

Tuesday 13 February 2024

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FEBRUARY 2024

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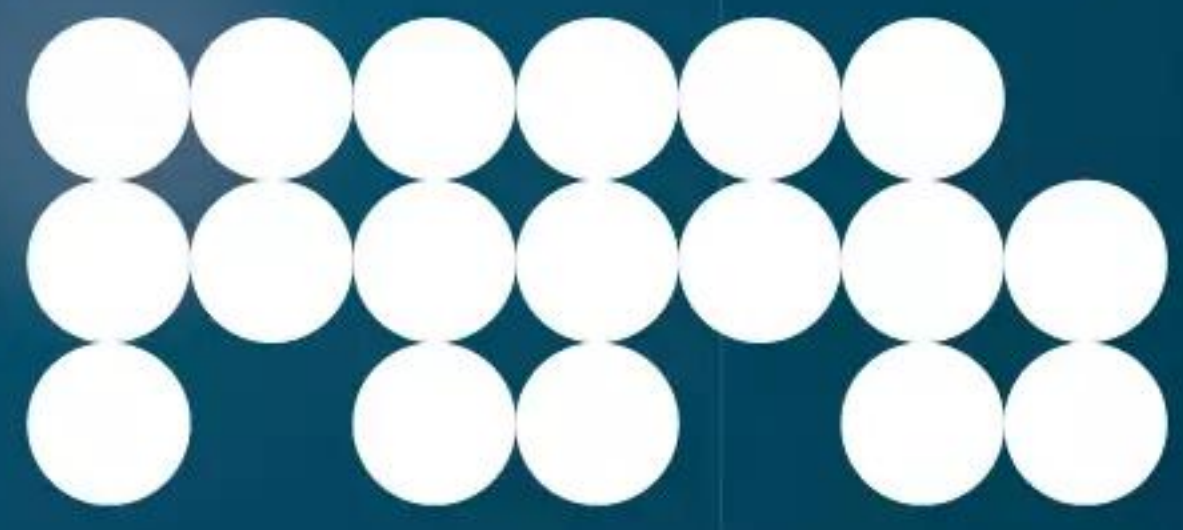
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Inside this issue

- 3** 7 days
- 8** It's good to share
- 12** Best used cameras under £500
- 20** The kit readers have bought on the cheap
- 26** Fujifilm GFX100 II: medium format ground-breaker
- 28** Photo Insight
- 31** Inbox
- 34** OM System OM-1 Mark II: Andrew Fusek Peters
- 36** Make the most of your camera
- 42** Get the best price for your used gear
- 46** Top DIY hacks
- 52** Don't despair, get it repaired!
- 56** Cut the cost of film photography
- 60** Off-camera flash on a budget
- 68** Reader portfolio
- 70** GuruShots
- 72** Kiev 4A field test
- 76** My favourite kit
- 79** Viltrox AF 20mm F2.8 FE review
- 82** Accessories
- 83** Tech talk
- 85** Buying Guide: Mirrorless lenses
- 98** Final analysis



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79



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60



© CAMERA MUSEUM

52



72

Welcome



This packed premium issue is dedicated to helping you enjoy more photography for less. First up is a round-up of the best cameras under £500. It's required reading if you want to save money, or need a back-up camera, and proves that cheap needn't mean 'cheap and nasty'. We then focus on making the most of your existing camera, including how to get it repaired. Also, with the used market so important now, specialists reveal how to get the best price for your used kit. Then there's a round-up of affordable film, and a photographer reveals why he's sticking with the Nikon D750 DSLR – now something of a bargain if you buy used. Why not spend some of that money you've saved on an AP subscription, and save even more! See page 67.

Geoff Harris, Deputy Editor



INSET PICTURE © DENNY WOODHORPE

The image of our cover cameras was created by Nigel Atherton, with a background by Getty Images.

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



JON STAPLEY

Photo specialist Jon scoured the market to reveal the best used camera bargains under £500



AILSA MCWHINNIE
Acting Features Editor

Ailsa compiles five pages of readers' best bargains



WILL CHEUNG

Expert photo tutor Will shares some ideas to help you to make the most of your existing camera's potential



CLAIRE GILLO

Top photographer Claire shares her top ten photo hacks so you can great images on a tight budget



CALLUM MCINERNEY-RILEY

The AP regular on how to get started with off-camera flash while keeping costs down



ANDY WESTLAKE
Technical Editor

Our resident kit expert assesses the reasonably priced Viltrox 20mm f/2.8

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The Photography Show returns – save money on tickets

 THE PHOTOGRAPHY and Video Show is returning to the Birmingham NEC from 16-19 March. Now moved to early spring rather than September, this pre-eminent show in the UK photography calendar will feature more than 250 exhibiting brands including top camera, lens and accessory makers, and an impressive line-up of speakers and seminar leaders.

Confirmed speakers so far include AP regulars Angela Nicholson, Peter Dench and Denise Maxwell, plus Joe Cornish, Tim Flach, Julieanne Kost from Adobe and other big

names. There will be lots of talks and seminars for video makers, professionals and analogue photographers, too.

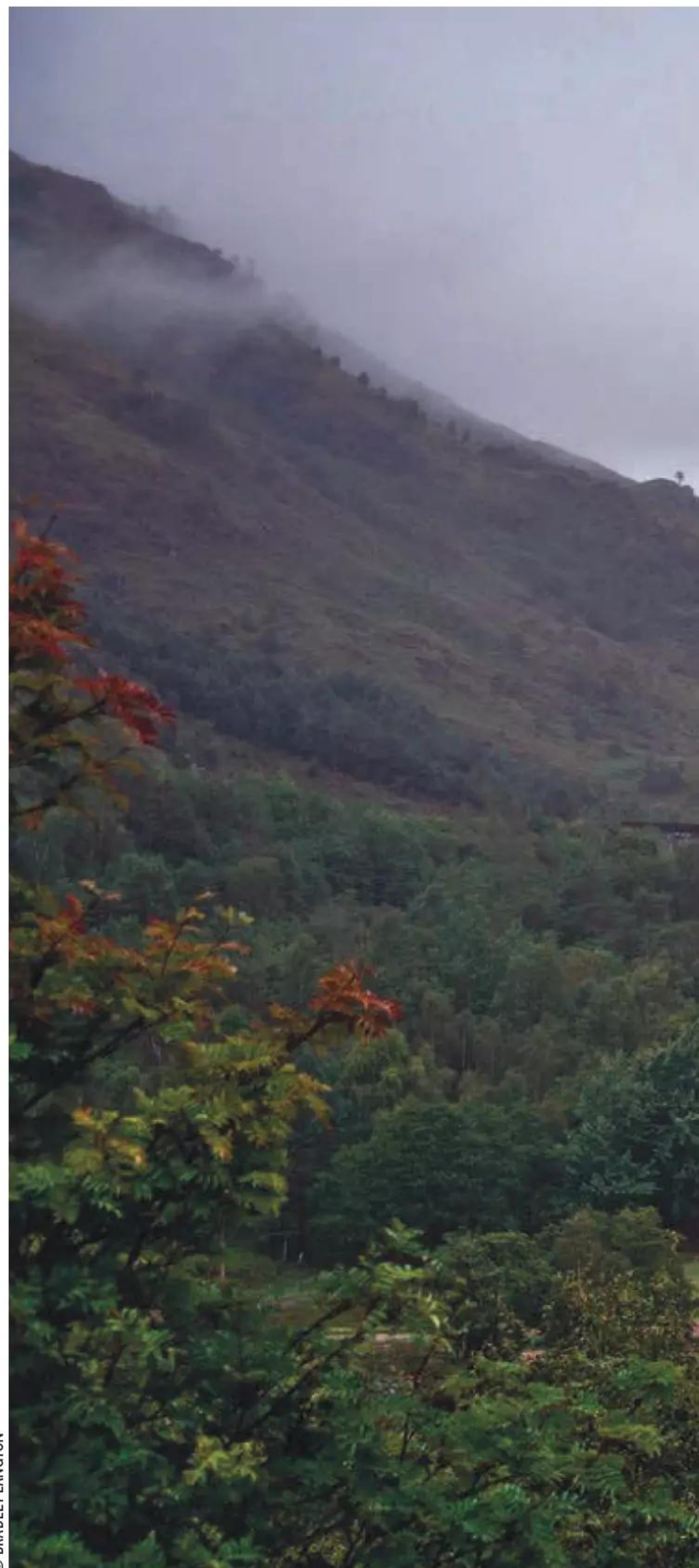
Needless to say, AP will have a stand (K207) at this year's show, featuring a gallery of AP Awards 2024 winners and iconic images from veteran music photographer Jill Furmanovsky.

Visiting our stand is also a great opportunity to meet the AP team. Book online at photographyshow.com/welcome/get-tickets – you can get 20% off a standard entry ticket using the code AMPHOTPS24.



Keep 16-19 March free!

© BRADLEY LANGTON



Abstract excellence

 AN ABSTRACT image has won the 17th International Garden Photographer of the Year competition, underscoring the contest's eclectic nature.

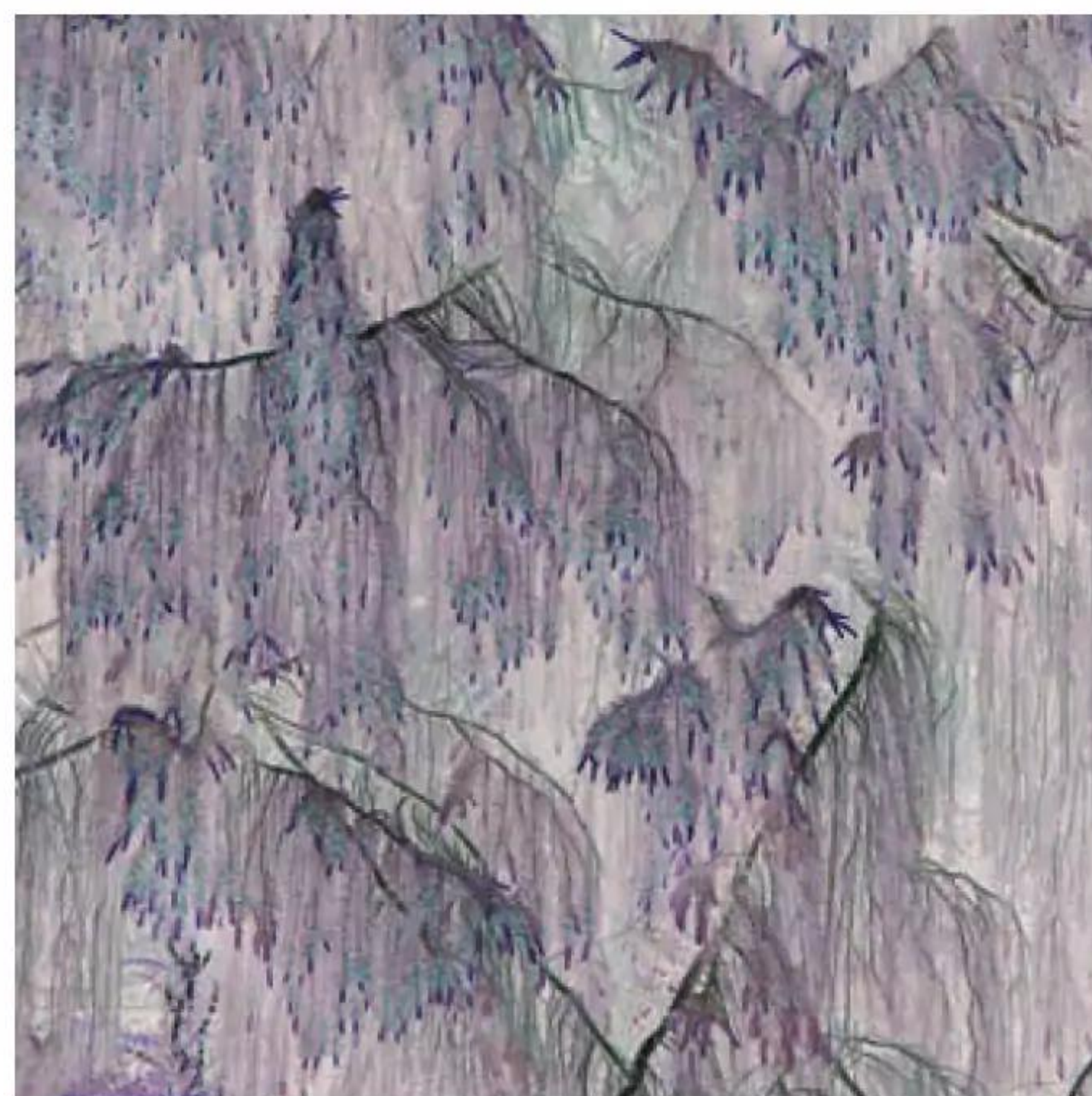
The overall winning image, 'Birdscape', was taken by June Sharpe, using a Canon EOS 5D Mark III DSLR and a Canon 24-105mm lens, with further work in Photoshop. 'There is an abundance of interest and depth which fires the imagination,' commented head judge, Tyrone McGlinchey. 'The soft, new growth transforming between plant and feathers – it is both enticing and enchanting. We are pulled into and beyond the symbolic dancing cranes, and embraced by their "wings", to a place of hope and peace.' June received the top prize of £4,000.

Meanwhile Annaick Guitteny came first in the Portfolios category for a set of six photos with the title 'Evanescence.' Her prize included £1,000 and a Gold Medal from the Royal Photographic Society (RPS).

An exhibition of winning images is now on

at Kew Gardens, London, until 10 March. International Garden Photographer of the Year 18 is now open for entries from both amateurs and professionals.


See igpoty.com for more details.



© JUNE SHARPE

'Birdscape' by June Sharpe was the winner

Young person's rail pass

 ENTRIES are now open for the Young Railway Photographer of the Year, organised by the National Railway Museum, with AP as a media partner. The portfolio-based contest is open until 31 January 2025, with categories for 18 and under, and 19-25. The theme is Railway 200, and entrants are being asked to submit a set of images celebrating 200 years of passenger rail travel. Shortlisted entries will be displayed at the National Railway Museum in York and at Locomotion railway museum in Shildon, County Durham, in summer 2025, before the winners are announced at an awards ceremony.

For more details, and to enter, see www.youngrailphotographeroftheyear.co.uk

Bradley Langton (see pages 76-77) won the 19-25 category last time with this stunning image taken in Scotland



Camera market: positive news

ACCORDING to the latest data from the CIPA industry body in Japan, shipments of interchangeable-lens cameras reached a peak of 667,747 last September, a big increase from the same month in 2022 and 2021. After crunching latest numbers from CIPA, used retailer MPB is predicting that the retail market will exceed its 2012 peak by next year. Canon's Imaging Division also announced that sales have risen by 7.2% year on year. See bit.ly/cipalatest



Higher-end cameras are keeping the market buoyant

The human element

UK ADVERTISING and documentary photographer Owen Harvey has won the inaugural The Human Element photo competition, organised by *Time* magazine and the American Society of Media Photographers. Harvey won through with an image of David Fuentes, a trainee matador, who comes from a long line of bull fighters. The picture shows David sitting at a table in his grandfather's home, surrounded by his grandfather's artwork.

Thousands of photographers worldwide entered the contest, which aims to celebrate the diversity of the human experience while touching on timely themes like climate change, gender identity, loss and love.

Prizes included more than \$16,000 in cash prizes, and a paid photo assignment for *Time*.



Owen's image of trainee matador David Fuentes

© OWEN HARVEY



Daniel Dencescu's winning image

The people have chosen

IT'S BEEN a busy week for competition news, with Wildlife Photographer of the Year announcing the People's Choice awards for last year's contest (the 59th).

UK photographer Nima Sarikhani was amongst the winners, for a powerful image of a polar bear carving out a bed from a small iceberg before drifting off to sleep in the northern region off Norway's Svalbard archipelago. Nima shot the image with a Canon EOS-1D X Mark III DSLR and 70-200mm f/2.8 lens.

Staying with Norway, local photographer Audun Rikardsen also charmed the public

with an image of moon jellyfish swarming in the cool autumnal waters of a fjord outside Tromsø, illuminated by the aurora borealis. Another stand-out image was taken by Daniel Dencescu, from Germany/Romania. He managed the rare feat of capturing a starling murmuration in the shape of a giant bird; unusually, the image was also taken in a big city (Rome and its suburbs) rather than a rural area or bird reserve.

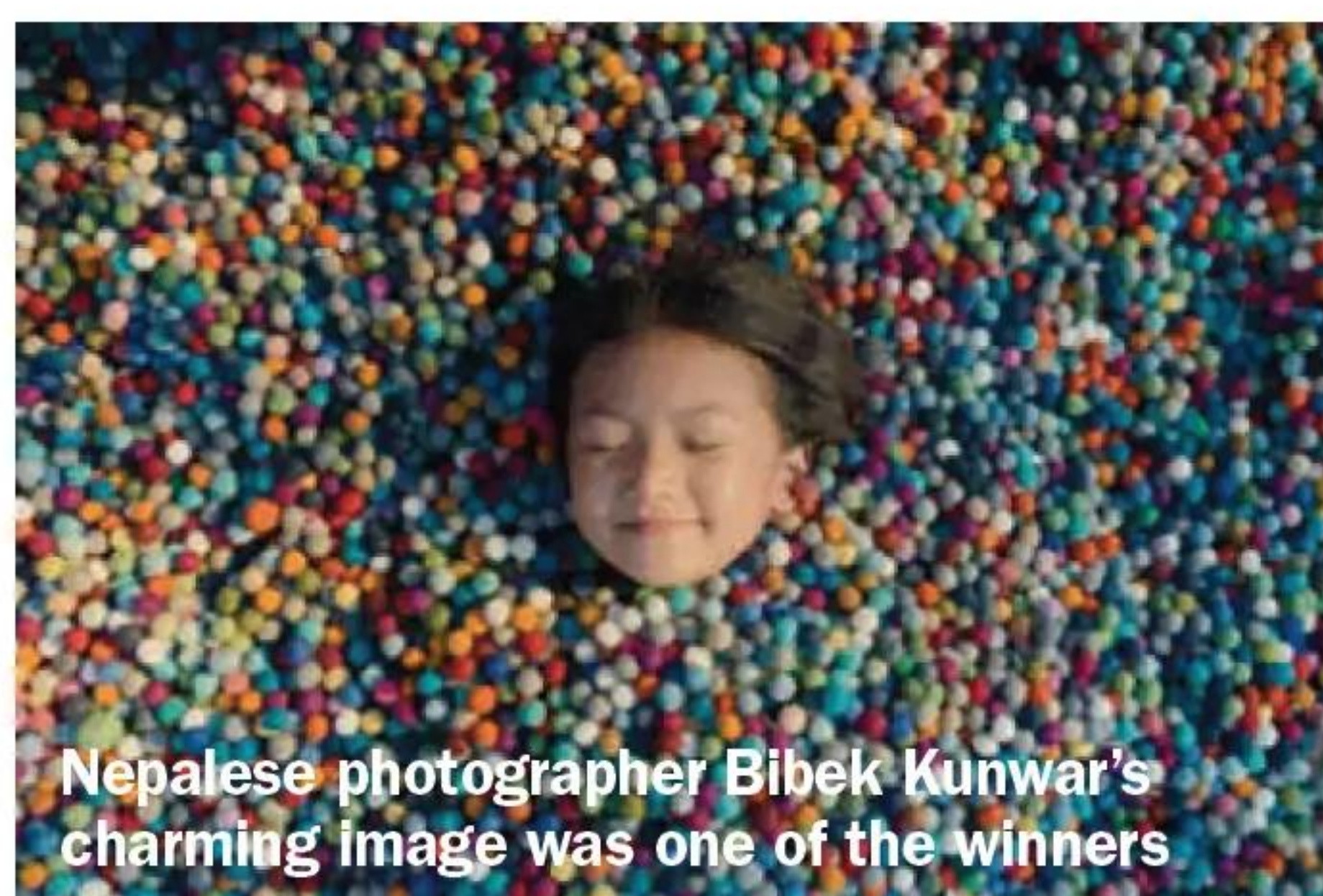
The other People's Choice winners were Tzachi Finklestein from Israel, for an image of a Balkan pond turtle, and Kenya's Mark Boyd, for a captivating capture of two lionesses



UK photographer Nima Sarikhani's image

grooming one of the pride's five cubs.

The winners of the 59th contest are on display at the Natural History Museum until 30 June, while the winners of this year's competition will be announced on 8 March.



Nepalese photographer Bibek Kunwar's charming image was one of the winners

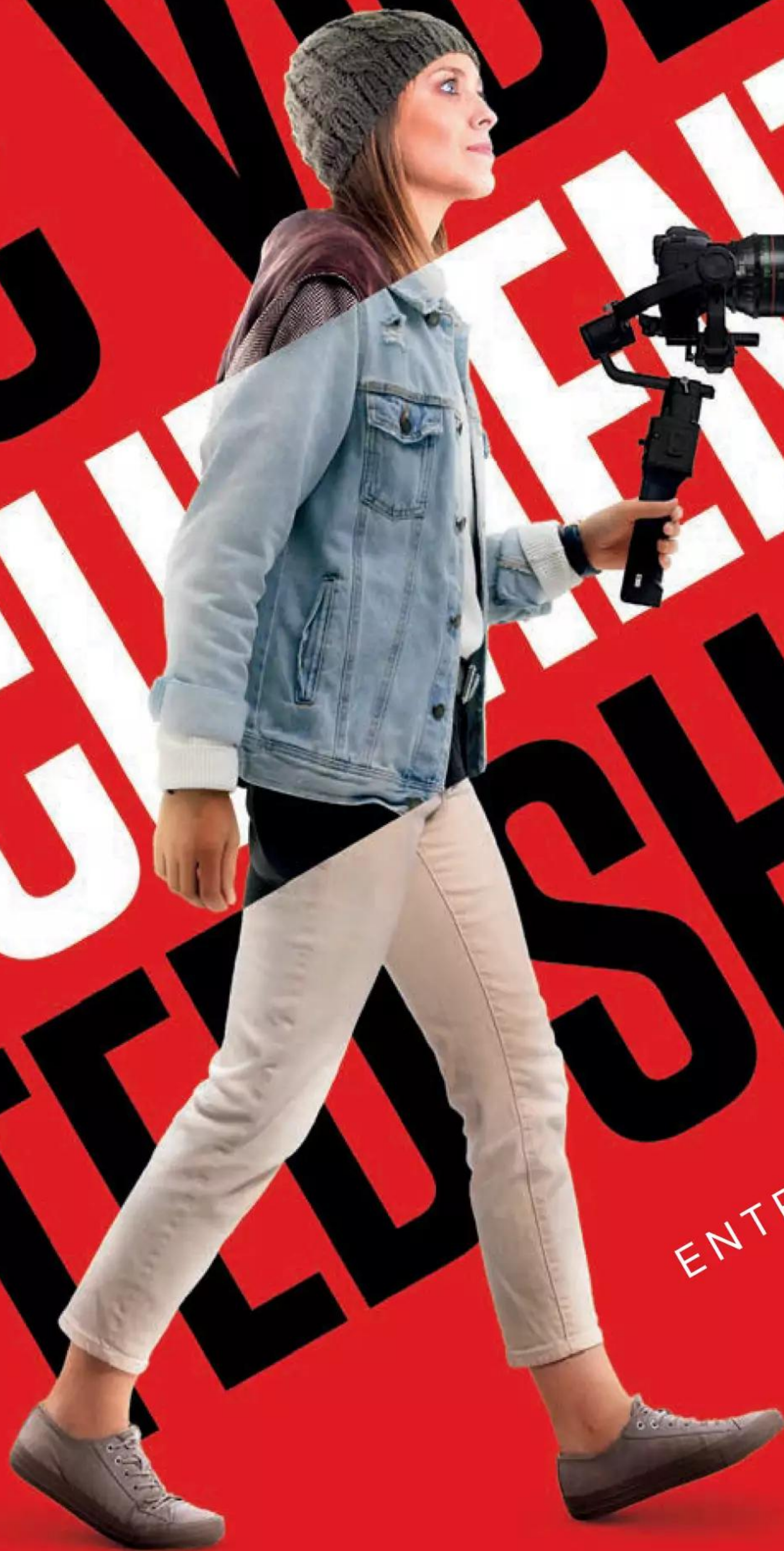
Sony regional winners

THE WORLD Photography Organisation has announced the winners of the National and Regional awards in the Sony World Photography Awards 2024 competition.

Photographers from over 54 countries were shortlisted, with all National and Regional Award winners receiving Sony digital imaging equipment as prizes. They will also be included in the awards exhibition and book.

The overall winners in the Student, Youth, Open and Professional competitions of the Sony World Photography Awards 2024 will be announced on 18 April and will go on display as part of the exhibition at Somerset House in London from 19 April to 6 May. For more information about upcoming announcements and winners, see www.worldphoto.org

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Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

AP picture of the week

Swerve by Lloyd Lane

Sony Alpha 7R IV, Sony FE 24-105mm F4 G OSS lens, 1/250sec at f/9, ISO 1000

'During January and February, I often go down to Brighton's Palace Pier to watch the starlings at sunset. On this occasion there was a low tide so I opted to photograph them from the beach; it felt like I was almost underneath the murmuration.'

Website: www.lloydlane.uk

Instagram: @lloydlanephotography

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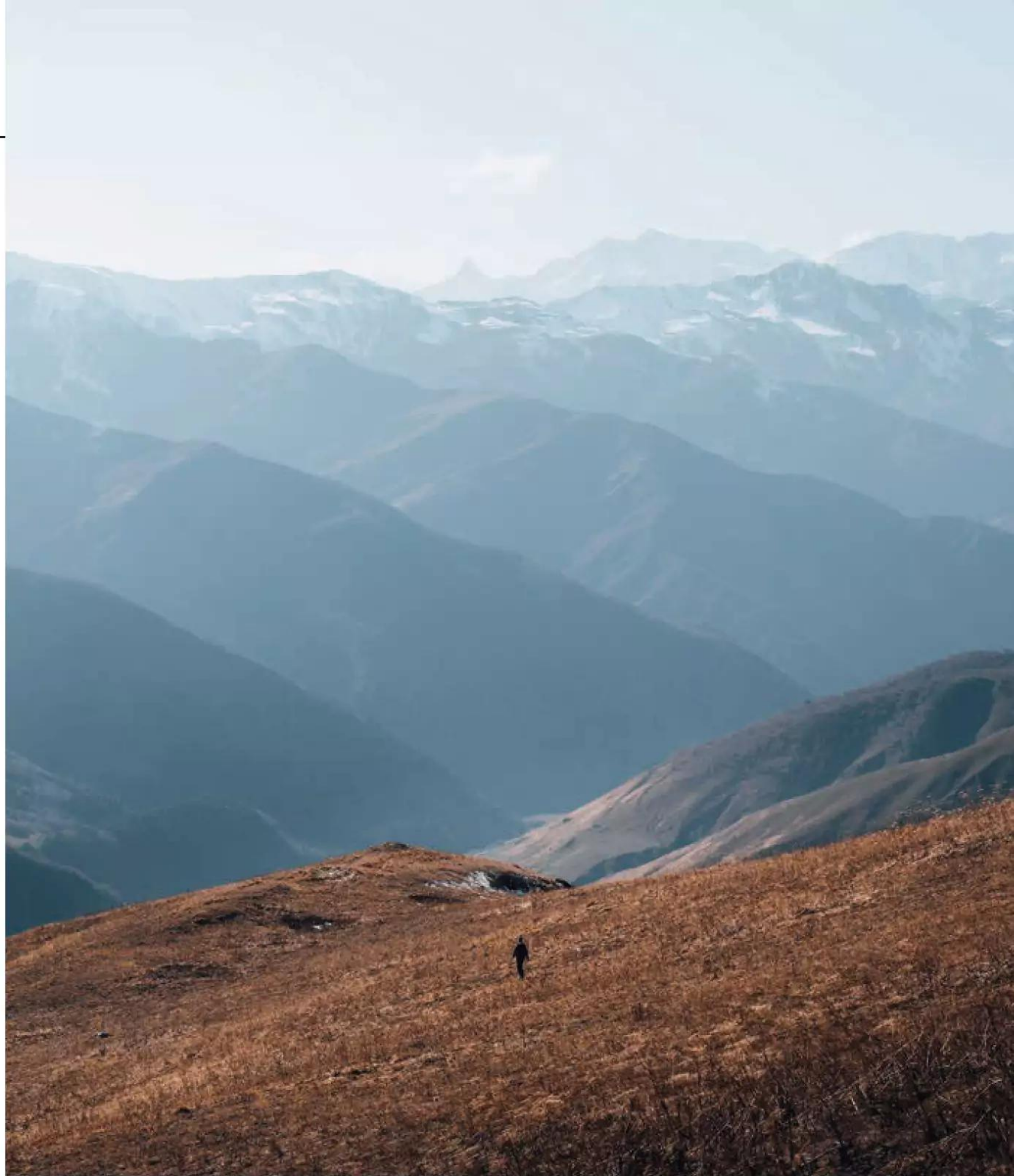
Svaneti Panorama: Amidst the Caucasus Peaks

by Irena Savic

Sony Alpha 7 IV, Tamron 28-75mm F/2.8 Di III VXD G2, 1/400sec at f/8, ISO 100

'This photo captures a hiker standing against a backdrop of layered Caucasus mountains in Svaneti, Georgia. Taken during a hike to a viewpoint offering a 360-degree panorama, the image showcases the vastness and rugged beauty of the Svaneti region. The hiker, dwarfed by the towering peaks, embodies the scale and grandeur of the landscape.'

Instagram: @irenascaptures



We also
liked...

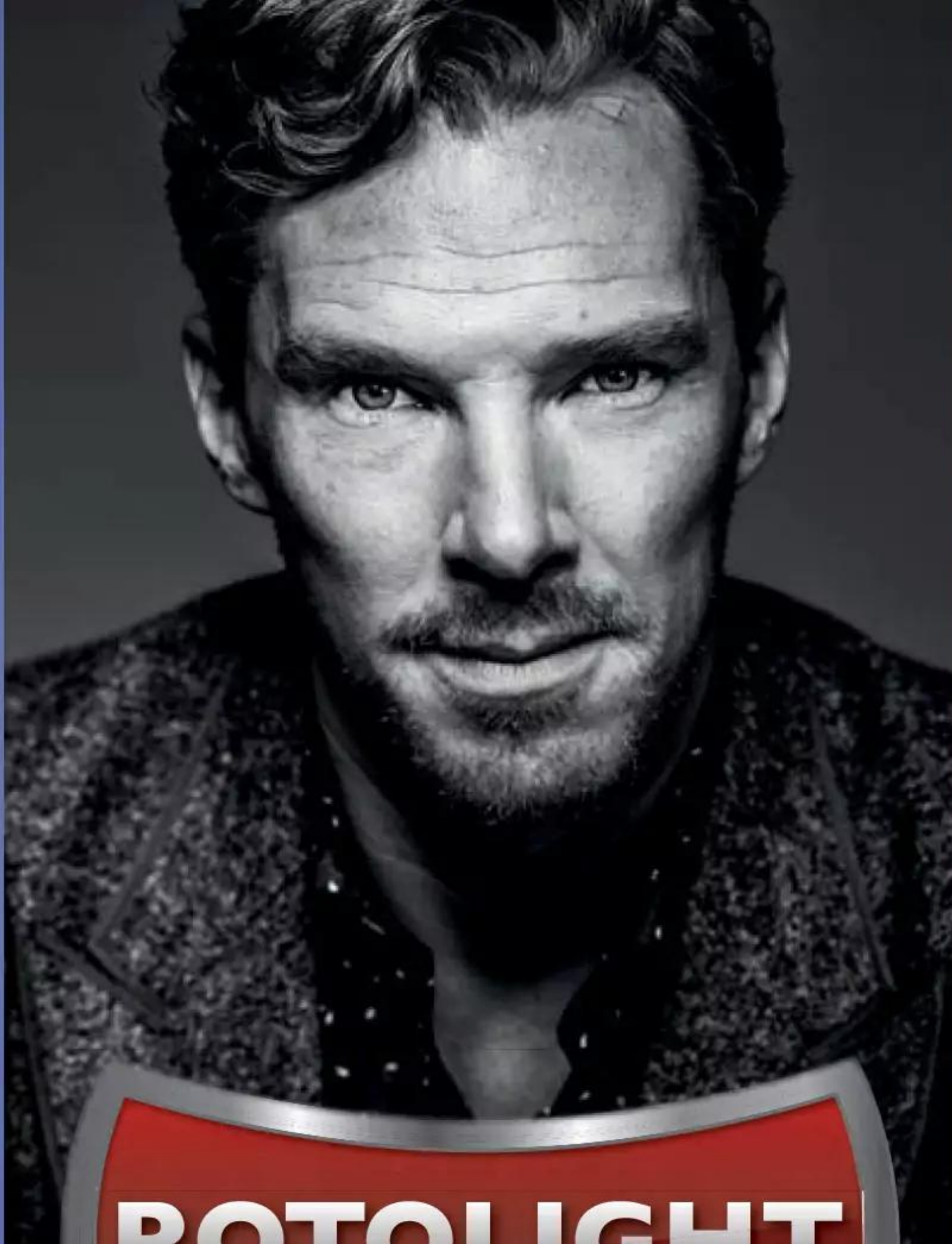
Wolf by Tom Barnes

Sony Alpha 7 III, Tamron 70-300mm F/4.5-6.3 Di III RXD, 1/20sec at f/6.3, ISO 3200

'After multiple failed previous attempts, the stars (and Moon!) finally aligned for the Wolf Moon moonrise this January behind this iconic Somerset landmark, with the Saharan dust only adding to the orange glow. Perseverance for the shot meant it finally came good!'

Instagram: @TBarnes99

Want to see your pictures here? Simply share them with our Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. Or you can email your best shot to us at ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. See page 3 for how to find us.

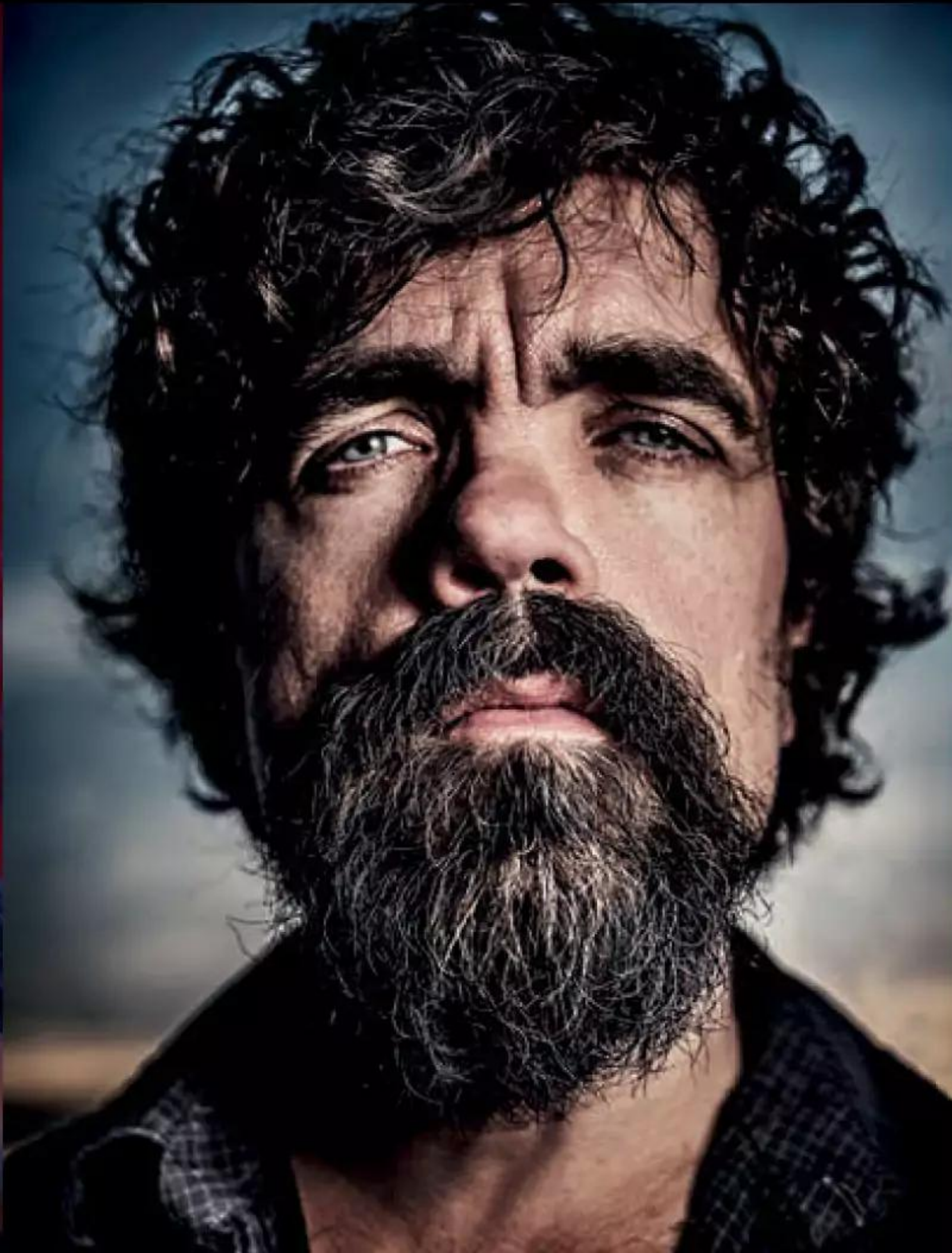


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Best used cameras under £500

Jon Stapley scours the second-hand camera market to find its most outrageous hidden bargains

We've spent the past few weeks trawling the UK's reputable second-hand camera sellers, and have uncovered the most outrageous bargains on the used kit market. From pocketable compacts to pro DSLRs and cutting-edge mirrorless cameras, the world of second-hand is a brilliant place to find bargains.

We've kept our list to exclusively feature cameras that can be bought used for under £500. Times are tough at the moment, with the continually rising cost of living, and it can be tough to justify spending money on our hobbies. So, if you need a new camera, but haven't quite found enough change down the back of the sofa to scrounge up £2,400 for a new Nikon Z f, we're here to help.

We've kept our second-hand golden rules in mind for this list. We've stuck to reputable sellers when checking prices, so if you see a camera available for significantly cheaper than we've listed, research the site you're buying from and think twice before you buy.

Where to buy used cameras

We recommend sticking with a trusted retailer, where you can rely on the accuracy of the used gear description. Many of these retailers also offer limited warranty and/or guarantees.

- MPB - mpb.com
- Clifton Cameras - cliftoncameras.co.uk
- Park Cameras - parkcameras.com
- Wex Photo Video - wexphotovideo.com
- Ffordes Photographic - ffordes.com
- Castle Cameras - castlecameras.co.uk
- CameraWorld - cameraworld.co.uk
- Camera Jungle - camerajungle.co.uk
- London Camera Exchange - lcegroup.co.uk
- Grays of Westminster (Nikon only) - graysofwestminster.co.uk

Used compact cameras under £500

Compact cameras aren't as popular as they once were, but if you're shopping on a limited budget, they can be an excellent way of ensuring you get bang for your buck. Unlike

with DSLRs or mirrorless cameras (which we'll get to), you don't need to worry about factoring in the extra cost of a lens.

Compacts come in all sorts of shapes –

some are slim and pocketable, others are styled after DSLRs and come packing big zoom lenses. We've included a mix to give you plenty of options, and while the upper limit of our budget is £500, there are some great compacts on this list you can pick up for a good deal less than that.

Canon PowerShot G5 X

- Expect to pay: around £400
- www.canon.co.uk



At a glance

- 20.2MP 1in sensor
- 24-100mm (equivalent) f/1.8-2.8 lens
- 5.9fps continuous shooting
- ISO 125-12,800

A nifty little compact camera from the earlier days of the PowerShot range, the G5 X is not quite as common a sight on the second-hand market, but at the time of writing there are a couple available at MPB for less than £400. You get a decent amount of camera for that outlay, with a 1-inch sensor providing image quality that's a step above the 1/2.3in sensors of cheaper models, and a versatile 24-100mm equivalent lens that

covers most bases for day-to-day shooting. There's also a built-in three-stop ND filter.

The burst speed of the G5 X is 5.9fps for JPEG only; switching to raw it slows down considerably. Battery life is okay – the camera is rated to 210 shots, or 350 in Eco mode. While these estimates tend to be conservative, it's also hard to predict how well-preserved the battery will be on a second-hand camera, as it depends on the previous owner's usage and storage habits. The G5 X does let you top up via Micro USB though.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ330

- Expect to pay: £300-390
- www.panasonic.com



At a glance

- 12.1MP 1/2.3in sensor
- 25-600mm (equivalent) f/2.8 lens
- 60 fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-6400

The Panasonic Lumix FZ330 is a bridge camera, meaning it pairs a big zoom lens with an SLR-style body. The lens in question is a rather good one – it covers an equivalent zoom range of 25-600mm, which gives you plenty of shooting flexibility. Even better though is the constant f/2.8 aperture. Normally, superzooms have an aperture that drops off pretty sharply at the telephoto end, making them difficult to use in low light. Not so with the lovely Leica DC

Vario-Elmarit optic on the front. This camera is plentifully available both new and used – while it's cheaper second-hand of course, you can pick up new ones for about £479 across most retailers, which is still within our £500 budget. The FZ330 does use a 1/2.3in sensor, rather than the larger 1in format that's common in slightly more upscale compacts. This has an inevitable impact on image quality, and resolution degrades quickly when you start pushing the ISO.

Sony Cyber-shot RX100 IV

- Expect to pay: £380-450
- www.sony.co.uk

At a glance

- 20.1MP 1in sensor
- 24-70mm (equivalent) f/1.8-2.8 lens
- 16fps continuous shooting
- ISO 125-12,800 (expandable to 80)

Sony's RX100 series of premium compact cameras comprises seven models in total. All are currently available second-hand. With our £500 budget, the best RX100 camera is the RX100 IV, which was released in 2015.

The basic proposition of any RX100 camera has remained constant throughout the series – a high-quality 1in sensor paired with a fast zoom lens, all wrapped up in a body that can slip into a (reasonably sized) pocket. At first glance, the RX100 IV looks mighty similar to the RX100 III, with the same 20MP resolution, the same 24-70mm f/1.8-2.8 lens, and



another pop-up viewfinder. So why not pick up the Mark III and save yourself £100?

Well, the RX100 IV was one of the first cameras to sport Sony's Exmor RS sensor, which features a stacked design. Stacked sensors are somewhat commonplace now, but in 2015 they weren't, and the significantly faster processing speeds of the sensor make the RX100 IV a very different beast from the Mark III. The burst rate jumps from 10fps to 16fps, and the maximum shutter speed leaps from 1/8000sec to 1/32,000sec on the RX100 IV. Video capability is also dramatically improved, with 4K 30p, a top bit-rate of 1000MBps, a high-speed 960fps mode and the S-Log flat profile.

Nikon Coolpix P900

- Expect to pay: £320-490
- www.nikon.co.uk

At a glance

- 16MP 1/2.3in sensor
- 24-2000mm (equivalent) f/2.8-6.5 lens
- 7fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-6400 (expandable to 12,800)

For wildlife photographers and birders on a budget, the Nikon Coolpix P900 is definitely an option to consider. A bridge-style compact camera, the P900 has a whopping 83x zoom lens, covering a focal range from 24mm all the way to an equivalent of 2000mm. What's more, Nikon also put in a fair dint of effort to make this long lens actually usable (not always the case with superzoom compacts), including features like optical stabilisation and focus assist to help those working at the extreme end of the zoom.



Of course, cameras such as this tend to come with a fair few compromises, and so it is with the P900. The relatively low resolution of 16MP isn't much of a surprise, and is perfectly acceptable for most people, but you also have to contend with some quite aggressive noise reduction that kicks in at higher ISOs, rendering images looking rather indistinct and smeary. It's also worth noting that while the burst mode clips along at a reasonable 7fps, it has a very small buffer and will probably manage about a second's worth of activity before needing several seconds to recover. So you'll need to choose your burst moments with care.

Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX15

- Expect to pay: £415-450
- www.panasonic.com

At a glance

- 20MP 1in sensor
- 24-72mm (equivalent) f/1.4-2.8 lens
- 10fps continuous shooting
- ISO 125-12,800 (expandable to 80-25,600)

This diminutive compact from Panasonic looks unassuming at first glance, but the Lumix LX15 is a class act. With a 1in sensor and a zoom lens that can open up to f/1.4 at the wide end, it can consistently produce great-looking imagery even in challenging lighting conditions. The zoom itself is a pretty minor thing, running only from 24-72mm equivalent. If you like the look of Fujifilm's X100 cameras but are struggling to get hold of one, this could be an interesting alternative.

One thing to note is that the LX15 lacks a viewfinder. Your mileage will vary as to whether



this is an issue – some photographers never bother with the viewfinder, preferring to use the LCD screen (here a pretty standard 3in tilting type), while others refuse to use anything but the viewfinder. Otherwise, the Lumix LX15 has a pleasingly premium feel to it – pick it up and the first thing you'll notice is that the body is metal. With touchscreen operation and a useful control ring encircling the lens, it's an intuitive and enjoyable camera to use. Also, while there are second-hand LX15 cameras available for a good price at the likes of MPB and Wex, you can also pick it up new and still come under our £500 budget.

Fujifilm X100S

- Expect to pay: £440-670
- fujifilm.com/uk/en

At a glance

- 16.3MP APS-C sensor
- 23mm (equivalent) f/2 lens
- 6fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-25,600

Used prices for the X100S can and do rise above the £600 mark. However, if you don't mind a few scuffs on the camera body then you can pick one up for a budget price – at time of writing, MPB has three listed in varying conditions between £450 and £499, and a couple that just nudge over to £550.

The X100S was the second entry in the series, preceded by the original X100, and followed by the X100T, X100F and X100V. Blending superb image quality and handling with stylish looks, these are flat-out some of the most enjoyable cameras to use. Some affectionately refer to X100 cameras as Leicas for



those who can't afford Leicas, and the X100S definitely captures a flavour of that immersive, responsive feel you get from shooting on Leica gear.

The unchanged essential combination of the X100 series is a high-quality APS-C sensor and a fixed 23mm f/2 lens. There's no zoom functionality – if you want to get closer to a subject, you must move – and while some find this restrictive, in practice it makes you a much more engaged and immersed photographer. Image quality is gorgeous, with the option to benefit from Fujifilm's stylish Film Simulations, and the introduction of on-sensor phase-detection autofocus makes this camera faster and more responsive than the original X100.

Used DSLRs under £500

With mirrorless cameras ruling the roost in the professional and enthusiast photo/video spaces, the used DSLR market has become a bountiful place to find some astoundingly good deals. Professional DSLRs that would have run you up a four-figure bill not all that long ago can be picked up without straying over our £500 budget. With most DSLR lens systems also offering plenty of cheap options, the used DSLR market is one of the most cost-effective places to kit yourself out as a photographer.

An important thing to remember when shopping for DSLRs is to always check the shutter actuation count before buying. All DSLRs are rated to a specific number of shutter actuations, and reputable sellers will always list the number of times a DSLR's shutter has fired when they put it up for sale. While this isn't a hard and fast guide to how long the camera

will last – many DSLRs can and do exceed their stated actuation counts – it will give you a rough idea of how much use you can expect to get out of a used DSLR before parts start to wear out.

All the cameras in this section are priced body-only, meaning you will also need to factor in the cost of a lens if you don't already have one. While we've picked some bodies that run to the upper limit of our budget, we've also nominated plenty of great cameras that can be picked up at prices that will leave you space to get a lens, too, and still stay within £500.

Canon EOS 70D

- Expect to pay: £200-350
- www.canon.co.uk

At a glance

- 20.2MP APS-C sensor
- Canon EF-S lens mount
- 7fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-12,800 (expandable to 25,600)



An enduringly popular all-rounder DSLR, the Canon EOS 70D is pretty adept for video as well as stills – it was quite popular among YouTubers for a while. With highly capable Dual Pixel autofocus in both photo and video modes, the EOS 70D acquires focus quickly and reliably, and having the fully articulating touchscreen gives you plenty of flexible composing options, in addition to the lovely optical viewfinder.

Elsewhere, you get burst shooting at a decent clip of 7fps, while image quality from the 20.2MP APS-C sensor is

consistently impressive. Detail from the EOS 70D is surprisingly resilient even as you push the ISO up – you can shoot at 12,800 and still get grainy but printable images. However, the expanded ISO 25,600 setting is best avoided unless there's absolutely no alternative.

Having access to the Canon EF stable of lenses makes the Canon EOS 70D an excellent option for the budget-conscious photographer – you could pick yourself up a used EOS 70D body and a second-hand flexible zoom like the Canon EF-S 15-85mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM, and still stay within our £500 budget.

Nikon D800

- Expect to pay: £350-510
- www.nikon.co.uk

At a glance

- 36.3MP full-frame sensor
- Nikon F lens mount
- 4fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-6400 (expandable to 25,600)



Let's be real for a second – £399 is quite frankly an absurdly good deal for a DSLR that cost £2,599 on release.

The 36.3MP full-frame sensor on the D800 is a thing of beauty, capable of capturing gorgeous images with wide dynamic range and vivid colours. While the ISO settings can't be pushed as high as on cameras that have come along since, the performance that the D800 puts in even at its higher settings is still absolutely brilliant. This is a versatile camera that'll cope with all sorts of lighting conditions. A lot of great landscapes have been taken on this thing, and a lot

more will in the future as long as prices remain this good. The shutter is rated to around 200,000 actuations.

The 51-point autofocus is not the fastest, and the 4fps burst rate is pretty meagre. This isn't a camera you'd bring to capture a football game and subsequent models like the D810 and D850 would also prove much more suited to faster pursuits like wildlife photography. However, for those who enjoy a slower-paced photographic life, the Nikon D800 is still a DSLR that demands consideration, and potentially offers outstanding value for money.

Nikon D4

- Expect to pay: £370-500
- www.nikon.co.uk

At a glance

- 16.2MP full-frame sensor
- Nikon F lens mount
- 11fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-12,800 (expandable to 50-204,800)



Released contemporaneously with the Nikon D800, the Nikon D4 was the flagship speedster, forgoing the high megapixel count in favour of 11fps burst speeds and ISO sensitivity that can be pushed all the way up to 204,800. It was the professional sports photographer's camera of choice in 2012, and as such it commanded a price in excess of £5,000. Today, though, you can pick it up for less than a tenth of that.

Nikon's top-end pro DSLRs have long had a reputation for being built like tanks. Professional photographers, given the chance, will regale you

with stories of dropping their D4, getting it caked in mud, accidentally bashing it against a wall, and the thing just carrying on shooting and shooting. As such, you shouldn't be afraid of looking at D4 cameras classified as 'well used' or similar. A scuffed-up D4 may not look the prettiest, but it'll be likely to shoot just fine.

Remember – the thing to pay more attention to is shutter actuations. The D4 is rated for at least 400,000 actuations, and we've seen 'well used' examples listed on MPB with actuation counts at less than 60,000, available for around £500.

Nikon D5500

- Expect to pay: £190-320
- www.nikon.co.uk

At a glance

- 24.2MP APS-C sensor
- Nikon F (DX) lens mount
- 5fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-25,600



A likeable, all-rounder DSLR, the Nikon D5500 sits comfortably in the mid-range. It's similarly priced to the Canon EOS 70D. There's lots to tempt you in either direction – the Nikon gives you a little more resolution to play with, but isn't quite as quick on the draw as the EOS 70D when it comes to burst shooting and maximum shutter speed.

In general, if you're looking for a camera to capture fast action and erratically moving subjects, the D5500 probably isn't it. The autofocus system does a decent job, but sometimes has a tendency to hunt, especially in low light. Happily though, the

quality from the APS-C sensor is gorgeous, with accurate colours and a pleasing level of detail even when the ISO is pushed up.

We'd say this DSLR makes for a savvy second-hand buy than the newer D5600, which was a pretty light refresh of this camera and commands consistently higher prices on the used market. The main headline addition for the D5600 was Nikon's wireless SnapBridge technology for instantly sharing images to your smartphone. The imaging fundamentals are otherwise more or less identical, so we'd say save yourself £100 or so and get the D5500.

Pentax K-3

- Expect to pay: £260-390
- www.pentax.eu

At a glance

- 24MP APS-C sensor
- Pentax KAF2 lens mount
- 8.3fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-51,200



For a change from the Canon/Nikon hegemony, consider the Pentax K-3. A robust little DSLR with extensive weatherproofing and a lovely big viewfinder, the K-3 feels premium from the moment you pick it up, thanks to the magnesium-steel alloy body. It also benefits from in-camera shake-reduction that works with all lenses – something that wasn't exactly ubiquitous in 2014 when the K-3 was released.

The K-3's shutter is rated to 200,000 actuations, which is music to the ears of the second-hand shopper – you shouldn't have any trouble

finding one with plenty of shots left on the clock. Currently the best place to look seems to be Park Cameras, where there are a good few to choose from at varying condition levels.

With lots of affordable lenses to choose from, and a high-quality APS-C sensor capable of putting out great-quality images, the Pentax K-3 is a capable workhorse DSLR. Handy features like dual SD card slots and a simulated low-pass filter (to control for moiré patterning) make it feel more modern than it actually is, and many similarly priced DSLRs from The Big Two don't have anywhere near its level of weatherproofing.

Canon EOS 7D Mark II

- Expect to pay £320-550
- www.canon.co.uk

At a glance

- 20.2MP APS-C sensor
- Canon EF-S lens mount
- 10fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-16,000 (expandable to 51,200)



An APS-C DSLR that's designed to prioritise speed, the Canon EOS 7D Mark II was a hit among wildlife photographers when it came out in 2014. The 1.6x crop (Canon's crop is slightly heavier than other manufacturers' crop factors) is actually quite beneficial for wildlife, as it extends the effective focal length of your lens by 1.6x. A 70-200mm lens, for instance, becomes a 112-320mm, giving you much more reach when it comes to spotting and snapping elusive wildlife subjects.

The EOS 7D Mark II is kitted out across the board for wildlife. It's got up to 10fps burst

shooting speeds, but what impresses even more is the shot buffer. Shoot in raw and it'll manage 31 frames, but switch to high-resolution JPEG and it can basically go indefinitely – or at least, until your card fills up. The autofocus system, while clearly inferior to modern systems with AI-powered subject-detection and the like, still does a pretty good job in varying light conditions.

Plentifully available from multiple second-hand sellers, the EOS 7D Mark II does show its age though. There are two card slots, one of them being the rather outdated CompactFlash format. The LCD screen is also fixed in place, and there's no touchscreen functionality to speak of.

Canon EOS 5D Mark III

- Expect to pay: £240-650
- www.canon.co.uk

At a glance

- 22.3MP full-frame sensor
- Canon EF lens mount
- 6fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-25,600 (expandable to 102,400)



The Canon EOS 5D Mark II was a DSLR that revolutionised filmmaking, and the Mark III version built on its success with a raft of sensible updates that make it the kind of DSLR you can happily shoot on for years and years. Canon, for its part, did a good job of helping this along by releasing regular firmware updates for the EOS 5D Mark III, the last of which arrived in 2019 – seven years after the camera first debuted. These updates have included features like adding an uncompressed HDMI output, as well as upgrading and improving the autofocus.

One thing the used camera

market does not lack for is second-hand copies of the EOS 5D Mark III. While prices do go as high as £650, you can easily get a slightly less shiny version that's within our £500 budget. MPB is currently stuffed to the gills with them and there are also options within budget at Wex and Park at time of writing.

The image quality from the full-frame sensor is great; the autofocus impresses thanks to continual updates; and the body and handling are just as you'd expect from a pro-spec Canon DSLR. While the lack of 4K means it's less useful as a video camera than it once was, the EOS 5D Mark III is enjoying a new lease of life as an enthusiast's camera.

Used mirrorless cameras under £500

If you're worried about the cost of new mirrorless gear, don't be. With all the major mirrorless systems having been running for a good few years now, there are plenty of second-hand options across the board, and if you want a cheap way to hop into a current flagship system, you have plenty of options available to you. Whether you're looking for a beginner, intermediate or pro-level mirrorless camera, the used market is the time-honoured place to snag yourself a bargain.

It's worth being cautious and doing your research when buying a second-hand mirrorless model, just as it is with any other type of camera. Mirrorless cameras will record the number of shutter actuations their mechanical shutters have made, and while this isn't quite as important as it is with DSLRs, since there isn't a

great big mirror mechanism flapping up and down, it's still worth paying attention to get a rough idea of how well-used the camera is. Note, though, that most mirrorless cameras' actuation counts won't include the electronic shutter, so this may not always be a representative picture.

Really though, you can't go wrong if you stick to reputable sellers, read the camera description thoroughly to understand what you're getting, and exercise some basic common sense. Once again, you'll need to factor in the cost of a lens if you don't already have one, so we've made sure to include some cameras that leave enough room in the budget for this.

Sony Alpha 7 II

- Expect to pay: £400-600
- www.sony.co.uk

At a glance

- 24.3MP full-frame sensor
- Sony FE lens mount
- 5fps continuous shooting
- ISO 50-25,600



than £499. Currently there are multiple available at MPB and Park Cameras.

For stills photography in particular, you really can't argue with the Sony A7 II at these prices. The quality of its full-frame sensor is sublime, the burst speed of 10fps puts action photography in play, and its autofocus system is still reasonably competitive, even if it does predate the introduction of swanky features like Subject Recognition. Sony E-mount is also one of the best mirrorless systems in which to snag bargain lenses, both because it's been around for a very long time, and because Sony has historically been very welcoming to third-party manufacturers.

Sony does love its world-firsts. While the original Sony Alpha 7 changed the game by being one of the first mirrorless cameras to pack a full-frame sensor, its successor, the Mark II, upped the ante by being the first full-frame camera to come with a feature that these days is commonplace – in-body 5-axis optical stabilisation. This alone makes the A7 II a much more attractive buy than the original A7, even with a premium of £100 or so added to the second-hand price. While the most pristine models tend to exceed our £500 budget, there are plenty of good-condition A7 II bodies to be had for less

Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II

- Expect to pay: £200-400
- explore.omsystem.com

At a glance

- 16MP Four Thirds sensor
- Micro Four Thirds lens mount
- 10fps continuous shooting
- ISO 200-25,600 (expandable to 100)



The Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II is an outstanding camera. The combination of a weatherproofed body, effective in-body stabilisation and the incredibly rich portfolio of lightweight and affordable lenses that makes up the Micro Four Thirds system, means the E-M5 II is one of those cameras where everything just seems to click into place.

Micro Four Thirds gets a lot less attention now that there are so many full-frame mirrorless systems. However, if you're willing to accept a minor compromise in raw image quality, you get an unbeatable system of lightweight lenses that provide

huge telephoto reach for a great price. And that compromise in quality really is minor – you can still make excellent prints with this camera.

If you're working to a budget, Micro Four Thirds is a mirrorless system that is well worth your consideration. It's probably the system in which you can kit yourself out most cost-effectively, and when it also contains cameras as clever and capable as the OM-D E-M5 Mark II, it's a hard proposition to argue with. Even an as-new E-M5 II from Wex or Park will only set you back £399, leaving £100 to play with for your first lens.

Fujifilm X-T2

- Expect to pay: £400-670
- fujifilm.com/uk/en

At a glance

- 24MP APS-C sensor
- Fujifilm X lens mount
- 8ps continuous shooting
- ISO 200-12,800 (expandable to 100-51,200)



A solid enthusiast's mirrorless camera, the Fujifilm X-T2 may be considerably outclassed by its successors, including the X-T4 and the sublime, high-resolution X-T5. However, it's still got that X-T magic that saw so many photographers fall in love with the series, including those tactile, dial-led controls, and of course, the brilliant X-Trans sensor that produces such vibrant and vivid imagery.

While the X-T2 does shoot 4K video, the X-T series has long been thought of as being one for stills shooters – to the point where the X-T4 engendered a bit

of backlash when it was perceived as a little too video-focused. Consequently, it's probably mostly photographers who'll be looking at this camera, and they'll find a capable shooter on their hand. Burst speeds are snappy, autofocus is reliable, and the standard JPEG output is some of the best in the business. If you're not one for processing raws, Fujifilm is a good choice of brands to hitch your wagon to.

This is going to push to the upper end of our £500 budget, and given that you'll also need to find spare change for an X-mount lens or two, it's not the cheapest option. Still, it's a fabulous camera and more than deserves a spot on this list.

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<p>SAVE AT LEAST £50!</p>  <p>USED SONY A9</p> <p>12 available from £1,049*</p>	<p>SAVE AT LEAST £25!</p>  <p>USED SONY A7S II</p> <p>11 available from £694*</p>	<p>SAVE AT LEAST £10!</p>  <p>USED SONY ZV-E10</p> <p>9 available from £499*</p>	<p>SAVE AT LEAST £50!</p>  <p>USED SONY FE PZ 16-35MM F/4 G</p> <p>10 available from £1,089*</p>	<p>SAVE AT LEAST £50!</p>  <p>USED SONY FE 70-200MM F/2.8 GM OSS</p> <p>10 available from £1,339*</p>
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Sony A6000

- Expect to pay: £250-340
- www.sony.co.uk

At a glance

- 24.3MP APS-C sensor
- Sony E lens mount
- 11fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-25,600



represent terrific value for money. Clifton Cameras, Park Cameras, Wex Photo Video, MPB and Ffordes Photographic all have at least one A6000 on their books at the time of writing, not one of them charging more than £339. That price leaves you more than enough room to pick up a second-hand Sony E lens and stay within the £500 limit.

Slim and sleek, with a built-in viewfinder, the Sony A6000 is the sort of camera you could happily shoot on for a lifetime. Video enthusiasts should note that it doesn't shoot 4K, resolution topping out at Full HD. Otherwise, there's very little we can say against this outstanding little camera.

The Sony A6000, first released in 2014, has gone on to have something of a late-career renaissance. Its fundamentals are so absolutely rock-solid, offering a 24MP sensor with 11fps burst shooting and fantastically reliable autofocus, that they've remained competitive in the years since the camera's release. The Sony A6000 became the photography world's worst-kept secret, to the point where its new price started to creep back up in response to the renewed interest.

Happily, there are plenty of Sony A6000 cameras available second-hand, and they still

Fujifilm X-T10

- Expect to pay: £290-320
- fujifilm.com/uk/en

At a glance

- 16MP APS-C sensor
- Fujifilm X-mount
- 8fps continuous shooting
- ISO 200-6400 (expandable to 100-51,200)



camera that covers the basics very well. It handles nicely, it produces rich and vibrant images with its X-Trans sensor, and it gives you access to the fantastic X-mount series of lenses. Buying the X-T10 should leave you with £200 or so to spare in your £500 budget, and with that you can get a standard zoom like the XF 18-55mm f/2.8-4 R LM OIS (giving you optical stabilisation), or a handy prime like the XF 14mm f/2.8 R.

Shooting on Fujifilm kit can be both addictive and quite pricey, so if you want an affordable way in, this camera is a great bet.

The relatively high cost of Fujifilm X lenses means it's not a bad idea to give yourself a little extra headroom in the budget. The X-T10 is a pretty basic mirrorless camera – and might be too basic for some. You only get 16MP of resolution, there's no built-in stabilisation to speak of and the native ISO range is a pretty pedestrian 200 to 6400. Also, while a headline burst speed of 8fps sounds pretty decent, the buffer is pretty slim, and you're not going to maintain that speed for more than a second or so.

However, for a pretty reasonable outlay you get a

Panasonic Lumix DMC-G7

- Expect to pay £220-300
- www.panasonic.com

At a glance

- 16MP Four Thirds sensor
- Micro Four Thirds lens mount
- 8fps continuous shooting
- ISO 200-25,600 (expandable to 100)



A travel-friendly all-rounder, the Panasonic Lumix G7 is a capable mirrorless camera that does show its age in a few respects, but still delivers the goods when it comes to both stills photography and video. With SLR-style handling, it's got sensibly laid-out controls and a substantial grip. Some might complain it's a little plasticky but that helps keep the weight down.

The imagery the G7 produces is consistently very good, with punchy colours and a pleasing level of detail. The burst mode fires off shots at a decent clip of 8fps, and while the contrast-based autofocus system isn't a

patch on more modern phase-detection systems, it's reasonably responsive and has been integrated well with the touchscreen.

The Lumix G7 is part of the Micro Four Thirds standard, meaning all the advantages we gushed over regarding the E-M5 Mark II apply here, too. You still have your pick of an expansive, long-running lens ecosystem, and can get effective telephoto reach much more cheaply than any other system. Even if you pick the most expensive G7 you can find on the second-hand market, you're unlikely to need to pay much more than £300, leaving you with £200 to play with when you're shopping for second-hand MFT lenses.

Canon EOS M50

- Expect to pay: £320-410
- www.canon.co.uk

At a glance

- 24MP APS-C sensor
- Canon EF-M lens mount
- 10fps continuous shooting
- ISO 100-25,600 (expandable to 51,200)



EOS M cameras have remained stubbornly popular; with slim, stylish bodies and APS-C sensors, they strike an impressive balance between portability and image quality.

The EOS M50 sports 24MP of resolution, 7.4fps burst with continuous autofocus (up to 10fps with focus fixed) and a fully articulating LCD screen that has an intuitive touch interface. While we're unlikely to see any new lenses for its EF-M mount, there are enough options available to kit yourself out. The EOS M50 was also one of the first entry-level Canon cameras to support 4K video, though this

was in the heyday of the dreaded 'Canon crop'. As such, 4K is recorded with a 2.7x crop that basically makes wideangle shooting impossible. Stick to stills with this one – you can get better video elsewhere.

Canon did release an update to this camera, the EOS M50 Mark II, which is also available second-hand. However, there's quite honestly no real reason to bother with it – the Mark II still routinely costs an extra £100 and the key components are basically identical. The main additions the Mark II made were improved Eye AF, a physical video record button and YouTube livestreaming. Unless you'd be completely inconsolable without those features, the cheaper M50 will do you just fine.

All for under £1,000

Whether you're buying new, second-hand or part exchanging, it's possible to purchase high-quality kit that gives you superb shots for less than a grand - as these AP readers prove. Compiled by **Ailsa McWhinnie**



The 600mm reach of the Sigma 60-600mm F4.5-6.3 DG DN OS is ideal for both motorsport and wildlife photography

◀ **Sigma 60-600mm F4.5-6.3 DG DN OS | Sport, £814 with part exchange**

Kevin Henderson, Derbyshire

I already had an 80-400mm, but found it a bit slow and lacking in reach, so wanted a lens for extra reach at motor sports events as a spectator. I also had a trip to Skomer Island planned, and had read good things about this lens for wildlife photography, a genre I wanted to get more involved in. I am super-impressed with how good the AF is for such a large lens. Although I focused manually for the image here, the lens has no problems keeping up with fast-moving objects, whether when panning or having cars approaching head on. This paid off as it delivered some good-quality shots of puffins on a wobbly boat trip around Skomer! Being a telescopic lens, it takes up surprisingly limited space in a backpack.

Visit www.mpb.com; Instagram @K_hendersonphotography

✓ **Camp Snap camera, £52 new**
Rachel Anthony-Rowlands, Swansea

My favourite bit of new kit is the Camp Snap. It's an 8MP point-and-shoot with no screen designed for kids to take to summer camps, but the creative photography community has fallen in love with these



The screen-free Camp Snap features a black & white firmware filter

simple, screen-free cameras. I bought mine to use at an retro event that I organise, and it functions in the same manner as a disposable film camera. It is pocket-sized, and so now I carry it with me wherever I go. Camp Snap has produced two firmware filters, a black & white one and a retro filter.

Post-processing is something I find a slog, so it's fantastic to not have to do anything other than maybe a rotational crop. The thing I really love is discovering what shots I have taken. With no screen on the camera, I have to download the images to view them, which is a little bit of a thrill, as I never know how good the images are going to be. It means my creative brain gets a lovely dopamine hit every time an amazing shot turns out the way it was in my head.

Visit www.campsnapphoto.com; Instagram @touringtheuk



Size and weight were important factors for Sue when choosing a macro lens

⬆ **Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 60mm F2.8 Macro, £399 second-hand**

Sue Pankhurst, Leighton Buzzard

I love wildlife and nature photography, so I bought this lens second-hand from Wex as I was after a resilient, splashproof dedicated macro lens with a good working distance for close-ups of insects, flowers and fungi. Deciding factors were portability and value for money without compromising picture quality. Its sharpness, focusing speed and quietness are great. I'm especially impressed with the detail of subjects, the soft bokeh, the f/2.8 aperture for low light and being able to change the focus range quickly with the focus dial.

Visit www.wexphotovideo.com; Instagram @sue_ann_pankhurst



Three-time Isle of Man TT winner Dean Harrison at Knockhill Racing Circuit

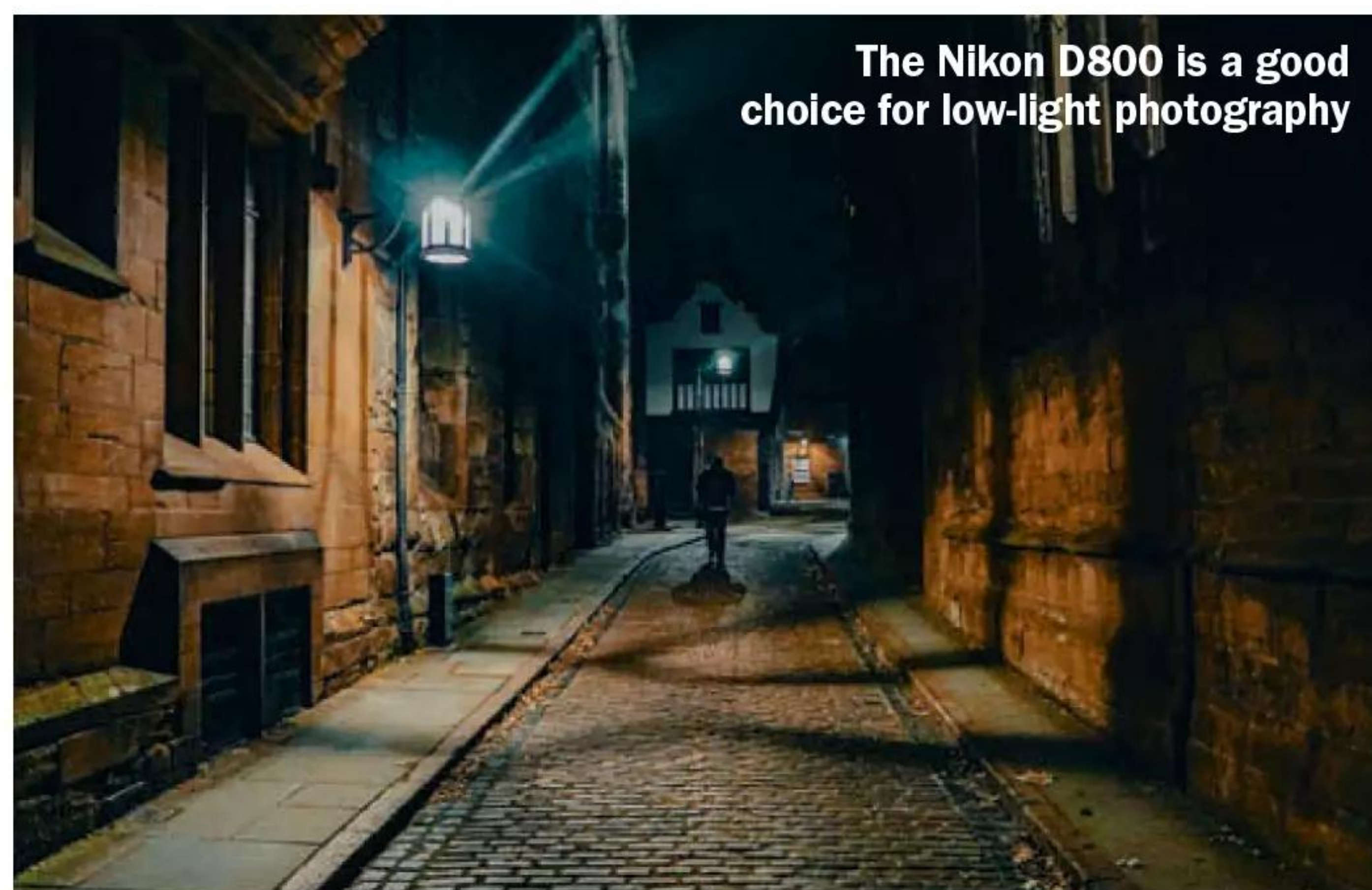
Canon EOS 2000D with kit lens, £499 new

Derek Horne, Dunfermline

I bought my Canon EOS 2000D with EF-S 18-55mm IS II kit lens from Curry's when my trusty EOS 1100D was damaged. A heavy suitcase fell on top of it and damaged the sensor, meaning it could no longer focus correctly. I have a Sigma 150-600mm F5-6.3

DG OS HSM | Contemporary lens, which I get great results with in my hobby of motorcycle racing photography, and I wanted to continue using Canon kit as I've always been very pleased with it over the years. Some of my images have been featured in an article in *Road Racing Ireland* magazine, and in the book *Knockhill: 50 Years of Racing*.

Visit www.currys.co.uk; X @degsguitar



The Nikon D800 is a good choice for low-light photography

Nikon D800 with Tokina 16-28mm lens, £700 second-hand

Neil Jason Catley, Coventry

I recently bought a Nikon D800 with a Tokina 16-28mm lens, which together cost £700 from MPB. I chose this kit because it goes with my style, which is long exposure, architecture and night-time photography. I have a huge passion for the craft, which helps with my mental health. I love the combination of this camera and lens, and going full frame has been beneficial to my photography.

Visit www.mpb.com; Instagram @_neilcatley_photo

Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark III, £568 ex-demo

Sarah Swan, Linlithgow

This image was taken on a local walk, using my OM-D E-M5 Mark III with the fantastic Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-40mm f/2.8 PRO lens. I bought my new camera (an upgrade from my previous E-M10 II) from HDEW Cameras as an ex-demo model in immaculate condition at a bargain price of £568. I love it, as it is a fantastic package of lightweight portability coupled with some amazing lens choices.

Visit www.hdewcameras.co.uk;

Instagram @thesnappyswanphotography



The ex-demo Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark III was the ideal upgrade for Sarah

➤ **Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L IS USM, £495 second-hand**

Shaun Woodward, South Yorkshire

A great, sharp and fast wideangle lens for landscape photography, which is also lightweight and great to have in the kit bag for those long hikes in the wilderness. This is probably my go-to lens, as I love taking shots of large vistas, which helps give my shots more drama and sense of adventure.

Visit www.mpb.com;

Instagram [@shaun_woodward711](https://www.instagram.com/shaun_woodward711)

✓ **Canon RF 24-105mm F4-7.1 IS STM kit lens, £480 new**

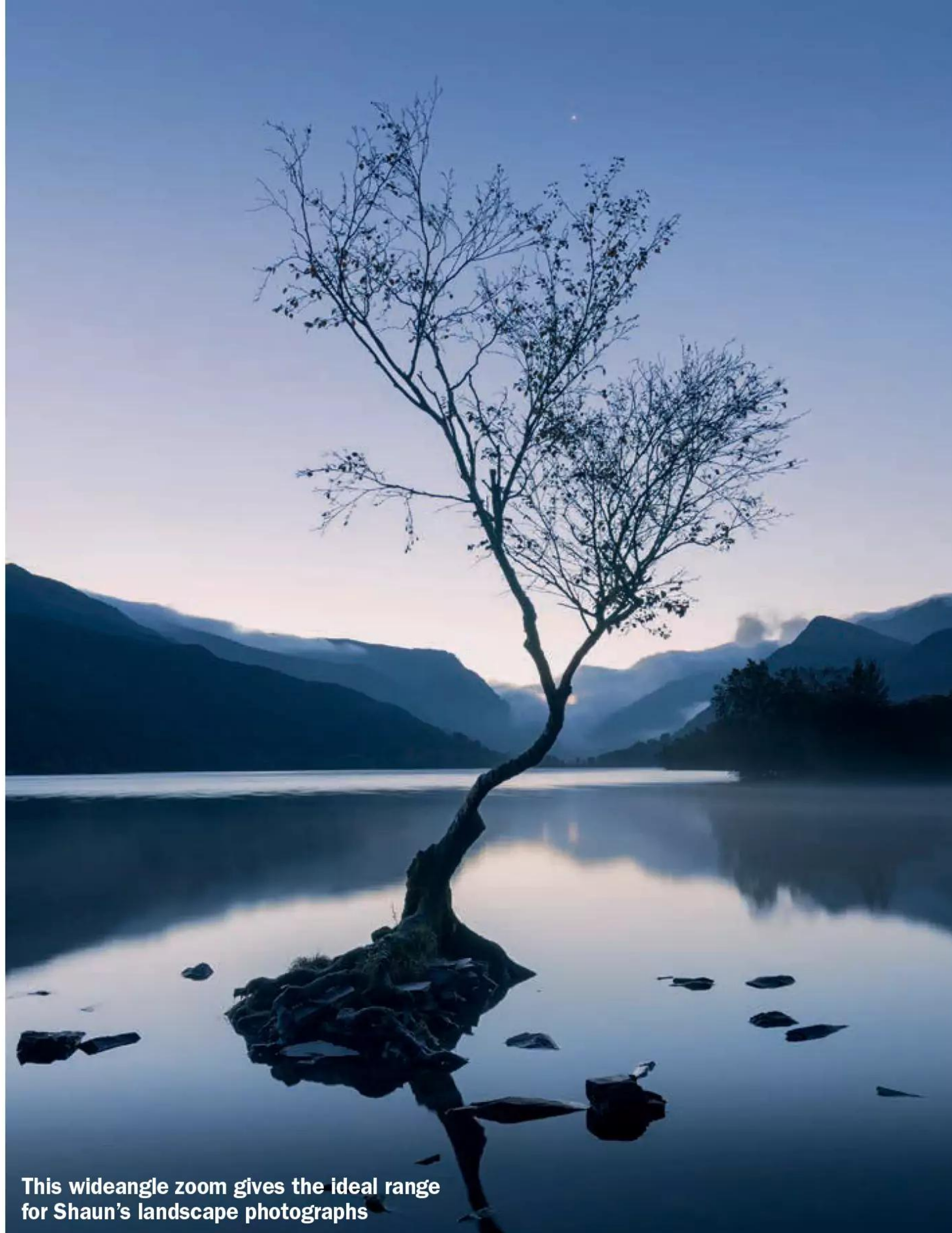
Damo Hutchinson, Haworth

I was looking for a light lens that was affordable as well as being an all-rounder for general everyday photography. The RF 24-105mm F4-7.1 IS STM seemed to be the perfect choice for taking on long walks with the dog to days out with my partner without having to carry several lenses. When paired with the Canon RP mirrorless, it's compact enough to carry in a small bag and is extremely portable for travel. For a kit lens, I'm impressed by the quality of sharpness this glass produces. I bought mine new on Very, but it can be found used for £300-350.

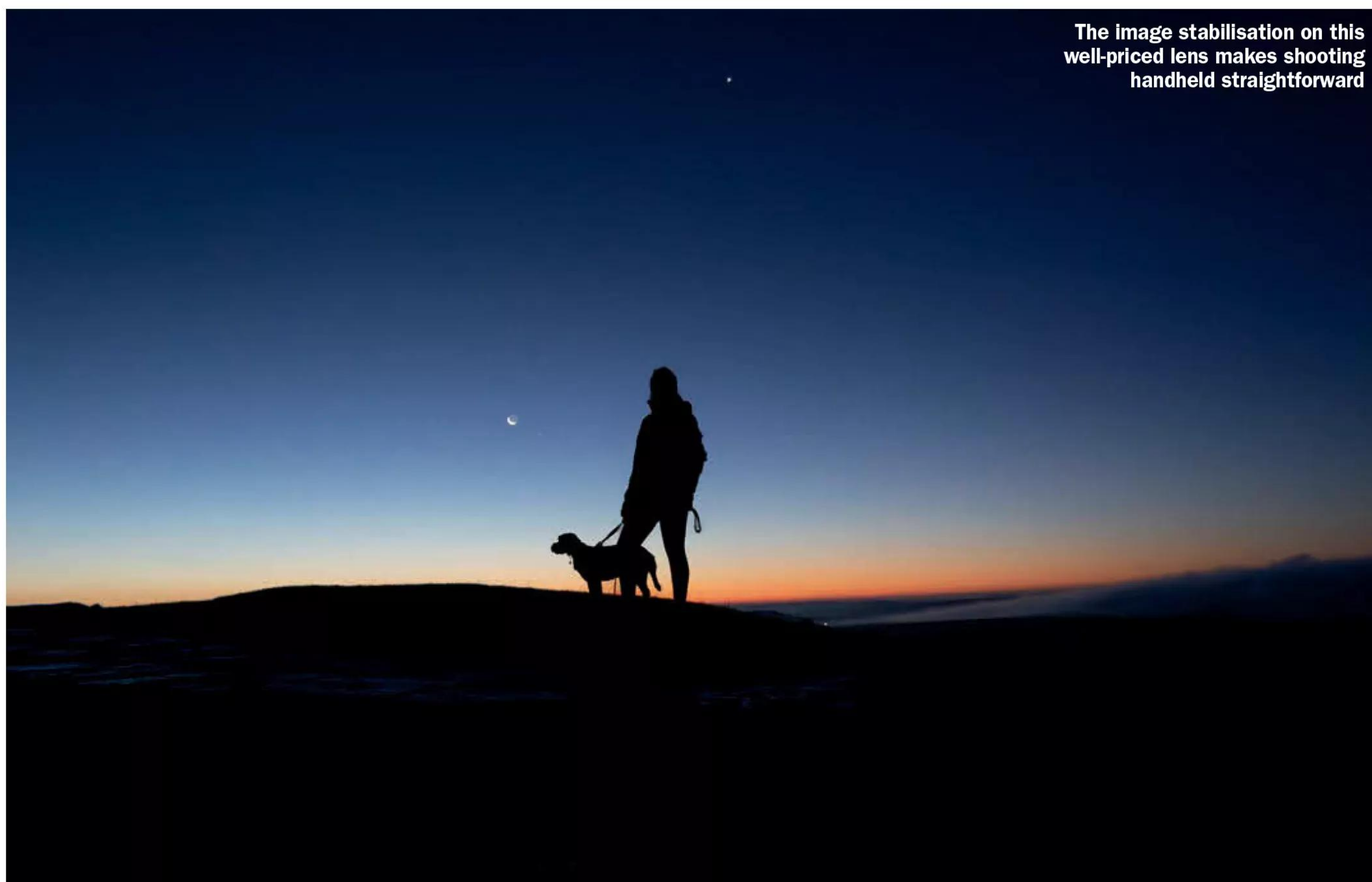
The image stabilisation is fantastic, allowing me to capture handheld shots down to around one second with steady hands and no wind, which is incredible. This photo was taken at 1/8sec handheld.

Visit www.very.co.uk;

Instagram [@damohutchinson](https://www.instagram.com/damohutchinson)



This wideangle zoom gives the ideal range for Shaun's landscape photographs



The image stabilisation on this well-priced lens makes shooting handheld straightforward



Although the Star Filters were advertised for use with streetlights, Jessica used them for a glamorous portrait shoot

JJC 52mm Variable Star Filter Set, £19.99 new

Jessica Walker, Derby

I had put my name down to attend a workshop at a local studio (Studio Luminescence in Nottingham) with the theme of iridescence and sparkle, and I wanted to see if I could achieve a really glamorous retro feel to the images where the diamantes would pop. The filters were advertised more for use with streetlights at night, but I shot in a studio using ambient light and got the look I wanted. For the price they are great. Definitely a good piece of kit when on a budget and they allowed me to achieve in camera what I would previously had to have tried to do in Photoshop. They also gave the images a nice soft-focus feel, which was a happy unexpected extra.

I am already planning another shoot with sequins and a disco ball to see what will happen when I use the filters again. The filters came in a zip-up case and individually wrapped in plastic to keep them safe which is really handy. Visit amazon.co.uk

Tamron 28-80mm f/3.5-5.6 Aspherical AF, £25 second-hand

Abi Winkle, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

The obvious reason for buying this lens from CeX was simply the price. I also wanted another lens that would give me a little more than my nifty fifty. I was going to a local gig, and I was given the privilege to photograph the rehearsals and the gig itself, so I wanted as much choice as possible. The finished images have a vintage feel to them, which I like. Although the focus wasn't very sharp within the dark conditions, I still came away with some images I'm happy with. The artist shown here is Dead Bird Lady and the gig was Honey Box Live.'

Visit uk.webuy.com; Instagram @asl_photos

Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM, £369 second-hand

Steven Farmer, Rugby

I recently started going to workshops with Birmingham photography group (birminghamphotographygroup.co.uk) as I want to learn more about portraiture and other skills. My friend invited me to the Cosplay event, and as it was the day after my birthday, I decided to treat myself to this lens and the event. Everyone was dressed in Halloween cosplays with looks such as leather face, clown and peasant girl etc.

It was interesting, not least because I fell over and damaged my 24-70mm f/2.8 lens, and although most of my gear was OK, I severely damaged my knee. (Seeing 'Leather Face' run over to help me as he was first-aid trained was pretty funny.)

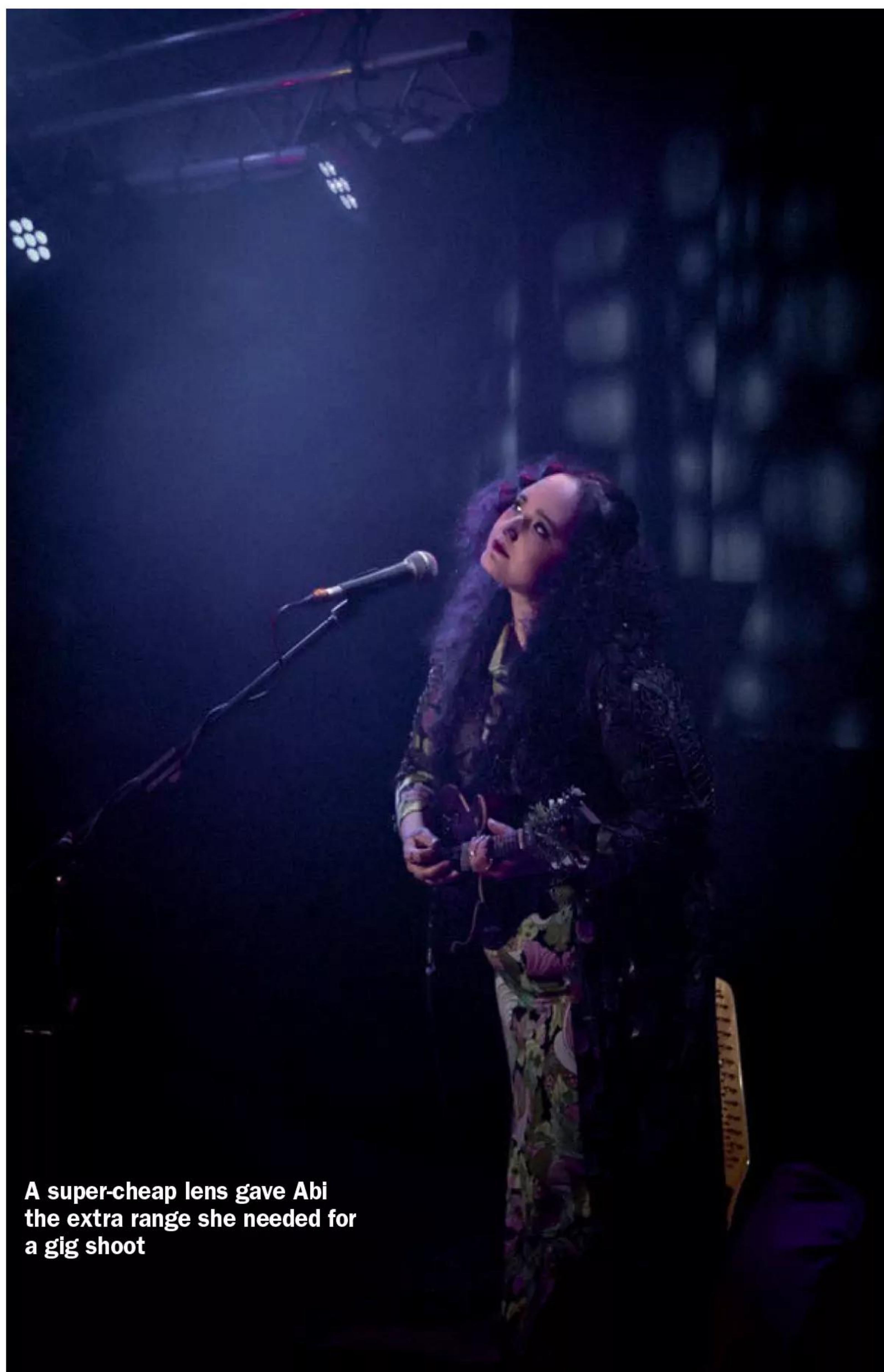
The Sigma 70-200mm is an amazing lens as it gives me so much



Steven finds the Sigma 70-200mm ideal for portraiture

separation, allowing me to shoot without distracting backgrounds/other people interfering. The lens complements my Pentax K-1 perfectly.

Visit www.mpb.com; Instagram @sjf_photography



A super-cheap lens gave Abi the extra range she needed for a gig shoot

READERS' KIT

Sabre LiDAR camera trigger, \$439/£350 new

Denny Woodthorpe, Lincolnshire

I bought a Sabre LiDAR from Cognisys-inc.com for taking flight shots of small garden birds. I chose it after trying passive infrared systems that proved difficult to set up.

The Sabre uses LiDAR, which is like radar, but uses infrared light instead of radio. Unlike a PIR detector, it is not affected by changes in light levels and it produces a narrow beam, allowing precise targeting. It can be set up with a 'window', so only objects between two chosen distances will trigger the camera. I align the beam (invisible) with the aid of a laser pointer so it is pointing just off the end of a take-off perch. The camera is on a tripod and the Sabre is attached with the included cable. When a bird takes off and flies through the beam, it triggers the camera. Waterproof and configurable, I find it ideal for capturing in-flight photos of small garden birds.

Visit cognisys-inc.com

Canon EF 85mm f/1.8 USM, £262 new

Neil Porter, Devon

I bought this Canon lens purely to document our new puppy Phoebe growing up. I had to replace my EF 135mm f/2 L USM, which I used to photograph our other golden retriever, but I sold that a few years ago and regret it!

The main reason for buying the lens was for the very fast apertures you get with prime lenses, as well as the shallow depth of field. Having the ability to blur out the background can make for some nice photos and is a look slower zoom lenses will struggle to replicate.

Cheap older primes do come with their issues, though, especially with chromatic aberration and this lens is no exception when shot wide open. Fortunately, it's an easy fix in editing software. Overall, it's lovely and sharp with nice bokeh and more importantly, cheap!

Visit www.e-infin.com/uk

Having the ability to blur backgrounds was important when it came to Neil's choice of lens



The Sabre LiDAR camera trigger works by an infrared rather than a radio signal

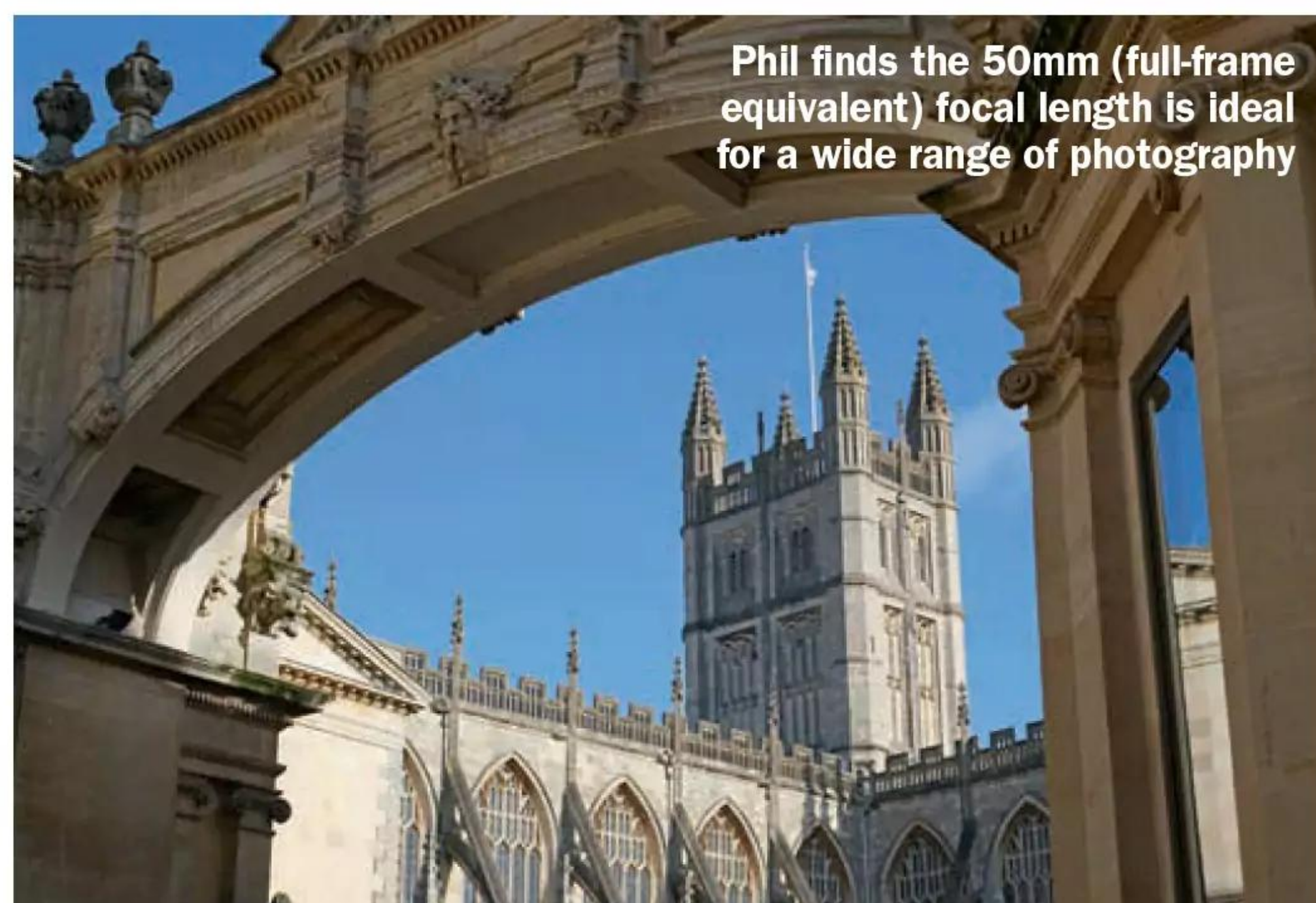
Fujinon XF33mmF1.4 R LM WR, £699 new

Phil Harding, Somerset

This is the second time I have purchased the XF33mmF1.4 R LM WR. I used to have one on a Fujifilm X-Pro3, but didn't get on so well with that camera body and traded it in, along with the lens. I regretted that decision when I got the Fujifilm X-E4 rangefinder-style camera, so ended up buying it again. The

50mm-equivalent lens is particularly well made, and produces high-quality images.

I normally shoot full frame using Sony kit, but I love the Fujifilm system too, and the compact size and form factor of their cameras and lenses. The XF33mm, which I bought from London Camera Exchange, pairs nicely with the X-E4, providing a relatively unobtrusive compact camera-and-lens combination for taking portraits of more nervous or self-



Phil finds the 50mm (full-frame equivalent) focal length is ideal for a wide range of photography

conscious subjects, like my youngest grandchildren, who find my Sony with 50mm GM lens a bit intimidating. The smaller size is handier for street and travel photography, too. Image quality holds up well compared to full-frame-equivalent lenses.

Visit www.lcegroup.co.uk; Instagram @phil_r_harding

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Fujifilm GFX100 II: the medium format ground-breaker

Class-leading autofocus, superlative image quality and highly effective noise control make the Fujifilm GFX100 II the medium format mirrorless camera that grabs attention



Above: The GFX100 II pushes beyond the usual boundaries of medium-format photography

Amid all the talk about full-frame digital photography, we seem to have lost track of the fact that 35mm (36x24mm) film used to be called 'small format,' and medium format cameras accepted exactly the same film emulsions but with much larger frames.

In 2023, a medium format mirrorless camera such as the Fujifilm GFX100 II has a sensor that measures 43.8x32.9mm – that means its sensor is around 1.7x the size of a full-frame sensor, which brings many benefits.

As the images from the GFX100 II consist of up to 11648x8736 pixels, they can make prints of just under an impressive 1 metre across (98.62x73.96cm, to be precise) at 300ppi. The camera's huge pixel count gives plenty of scope for cropping without loss of detail but it's not just about outputting images in the native 4:3 aspect ratio.

In fact, there are seven aspect ratios available in-camera, so if you want to shoot in 4:3, 3:2, 16:9, 1:1, 65:24, 5:4, or 7:6 ratio, you can. Also, in the unlikely event that you need even larger images, there's the option to create 400MP files using the 16-shot High-Resolution Multi-Shot mode. But that's not all that the GFX100 II has up its sleeve.

BSI-CMOS sensor benefits

It's not just the size and pixel count of a sensor that's

important, its design is pivotal too. The Fujifilm GFX100 II has a 102MP backside-illuminated (BSI) CMOS sensor, which means that each pixel is the largest it can be and has the maximum potential for gathering light. Lots of light means there's a strong image signal, which is great news for noise control.

In addition, Fujifilm has given the GFX100 II a base sensitivity of ISO 80, which means that the native range is ISO 80-12,800 and there are expansion settings that take the range to ISO 40-102,400. And thanks to that large sensor, noise is kept under tight control.

Medium format cameras have tended to be slow, but thanks to the modern sensor design, paired with Fujifilm's latest X Processor 5, the GFX100 II emphatically breaks out of this limitation, as it's able to shoot 102MP images at up to 8fps (frames per second). What's more, it can maintain that rate for 1,000+ JPEGs, 325 compressed raw, 302 lossless compressed raw or 76 uncompressed raw files.

Excellent AF

In addition, the Fujifilm GFX100 II has AI-based subject

Below: The huge pixel count gives plenty of scope to crop images or use one of the seven in-camera aspect ratio options without needing to worry about any loss of detail



The 102MP sensor ensures that images have an incredible amount of natural-looking detail

detection autofocusing with the same algorithms that are found in the superb APS-C format Fujifilm X-T5 and X-H2S. This means that as well as Face and Eye Detection, the camera can be set to Animal, Bird, Automobile, Motorcycle & Bike, Airplane and Train detection.

That's a first for a medium format camera and it works flawlessly, with a white box appearing around a subject to let you know it's detected before it turns green to confirm autofocus.

So the GFX100 II is very versatile. It's perfect for all the genres we traditionally associate with medium format – studio-based commercial shoots, still life, portrait and highly detailed landscape photography – but it's also suitable for more action-based photography such as fashion shoots and social photography. The Eye Detection system ensures that the most important part of the subject is sharp. It can even be used to photograph wildlife or sport, taking out a lot of the guesswork and finger-crossing associated with capturing fast-moving subjects.



Above: Modular design makes the camera feel very intuitive to use

Left: The subject detection and tracking helped nail this panning shot – not something that you'd traditionally expect with a medium format camera

Ease of use and smart design

Despite its advanced capabilities, the GFX100 II has a user-friendly design with plenty of nicely sized buttons and dials giving quick control over all the key settings. Plus, there's a large, deep grip that makes it feel secure and comfortable in your hand.

A large mode dial on the left of the camera lets you set the exposure mode while front and rear command dials control exposure adjustment. It's a familiar set-up for most photographers.

All of the key features are within easy reach, plus along with six custom settings on the mode dial, there are nine customisable buttons and it's possible to use gesture control on the screen. It means you can really make the camera your own and switch a collection of settings with just one turn of a dial.

Fujifilm has given the GFX100 II a modular design similar to its predecessor, the GFX100. For instance, the 1.0x magnification, 9.44m-dot OLED viewfinder can be removed if you don't need it. Alternatively, there's an optional adapter that allows the finder to tilt through 90° when shooting horizontal images and from -45° to +45° when shooting in portrait orientation. It means



that it's easy to find a comfortable viewing angle however you're shooting.

This viewfinder is paired with a 3.2-inch, 2.36-million-dot 3-way tilting touchscreen display (above) that can be tilted to give a clear view in either landscape or portrait orientation. It's also handy for making settings changes with a tap on the Quick Menu.

In-Body Image Stabilisation and video

We tend to associate medium format cameras with tripod-bound photography, but that's certainly not the case with the Fujifilm GFX100 II. Firstly its ergonomic build makes it extremely comfortable to use handheld, but it also has in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) that can extend the safe handholdable shutter speed range by up to 8 stops (on the 63mm lens). The IBIS is rated via CIPA standards.

The GFX100 II's video credentials are as impressive as its stills capability. For instance, it can shoot at up to 8K resolution at 30fps and there's internal 4K 60P recording from the full sensor width, in 4:2:2 10-bit colour. Furthermore, the F-Log2 profile is on hand in Dynamic Range Priority mode to deliver over 14 stops of dynamic range, and anamorphic de-squeeze is built into the camera. And that is just for starters.

The GFX100 II: breaking new ground

At low ISO settings, the GFX100 II captures a sensational amount of detail, and noise is controlled exceptionally well as you increase ISO. There's also a huge dynamic range, which makes it perfect for capturing the subtle

tones and high contrast of landscapes at sunrise.

However, it's the responsiveness, ease of use and speed of the autofocus system that really sets it apart from the competition.

Fujifilm isn't just pushing beyond the limitations of medium format photography, it's dismantling them. 



Right: Skin tones and details are faithfully reproduced while the Face and Eye Detection makes it easy to get the subject sharp

Angela VanWiemeersch, Long Canyon, Utah

By Krystle Wright

Peter Dench discovers the process behind this dramatic award-winning capture

For the first time in its 17-year history, in November 2023 on stage at the Winner Award Ceremony in Sölden, Austria, a female photographer took the grand prize at Red Bull Illume Image Quest 2023 competition, the world's largest imagery contest that celebrates adventure and action sports. Australian photographer Krystle Wright overwhelmed the 50-strong renowned judging panel with her shot of climber Angela VanWiemeersch illuminated in a crack, deep within Long Canyon, Utah, United States. It also won the Innovation by MPB category.

On a warm spring day, as Krystle drove towards Coolum Cave, a regular climbing spot not far from her home in Australia, she had a lightning-bolt moment. 'I'd been stewing on an idea for a couple of years, honestly, a very loose idea floating around my mind; it wasn't anything to do with lighting a crack, if anything it was like how to light up climbing at night in a different way. My brain was circling the idea again and then it just hit

'If her body shape disappeared into darkness, I don't think it would've worked, so we had to finesse that a little bit'

me that no one else had ever lit up a crack climb,' she explains.

Iconic location

Krystle had been visiting Moab, Utah in the USA on and off for over a decade and knew that it would provide the right destination and conditions. 'Moab is one of my special places where I feel so creative and it's absolutely a world-class climbing destination. It's an iconic red sandstone, there are few other places in the world that would match that terrain or that landscape,' she adds. She arrived to execute her idea in June 2023 with a TV documentary crew in tow via a stint filming *Storm Chasing* in the American midwest.

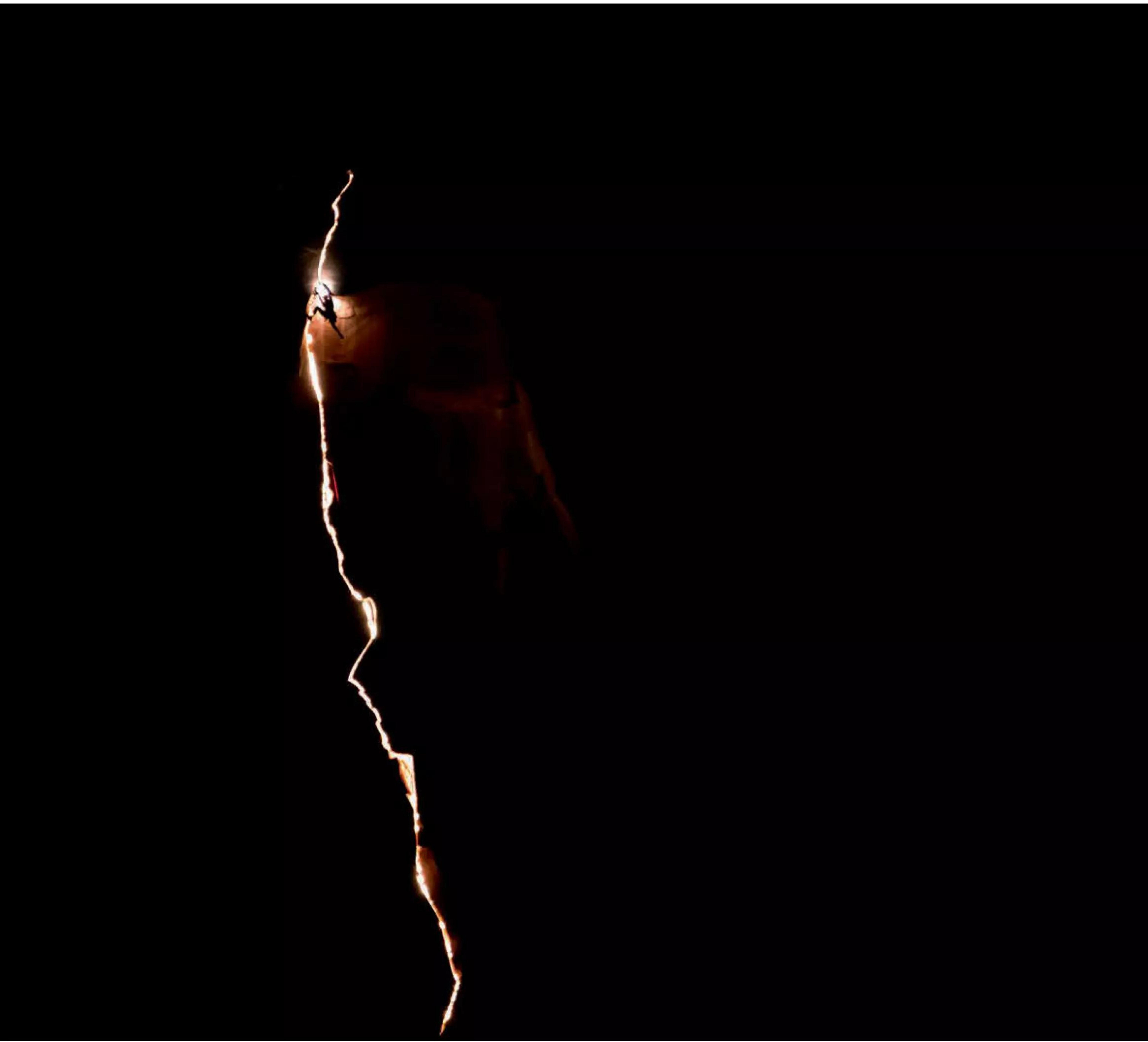
Krystle teamed up with Angela, who she had worked with before and knew well as a strong crack climber. They rigged up two trial climbs before deciding that a third, the Seventh Serpent (5.11) crack, one of the classics of Long Canyon, had the right character. Over two afternoons in 103°F heat, Krystle gaffer-taped six battery packs (that had only arrived days before) hung in dry bags, to six 5m-long LED light strips.

As darkness encroached, she retreated to a crag 200-300m across the canyon, made herself comfortable on a rock, fixed her mirrorless Leica SL2 camera to a tripod and turned the APO-Vario-Elmarit-SL 90-280 f/2.8-4 lens to a focal length of 280mm. As the crack illuminated into life, at 1/30sec, f/4, ISO 3200, she thoughtfully captured

her award-winning frame. 'It did take a bit of shooting, not a lot, maybe 50 frames, it wasn't like thousands. I don't want to shoot and pray. I don't want to shoot 20 frames a second. I've actually enjoyed the process of slowing things down. The thing I love about Leica is their colour, my gosh, I think that the colours are far superior than any other brand. Leica for me has brought the joy back into photography.'

Shouting instructions

Creating the shot wasn't exactly straightforward. The radios were faulty, so Krystle had to yell her instructions and



assurances to a dangling Angela, who was also wearing a headlamp strapped around her chest. 'I knew the light needed to spill out around her body in order to see it. If her body shape disappeared into darkness, I don't think it would've worked, so we had to finesse that a little bit.'

Post-processing the image was minimal, a tweak to the curves. Then insecurities set in. 'I shot it and didn't publish for six months. I sat on it. I started to tell myself maybe it's not that good an idea. I got a bit worried thinking what if someone else has heard of what I've done and wants to get onto this idea. I know it's silly but

I did start to fear what if someone else tries to claim this idea, so I ended up publishing it. I reached out to *Sidetracked* magazine to publish an article. They were the first ones to put it online so then I thought oh f***, if you guys have posted on Instagram I guess I'd better do it – and then it just took off.' The photograph has since become widely recognised as a unique and original idea within the profession and beyond.

Krystle's adventures are documented in the National Geographic series, *Photographer*, available to stream from 19 March on Disney+ and Hulu.



Krystle Wright



Krystle Wright is an award-winning adventure photographer, cinematographer and director from Australia. She lives a semi-nomadic

lifestyle in her quest to capture and present unique moments from extreme sports, expeditions, and adventures across the world. See more on [Instagram @krystlejwright](#)

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Leica lotta loot

I read your article on the Leica M11 by Jeremy Walker, with great interest and a slight touch of bewilderment. My understanding of 'amateur' as in the title of the magazine seemed clear – a lack of professional skill. However, your piece challenges this assumption.

The Leica M11, an epitome of photographic excellence, undoubtedly captivates the imagination. Despite my 45 years of capturing moments through my lens, the prospect of owning such a camera remains a dream due to financial constraints.

I can't help but wonder if a significant portion of your readership shares this predicament. The allure of the M11 is undeniable, yet the financial chasm feels insurmountable.



AP's field test of the Leica M11

As you cater to a diverse audience, perhaps future articles could explore options for passionate yet budget-conscious photographers, providing a bridge between aspiration and reality.
Chris Quest

Most Leica buyers are amateurs. But we cater for all budgets and as you'll see in this issue, AP has plenty for more cost-conscious shooters too. If your wallet doesn't stretch to an M11 we frequently cover lots of more-affordable alternatives.

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A Samsung 256GB PRO Ultimate SDXC memory card. The PRO Ultimate card offers read speeds of up to 200MB/s and write speeds of up to 130MB/s. Plus 6 proof technology: Water, Temperature, X-Ray, Magnet, Drop, Wearout & Shock. Limited 10-year warranty. Visit www.samsung.com/uk/memory-storage-devices/



Prints of darkness

Why is the UK photo press keeping quiet while we are getting ripped off? I remember many letters over the years where lame excuses of such things as bulk buying, size of market, local taxes etc). None of which held any water. The cost of printing is slowly but surely killing a whole branch of photography. We

all realise that advertisers have a firm grip on the jobs of photojournalists and criticism can reap retaliation. How can the UK vs USA prices be reconciled? A single cartridge for my Canon printer can cost from £16 to £28 yet the same one from B&H costs \$12 (approx £9.46). Someone needs to deal with the

elephant in the room before home printing dies out, to the detriment of photography. **Ian Douglas**

AP is not influenced by advertisers, and in fact we haven't carried any printer advertising for ages. The US/UK price disparities extend well beyond the photography world for many reasons, which we

have covered endlessly over the years. Why don't you compare the UK with the EU, where prices are much the same? For a start, US prices are exclusive of tax, whereas UK prices usually include 20% VAT. Business costs are lower and sales volumes much higher. But both UK customers and employees also have a much higher level of protection than you will get in the US. We ran a feature on saving money on home printing in 2022, and will revisit this.

It's weighing on him

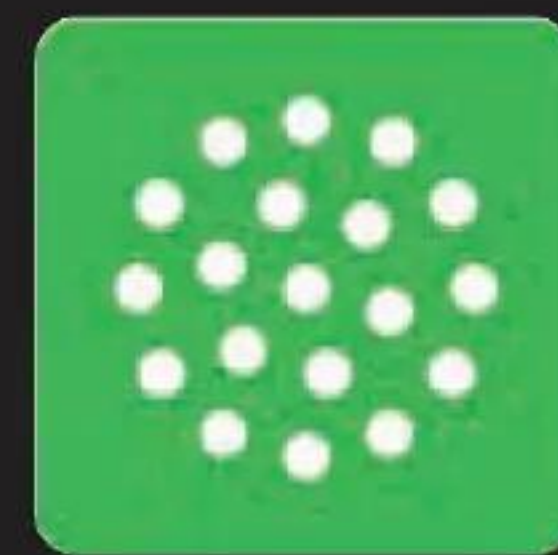
I once teased an elderly mate who'd taken to carrying a digital compact as his bad back restricted the weight of his DSLR kit. But what goes around comes around. Recently I've suffered a torn rotator cuff in my left shoulder and an (exceedingly painful) popped muscle in my right shoulder. Even after physiotherapy I'm as yet unable to raise my camera to my eye and have taken to using the articulating screen on my Lumix GH5. At waist level I can still take photos.

After 35 years of taking pictures, it will have to do until my shoulders improve. Meanwhile, my mate has kitted himself out with a tiny Olympus Four Thirds job and is snapping merrily away. Who's laughing now?
Barry Smith

We sympathise. While some mirrorless cameras can be as weighty as older DSLRs, not all are. The new OM-1 II, for example, is just 599g with battery.



The new OM-1 Mark II



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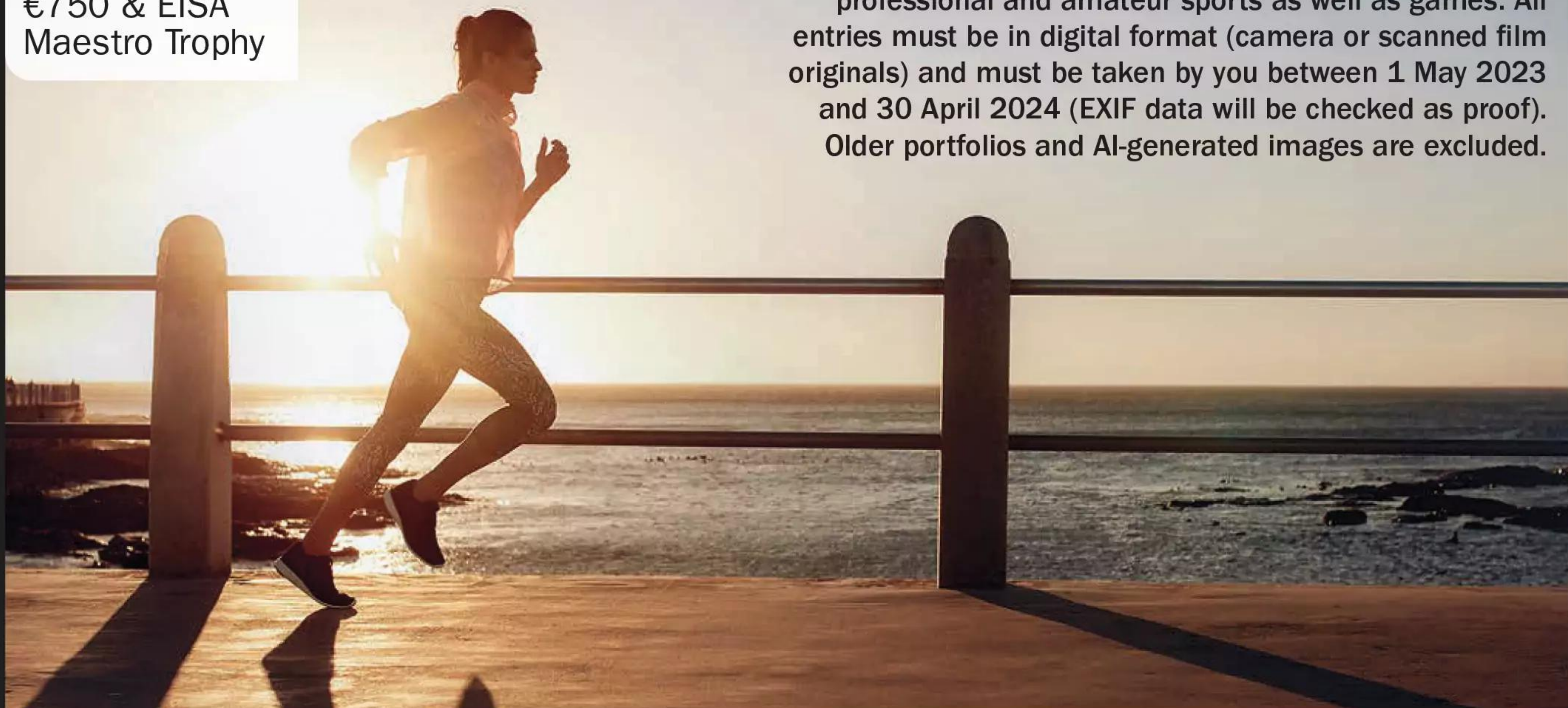
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This year's theme: Sports and Games

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Entrants should provide 5-8 photographs on the theme of 'Sports and Games'. Your subject matter may include professional and amateur sports as well as games. All entries must be in digital format (camera or scanned film originals) and must be taken by you between 1 May 2023 and 30 April 2024 (EXIF data will be checked as proof). Older portfolios and AI-generated images are excluded.



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NATIONAL DEADLINE: MAY 1ST 2024

AP is running this EISA contest in conjunction with Photocrowd. To enter your portfolio, go to bit.ly/maestrosport AP will choose the top 3 and publish them in a June or July issue. The winner will

National Maestro winners will also be published on Facebook at the end of June 2024 for the EISA Public's Choice competition. Prize for the winner: €1000.



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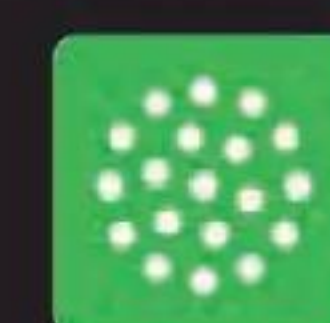
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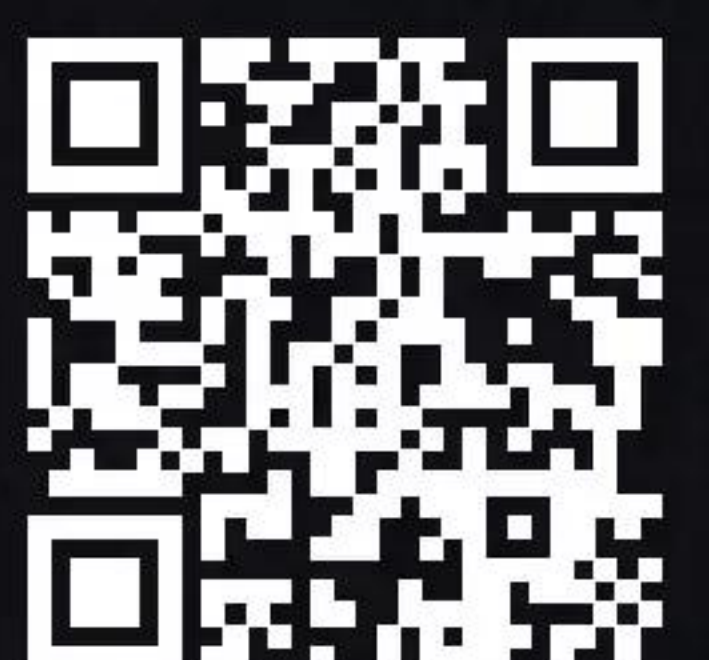
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OM System OM-1 Mark II



Andrew Fusek Peters gives his first impressions on the new OM-1 Mark II and M.Zuiko 150-600mm IS lens

explore.omsystem.com

I have in my hands the new and very versatile 150-600mm F5-6.3 and the first upgrade since the OM-1 came out two years ago – the OM-1 Mark II. The lens weighs just over 2.2kg, only 150g more than the 150-400mm, but gives an equivalent reach of 1200mm. The zoom is of the push-pull type and the various buttons can control how smooth this action is along with a useful focus limiter. My concern is not specification but performance and for that I need the OM-1 Mark II.

There is significant physical difference from the OM-1. I have sometimes found the recessed dials

quite hard to use, especially in cold weather with thin gloves. OM has responded to feedback and the dials are now rubberised. This might seem a small detail, but out in the field when I am adjusting shutter speed or exposure compensation, these 'grippier' dials make a huge difference. However, it's under the hood that counts. I head out to a good spot for waxwings, and am happy to aim at the tops of the trees, where the first native 600mm lens for Micro Four Thirds gets me in close. What happens next is a revelation. The Bird AF is sticky as superglue. The AF and AI algorithms have been put on steroids. When a

Below left: The eye of a roosting tree-creeper is beautifully detailed and sharp, even with the lens at full reach and 1/30sec shutter speed

Below right: The new AF algorithms deal with low-light situations perfectly, enabling me to catch the moment the dawn light refracts and turns blue-tit feathers into a rainbow

waxwing flies into the frame, it is instantly picked up.

As the days go by, I am aware that this 'modded' OM-1 enables me to get shots I did not think possible. The buffer is over twice as large, which means I can keep shooting in Pro Capture bursts and not be slowed down. Garden birds are a doddle and the flighty long-tailed tit comes out sharp as a pin. The eye-detect element (with Human now added into subject detection) simply does what it says on the tin. There are other new features to explore, like a superb in-built ND grad filter, but for now my bird photography has gone to another level.





Finally, I am shooting at dawn through my kitchen window. When I underexpose, bird wings refract into rainbows. The OM-1 Mark II can easily find focus in near-darkness and every shot is sharp. If you have not yet jumped on the OM train, now is the time. For my wildlife work, and seeing the results after two months, I say – go for it!

Above: The OM-1 Mark II had no problem nailing focus on this incoming waxwing

Below: Small garden birds and their tiny eyes are easily captured with the new body

As for the lens, which sits between the 100-400mm and 150-400mm in the OM System range, the reach is outstanding. In good light, it is sharp wide-open. Yet even in low light it is not an issue to pump up the ISO with the stacked sensor and it will be great for all sorts of shy and distant wildlife.

Prices

■ OM-1 Mark II
£2,199 body only

■ M.Zuiko Digital ED 150-600 F5.0-6.3 IS
£2,499 lens



Andrew Fusek Peters

Andrew is a wildlife and landscape photographer who works on commission for the National Trust. His images regularly appear in the national and specialist photographic media. His books include: *Butterfly Safari*; *Flight*; *Hill and Dale*, *My Shropshire Year*; and *Upland*. He is an OM SYSTEM Brand Ambassador.



Make the most of your camera – now!

All your photographic adventures start with the camera, so making the most of its potential will improve your images. It's as simple as that, says **Will Cheung**, and here are a few ideas to get you on the right track for 2024

Photography is not just about equipment but then where would we be without the incredible cameras at our disposal? Features such as lightning-quick frame rates, excellent image quality even at sky-high ISO speeds and super-responsive, subject-detect AF grab the headlines, but our cameras are blessed with many features that don't get the attention they deserve. We're probably all guilty of not exploiting our kit more fully, so we're going put that right in this feature.

Let's kick off with the basics and how you

carry your camera. If you use the logo-embazoned strap that came with the camera, now's the time to ditch it and consider other solutions. For instance, if you enjoy street shooting then a wrist strap or an across-the-body 'pap' strap makes sense. Straps that convert from one carrying method to another with a quick release system are a great all-round alternative, while if you need to use two cameras a dual strap is more practical. Brands to look out for include B-Grip, Black Rapid, Novo, Optech and Peak Design.

If you enjoy taking a walk around the

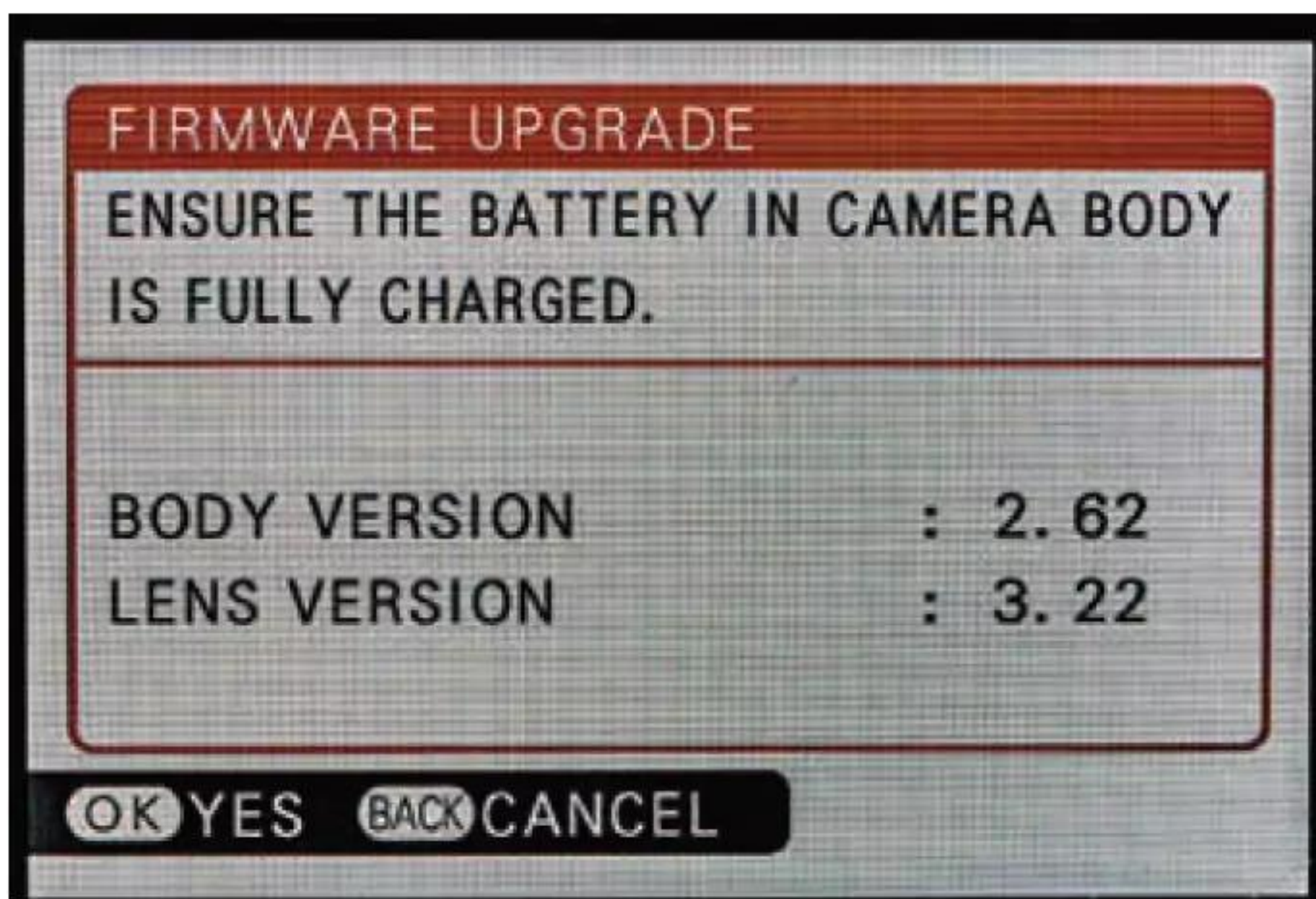


The B-Grip UNO belt holster or Peak Design Capture Clip V3 offers a different camera-carrying solution

Ensure your camera's AF skills are up to scratch by keeping it up to date. This landing dalmatian pelican was captured on a Canon EOS R5 with an RF 100-500mm lens at 324mm

Canon EOS R5, 100-500mm, 1/6000sec at f/5.6, ISO 400





© WILL CHEUNG

Keeping your kit's firmware up to date will help you get the most out of it and the process is straightforward; just make sure the battery is fully charged

local nature reserve, consider the Peak Design Capture Clip V3 (£69) or B-Grip UNO belt holster (£40) which lets you attach the camera to the backpack strap or belt where it sits securely and comfortably.

Stay up to date

How up-to-date is your camera? Many photographers follow rumour and news sites and are quick to spot a new firmware release; others are much more relaxed. Somewhere between the two is a good place to be. An update might be 'buggy' so it can pay to wait a little while in case there are issues, although this is rare. Keeping up to date means your camera will be performing at its optimum.

Firmware is the software used by cameras, lenses and lighting to help them run correctly. Updates can fix operating glitches, keep kit compatible and add new features and functionality.

To check whether your kit has an update available, do a web search or check the maker's website. Installation is often straightforward and instructions are provided. On cameras and lenses, it is usually done by loading the update onto a memory card or using the cable that came with the camera. Most camera and lens brands provide updates for macOS and Windows but sometimes they are Windows only so you might have to rely on a PC-owning friend.



One day perhaps all cameras will have an anti-dust shutter blind but currently it's a feature mostly confined to more expensive cameras such as the Canon EOS R5 shown here. It can be opened for sensor cleaning



© WILL CHEUNG

A dry clean with Dust-Aid will get rid of dust, and if needed a wet clean with a swab to match the format of your camera will remove surface gunge such as grease

Keeping it clean

Dirty sensors are part and parcel of digital imaging and at some point in your imaging career you'll tire of cloning dust spots in post, so the sensor cleaning options are to get it done by an expert or do it yourself.

Most imaging retailers including Wex, Park Cameras, Wilkinson Cameras and Jessops offer a sensor-cleaning service with a typical cost in the £35-60 range depending on sensor size and required turnaround time.

For the brave of heart, there are plenty of devices, swabs, tools and liquids for sensor cleaning. Although the prospect of DIY sensor cleaning is daunting it is simple enough, but it is absolutely crucial that you only use kit and liquids designed specifically for the purpose and that you strictly adhere to the instructions.

You may be lucky enough to own a camera

with a really effective sensor-cleaning system or you shoot only at wide apertures (small apertures tend to show up sensor nasties more).

Most sensors have some form of integrated cleaning mechanism, and while none are 100% effective, some are more effective than others. A shout-out here for OM System (formerly Olympus) for its Super Sonic Wave Filter which is the best around.

A recent and welcome innovation is the fitting of an anti-dust protection blind which prevents airborne nasties entering the sensor area during lens changing. The Canon EOS R was the first to have it and it's now featured on Nikon (Z 8 and Z 9), Sony (A1, A7R V, A7 VI and A9 III) as well as other Canon models (EOS R5, R6, R6 Mark II, R3 and R7).



A selection of sensor-cleaning products available from PhotoTEQ, see phototeq.com

Creative lens options

Canon EOS RF and Nikon Z users can enjoy their SLR lenses with no loss of functionality via adapters, but there's a plethora of mount adapters available so that almost any legacy lens can be used on mirrorless cameras. This camera type has thinner bodies than SLRs so you can fit and enjoy infinity focus with non-native lenses. It is true that SLRs can accept different mount lenses, but options are limited and few camera/lens combinations allow infinity focus. That's not the case with mirrorless and, you'll get a full – manual – focusing range, and some adapters give aperture control and have communication pins to record EXIF data. Advanced adapters have built-in ND filters, optics to alter lens speed and some even have a tilt mechanism.

There are many adapter suppliers including K&F, Fotodiox, Laowa, Neewer and Urth, with prices starting from £15 for the most basic adapters with £40-60 being more typical, depending on the mount and the features.

If you have a lens or two from your old film camera sitting around, taking the adapter route will give them a new lease of life. You may have a prime lens with a faster maximum aperture than your zooms, so there's a practical benefit – but there's a potential pictorial plus too. Old lenses weren't designed for use on high-resolution digital cameras so they might not be critically sharp and may also suffer from optical aberrations that will give your shots individual character.

If you invest in an adapter, remember to set the camera to allow shutter release without a lens attached.

If you have a yen for creativity, check out the offerings from Lensbaby. Its Soft Focus UK Collection costs £379 and includes all you need to produce Impressionistic images, while the Composer Pro II at £369 allows creative focusing techniques.

Another fun, creative option is digital pinhole photography. Make a tiny hole in a piece of aluminium foil, drill a bigger hole in the centre of a body cap and tape the pierced foil to the sensor side. For precision laser cut pinholes (€6 each or €20 for five) check out RealitySoSubtle, see realitysosubtle.fr/custom-cameras/laser-drilled-pinholes/



Left: A Nikon manual-focus 35mm f/2 mounted on a Canon EOS R5 using an Urth adapter (£59) which allows aperture control

Below: Have fun and exploit creative soft focusing with the LensBaby Composer which can be tilted to fine-tune the effect

Bottom: Mirrorless cameras and adapters can turn in eye-catching results. Here a Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8 was used on a Fujifilm GFX 50R, giving a cool result with serious vignetting



Lenses for all

The new year may have you looking to expand your existing lens armoury, but it is an expensive business. Buying used kit is worth exploring so check out dealers such as MPB, Mifsuds or try Usedlens.co.uk, a new free search engine that works with well-known retailers to help you find your dream lens.

Or expand your potential with accessories. Close-up lenses and extension tubes let you explore the world intimately while if you enjoy distant subjects such as birds, and need more pulling power, a teleconverter could do the trick.

Independent brands such as Samyang, Sigma and Tamron can save you cash and offer high-performing products; Canon EOS RF is the only system not currently supported by third-party AF options.

Most of us rely on autofocus; but don't rule out manual-focus lenses. Brands such as 7Artisans, Meike, Mitakon, TtArtisans and AstrHori can be cost-effective and for those with deeper pockets and looking for better performance, Irix, Voigtlander and Zeiss are names to look at.

It's early in the year but you may already be looking forward to a big photo trip. Perhaps you have a birding tour or safari booked and thinking that a fast-aperture telephoto is what you need to make the most of the opportunities, but they don't come cheap. The sensible, most logical option is hire. Two respected hire specialists renowned for their range of stock and quality service are Hirecamera (www.hirecamera.com) and Lenses for Hire (www.lensesforhire.co.uk). With exotic lenses where stock might be limited, it pays to check availability and book them early.

We should finish with a reminder to check over your lenses and make sure the front and rear elements are clean, and

A new Canon RF 600mm f/4 L IS USM is a beautiful optic but costs an eye-watering £14,179; a seven-day hire from Hire a Camera is just £328



Taking the third-party option can get you a lens with character. This portrait was captured using a Mitakon 65mm f/1.4 (around £600) on a Fujifilm GFX 50R. At f/1.4 there's a very shallow depth of field and it vignettes; it's fabulous for portraits and scenics

only use kit designed for the purpose to keep them in pristine condition. While you are at it, give the camera and lens communication pins a wipe too and also check that the lens diaphragm is closing down correctly. Do this by setting each value and releasing the shutter while viewing the lens from the front.

While the odd speck of dust on an internal element is not a concern, a service might be in order if you see any signs of mould or bigger pieces of debris. The same applies if any lens control is sticky or feels 'gritty' which might be due to sand getting into the works.

Finally, if you gently shake the lens and notice that it has a low pitch 'rattle' this is probably due to its image stabiliser so nothing to be concerned about.

Go unworldly with infrared

Digital camera sensors are overlaid with a filter to avoid false colours that infrared radiation can cause. A notable exception is Sigma and most of its cameras have a removable IR-cut filter.

So, to capture weird and wonderful infrared effects with a typical digital camera you'll need an infrared-transmitting filter, which are visually opaque, and a tripod for the long exposures needed to record any infrared that sneaks past the IR-cut filter.

Filter options include: SRB Photo IR720 at £32.95; the Hoya R72 filter at £149; and the B+W 093 Black Red infrared filter at £130; quoted prices are for 77mm fit filters.

The other option is to have a camera professionally converted but you need a 'spare' camera or have the budget to invest in a used camera for the purpose. A conversion means the IR-cut filter covering the sensor is removed and replaced with an IR transmitting filter; different wavelength options are available depending on what sort of result you want.

The downside of going for a conversion is it's permanent so you can't switch from IR to normal photography and there's a cost, starting from around £170 depending on the camera format and filter.

However, an IR conversion has serious upsides. You can enjoy the full use of the camera's features and, most importantly, shoot handheld without any filter on the lens.

Two tips: some lenses can produce a hot-spot that's nigh-on impossible – or takes a lot of patience – to remove in post, so check online how they'll fare for IR shooting. And watch out for flare when shooting anywhere towards the sun. A hood won't help and flare spots are only avoided by using your hand or a piece of card to shield the lens front.

Here are three UK businesses offering IR conversions. Check out their websites for advice on which conversion to go for as well as shooting and editing techniques.



Blue skies coming out almost black, light-toned foliage and dark water are characteristics of mono infrared pictures. This was shot on a converted Canon EOS 10D with the raw file processed in Adobe Lightroom

Aim high

Electronic shutters have more benefits than being silent. Namely, super-rapid burst shooting, pre-shot capture, high resolution shot modes and focus bracketing/stacking.

Many cameras can capture full size raw files at 20 or 30fps, which is incredible; the OM System OM-1 can shoot full raws at 120fps. To exploit such speeds you need the fastest memory you can afford, and manage the buffer by not shooting sustained bursts.

However, if you are waiting for something to happen you can still miss the shot. This is where pre-shot shooting comes in. The camera takes pictures for as long as the shutter button is partially held down, but these are not written to the memory card and just held temporarily in the buffer. Only when the shutter button is fully depressed are the images from the past 0.5sec or 1sec recorded to the memory card. So, if you are waiting for a bird or insect to take off, then frame up, keep your finger on the button and as soon as it departs, press the button.

If you own a camera with high resolution shot mode, give it a try with the right scene, which means it needs to be totally static, so no flowing water or wind-blown trees although you will get away with moving clouds.

High resolution shot modes take a number of consecutive pictures – 4, 8, 16 or 32 shots – with the camera using its image stabiliser to move the image sensor by half a pixel between each shot. Depending on the camera, the images are merged internally to give a much higher resolution file, or files are recorded to card as normal and merging is performed in post.

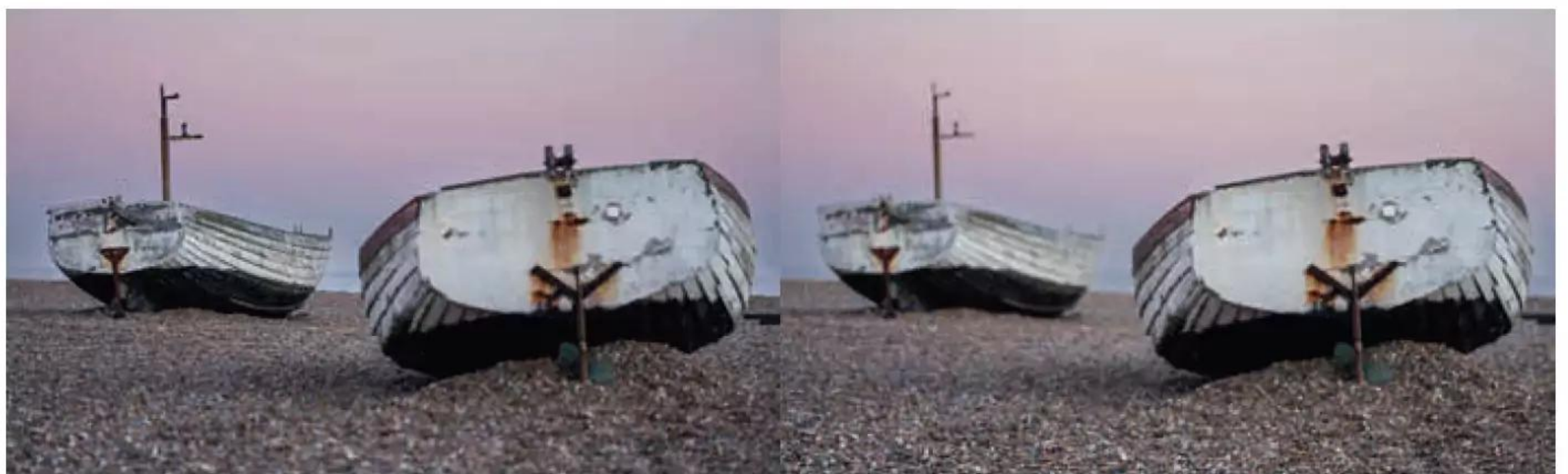
Having a higher-resolution, more detailed image means you can output a much larger print and there is a gain in image quality with less noise and greater colour accuracy. The Panasonic Lumix G9 II, for example, has a 25.2MP resolution but high res mode gives 100MP files, and it works even with handheld shooting. The 20MP OM System OM-1 has both handheld and tripod high res shot modes giving 50MP and 80MP files respectively. The best method is to use a tripod to keep the camera rock steady.

Focus bracketing is also best done on a tripod but handheld shooting is possible. This mode means the camera will shoot a number of frames with the focus adjusted, usually from near to far, very slightly between each shot. The number of frames and the focus adjustment between each shot is set by the photographer.

For a landscape where you want extreme depth of field, a two or three focus bracket



© WILL CHEUNG

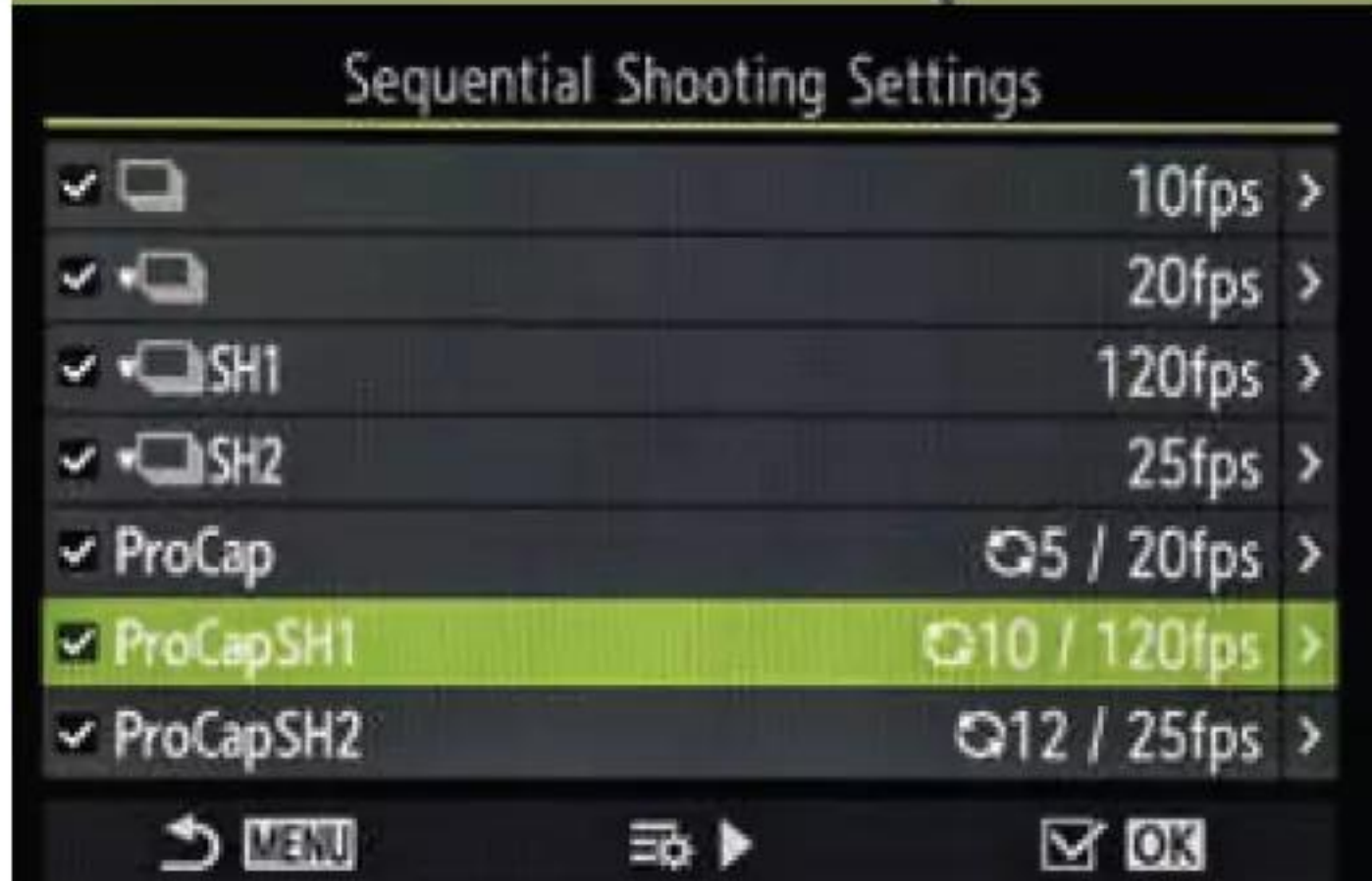


Using a 120mm f/4 telephoto lens at f/4 on a medium-format Fujifilm GFX 50R, with the two boats some metres apart, a focus bracket of 46 frames was needed to get the whole scene sharp



© WILL CHEUNG

Focus bracketing is getting more common, while in-camera focus stacking is still comparatively rare and the best implementation of it so far is in OM Systems/Olympus Micro Four Thirds cameras. It'll take up to 15 shots (raw or JPEG) and give a stacked JPEG with all the original files kept for later editing

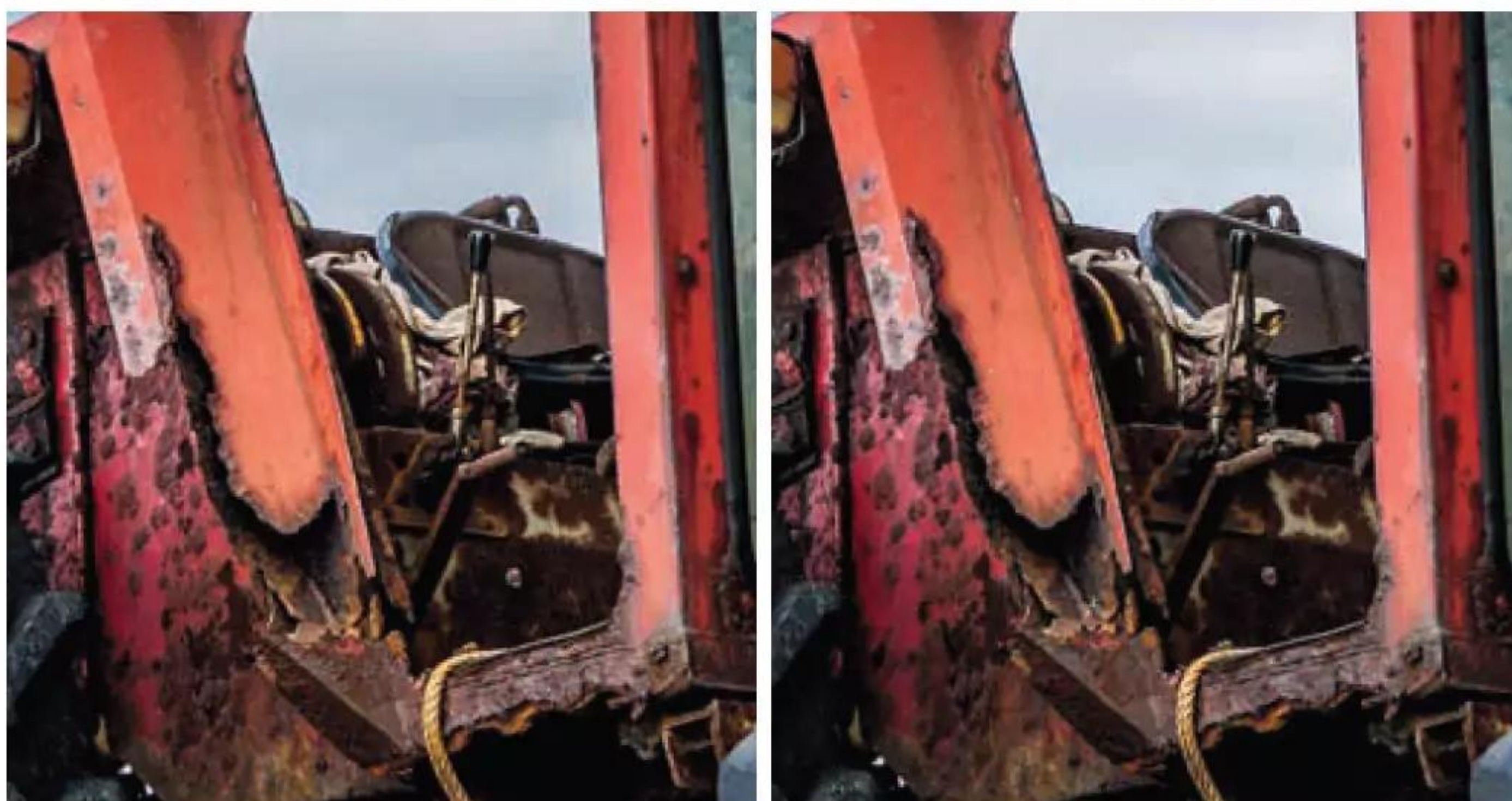


The ability to 'take' pictures without recording them is the benefit of the pre-shot feature. This sequence of a four-spotted chaser lifting off was taken with an OM-1, 40-150mm f/2.8 and 1.4x teleconverter in Pro Capture mode

with a significant focus shift between each shot and an aperture of f/8 or f/11 will work. For macro, you could set more frames, shoot at f/2.8 for total sharpness in the subject while keeping the background blurred.

Focus bracketed shots need to be merged in software; and Adobe Photoshop and Affinity Photo can merge bracketed images, the latter having a focus merge command.

A few cameras go further and have in-body focus stacking, ie, the Canon EOS R7, several OM System/Olympus and Panasonic cameras. OM System/Olympus has the best implementation of the feature so far. On the OM-1 you can take up to 15 raws/JPEGs, the files merged in-camera to give a stacked JPEG and the raws/JPEGs retained for stacking in post.



A high res shot or pixel shift shot mode will take a number of shots to produce a much bigger and higher-quality file. Here, Panasonic Lumix S1's native 24-megapixel resolution becomes 96 megapixels with multi-shot mode

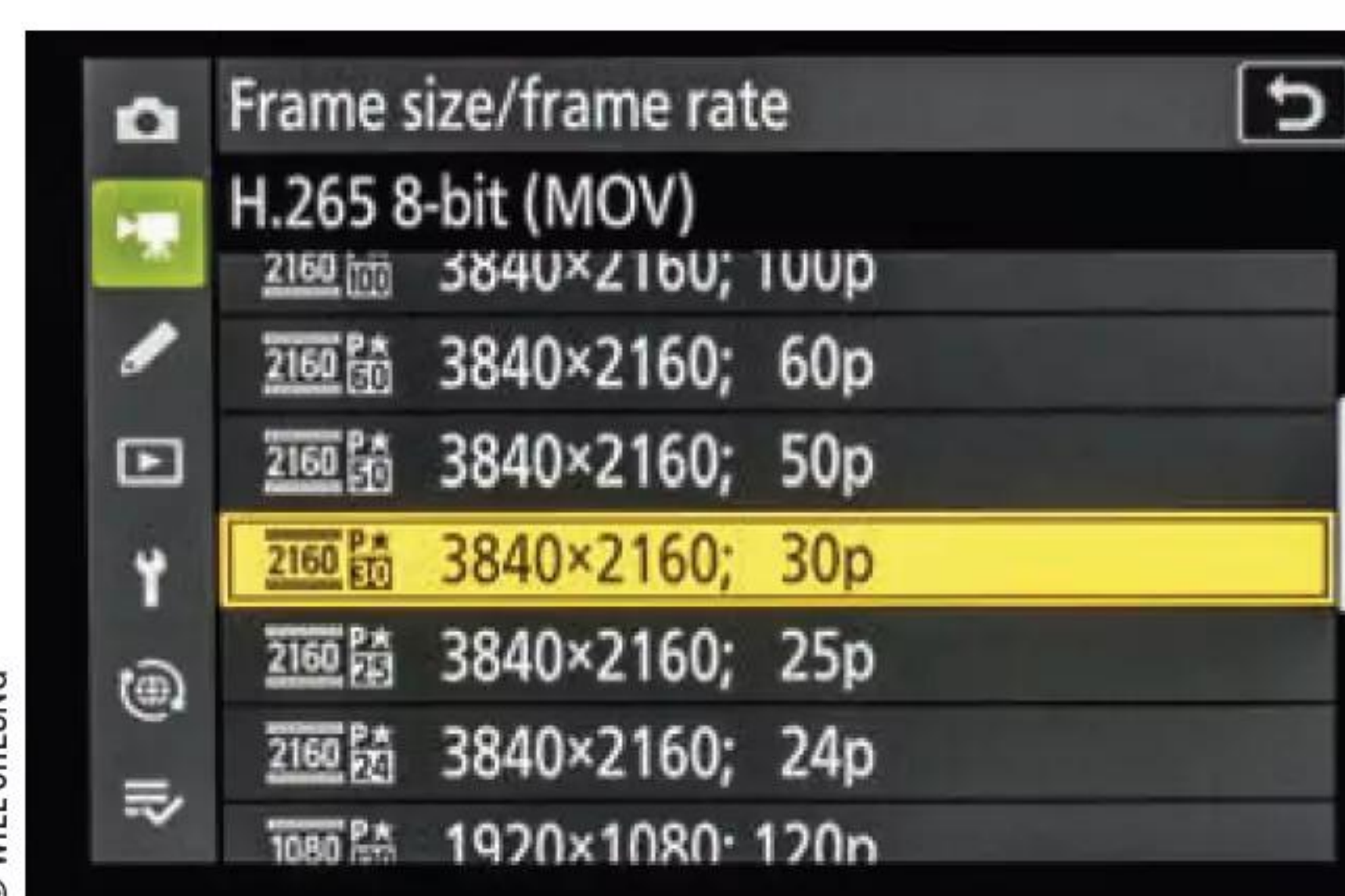
Moving pictures

You've probably noticed that virtually every new digital camera can shoot video and many are marketed as 'hybrids'. Whether the medium appeals to you is another matter, but the fact remains that if you hit the record button your camera will record high-quality video. Many cameras offer 4K and for those creators who feel they need even more video resolution, top-end models such as the Canon EOS 5, Fujifilm X-H2, Nikon Z 8 and Sony A1 are 8K capable. But consider this: shoot 8K/30p video and you're recording 30 33MP images every single second; so you'll need lots of memory.

Honestly, though, unless you've serious video ambitions, such high resolutions, the ability to output raw video formats and record to an external hard drive are overkill.

To start off, set the camera up to record 4K, or use Full HD which will be even easier to work with, consumes less memory and offers more shooting rates. For general shooting, shoot at 4K/24p or 4K/30p and for convenience let the camera look after exposure and use auto ISO. The ideal is manual mode with a shutter speed which is double the frame rate, ie 4K/30p means 1/60sec but in bright light you'll soon run out of apertures so you'll need a variable neutral density filter. See, it gets more involved very quickly.

If the video bug bites, you'll need to edit your footage. As with stills, there's a lot of choice out there. Check out Corel VideoStudio, CyberLink Power Director and Wondershare Filmora; iMovie is free if you own a Mac; and DaVinci Resolve 18, an excellent pro-level software for Windows, Mac and Linux. It's an absolute bargain (it's free) and downloadable from www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve



Top-end cameras – the menu shown here is from the Nikon Z 8 – offer serious options when it comes to video output, making them great buys for content creators



If your interest in video deepens, invest in a decent on-camera microphone, such as the Rode VideoMic GO II (£89)



Retailers such as Park Cameras are usually happy to buy in quality, sought-after cameras, without the potential hassle of eBay

© PARK CAMERAS

Get the best price for used kit

The market for used cameras remains buoyant, so how do you get the best price when you sell on your kit or part exchange? **Geoff Harris** shares some tips from top retailers

The market for second-hand cameras continues to grow steadily and it's not hard to understand why. The past few years have seen a cost of living crisis and as photographers, our spending power is being squeezed as never before. Another factor is the quality of cameras and lenses released over the past decade: few

genuinely 'bad' cameras have been released in the past few years. Let's start at the beginning. Many specialist retailers will give you an initial free quote before you send in the gear for inspection. While it can be tempting to describe the condition as better than it actually is, in the hope that they'll be too busy to check and will just cough up, the reality is that

you'll be fooling nobody. All equipment submitted for potential purchase or part exchange will be rigorously gone over by a specialist team, so check over what the definition of 'as new' actually means for that particular retailer.

'When people log on to our site and request a quote, we always ask that they are as clear as possible in terms of condition,' explains Jason Mitchell, from CameraWorld. 'Sometimes people overstate the condition – for example we use the term "as new". This means that the item has either never been used or has barely been used, is complete with box and supplied accessories in a condition you would not differentiate from new. We often

get gear that has clearly been used and has marks etc, or no box. In these cases, we must reduce the price offered.' This is backed up by Adrian Deary from London Camera Exchange (LCE). 'We thoroughly check the equipment so we can confidently offer a warranty and reassure the customer buying our used equipment. We check the shutter count, the condition of the sensor and that all the buttons and operations are functioning as they should.'

Mould is a killer

As well as obvious major problems, such as faulty camera electronics or scratched

sensors, all the retailers we spoke to also agreed that mould or fungus inside a lens makes it very difficult to accept it for purchase or part exchange. 'We're rather strict about mould and we will never intentionally re-sell any camera or lens showing any sign of mould growth,' says Andy Lorton of MPB. 'It's usually caused by moisture entering the internal elements, often due to broken weather-sealing or improper storage. Our product specialist teams are very good at spotting these signs.' As CameraWorld's Jason Mitchell explains, just leaving your equipment unattended for a long time can leave it

© MPB

Do your absolute best to avoid mould in your lenses, as it can be a deal-breaker



© CARMARTHEN CAMERAS

Do your research in case you might need to do a bit of haggling, says Sean Kirkhouse of Carmarthen Cameras

vulnerable to mould, so it's worth keeping an eye on any lens you've stored for a while. 'We are often presented with items that suffer from fungus, as this can be caused when they are kept in, for example, a loft where air circulation is minimal, as well as not being used regularly. Even gear left for long periods in drawers can suffer. If the condition as a result is poor, the item is unsaleable unless a clean can be completed. In many cases, fungus can't be treated.'

Don't despair if there is a small amount of mould, however. According to Becky Danese from Grays of Westminster: 'Very small amounts of fungus can be cleaned if caught early, but if a lens has been sitting in a cupboard for a prolonged period of time without attention, that mould eats into the coatings of the glass and the only way to salvage it is to replace optics.'

Insider advice

When browsing dealer sites or eBay listings, you will often see a camera's shutter count mentioned. We wondered how much of an issue this really is for people wanting to sell on their cameras – is it basically like car mileage, ie, the lower the better, or does it depend on the camera?

'As shutter count refers to the number of times the physical shutter mechanism opens and closes – to expose and cover the sensor – it's only really relevant when you're talking about DSLR camera bodies,' explains MPB's Andy Lorton. 'Mirrorless cameras, on the other hand, don't always have a physical shutter mechanism and aren't moving mirrors up and down. Shutter count doesn't really affect the image quality created by a DSLR, but



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All reputable dealers undertake a thorough check before confirming an offer



© MPB

▶ it does give an indication of how much a DSLR has been used in the past.' At MPB, a DSLR's shutter count doesn't affect its condition rating, however. 'Instead, we pay our customers a higher price for a low shutter count, and a lower price for a high shutter count. So, there's no need to worry about shutter count when you get a quote and provide the estimated condition. When we inspect your kit, we'll just let you know if your quote needs to be adjusted.'

To put this in technological context, with DSLRs every press of the shutter button means the mirror flips up, the shutter opens and closes, then the mirror drops down. So there is a lot of potential for mechanical wear and tear. With mirrorless cameras, it might just be the electronic first-curtain shutter, then the mechanical shutter ends the exposure.

CameraWorld pays very particular attention to shutter count. 'The shutter count is the same as mileage on a car, and in all cases can seriously affect its value,' says Jason Mitchell. 'We make offers based on average use for the age of the item and the shutter count that is expected with average use. For high shutter counts, this can reduce the price by 50% or in some cases make it unsaleable.' For Grays of Westminster too, shutter count remains a good yardstick of how hard a life a camera's had, with some caveats. 'We've seen beautiful cameras that have done hundreds of thousands of actuations, and beaten-up bodies with next to nothing on them, so obviously it is a little bit of a case-by-case scenario, but the quickest way to tell if a camera has been well-used is by its actuation count,' says Becky Danese. 'This is one of the biggest factors we take into

account when giving an estimate on a camera before seeing it.'

Moving, on, you shouldn't be afraid to negotiate either, or consider a variety of options, as Sean Kirkhouse from Carmarthen Cameras explains. 'Be polite but assertive, and try to engage in a conversation about the value of your gear. If you've done your research, you'll be better equipped to make a compelling case for a higher trade-in value. Also, consider alternatives. Compare the trade-in offer with other options, such as selling your equipment independently or using other trade-in programs. Sometimes, selling directly to a buyer may yield a higher return, but it comes with its own set of challenges. In addition, be open to the idea of receiving store credit instead of cash. And we sometimes offer higher trade-in values if you accept store credit.'

Regularly checking the retailer's website can be profitable, too, Sean adds. 'Keep an eye on promotions or special events that

the retailer might have. Sometimes we offer bonus trade-in values during specific periods, which can help you get more for your equipment.'

Boxes and caps

Have you damaged or mislaid your camera's original box, or some of the accessories such as lens or body caps? It's not ideal, but might not be the end of the world. 'When people sell to MPB, we always encourage them to include batteries, chargers, straps and any other accessories that originally came with the item, as well as the original manufacturer's box,' says the company's Andy Lorton. 'If there's anything missing, we may need to lower the quote – this is so that the person who buys the item can get a fair price based on what is in the box. But we don't reduce quotes any more than necessary.'

Becky Danese from Grays of Westminster goes into more detail about the company's policy towards lenses. 'They should always come with front and rear caps, and wherever possible the original lens hood and pouch too (if supplied when new). Because of that, if an item of equipment comes without accessories and we are required to replace these to sell the item on, then yes, we would make adjustments to the buying prices accordingly.'

Package your gear carefully

Never scrimp and save on packaging when you are sending in your used gear. 'When sending items via courier, ensure you package it well to ensure it arrives safely and doesn't get damaged in transit,' urges Andy Steel of Park Cameras. 'You'd also be amazed what some people use to protect their gear!' Carmarthen Cameras also recommends keeping records of your kit's serial numbers and taking clear photos of your gear before trading it in. 'This documentation can be helpful in case of any disputes or discrepancies.'

AP

It sounds obvious, but you must pack your camera as carefully as possible before sending it in



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Used item

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 Sony FE 200-600mm f5.6-6.3 G OSS Lens
 Sony A7 III Body
 Canon EF 100-400mm f4.5-5.6L IS II USM Lens
 Nikon D500 Body
 Nikon 200-500mm f5.6E ED VR AF-S Lens

Condition

9 Excellent
 9+ Like New
 9+ Like New
 9 Excellent
 9 Excellent
 9+ Like New

Price**

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 £1,260
 £1,189
 £1,033
 £897
 £746

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Claire Gillo

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Coloured cellophane attached to flashguns are a great and cheap way to inject a bit of colour and atmosphere into your images

Top 10 DIY photography hacks

Claire Gillo shares her tricks of the trade so you can get professional-looking images on a tight budget!

We all know that photography equipment costs a fortune (especially the top-end brands), however the good news is not all of it is necessary!

To try our photography DIY hacks, the only bit of expensive kit you'll need is a camera and a lens. The rest of your 'kit' can be found around the home or bought at a budget price. For some of our DIY hacks you may need an external light source, but once again if you don't have an external flashgun or fancy studio lights you can find an alternative budget solution such as a halogen flood light or a household lamp. Remember as well that to save yourself money, look at the second-hand market no matter what you are buying, because not only is this better environmentally (big win!) it will also save you some pounds.

In this feature we have it all covered, from budget background options to household lighting modifiers, so you can take professional-looking images without forking out the big bucks. It's all about thinking smart and taking the time to put your accessories together.

ALL IMAGES © CLAIRE GILLO

Hack 1: Cheap lighting gels

Gel lighting is when you alter the colour of the light source to create a moody and alternative effect. The trick when using colour gels is to use two complementary colours that enhance each other. For example, on the colour wheel choose opposing colours – ie a cool and a warm tone – as these will complement each other. Blue and red work well together, or yellow and purple.

To create your own colour gels all you need is cellophane (we purchased small square pieces from Amazon for £2.79). To attach to our light we got a hair band to secure it in place. Note that we could do this safely because the output heat of our flashgun is low. If you are using a light source with a hot bulb, do not tape anything over it as it's a fire risk. LED lights or flash are best here, as they stay cool. Alternatively if you don't have a flashgun use a torch and secure coloured cellophane over it. Torch light isn't that powerful so it's best used for small object set-ups where your camera is on a tripod.





Small square pieces of cellophane are a cheap alternative to gels

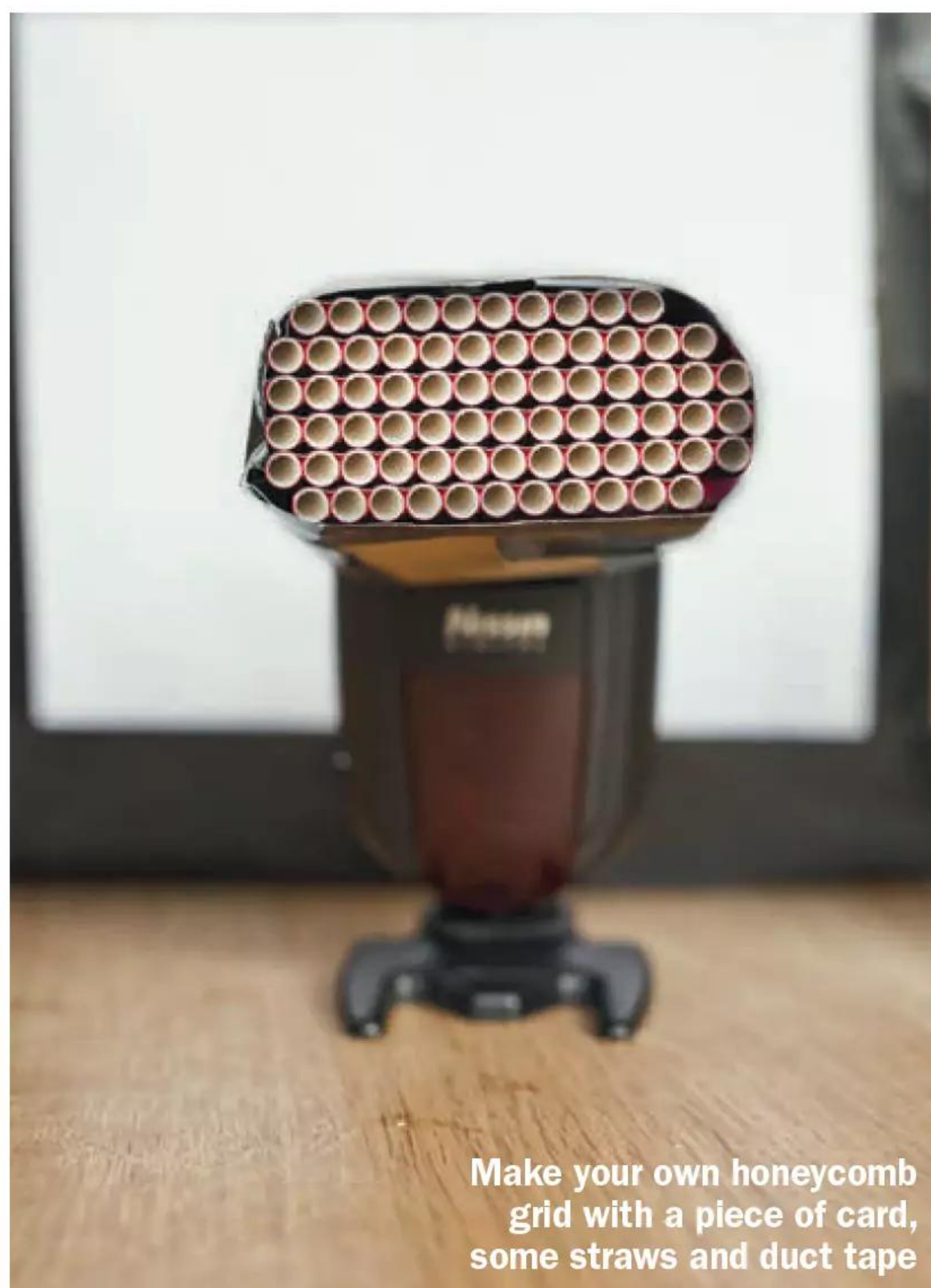
Making a honeycomb grid will allow you to modify the light from the flashgun to create a spotlight effect



Hack 2: Honeycomb grid

If you want to create a spotlight effect then the best lighting accessory for the job is a honeycomb grid. Essentially the grid stops the light from spilling out, and focuses in on one area of the image.

To make yourself a honeycomb grid you will need some straws, black duct tape and a piece of bendy card that is large enough to go around your flashgun. To create your grid, cut your straws into 3cm lengths. You'll need around 70 pieces. Start by laying down a piece of duct tape, sticky side up. Then, starting on the far end, stick the first straw piece lining the top of the straw with the tape. Now put the next straw next to that one and carry on like this until you have a line of straws on the tape. It will need to fold back on itself and around. Now wrap your piece of bendy card around your flashlight head and tape it in place. You want to make sure your card has moulded to the shape of the flashgun so it can be slotted on and off for future use. Now fold the straws into a honeycomb grid shape and slot them into the card so they fill the hole. Finally put your homemade grid back onto your flashgun and you're ready to get shooting!



Make your own honeycomb grid with a piece of card, some straws and duct tape

Hack 3: Make a light cube

If you want to take evenly lit images of small products and items, then a light cube – or light tent as they are also known – is the best accessory for the job. Whilst you can buy one for around the £70 mark this is an unnecessary purchase as you can make one for free out of a cardboard box! The idea is to create a white box space that lets the light in, so the light falls over your subject evenly to avoid strong harsh shadows.

To create your own lightbox you'll need a cardboard box, tape and four white paper sheets (you can alter the background colour if you have coloured paper). Cut out the sides and top of your box, and tape the paper over the gaps. Now place a sheet of paper inside the box so it curves down from the back to create an infinity curve. Light your box from either side through the white paper. We used flashguns, however if you don't have these a constant light source such as a lamp or a torch can be used. Just make sure the bulbs on either side are a similar strength and tungsten setting so you can alter the white balance setting at the editing stage, and shoot in raw to make this correction easier at the editing stage.



A light cube can easily be made using a cardboard box and some white paper

Make your own light cube for photographing small items that need to be evenly lit



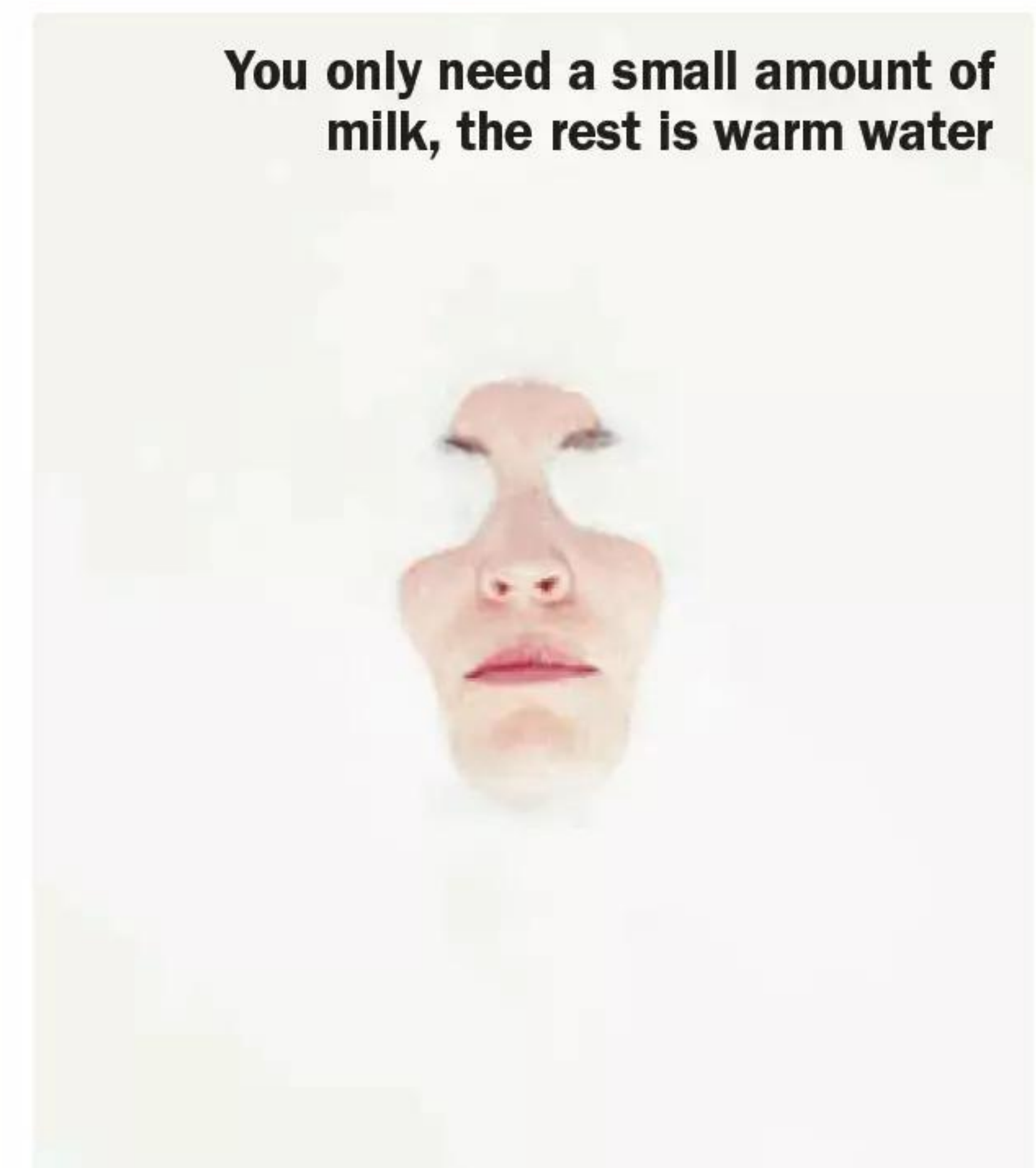
A milk bath is a cheap way to create stunning and unique portraits



Use a white piece of card or some tinfoil to make a reflector



You only need a small amount of milk, the rest is warm water



Hack 4: Milky background

Another effective background choice, and an easy way to create a cheap, low-budget portrait shoot that looks expensive, is to fill a bath with milk! And the good news is you only need a little bit of milk (around 4L) as the rest of the bath is warm water so your model doesn't freeze!

To take our images we used natural light with a homemade reflector out of card and tinfoil so it was an easy set-up. A white piece of card will also work. Remember as well with this set-up, since you are shooting your model from a bird's eye view, make sure you have your camera strap securely fastened.

Hack 5: Macro effects

If you want to take a closer look at your subject but you can't afford a macro lens, there are many alternative and easy solutions – from using an extension tube, reversing ring, or screw-on close-up filter, to photographing your subject through a magnifying glass. It's true that all these solutions aren't going to produce high-quality images compared with a decent macro lens, however they are all a great place to start and you can have fun and be experimental in your approach.

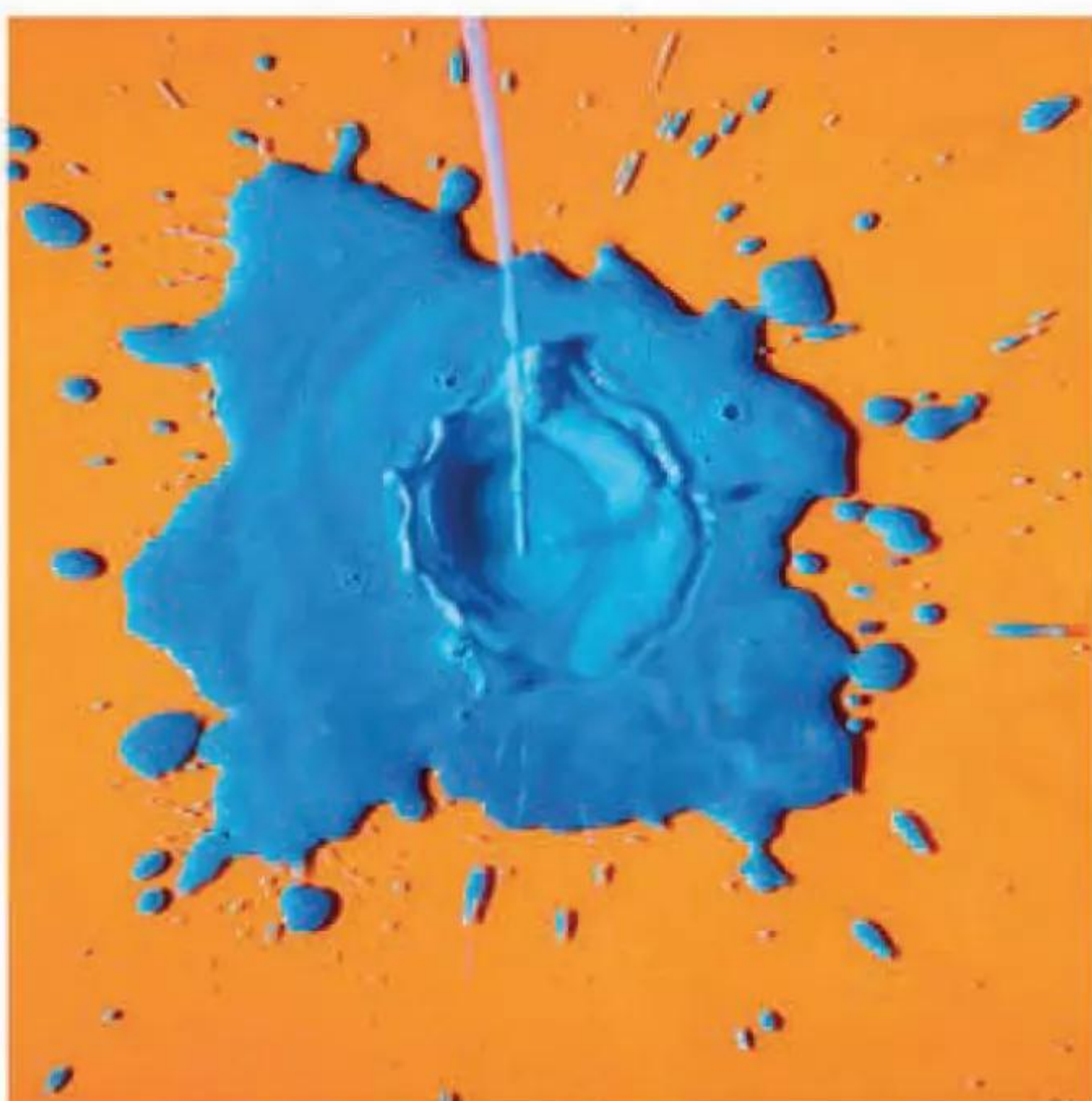
To use the magnifying glass we first removed our lens hood from our camera and carefully placed the glass in front of our lens, being careful not to let the metal edge of the magnifying glass touch the surface of our lens. We found it easier to move ourselves in and out to get the focusing point and then fired the shutter when it looked sharp.



Above: With a 50mm lens this is how close we can zoom in to our subject



Left: With the magnifying glass held in front of the lens we can get substantially closer



Getting creative with milk and food colouring to capture colourful splashes is one of many ways to make use of cheap Perspex backdrops

Hack 6: Perfect Perspex

A piece of Perspex is cheap to buy and can be used in a number of ways to improve your photography. For example, you can create a reflective surface for your still-life set-ups or you can splatter liquid against it to achieve

a creative effect like we have here.

If you want to create something similar you will need a piece of Perspex, a colourful piece of card or paper to go under the Perspex for the background, an external flashgun (you can make do without if you set your set-up in a

light spot; however the flash light really makes it ping), some milk and food colouring for the liquid and a pipette to drop the liquid. It's all about timing your splashes as you drop the liquid and firing the shutter at the same time. It's a trial and error approach.



Make use of rain for some creative outdoor portraits

Hack 7: DIY camera raincoat

We all know that it rains a lot in the UK, and whilst rain can be really annoying for our photography you can also get some amazing and creative images by shooting in it. Whilst a little bit of rain is fine for your kit (the professional models have better weather-sealing) if there is a lot you will need to protect it. You don't need to spend a fortune on a specialist cover – all you need are two plastic bags, and some elastic bands to hold them in place. Cut a small hole in the bottom of your bigger bag and post the lens through and use an elastic band to secure in place – being careful not to wrap it around the focusing ring or any controls). Use the smaller bag to double up around the end of the lens and wrap around so the bag goes to the end of the lens hood. We taped this one in place with some duct tape.

Do a few checks to ensure there are no holes for water to get in and ruin your camera!



A strong light source shining through the lace detail will create subtle, dreamy shadows on your model's face

Hack 8: Lace effects

These images were taken with an old lace tablecloth and an LED light source. To create the same effect simply drape the cloth over your model and yourself to create a tunnel effect. You want to light your subject with a continuous light source, and this could be an LED light, the sun or a household lamp – but remember the stronger the light, the better, as your aim is to create those interesting shadows that fall on the model's face. It can help to get your model to sit on a chair and to peg the cloth to the back of the chair or to their clothes, so it doesn't keep slipping out of place. Use a shallow aperture setting and keep the focus on the eyes to create a dreamy result.

Create a tunnel between yourself and your model with an old lace tablecloth



Hack 9: Light modifier

A light modifier is a device that alters the path of the light. In photography there are various devices that can do this such as a softbox or a snood. The light can be natural, ambient or flash, however when shooting with a controlled light such as flash you get more accurate results because you are in complete control.

There are many different household items that can be used as a modifier and by using them you can alter the finished effect of your image dramatically.

In this example we have used a sieve but other items such as window blinds or even shooting a flashlight through a used (and cleaned) Pringles tube can also add some interesting effects.

If you want to create what we've achieved, simply place the sieve in front of the light source and shine over your subject to create soft, dappled lighting. Again, as mentioned before, if you don't have a studio or flash use a big torch or a flood light like a halogen light. Easy!

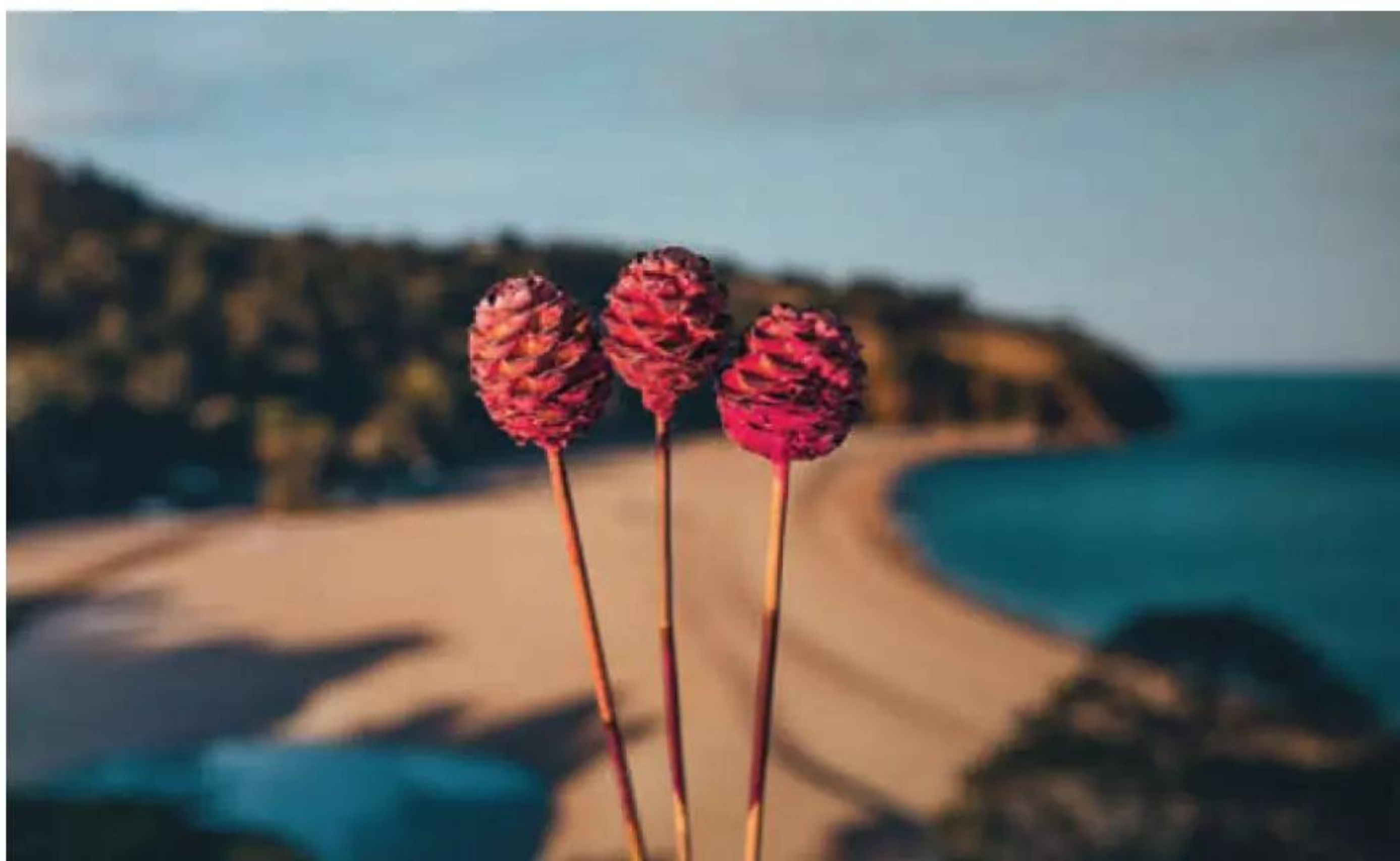


Hack 10: Background alternatives

For still-life or portrait set-ups it's not always about the main subject (well maybe it is a little), but about how you choose to frame your subject and your background choice that makes all the difference.

There are many top-end studio backgrounds that can be purchased, and whilst we aren't dismissing their quality, if you want to save money you can afford to improvise here. If you're after something retro for your product shots then a free wallpaper sample is a great solution or, if you need a plain dark background, some material from a charity shop is also an option. Curtains or blinds in the house can also be used for your background. Fairy lights in the background can create a wonderful bokeh effect or you could try hanging some tin foil.

In our example here we've shot the same subject against three different backdrops. The backdrops are all images taken from our library stock and we've simply used our computer screen as our background. A simple yet effective set-up for still-life subjects.





© SOPHIE LINDSAY

Tracy Calder

Tracy Calder has more than 20 years of experience in the photo industry and is a former editor of *Outdoor Photography* magazine. In 2018 she co-founded Close-up Photographer of the Year. She writes a free Letter to Creatives, which has more than 5.5k subscribers. To sign up, visit www.cupoty.com

Don't despair, get it repaired

When you've invested heavily in lenses, and you're comfortable with the handling and functionality of your camera, getting it repaired can be a better option than buying new, says **Tracy Calder**

There's a picture in the book *Things Come Apart 2.0* by Todd McLellan that I find fascinating. McLellan has a penchant for taking things apart: phones, typewriters, clocks; nothing is spared from this man's screwdriver. Once an object has been disassembled, he places the parts neatly and precisely on a plain background and photographs them from above. In the past, he has reduced a Pentax SLR to a selection of rings, screws and wires; prised apart a Polaroid camera to reveal its boxy innards and, in the picture I'm so taken by, he has perfectly arranged 580 parts of a Sony DSLR on the floor. This picture fascinates me for three reasons: one, it looks great; two, it makes me think about the precision engineering that goes into designing and building a DSLR; and three, it's a powerful reminder that taking your camera apart is probably best left to the experts.

Dodgy DIY repairs

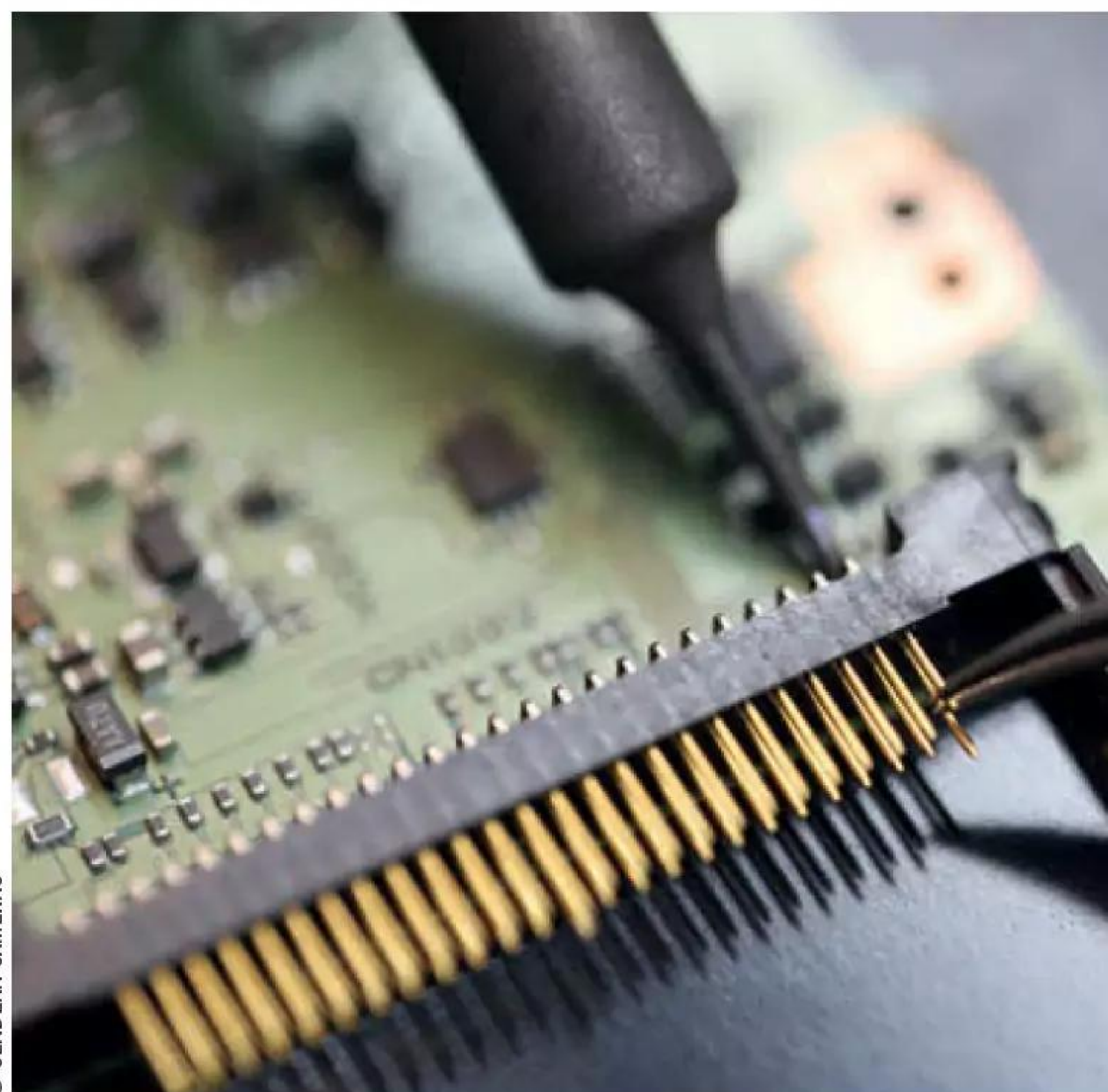
Steve Smart from Camserve has seen a lot of dodgy DIY 'repairs' over the years. 'We often deal with cameras and lenses that have been dismantled and arrive in dozens

of pieces because the customer can't reassemble them again,' he explains. Steve believes the rise in online 'how-to' videos is partly to blame. Watching a video describing how to make a flash diffuser out of a Pringles tube is one thing but attempting to open and mend an electronic device without the appropriate tools and knowledge is quite another. 'Some advice online is just plain wrong!' adds Steve. In fact, it's important to remember that you run the risk of an electric shock if you don't know what you're doing (flash capacitors, for example, store quite a lot of electrical energy!).

Separate guarantee

Carrying out a DIY repair on your camera can also affect its warranty. Most manufacturers won't cover repairs or maintenance carried out at home, but it's worth noting that repairs carried out by a reputable repair service often come with a separate guarantee. 'Camera repair can be expensive,' says Adrian Tang from the Camera Museum, 'so all our repairs come with a guarantee of six months.' The fact is, almost all camera equipment

© CAMERA MUSEUM



© SENDAN CAMERAS



Cameras are more complex than you might think, so opening one up is best left to the experts

Where to get a repair

Aperture UK, www.apertureuk.com

In-house repair service for film cameras and lenses, specialising in repairs to all mechanical cameras, but especially Leica, Hasselblad, Rollei and Nikon.

Camera Museum, www.cameramuseum.uk

Camera shop, gallery, coffee shop and in-house repair service for analogue and digital. Specialising in repairs to classic manufacturers such as Hasselblad, Rolleiflex, Leica, Nikon and Canon.

The Classic Camera, www.theclassiccamera.com

Rangefinder and mirrorless camera specialists offering repair options for mechanical cameras, lenses and optical devices, plus digital repairs through individual manufacturers.

Camera Repair Direct, www.camerarepairdirect.co.uk

In-house repair service, specialising in digital cameras, SLRs, compacts and lenses.

Camserve Ltd, www.camserve.co.uk

Camera service and repair centre handling everything from analogue to digital, lenses and flash.

Fixation, www.fixationuk.com

In-house repair service for DSLR and mirrorless camera systems. Also has a professional lens repair workshop and lighting repair centre.

Sendean Cameras, www.sendeancameras.co.uk

Camera repair and equipment hire service, handling analogue and digital equipment.



One of the team at Sendean Cameras carrying out a CF repair



Camera Museum repairs both analogue and digital equipment



Camserve handles everything from cameras to lenses and flash

Technique CAMERA REPAIRS

➤ can be repaired, but the cost of repairing goods sometimes outweighs its value. According to Steve, this has been made worse by the UK's departure from the EU in 2020. 'Brexit has made it more difficult to obtain spare parts, resulting in delays and price increases,' he says. 'It has also created customs complications for some of our customers in the EU.' (Despite all this, Camserve currently has a respectable turnaround time of around six weeks.)

Best to repair

Some cameras are worth more than the value of their parts. Adrian, for example, recalls fixing a camera that had once been used to document a war. Meanwhile, Wes Davies from Camera Repair Direct once told me that he enjoys working on cameras with sentimental value, especially those that have been passed down generations. 'I try a little harder to get those going for our customers,' he admits.

I have long held the belief that objects have a biography – surely Don McCullin's Nikon F with its brutal AK-47 war wound holds memories in its mechanical heart. To add weight to my theory, a few years ago, Philip Sendean from Sendean Cameras regaled me with the tale of a Canon DSLR used to film a documentary about walking with elephants. Hearing these stories, I'm guessing some cameras are more enjoyable to work on than others.

'Well designed and manufactured gear is best to repair,' agrees Steve. 'All manufacturers make the odd "lemon" occasionally, but generally Canon, Hasselblad, Leica, Nikon and Rollei make items that are serviceable for many years.'

3D printing

Some of us will be confident cleaning a sensor, but most repair shops offer this service too – in fact, cleaning sensors is one of Adrian's favourite jobs (alongside changing light seals). While it might sound like a low-risk task, Steve once had to clean a sensor covered in blood after a one-in-a-million mishap. 'The chap who owned the camera suffered a heavy nose bleed at the precise moment that he attempted to clean his sensor, and he covered it in blood!' he recalls.

Aside from sensor cleaning, some repair shops will service your camera, remove fungus, replace perishable foam and rubber components, fit new screens, repair dropped lenses (usually by stripping and reassembling them) and deal with electrical issues. If a part is unavailable, a few of them now use 3D printing to create new pieces, so hope is not lost if you own a previously unrepairable Polaroid SX-70 or Yashica T4!



Camera Museum is a camera shop, in-house repair service and coffee shop

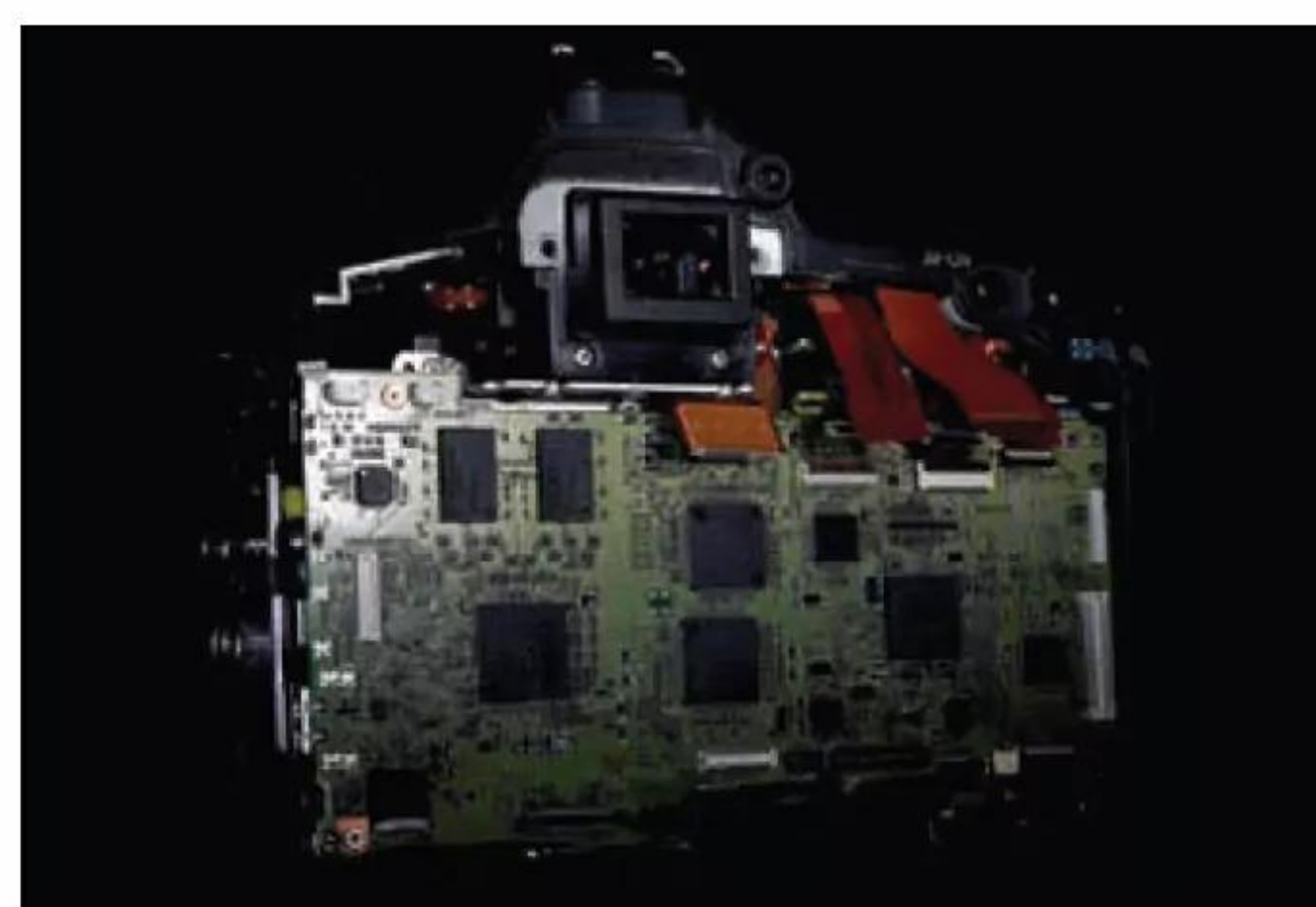
© CAMERA MUSEUM



A Leica camera awaits some TLC from the Camserve team

© CAMSERVE LTD

TIPS FOR ARRANGING A REPAIR



© SENDEAN CAMERAS



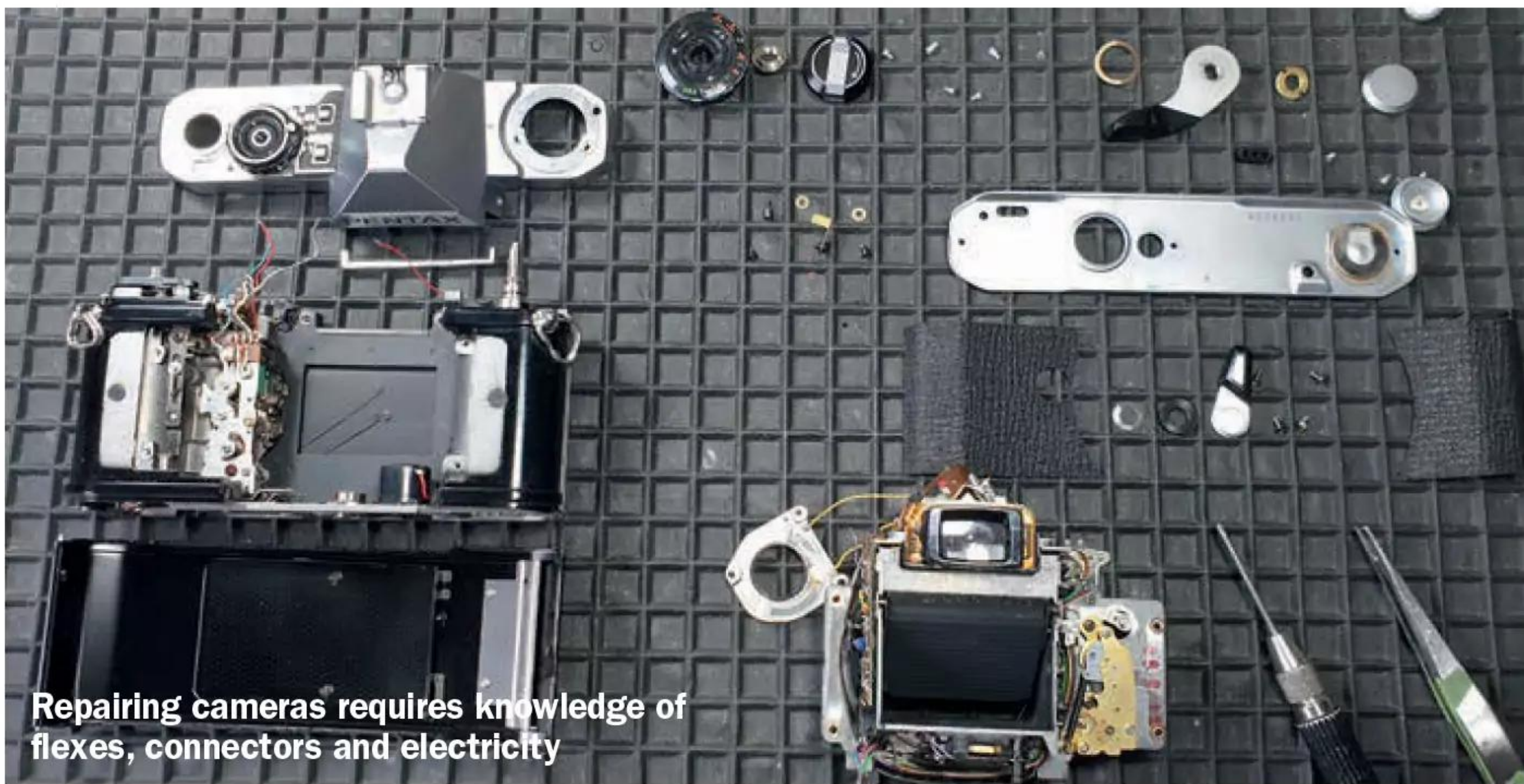
© CAMSERVE LTD

Don't go it alone

Cameras are more complex than you might think, and opening one up can lead to ripped flexes, connectors and, potentially, a nasty electric shock! Also, without the right tools for the job (eg, equipment to recalibrate focus) you might end up making things worse.

Request a quote

Some camera repairs will cost more than the value of the equipment, so it's important to get a quote before work is carried out. A repair centre has to factor in the cost of skills and labour as well as parts, so don't be surprised if it's more than you bargained for!



Repairing cameras requires knowledge of flexes, connectors and electricity

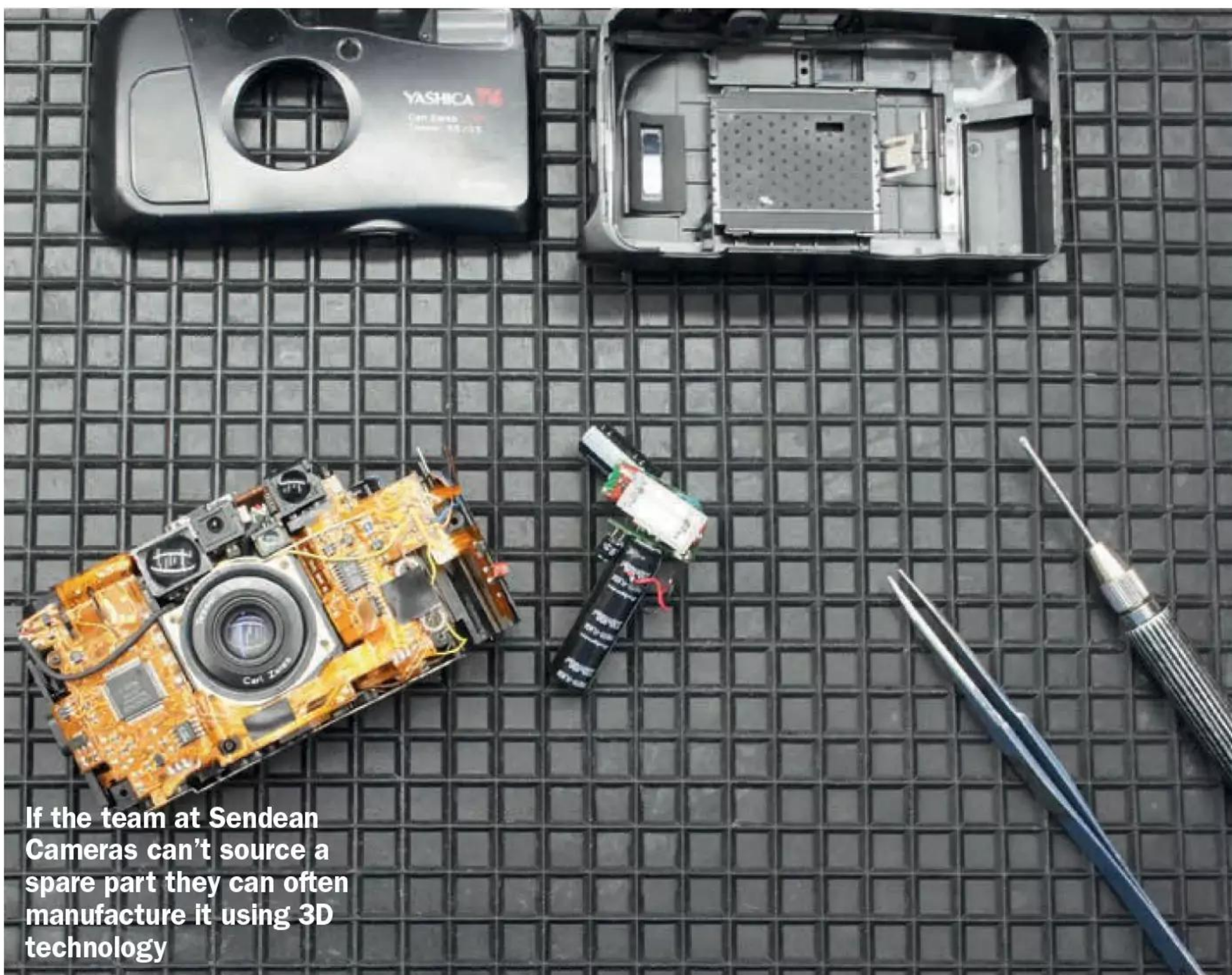
‘But what are the hardest repairs to carry out and what can’t be repaired?’

What can’t be repaired

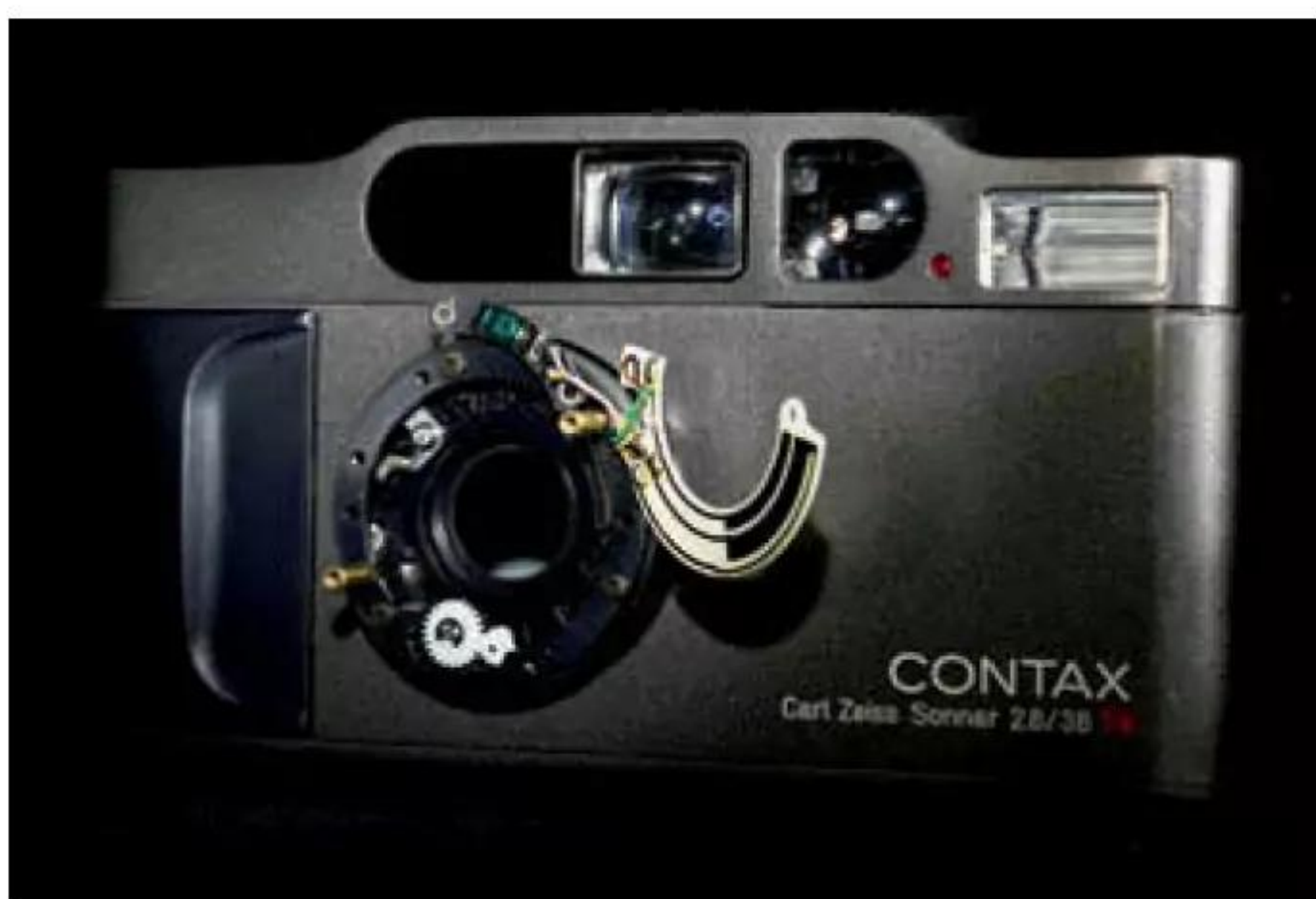
Some technicians consider a broken camera as a puzzle to be solved. Having spoken to a few technicians, I can confirm that there’s definitely a sense of excitement when a problem is presented. But what are the hardest repairs to carry out and what can’t be repaired, even when money is no object? ‘Generally speaking, liquid damage is fatal,’ says Wes. ‘Cameras affected by liquid can sometimes be brought back to life but experience issues later down the line.’ Sand is also a big problem, with just one grain capable of jamming up delicate camera parts. Steve also names liquid as the ultimate destroyer. ‘Repairs which are generally impossible involve water contamination (especially saltwater) and impact damage where the chassis has been broken,’ he explains.

In addition, some repairs are not possible because the camera or lens manufacturer does not supply spare parts to the independent repairer. ‘Also, sometimes work requires a software reboot which can only be performed “in-house” by the manufacturer’s repair team,’ reveals Steve.

Many camera technicians have been in the trade for years, sitting at desks covered with tiny screws, flexes and connectors, or staring at computer screens full of unfathomable graphics, and the best part is they enjoy it! Carrying out a repair at home might seem like a money-saving idea, but if you attempt anything adventurous it could turn a cheap repair into an expensive (or even dangerous) mistake. If in doubt, call in the experts.

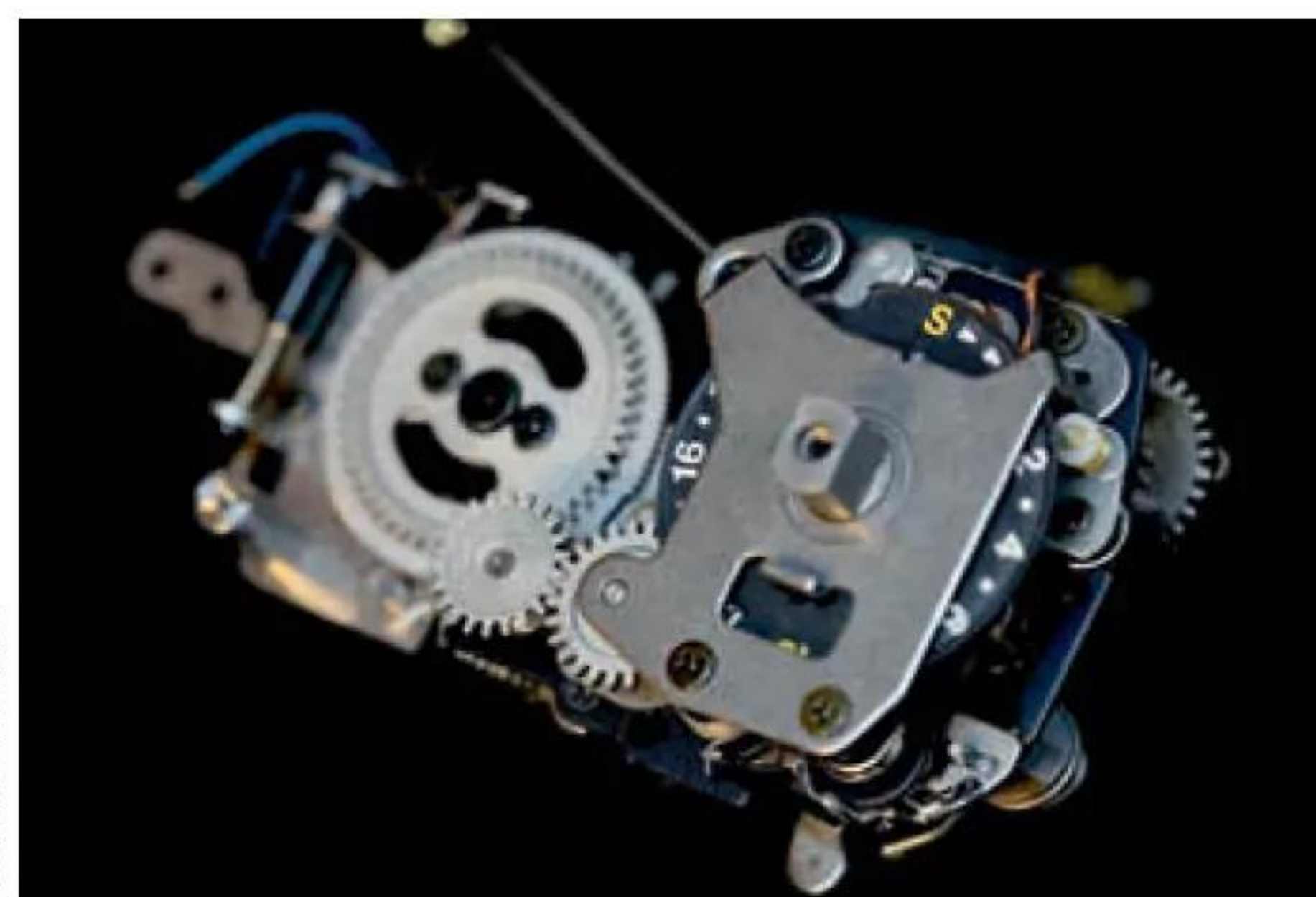


If the team at Sendean Cameras can’t source a spare part they can often manufacture it using 3D technology



Get a guarantee

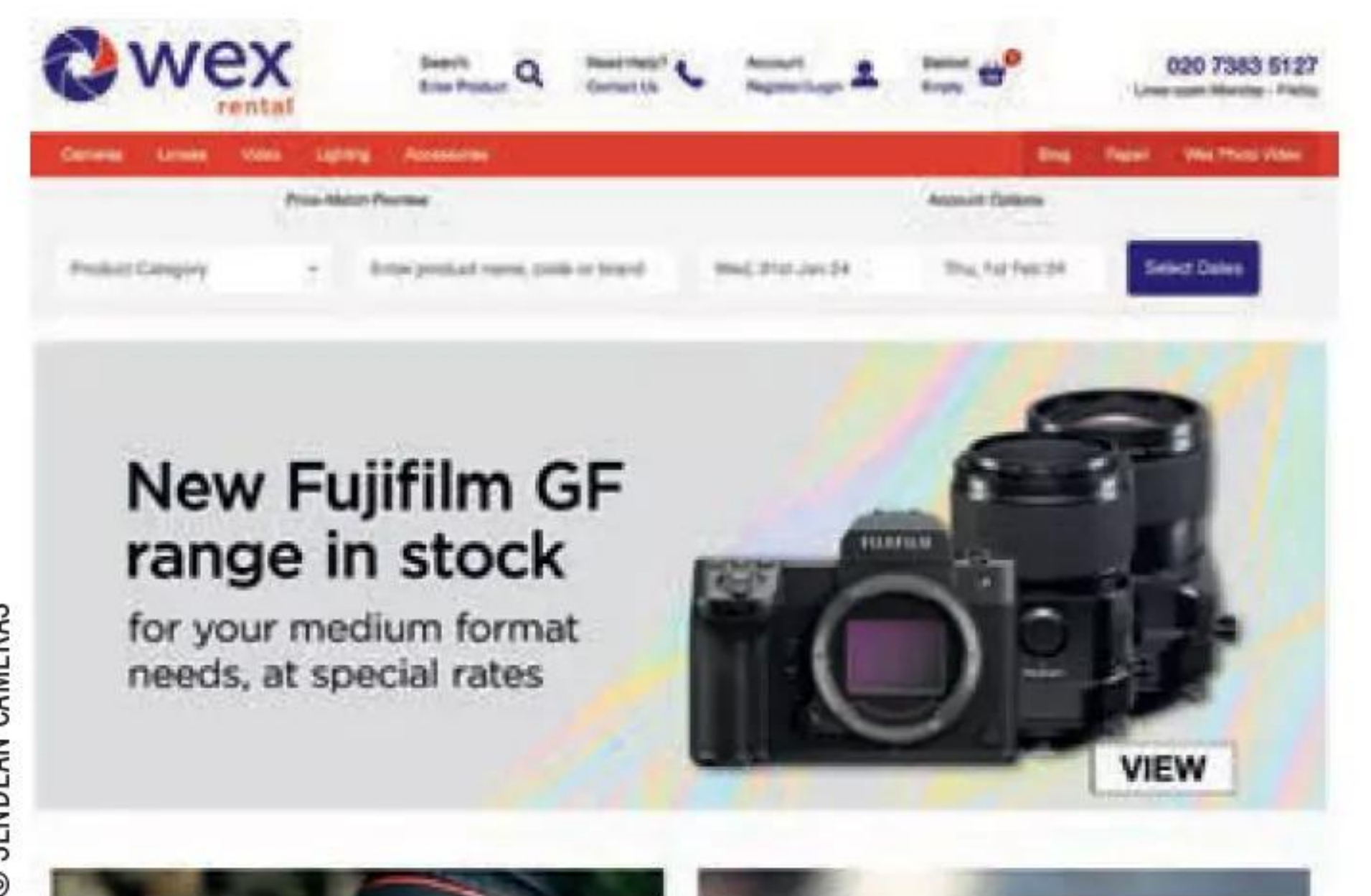
While the warranty offered by many manufacturers won’t cover repairs or maintenance carried out by a third party, most reputable repair services will offer a guarantee for the work they carry out. Anything from three to six months is typical.



Remember turnaround

Brexit has made it harder for some repair services to obtain spare parts, so factor extra time in if you need your equipment for an important job or event. Depending on the task, repairs can take anything from one week to a few months.

AP



Think about renting

If your repair is going to take a while and you can’t be without a camera, then bear in mind that some repair services offer a rental service with a generous discount for clients. (Fixation, for example, offers 30% off hires from Wex Rental.)

Film on a budget

Film expert **Mike Crawford** shares his advice on how to keep costs down when it comes to analogue photography

Photography can certainly be an expensive pastime, considering the price of top-of-the-range equipment. Analogue photography might also appear to be a costly pursuit, given the additional expense of buying film, processing, scanning and printing, though I would perhaps argue this does not have to be so. I took up photography in the 1970s with a cheap Zenit SLR, eventually progressing to more-advanced cameras as finances allowed, but over the years I think I will have spent more money on film than equipment.

Perhaps one of the biggest economies we can make is simply resisting the temptation to photograph everything of interest; and to take a more considered approach. Knowing that every developed frame has a cost attached helps me to be more judgemental before pressing the shutter, though once engaged with a subject or location, I will then use as much film as I feel necessary. However, there are further possibilities for cutting the cost of film photography.

Colour or black and white?

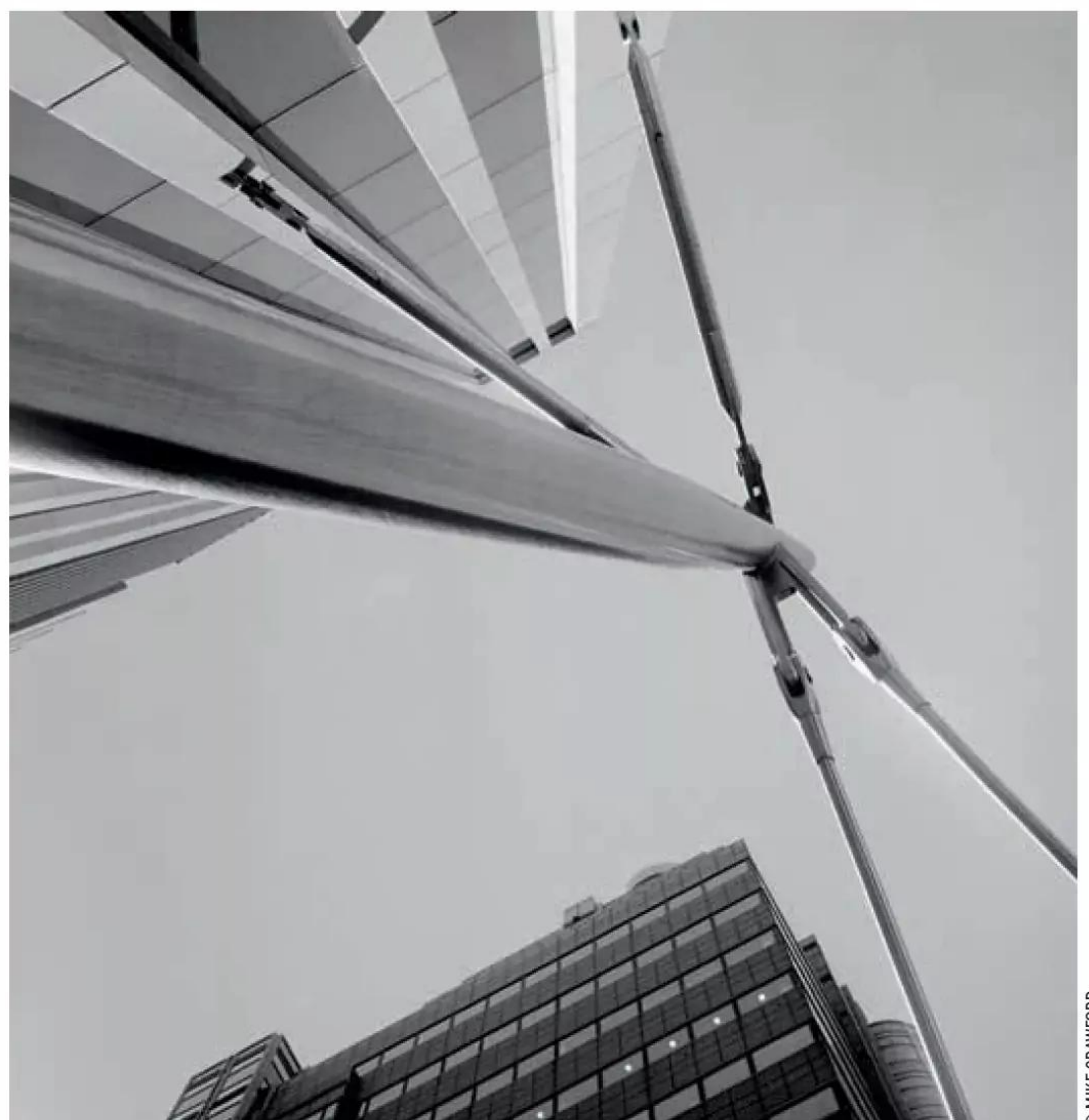
Not so long ago, it was possible to buy 35mm Agfa colour film at discount stores for £1 a roll. Today, there are no budget colour films available, with premium Kodak and Fuji films costing between £15 to £20 for 35mm, and over £15 for 120 film. A cheaper alternative is Kodak Gold 200, which retails for around £9 for 36 exposures when bought in packs of three.

Compared to the amount of black & white I use, I have never shot a lot of colour images, but when required, Gold 200 has always been my preferred choice. In 2022 Kodak released a Professional version in 120, available in packs of five for less than £40, making it a more economical choice for medium format. While not quite as fine-grained as Portra



Kodak Gold 200 has been a popular general-purpose colour film for many years, known for its natural colours and relatively fine grain. I recently had the opportunity to print some of my older negatives in a colour darkroom, and was very pleased by how smooth and sharp the resulting prints were. It has recently been released in 120 format

Right: Foma is one of the best known brands of black & white film in Europe and one of the least expensive. While the 400 emulsion tends to be quite contrasty, fine grain developers can reduce the contrast and grain. I personally prefer Fomapan 100 for smoother, finer negatives. This was processed in my standard developer, Ilford ID11. Mamiya 6, Fomapan 100



Mike Crawford

Mike is a London-based photographer and specialist printer working in urban landscape and portraiture. For over 25 years he has run Lighthouse Darkroom, one of the UK's premier photographic labs, working for many leading photographers on numerous exhibitions and publications. www.mike-crawford.co.uk, www.lighthousedarkroom.com

160, it is still an excellent, very popular, general-purpose film.

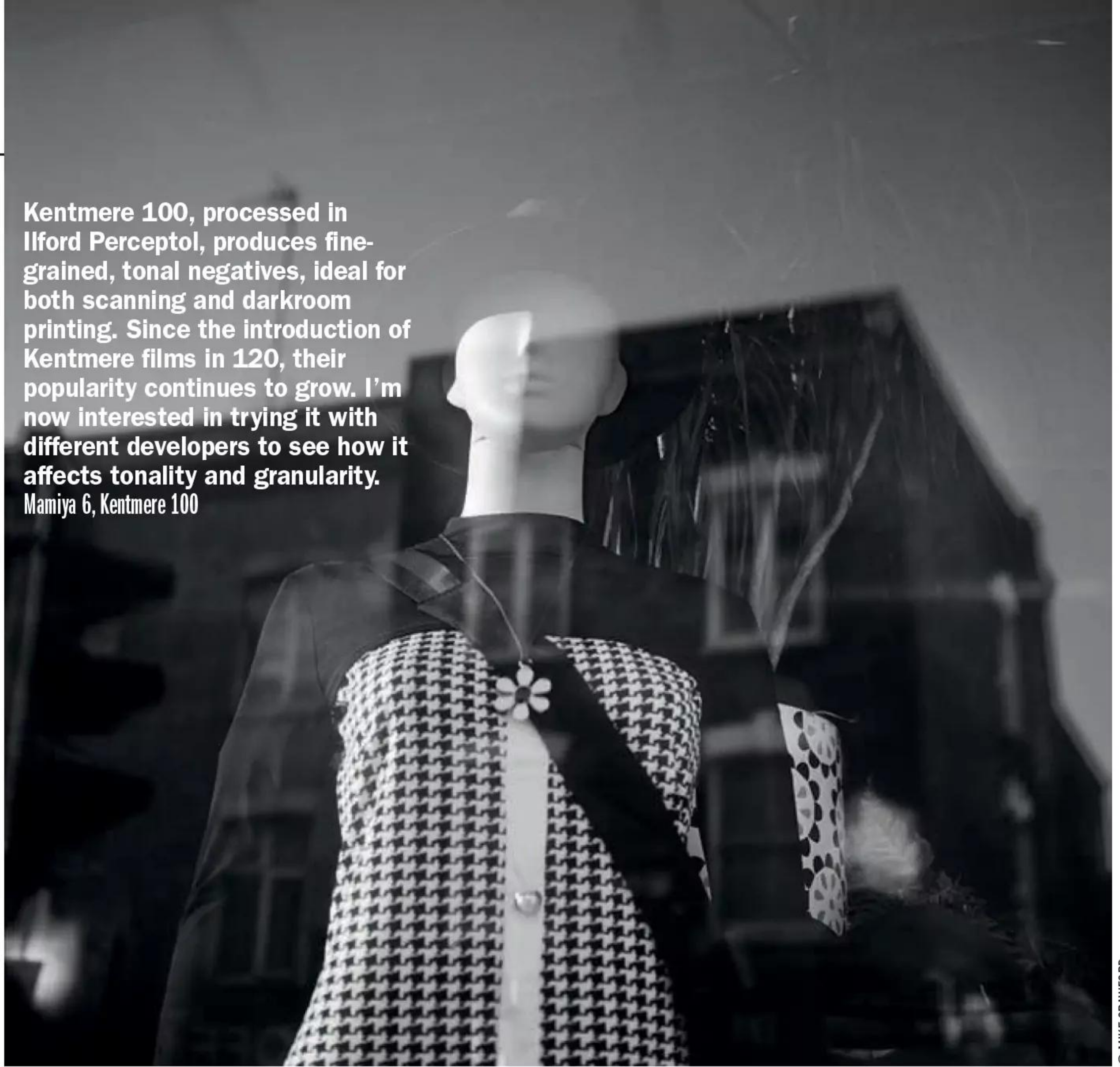
Foma

There are far more options for black & white, and one of the best-value brands come from the Czech company Foma Bohemia. Established in 1921, they produce several emulsions, available in most film formats, and both 35mm and 120 can be bought for less than £5 a roll. When I first used Fomapan 100 and 400, I found the negatives a touch contrasty at standard development times but benefited from a slight reduction in time. This is a personal choice as Foma films are very flexible depending on exposure and choice of developer. Indeed, some photographers will prefer to push process for more contrast and grain.

Kentmere films

Ilford films, manufactured by Harman Technology in Cheshire, have long been my favourite black & white films. While good value for their high quality and consistency, Harman also produces a less-expensive range under the Kentmere brand. I spoke to Matt Parry, head of marketing at Harman, who described Kentmere as 'a traditional emulsion, produced the same way as films like HP5, whereas Delta films use a more modern technology.' Harman makes two films, (Kentmere 100 and 400) in 35mm and 120, retailing for around £5 a roll. 'For me, Kentmere is the perfect budget option,' Matt commented. 'I think the 100 is a fantastic film, with very fine grain, while a lot of people really like the

Kentmere 100, processed in Ilford Perceptol, produces fine-grained, tonal negatives, ideal for both scanning and darkroom printing. Since the introduction of Kentmere films in 120, their popularity continues to grow. I'm now interested in trying it with different developers to see how it affects tonality and granularity. Mamiya 6, Kentmere 100



© MIKE CRAWFORD



Left: Founded in Cumbria in 1919, Kentmere was acquired by Harman Technology in 2007, which continues to produce Kentmere films and resin-coated papers as a budget alternative to its Ilford range

HIRE / COMMUNITY DARKROOMS

● BRIGHTON

Intrepid

www.intrepidstudio.co.uk
Instagram: @intrepidstudios_
Colour / Black & White

● BRISTOL

Negative Thinking

negative-thinking.myshopify.com
Instagram:
@negative_thinking_bristol
Black & White

St Paul's Darkroom

stpaulsdarkrooms.wordpress.com
Black & White

● LIVERPOOL

Little Vintage Photography

www.littlevintagephotography.co.uk
Instagram: @littlevintagephotography
Black & White

● LONDON

Darkroom London (Belsize Park)

www.darkroomlondon.org
Instagram: @darkroomlondon
Black & White

Four Corners (Bethnal Green)

www.fourcornersfilm.co.uk/darkrooms
Instagram: @fourcornerse2
Colour / Black & White

Photofusion (Brixton)

www.photofusion.org
Instagram: @photofusionuk
Colour / Black & White

Rapid Eye (Shoreditch)

www.rapideye.uk.com
Instagram: @rapideye.darkroom
Colour / Black & White / Scanning

The Gate Darkroom (Greenwich)

www.thegatedarkroom.co.uk
Instagram: @thegatedarkroom
Black & White

● NORTHERN IRELAND

Belfast Exposed (Belfast)

www.belfastexposed.org
Instagram: @bx_gallery
Black & White

● SCOTLAND

Street Level Photoworks (Glasgow)

www.streetlevelphotoworks.org
Instagram: @streetlevelphotoworks
Black & White / Scanning

The Inverness Darkroom (Inverness)

www.theinvernessdarkroom.org.uk
Instagram: @invdrkrm
Black & White

Stills (Edinburgh)

www.stills.org
Instagram: @stillsedinburgh
Colour / Black & White / Scanning

● SUFFOLK

Illuminate Studio (Brightwell)

www.illuminatestudio.co.uk
Instagram: @illuminate_20
Black & White

Old Jet Darkroom (Rendlesham)

www.oldjet.co.uk
Instagram: @oldjet
Black & White

● WALES

Oriel Colwyn (Colwyn Bay)

http://orielcolwyn.org
Instagram: @orielcolwyn
Black & White

Right: Processing workshop at the Darkroom London



© PHIL GREY

Technique BUDGET ANALOGUE PHOTOGRAPHY

➤ 400, certainly if pushed. It has quite a flat contrast, but anyone in the darkroom, or editing scans will tend to boost the contrast.'

Buying in bulk

One of the best ways to save money on 35mm is to buy bulk rolls in 30.5-metre lengths (100ft), and load into empty plastic cassettes. This should be enough for 17 rolls of film and can be hand rolled in the darkroom. As a guide, the average span of outstretched arms is close to a 36-exposure roll, though the easiest and safest way is to use a bulk loader.

After the initial outlay of £50 to £100 depending on model (more expensive ones are available), plus the cost of reusable cassettes, which can be had for £1.50 each or £20 for 20, savings are then made per roll of film. 'Most of our films, including Kentmere, are available in bulk lengths,' Matt pointed out, adding an extra benefit. 'There's also the option to split the cost of a 30.5-metre roll with friends.'

Many black & white films are available in bulk. With Ilford films it will save between £1.50 and £2.50 a roll, depending on the brand, and Foma and Kentmere become even more economical. After the initial cost of the loader and cassettes, Kentmere would cost about £4 per roll and Foma just over £3. Another brand to consider is the German firm, Adox. Its fine-grained films, such as CMS 20, can be bought for £68 in bulk, which then at £4 per roll is definitely a bargain. Bulk loading makes sense if shooting a lot, but for an occasional user, it is probably best to buy individual rolls. One word of caution is to keep your loader and cassettes free of dirt and dust. I remember several ruined rolls shot at college with deep scratches throughout caused by grit or dust in the loader.

Processing

The cost saving benefits, and different methods of home scanning, could easily fill another article [coming up in AP 20 February], however, processing film is another way for film users to save money. Developing black & white film has always been popular and does not require a darkroom. Initial costs will be for a processing tank, possibly a changing bag, plus accessories. Ilford and Paterson produce a combined kit with all the essential equipment and chemistry, though it is simple to acquire tanks, measuring jugs and thermometers individually.

The wide choice of chemistry is an added benefit, from Ilford Perceptol for fine grain to excellent all-rounders like ID11 and high acutance developers such as Adox Rodinal for very sharp, well-defined negatives. More photographers are now processing colour



The main range of Foma films are available in 100, 200 and 400 ISO ratings in 35mm, 120, 5x4, 5x7 and 10x8. Bulk rolls are produced in 17 and 50 metre lengths in addition to the standard 30.5 metres



The Legacy Pro 35mm Lloyds bulk loader is manufactured and distributed by Freestyle Photo in the USA, and available in the UK for around £50 from Bristol Cameras



Many different films are available in 35mm bulk lengths, including popular Ilford films such as HP5 Plus and FP4 Plus



Flic Film is a Canadian company offering rebranded motion picture film, plus colour and black & white processing chemistry. See flicfilm.ca



The Film Processing Starter Kit, produced by Ilford and Paterson, contains everything required to start processing black & white film

films themselves. Until recently, Tetenal produced a popular C-41 kit for colour negatives, but its current situation is uncertain. Instead, kits from Flic Film in Canada, are now available in the UK at Process Supplies for both C-41 and ECN-2, required for processing rebranded Kodak Color Vision3 motion picture film.

Given all the economic benefits mentioned so far, I can only encourage photographers to then take the next step and print their own work. While setting up a darkroom at home is an additional expense, and may not be logistically possible, it's worth looking out for a local community or hire darkroom to use, which will offer tuition and guidance. It can also be a good way to meet and connect with other photographers.

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Off-camera flash on a budget

Elevate your photography with flash. Callum McInerney-Riley is your guide



Callum McInerney-Riley

Callum McInerney-Riley has been a Technical Writer at *Amateur Photographer*, reviewing cameras and accessories. A keen photographer for over 15 years, he now runs a company that creates photography and video content for a host of large brands.

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We've all been out on dull days and struggled to get a decent photo, haven't we? A beautiful sunset, streaming beams of light, misty mornings and reflections on rainy ground are the stuff of dreams for photographers. Good light is a gift we should all relish. One of the biggest things that helped take my photography to the

next level was learning how to work with the light you have, and the light you can create – either through flash or continuous lighting. In this feature we'll show you how to get started with flash, including what kit to buy and how to hone the skills of crafting your own light while working with ambient light to get incredible images. We will cover the kit you need, the techniques to try,

and creative ways to elevate your images without breaking the bank.

What to consider when buying off-camera flash kit

In recent years, off-camera flash kit has massively improved in technology and is now more affordable than ever. One of the best technological advancements is battery power. Gone are the days when flash units need to be plugged into the wall to work, and it's truly liberating having a powerful flash unit on location.

Another big step forward is there are now transmitters available for more than just Canon and Nikon cameras, which is good for Sony, Fujifilm, Olympus/OM and Pentax users. There are many flash units you can fire with multiple camera brands using the corresponding transmitter. Using these transmitters often allows you to boast features like high-speed sync and TTL Mode for automatic flash exposures.

Other than brand compatibility, the main thing to consider is the flash power output. As a general rule, flashguns – often referred to as speedlites – have enough power for indoors, events and outdoors too. If you need to light subjects from far away, or overpower bright sunlight, use large modifiers such as big softboxes or if you need to light large subjects, then you may need more power. 100Ws-200Ws flash units are a respectable step up from a standard speedlite.

For a small studio or regular outdoor work, this kind of power is perfect. Going up to 300-500W power gives you the ability to shoot large groups, use even the largest softboxes and blast light great distances should you need to. To overpower midday sun, you will need 500W unless you can get close to your subject.



A flash was used to light the inside of the bar and bring the exposure up to the same level as the surrounding ambient light

ALL PICTURES © CALLUM MCINERNEY-RILEY



Take your time to put your subjects at ease. Big softboxes can be a little intimidating so be sure to focus on more than just the lighting

KIT LIST

If you're after all the bells and whistles, it will cost a bit more, but there are plenty of options across the price spectrum to suit your needs and budget.

Add to existing kit

Let's start with the most budget-friendly option. That is to utilise transmitters and receivers with flashguns you already own. Even if you're new to flash, you can acquire second-hand Canon/Nikon compatible transmitter/receivers for around £100. Before I embraced Godox, I relied on Phottix Odin II transmitters and receivers, which provided TTL with my Canon DSLR, and Phottix Stratos II for manual flash power settings. There are various transmitter/receiver systems available, like Yongnuo YN-622C II E-TTL, Godox X2T, Hahnel Captur, and Neewer CT-16, priced between £35 and £100.

Compact flashguns

Small flashguns are a fantastic choice for off-camera use due to their portability and battery power. Since I switched to Sony, I've been using the Godox V1S flashgun, priced under £200. It's compact enough for any bag, works seamlessly with the AD300 Pro, and features a built-in wireless transmitter/receiver. Pair it with a Godox X-ProS transmitter for just £55, and you have a competent off-camera flash set-up for about £250.

Second-hand options

If you're open to mains-powered units, Bowens and Elinchrom offer excellent value, especially in the second-hand market. Often, 500W monolights, which might have cost upwards of £600 new, can be snagged for less than £100. Portable battery-powered lights like the Elinchrom Quadra are worth considering. A kit with two heads and a battery pack can cost less than £400. However, be mindful of potential battery degradation with these types of kits.

Increase your budget a little

Moving up the price ladder, the Godox AD100Pro is an amazing piece of kit available for around £280. It's an affordable, portable, battery-powered flash unit that doesn't skimp on quality. For those who want a bit more, I can personally vouch for the Godox AD300 Pro lights. Priced at about £380 each, they offer fantastic value and versatility. I use these frequently and can't recommend them enough.



➤ Why is off-camera flash so much better?

Like most photographers, when I first started using flash, it was mounted on top of the camera and blasted at my subject. The results were often likened to a rabbit in headlights. The flash is often too far away or too close to your subject and it just looks boring with unflattering shadows because the light source is pointing straight towards your subject. Softening the light with some kind of softbox or diffusion tool certainly helps. You can also bounce the flash off a low ceiling or a white wall and get a much better quality of light. However, the biggest change you can make is taking the flash off the camera and firing it remotely. When used correctly, it remedies all the problems stated above.

As soon as you change the flash direction from close to the camera you unlock the ability to create texture, form, and shape with the light and shadows. By illuminating

Above left: After a short while playing with various lighting options, I settled on using a single softbox, very close and to the right of my subject. Simplicity often wins

Above right: A flash helped me balance the natural light from the right of the subject

specific areas and putting other areas in shadow, your images are far more dynamic. You can emphasise subjects, evoke moods with different lighting or in the case of moving subjects, take photos not even possible before.

Put simply, all you are doing when shooting with an off-camera flash is taking an ambient exposure, and using a light to draw attention to the parts of the image you want. This gives you the ability to shoot images that strike a previously unobtainable balance between the environment and your subject.

Settings and getting started with off-camera flash

Balancing ambient light, sync speed, flash intensity, shaping the light, and positioning the light is a lot to get your head around when you first start. Unless you like jumping in at the deep end, I would avoid portraits in the field, to begin with. Try shooting something stationary like a piece of cake, your favourite bottle of

wine or a cool gadget you own. Bonus tip – you can also eat cake and drink wine when you're finished. Work smarter!

Place your subject in an area where the background looks interesting and ensure your camera is switched to full manual mode. I love shooting with a long lens, a wide aperture, and having lots of lovely bokeh from Christmas lights or LED lights. For me, it makes for an exciting background while not being distracting to whatever I am photographing. I always start my shooting by taking some test images of what I want to photograph without any flashes turned on. At this point, I am concentrating on getting the background looking great as I will be adding light to my subject anyway.

If your flashes or receiver/transceiver doesn't support high-speed sync or rear curtain sync, you will need to shoot at the supported sync speed for your flash. Often, this is between 1/60 and 1/200sec shutter



speed. If, however, you can use high-speed sync or rear curtain sync then you can shoot as fast or slow as you want. For outside shots on bright days, you will probably need a fast shutter speed of 1/400sec or faster which will require high-speed sync to be turned on to ensure you capture the flash during your exposure. If you're shooting somewhere dimly lit, or you want a slow shutter speed to capture motion, you can turn on rear curtain sync. This setting ensures the flash syncs right at the end of your shot, effectively freezing the motion when the flash is fired.

Once you are happy with your shutter speed and aperture, turn your flash on and place it near your subject. We will talk more about flash positioning and modifiers later. Power settings are usually denominated in fractions with most flashes going from 1/128 or 1/256 up to 1/1 – or full power. Try 1/16 and see if it's too bright or too dull and adjust it from there. Your shutter

speed will have no bearing on the brightness of the flash, only affecting the ambient exposure. However, opening the aperture and raising the ISO will let more light into the camera, meaning your flash will be brighter as you change those settings. When you try different angles, flash positions and exposure settings you will probably need to tweak the flash power. This usually takes a couple of poor shots to finally nail the decent ones.

If you plan to shoot with multiple flashes, add in one at a time. I am often guilty of trying to do too much too quickly and it results in a bit of a headache trying to fix. It doesn't make much difference what order you add your key, fill or background lights in, just focus on one at a time and you will make progress.

Shaping the light and experimenting

Once you have an off-camera lighting set-up, you will notice that positioning and modifying the flash

Above left: A super-easy project to try – a static subject with a nice background

Above right: Don't neglect foreground elements. It really helps tie in shots lit with flashes

will give you very different looks. There's a host of modifiers available for your flash including softboxes, snoots, gels, shoot-through umbrellas, beauty dishes, and grids. All of these give you wildly different looks but, generally, they have three main purposes. Making the light less harsh, harsher, concentrating, or expanding the light. You can experiment with all of these without spending huge



Softboxes and warm white balance gives a more natural look

Technique BUDGET LIGHTING

amounts on modifiers. Bed sheets and tracing paper can be used in place of softboxes, rolled-up paper for snoots and black or white cards can be used for all sorts of lighting wizardry. Without getting super in-depth, it's worth mentioning the inverse square law here: the farther the modifier is, the softer and weaker the light will be and when you bounce light off surfaces it loses intensity. I encourage you to experiment in different ways to modify your light so you can perfect being in control of the look you want.

Some suggestions for a creative experiment are using a snoot and channelling the light into a tight beam. The spotlight effect can pick out details and create dramatic shadows. Try bouncing your flash off a ceiling or white wall, to create soft, natural-looking light. Lastly, try to make your light source large by shooting through a big softbox, or even a bed sheet/diffusion paper and ensure it's far enough away to create



Left: Here, I kept the background slightly under-exposed and used the flash to accentuate the main focal points of the image

beautiful, soft light. The last technique is especially good for photographing food.

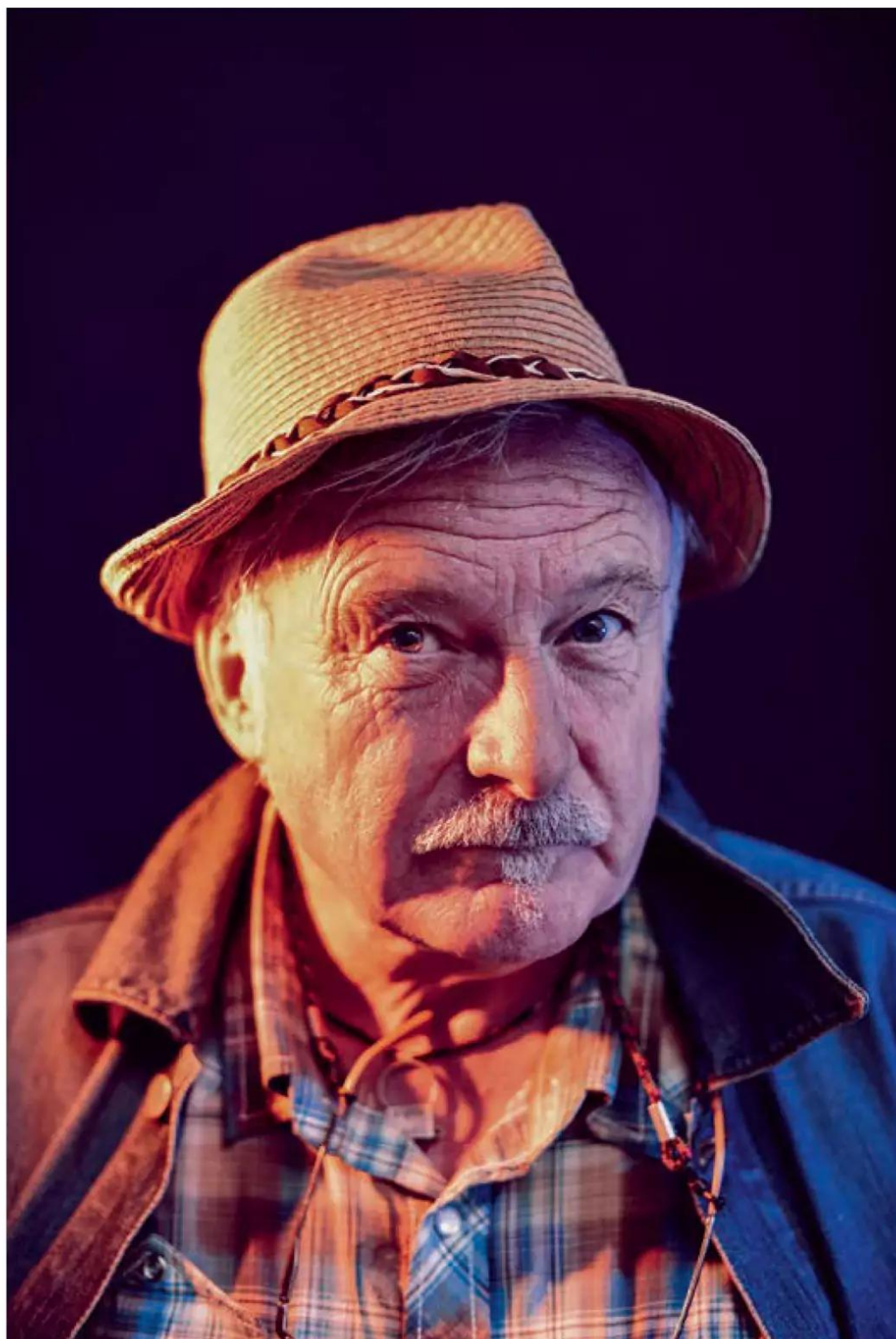
Experiment with positioning the flash at different angles – high for drama, low for a sense of mystery – and watch how the light plays across the scene. Don't be afraid to

get creative! Gels add a splash of colour or warmth, shoot-through umbrellas offer a softer alternative to bounce light, and grids control the spread for precise light shaping. With this understanding, you can craft the perfect illumination for your vision.

Below left: Shooting with long lenses or prime lenses wide open works great with off-camera flash

Below: This was shot with no natural light at all. Try using coloured gels for a dynamic lighting set-up

AP



THINGS TO TRY

Hopefully, I have convinced you to give off-camera flash a go and give you the tools to get stuck in. However, theory only gets you so far. Let's look at a few things you can try out that will help you create fantastic images and inspire your creativity.



Cinematic backlighting

Watch any good Hollywood blockbuster and take note of the positioning of the lights. Often, the lights are behind the subject and the part you are viewing is their face in shadow. It helps to create a cinematic-looking image. Try positioning your brightest light to the side of your subject, ensuring the part of the subject facing the camera is in shadow. You can add fill light to the face or check your ambient exposure is enough to ensure the shadow is not too dark.



Rim-lighting

If you have ever shot somebody or something in front of bright light, for example, sunshine, then you have experienced rim-lighting. The lighting technique illuminates the edges of a subject from behind, creating a glowing outline or halo effect, enhancing contours, and separating them from the background. Silhouettes are a great way to tell a story subtly.



Rear sync flash

When you use a slow shutter speed and rear sync flash, you capture the image on the sensor, and at the end of the exposure, your flash fires to add to it. This is great for bringing ambient light in and can be fantastic for capturing motion. At shutter speeds of 1/30sec or slower, flash freezes some of the action, but you will get blur from movement such as moving lights, cars, or people.



High-speed sync

Some flashes and cameras only sync to a maximum shutter speed of 1/250sec, but some allow you to sync much faster. HSS or High-Speed Sync is ideal for freezing motion, outdoor portraits with wide apertures, and balancing daylight exposure with flash. I love shooting portraits outdoors backlit by the sun while using the flash to illuminate the face. This usually requires a fast shutter speed.

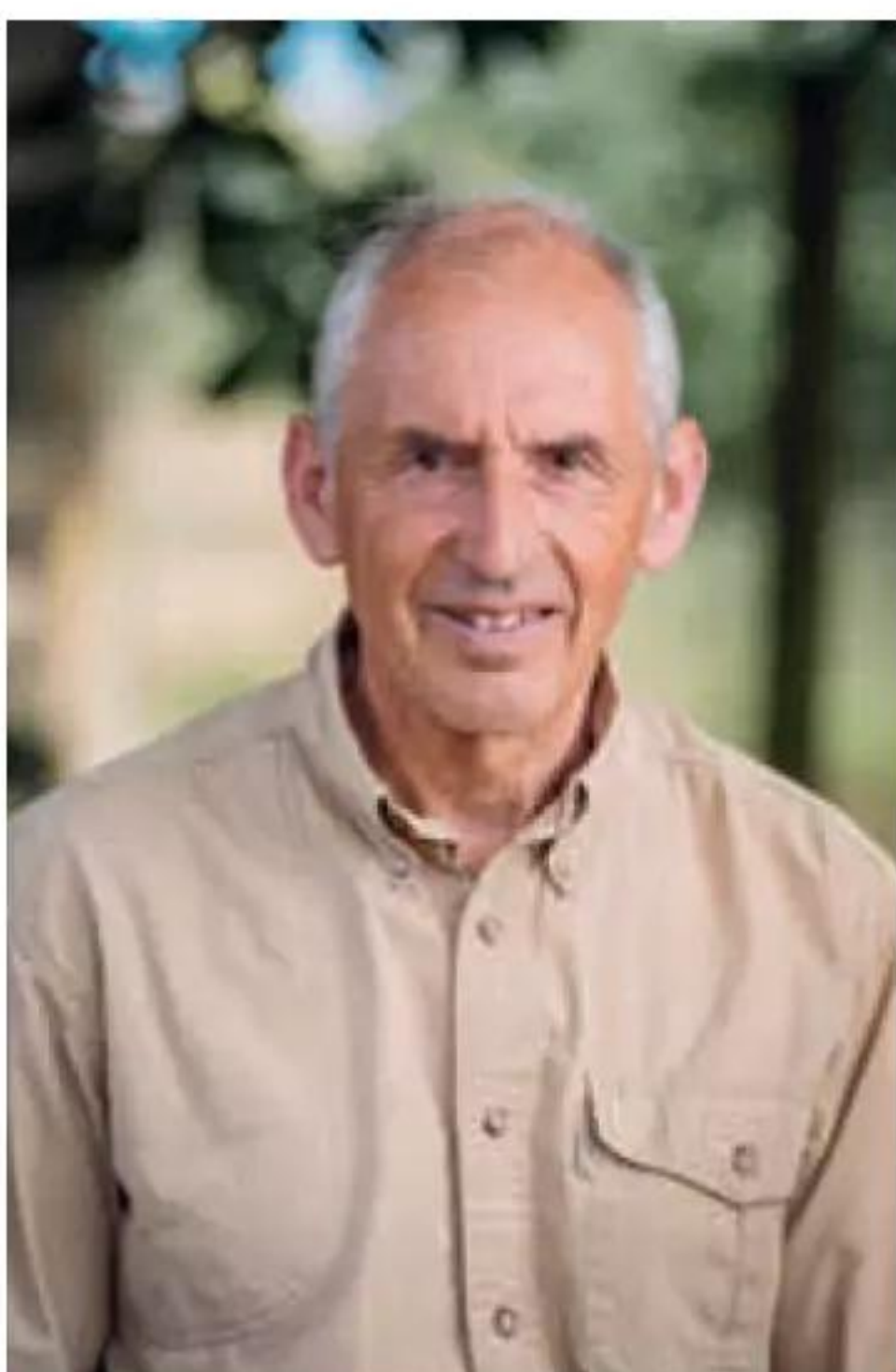


Events

Events can be dark with lots of interesting ambient light, whether it's coloured lighting or just very warm tungsten lighting. Using the rear sync flash technique is perfect in these situations. Put your camera in TV mode, use E TTL flash if you have it, and crank the ISO up as high as you dare. You can bring back the vibrance of the ambient light in the room and it doesn't look like it was blasted with flash.

Portraiture

Probably the first thing that comes to mind when you think of off-camera flash is studio light and portraiture. There are no rules when it comes to shooting this genre. Try shooting 45 degrees and slightly above your subject for nice contrasting light with flattering shadows. A white softbox or shoot-through umbrella will often create catchlights in the eyes, which make your portraits that much more engaging.



Food photography

Coloured gels over your flash can transform an image with vibrant hues and mood. They are perfect for creative portraits, abstract photography, or adding drama to a scene. Choose a gel colour that complements your subject or adds a contrasting pop. You can also use white balancing gels to make it look like a more natural light source. Place the gel-covered flash at different angles to see how the colour wash affects the scene.



Lighting from above

Lighting from above can create a dramatic and intense image. It can cast deep shadows and emphasise texture, so it's great for artistic or dramatic shots. For macro images, I think this works brilliantly. I would avoid it for portraiture generally unless you are photographing a tribute to *Bohemian Rhapsody*.



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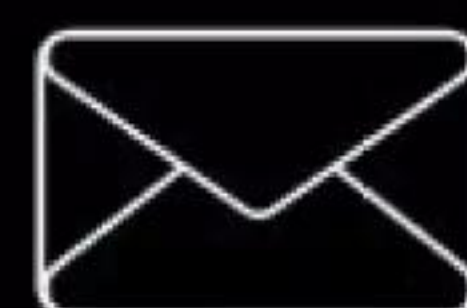
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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them

Asparagales

1 Creating images that are a little different permits me a moment of serenity in the midst of a busy and chaotic life. I feel the removal of colour from this set of images offers the viewer a moment too.

Canon EOS 6D, EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, 1/13sec at f/11, ISO 200



2



4



Carole Baker, Surrey

About Carole

In a busy life, Carole enjoys closing herself off from everyday distractions and getting creative with her camera. She shoots a range of subjects, but particularly enjoys making high-key black & white flower photos. See more of her work at www.creativecarole.com.

How and why did you get into photography?

I signed up for an evening class in 2014 (just one term) to take better pictures. I borrowed an old DSLR for the term, and it completely changed my world. Photography has allowed me to create, pause and capture moments in my life.

Favourite subjects

Anything and everything! The creation of an image is only finished, for me, with the actual printing. High-key images printed on cotton rag/heritage

paper is my favourite combination.

What do you love about photography?

The peace and relaxation of photography, just closing myself off from the world for a few hours. The freedom to play, to create, on my terms.

Where do you find inspiration?

Photography has made me view my world very differently. I definitely take more time to see the detail in things, especially nature. We all have amazing things to photograph on our doorsteps, we just need to take the time to look.

Favourite photographers

Rachael Talibart and Steve Le Prevost. Rachael Talibart was leading the very first workshop I attended and it was a game-changer for me. I discovered Steve Le Prevost later and his creativity makes me want to experiment and play much more.

What was your first camera?

A Canon EOS 700D.

Current camera kit

A Canon EOS 6D with lenses including an EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, an EF 24-105mm f/4L Macro IS USM and a Lensbaby Velvet 56.

Favourite lens

The EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM.

About your photos

Experimenting with high-key has been a fun way to enhance my skills and push my photographic boundaries. Originally intended as a colour portfolio, this set of black & white images are much more appealing to my creative side. They were all shot inside, purposely overexposed using a lightbox to achieve a high-key effect.

Favourite tips

Don't be afraid to break the photographic 'rules', because they are not really rules! Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. Push your kit and take the type of images that make you happy, not what is expected.

White Lisianthus

2 A beautiful, delicate flower. This b&w image offers an unusual, captivating perspective, allowing us to appreciate the flower without the distraction of colour. Canon 6D, EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, 1/8sec, f/16, ISO 800

Oxalis

4 This little garden flower always brings me joy when it appears. Even in b&w, it reminds me days will be longer, brighter and better. Canon 6D, EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, 1.3sec, f/22, ISO 200

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Submit your images

See page 3 for details of how to submit. You could see your photos here in a future issue! Please note: the prize is subject to change.

3



Bluebells

3 Bluebells are widely photographed for their colour, generally within a blanket-covered woodland area. The absence of colour for the bluebell gives focus to the delicate petals, perhaps conveying the calmness of the woodlands where they can be found.

Canon EOS 6D,
 Lensbaby Velvet 56,
 1/20sec at ISO 200

Sweetpea

5 This is one of my favourite garden flowers, and I think my favourite of the six images shown. In a world of bright and vibrant colours, which I choose to surround myself, removing the colour offers simplicity and purity.

Canon EOS 6D, EF
 24-105mm f/4L
 Macro IS USM, 2sec
 at f/22, ISO 400

Anemone

6 Absence of colour can create a sense of stillness and quietness, and I think removing the colour from this flower absolutely captures this quality. To take a moment to enjoy the details in this particular flower does allow a moment of stillness.

Canon EOS 6D, EF
 100mm f/2.8L macro
 IS USM, 1/13sec at
 f/11, ISO 200

5



6





Luís Ribeiro 100, Portugal

Meet the GuruShots winners

AP showcases the very best images sent in by GuruShots users on the theme of Photogenic

GURUSHOTS, the organisers of the world's greatest photography games and communities, recently challenged its users to send in their best images on the theme of Photogenic. *Amateur Photographer* is partnering with GuruShots and we are now pleased to publish the 18 highest ranked photographs by those who entered. Also, remember that you can view all the images that made it into the Top 500 at amateurphotographer.com

For more inspiring challenges to improve your photo skills and keep motivated, see gurushots.com



Binyamin ©©, Israel



Kuldeep Prkash Singh, India



Agnes Brunner, Hungary



Paweł Karczewski, Poland



Krystian Pszczola, Poland



Sanja Ristivojevic, United Arab Emirates



Aurelijus, Lithuania



Virgil Seger, United States



Tatiana Serova, Great Britain



Paolo Barozzi, Italy



Martina Herstusova, Czechia



Andrey Bogachev, Latvia



Johno Johnson, United Kingdom



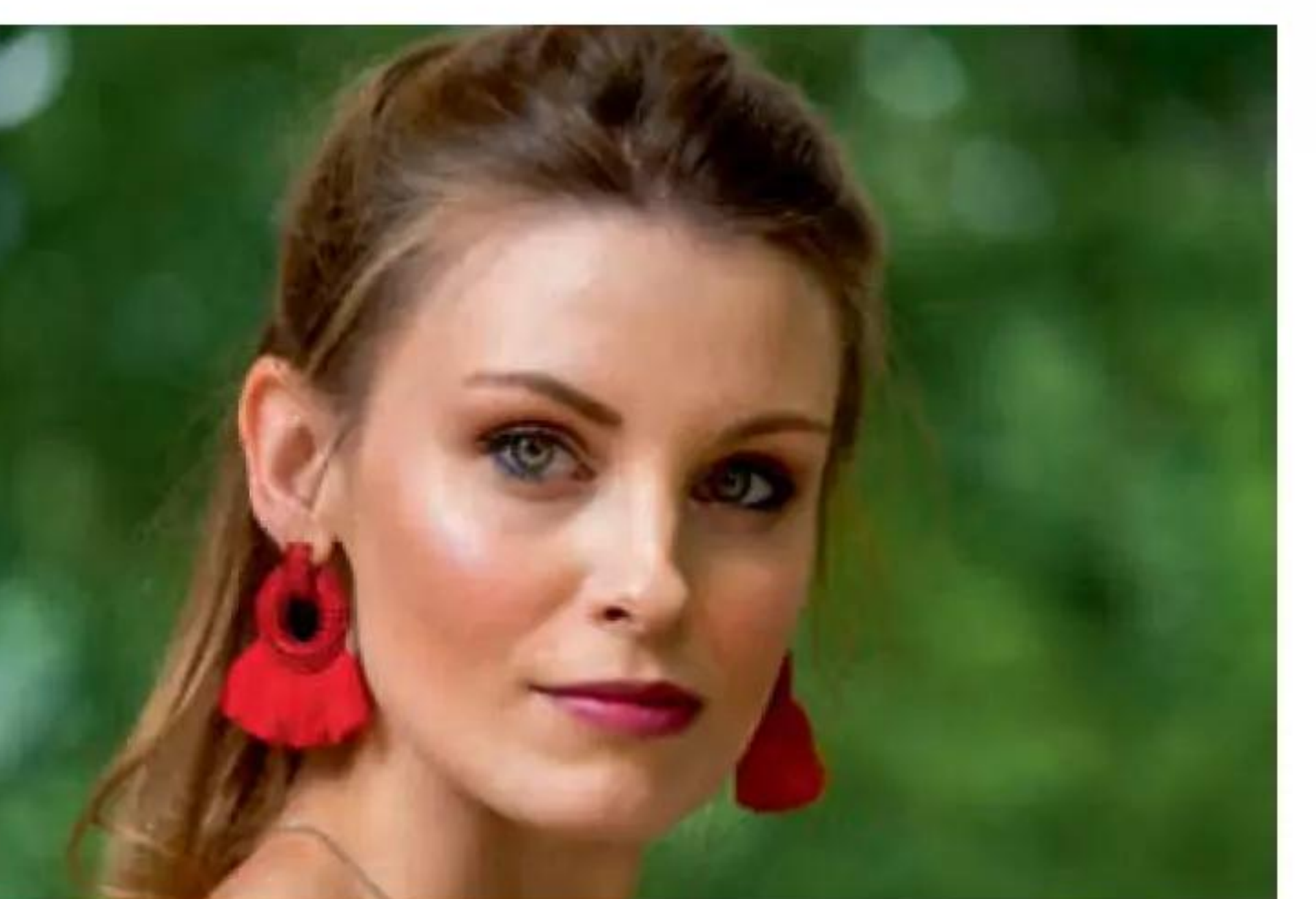
Simona L. Neumann, Romania



michaelwidmer, United States



Saša Josip Milec, Croatia



Valter Gallo, Italy



The International Man of Mystery, shot using the Kiev 4A. Wide open, the lens shows the expected softness

The Kiev 4A: a camera with history

This classic rangefinder camera offers an economical alternative to other, more famous, brands – but how good is it? **John Gilbey** takes a look

If you were growing up in the 1970s, rangefinder cameras from the Soviet Union were a popular route into photography. They were robust, cheap and had impressive optics if you got a good example – but reliability and quality control were very variable. Most of my friends had either a Zorki or a FED at some point, before graduating to a single lens reflex as we started earning more money. The Kiev 4A was less common and only appeared infrequently in the camera shop window. I didn't own a Kiev at the time – as an impoverished teenager I settled for a FED 3L – but I always wondered about

them, so when I saw one for sale for around £40 a few years ago I didn't hesitate to snap it up.

The Kiev 4A has a complicated background story which covers quite a bit of post-war European history, but here is the short version. At the end of the Second World War the Contax camera factory, which had been a major player in Germany during the 1930s, ended up under the control of the Soviet Union. There are various names for what happened next, but the practical upshot was that the production line for the well-known Contax II and III rangefinder cameras was dismantled and moved – along with the remaining components

and a number of key personnel – to Kiev in the Ukraine. Here, in the heart of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the plant was reassembled in the Arsenal factory and production restarted.

Over time, various incremental developments resulted in the Kiev 4A, which was sold well into the 1980s despite the basic design being over 50 years old at that point. This is a testament to the degree of innovation in the original Contax II design, which incorporated a number of features which made it really stand out when it first appeared.

Features and handling

If you are used to the current

classes of digital camera and pick up a Kiev 4A today, you notice a few things immediately. First is the weight: the construction is nearly all of metal and the body with a standard 50mm f/2 lens weighs in at 700g. Secondly it feels compact, with a much narrower, shallower body than a single lens reflex. Then there is the design, which is clever, uncluttered and fits well into your hands – but has a few features which are now remarkable. The companion camera, the Kiev 4, added a non-coupled selenium cell exposure meter on the top plate of the camera body. To me this looks awkward, and I prefer the



clean, slender lines of the 4A and the use of a handheld exposure meter. For improved handling the body is wrapped in black leatherette, which has survived much better than many of the moulded rubber grips which came after it.

The lens mounting of the Kiev 4A is a clone of the Contax rangefinder mount, which allows the use of a range of alternative lenses if you are lucky enough to find them. It is actually two mounts, arranged concentrically. The inner bayonet mount is used by lenses, principally the standard 50mm, which do not have their own focusing helicoid – it is built into the mount. The

wide outer bayonet mount is available for lenses which have their own focusing thread built into them.

So far, so weird – but it gets better. The front of the body is dominated by two rangefinder windows, set as far apart as the size of the chassis will allow. This long baseline gives a very accurate focusing mechanism, which is effective even in very low light conditions. The combined viewfinder/rangefinder port on the rear of the body is very small by modern standards, and takes some getting used to, especially if you wear glasses. Focusing is carried out either by turning the lens itself, or the small, knurled

wheel on the top right of the body near the shutter release. Looking through the viewfinder, you'll see that the centre of the view has a tinted element where the second rangefinder image is

superimposed. Adjust the focus until the two images merge into one, and the subject will be sharp. Simple and effective. One 'feature' to watch is the tab which pops up



The top plate is unusually clean and uncluttered



The single-coated lens is vulnerable to flare

spare to receive the exposed film, which can fit where the removable take-up spool would usually sit. This means that the film you have shot is protected if you open the back in error, and this might appeal especially to those who bulk load their films. Occasionally, you'll come across a Kiev for sale which is missing the take-up spool for this reason, so always check before you buy. Getting the camera reassembled is trickier than getting the back off, and you have to be very careful to ensure that the pressed metal back engages correctly with the guides on the body. It is worryingly easy to get the angles wrong, and leave the back slightly out of alignment, resulting in light leaks which ruin the film. Please don't ask me how I know this.

The standard lens for the Kiev 4A is a Jupiter 8M. This lens is a 50mm f/2 Sonnar design, originally from the early 1930s, made up of six elements in three groups, and is a very interesting optic to work with. Wide open it has some softness, which gives a great period feel to the images it captures. When stopped down to – say – f/5.6 or f/8, the images are crisper, more contrasty and well defined. The lens is single-coated and will stop down as far as f/22, while the body of the lens is a fairly soft metal alloy, so you need to take reasonable care of it to avoid damaging the finish. You can have a lot of fun with this lens, and a range of others are available if you'd like to experiment further. The Contax rangefinder family was a true system, with lots of interesting

➤ behind the focusing wheel when the lens is set to infinity. This locks the focus, and needs to be pressed down in order for the lens to be focused at any other distance. This helpful aid has probably cost me more lost images than any other aspect of the design.

The shutter is intriguing – a vertical run, metal-bladed focal plane unit which looks not unlike a Venetian blind. Shutter speeds on offer run from half a second to an impressive 1/1250th of a second, plus a brief time (B) setting. I haven't measured these timings directly, but the relative exposures look about right, and that is what counts to me. The shutter is tensioned when the film is wound on, and the shutter speeds are set with a lift-and-drop dial on the film winder. Unlike some other focal plane shutters, it is possible to set the shutter speed whether the

shutter is tensioned or not – but I have noticed occasional issues with setting the speed and then winding on, so I suggest you set the speed after tensioning. Press the shutter release, which is in the centre of the film wind knob, and you get the characteristic 'Zzt...' sound of the Contax-designed shutter firing – a sound familiar from several Hollywood films featuring photojournalists, including *High Society*. The Kiev 4A adds a standard PC flash sync socket on the front panel and has a cold accessory shoe on the top panel of the body, while the shutter release is threaded for a standard cable release. There is a frame counter on the top panel, near the film advance knob, but it needs to be reset manually when you load the film. A spring-driven delayed release on the front panel rounds off the features.

The back of the camera is removed completely for film

loading. Lift the two heavily chromed tabs on the base of the body, rotate them through 180 degrees and the back slides downwards. Here, the Kiev 4A offers another unusual option: you can use two 35mm film cassettes if you choose – the one containing the fresh film and a



Removing the back reveals an unusual shutter curtain design

accessories, many of which will work with the Kiev 4A. Last, but not least, this is definitely the cheapest way of buying a classic Sonnar design lens!

Out in the street

When it came to testing, I figured that the right place to explore the usability of the Kiev 4A is out in the street where it belongs, like its Contax predecessors which were so very popular with photojournalists. With its Cold War connections, I thought it would be fun to do an espionage-based shoot to collect images for a spy thriller story I haven't written yet – in which I pursue a mysterious figure around town and capture pictures of him as I go. The bleak winter streets of Aberystwyth stood in very well for a destination behind the Iron Curtain, and they were definitely the right temperature for East Berlin. I obtained the services of my son, and fellow photographer,

Alex as an appropriately costumed International Man of Mystery, in exchange for the offer of lunch and a pint.

The compact body and quiet shutter of the Kiev made for some nicely inconspicuous photography, and I don't think anyone noticed that I wasn't using a retro-styled digital compact system camera. Using a handheld meter made exposure decisions easy, even in the very variable weather of west Wales. The viewfinder and rangefinder combination works well in a wide range of light conditions, and makes focusing in low light very easy – especially where you have a well-defined feature to focus on. Loaded up with Ilford HP5 Plus, for a bit more gritty realism, the shutter speed kept well within the handheld range even in deep shade – while the fast f/2 lens gave me the chance to open up the aperture and blur the background without needing any

The Jupiter 8M lens can render a lot of detail



help from an app or digital filter.

I had expected the lack of lever-wind to slow down the speed at which I could work, but even in the very cold conditions I could get a frame off every couple of seconds. I must admit that I missed the big, bright viewfinder of an SLR, but the overall user experience was very positive, with the camera not getting in the way of the process and not causing distractions.

Verdict

As with many of the Soviet-era cameras, the Kiev 4A is robust but has some issues with the quality and refinement of its manufacture. My example is from 1975, and has survived remarkably well, but occasionally has issues associated with the fit and connectivity of components – so that sometimes things that shouldn't move do so, and things that should move, don't. There again, I purchased it second-hand at a low price and have no real

idea how it had been treated.

Like any old camera, especially an all-mechanical one, my advice is to test it before purchase if possible and ensure that you can return it to the vendor if it doesn't make the grade. This should include a test film, as I have noticed some fairly major differences in image quality between apparently identical examples of the same lens.

For me, the most important thing about the Kiev 4A is that it is great fun to use, giving you a truly retro photography experience at a very affordable price. If that is what you are looking for, and can't summon up the cash for a Contax, Leica or Nikon rangefinder, go right ahead and buy a Kiev – then use it to explore a classic form of photography, and enjoy the journey.

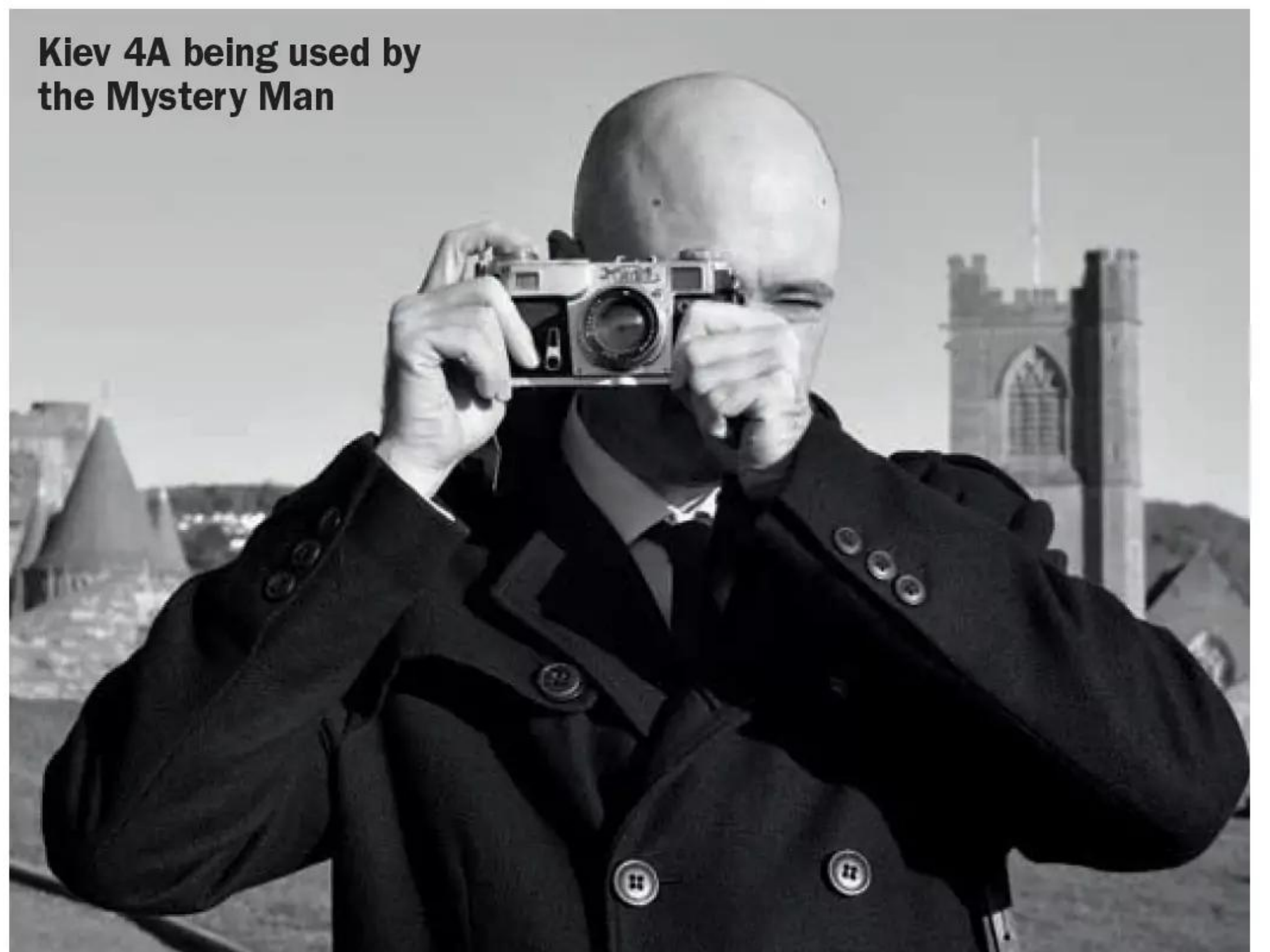
AP

John Gilbey is a writer and photographer based in west Wales. He tweets as @John_Gilbey.

Some natural motion blur adds atmosphere to this image

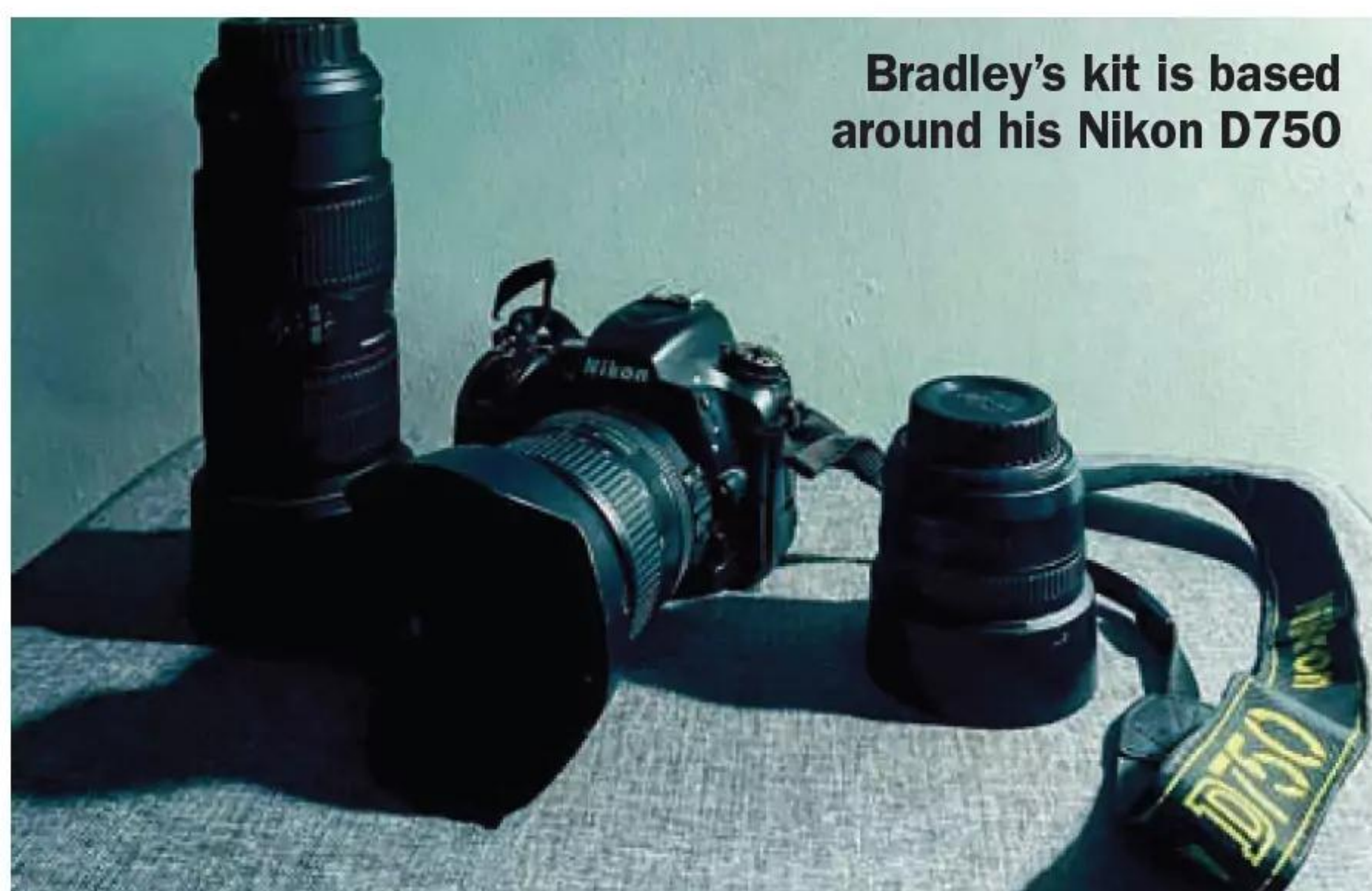


Kiev 4A being used by the Mystery Man



Bradley Langton

Lancashire-based photographer Bradley Langton tells AP why he couldn't be without his trusty **Nikon D750**



Bradley's kit is based around his Nikon D750

whilst dipping my feet into the world of animal and wildlife photography, as well as other forms of transportation such as aviation and motorsport.

AP: If we were to take a look in your bag, what would we find?

BL: Typically, you'd find my D750 body and three lenses. These include a 24-120mm f/4, 50mm f/1.4 prime, and a 70-200mm f/4, alongside various charging cables and a bottle of ketchup because you never know when it might be needed.

AP: Is there one item of kit you couldn't live without?

BL: The D750 is an awesome bit of kit that I would never let go of. Despite being a tad on the bulky side, it has proven to be brilliant for everyday photography and my personal needs, with the bonus of delivering the level of high ISO performance I need at night. I am certain that whenever I choose to upgrade, my D750 will be a great backup camera to fall back on.

AP: How long have you owned it?

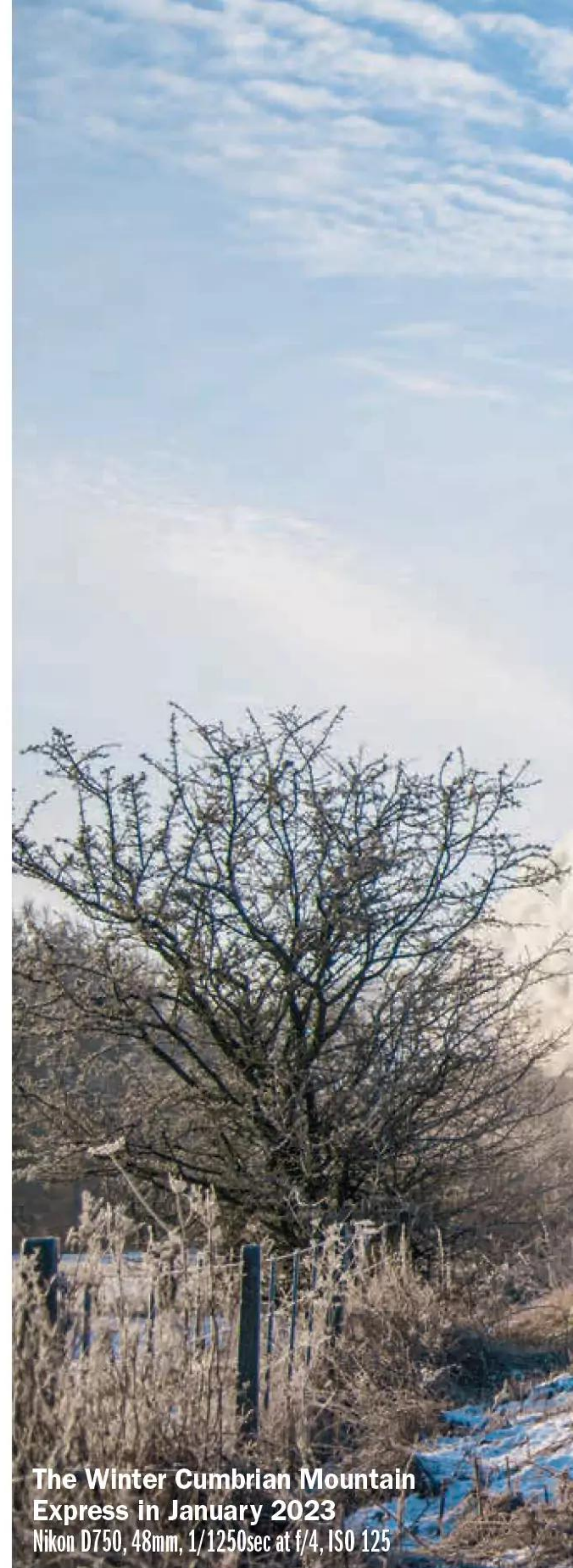
BL: I bought my D750 from new in May 2020 with a bundled 24-120mm lens. My dream camera has always been the Nikon D850, however the D750 seemed like a



AP: Tell us about your photography background

BL: Having grown up with an interest in railways, photography started as a method of recording what I saw from days out and trips to my local foot crossing. As the years passed, my interest slowly shifted into the photography aspect of the hobby, and since my first subscription of Adobe Lightroom and realising how engaging and fun photo editing can be, I began taking photography more seriously from 2018 onwards. My first camera was a Fujifilm bridge compact that I had throughout 2016 until I was able to upgrade to the Nikon D3300, and then more recently in 2020 to a Nikon D750 which I'm still using today. I am continuing to be the best railway photographer I can be,

Bradley Langton has been a photographer for seven years and lives in Blackburn, Lancashire. For more of his work see www.facebook.com/LangtonPhotography and follow him on [Instagram @langtonphotography_brad](https://www.instagram.com/langtonphotography_brad)



The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express in January 2023
Nikon D750, 48mm, 1/1250sec at f/4, ISO 125

more affordable alternative that shared similarities to the D850, including its excellent ability to capture high-quality, low-noise images in low light conditions – something I struggled to achieve on my old Nikon D3300.

AP: Can you elaborate about how you find the D750





performs in use?

BL: It performs faultlessly and is perfect for my needs. It is the camera behind some of my most successful and most recognisable photographs that I've taken. My main subject is railway photography and the D750 allows me to be comfortable and ready for anything, whether that be a steam locomotive powering

Below from left: The Red Arrows at Blackpool in August 2023; Ibis, a male lion at Chester Zoo; an LNER Intercity 225 pulling away from London King's Cross Station

through a dimly lit station at night, or the French TGV high-speed train travelling past the lens at more than 180mph. I am yet to come across a situation where the camera lets me down.

AP: Is there a standout photograph you've taken using the D750?

BL: I'm particularly pleased with a photo I took in 2021 of an LNER Intercity train pulling away from London King's Cross, which was reflected in a puddle left behind by some cleaning equipment (see left). The image won first place at a photography competition held at the National Railway Museum in York in 2022 and was displayed in the Great Hall throughout the following year.

AP: Have you identified any weaknesses or disadvantages?

BL: A common and well-known disadvantage of full-frame DSLRs is

their weight and size, particularly with a big telephoto lens attached. Whilst it is on the bulky side and does reduce the number of items you can put in a bag, I have not found any other weaknesses or reasons to fault the camera after a couple of years of regular use.

AP: Do you have any plans to replace or upgrade your kit?

BL: I have no plans to replace or upgrade my kit, other than to build my current F-mount lens collection. I am very happy and content with the set-up I have, but if I were to upgrade, I would move to mirrorless and Nikon's Z series.

AP: What do you think your kit will look like in the future?

BL: In the future I would like to branch out in the subjects I photograph and continue to build my kit bag of different lenses preparing me for anything I choose to point my camera at.



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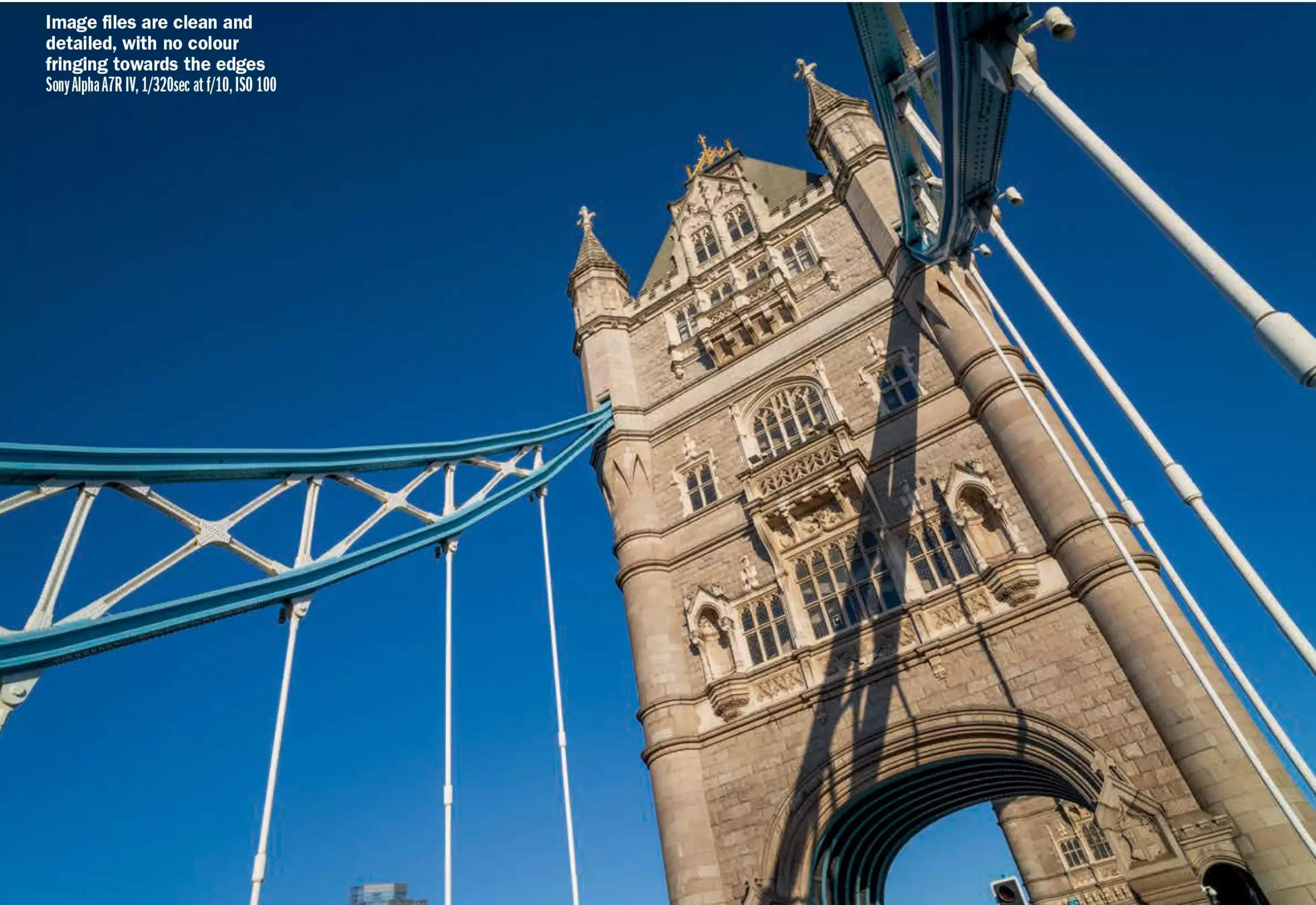
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Image files are clean and detailed, with no colour fringing towards the edges
Sony Alpha A7R IV, 1/320sec at f/10, ISO 100



Viltrox AF 20mm F2.8 FE

This wideangle prime for Sony full-frame cameras is startlingly cheap, but does this mean it's overly compromised? **Andy Westlake** finds out



One of the attractions of mirrorless systems has always been the promise of smaller and lighter cameras and lenses, especially wideangles. The Viltrox AF 20mm F2.8 FE is, perhaps, a case in point. It's a remarkably small wideangle prime for Sony E-mount full-frame mirrorless cameras, that measures less than 6cm long and weighs a

mere 157g. It's also astonishingly cheap – it can be bought from the firm's online store for around £125, including free shipping.

To put this bargain-basement price into context, we only have to look at the competition. The closest alternative is the Tamron 20mm F/2.8 Di III OSD Macro, which focuses closer but is rather larger, and costs £299. There's also the Samyang AF 18mm F2.8

FE, which is similar in size and weight for £345. We'd usually consider both of these lenses very affordable, but the Viltrox is a fraction of the price.

With its 20mm focal length, this lens looks like an incredibly tempting option for anyone who'd like to complement a standard zoom with something a bit wider. It could be especially interesting for travel photographers who

enjoy shooting subjects such as landscapes, architecture, or interiors, and might also be ideal for vloggers. But given the low price, can it really be any good?

Features

On paper, one area where Viltrox doesn't appear to have skimped lies with the optics. The AF 20mm F2.8 FE employs 10 elements in 8 groups,



The lens offers a usefully wider view than most standard zooms
 Sony Alpha A7R IV, 1/6sec at f/4, ISO 400

including two made from extra-low dispersion (ED) glass and one from high refractive-index (HR) glass to minimise chromatic aberrations. Two aspherical elements are also on board in a bid to maximise corner-to-corner sharpness. The firm's HD Nano multilayer coating is employed to suppress flare and ghosting, while the front element is treated to a water-repellent coating.

The aperture diaphragm is formed of 7 blades, with no real

effort made to deliver a rounded opening for attractive bokeh. But this makes sense, as you're rarely going to get much in the way of background blur anyway.

Focusing is internal, driven by a stepper motor. The minimum focusing distance is just 19cm, which delivers 0.17x maximum magnification. Filter users are accommodated via a 52mm thread, and a bayonet fitting, petal-shaped hood is supplied.

One neat feature is a USB-C port embedded into the lens

mount, which is used for updating the firmware. Connect the lens to your computer, and it'll show up as a USB drive. All you have to do is download the latest firmware file from the Viltrox website and copy it across; the lens then automatically updates itself. It's an easy, pain-free process.

Build and handling

In design terms, the Viltrox AF 20mm F2.8 FE is little more than a plastic-skinned cylinder with a metal mount. There's just a single control, with the manual focus ring covering almost half of the barrel and rotating smoothly with no end-stops.

Despite its light weight, the lens doesn't feel particularly fragile. It's an agreeable companion to both Sony's SLR-shaped full-frame cameras, and the smaller A6000-series APS-C models, on which it gives a 30mm equivalent view. Just be aware that there's no weather-sealing, so be careful with it in wet or dusty conditions.

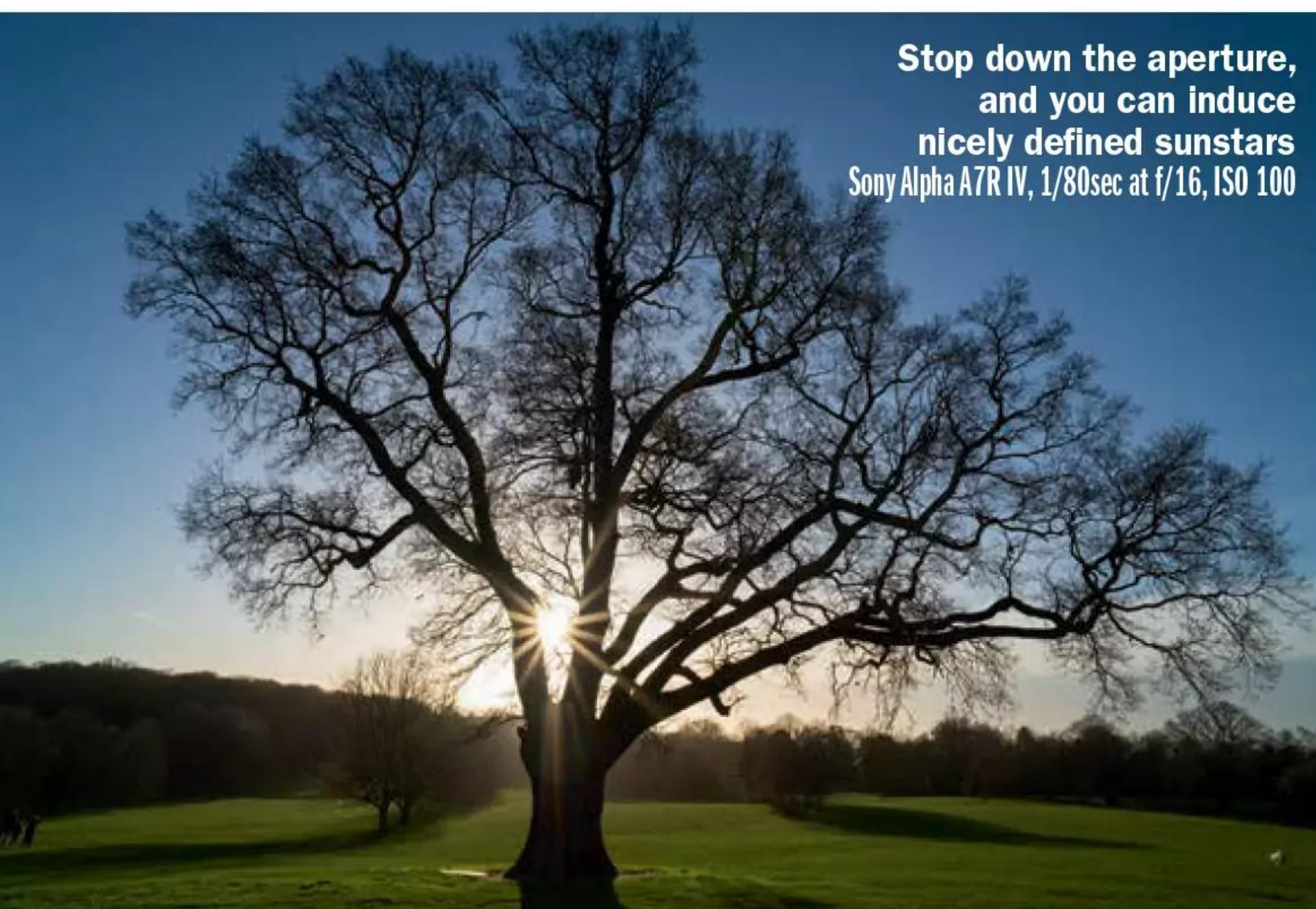
About my only handling quibble is that the hood doesn't click very firmly into place, and occasionally I found that the hood had worked itself loose in my bag.

Autofocus

Unusually, autofocus performance depends dramatically on the camera you use. With recent Sony cameras such as the 33MP Alpha A7 IV, there's absolutely nothing to complain about, with AF being snappy and decisive. However, I mostly used it the slightly older A7R IV, on which it's shockingly slow. Not only does it take a second or more to acquire focus, but it often fails completely in low light. I wouldn't even consider using it in AF-C.

This is by far the worst performance I've experienced from any lens on the A7R IV, which is still a current model. Autofocus is even worse on older cameras such the A7 II. It's clear that the difference lies with the focus method being used; newer cameras are able to use phase detection, while older ones fall back on contrast detection instead. It's possible that a firmware update could fix this problem, but until then, it's very much a case of buyer beware.

To be fair, we also have to consider how much the slow AF on older cameras actually matters for many of the lens's likely subjects. Landscapes and



Stop down the aperture, and you can induce nicely defined sunstars
 Sony Alpha A7R IV, 1/80sec at f/16, ISO 100



On older cameras, autofocus is painfully slow and hesitant, but ultimately accurate
Sony Alpha A7 II, 1/30sec at f/8, ISO 100

buildings, for example, are usually happy to wait. On the other hand, it would be useless for any kind of moving subject.

Thankfully on those occasions where autofocus fails, manual focus works well. The focus ring is smooth and precise, enabling critically accurate focusing. If you enable MF Assist, rotating the focus ring will automatically call up a magnified view for most accurate results. In addition, the lens is compatible with Sony's Direct Manual Focus (DMF) mode, which allows the focus to be adjusted manually after AF.

On a more positive note, the autofocus is at least very quiet. Viltrox has also done a good job of suppressing focus breathing. The angle of view narrows a little on focusing closer, but it's only noticeable if you really go looking for it.

Performance

Of course, the real question with the Viltrox AF 20mm F2.8 FE is just what this low-cost lens can deliver in terms of optical quality. In this respect, it probably shouldn't come as any great surprise to find that it doesn't perform as well as pricier alternatives. But that doesn't mean it's not capable of producing sharp images, especially when stopped down to normal working apertures.

Wide open at f/2.8, the middle of the image is impressively crisp. But this central zone of sharpness doesn't extend very far outwards, with the edges and corners looking distinctly blurred when you examine images onscreen. In night scenes, off-centre point light sources such as streetlights show pronounced coma distortion into diamond shapes. In part, this is down to fairly strong curvature of field, so if your main point of interest is well off centre it's best to position the focus point accordingly.

Stop down the aperture, and the zone of central sharpness expands progressively. There's still some softness visible in the corners at f/5.6, but it's unlikely to be problematic in most real-world shots. Once you reach f/8 to f/11, the lens renders fine detail all the way across the frame, even on the 60MP A7R IV – and these are arguably the apertures you'll be using most of the time anyway. There's inevitably a little diffraction softening at f/16, but that will often be an entirely acceptable trade-off when you need extended depth of field.

Chromatic aberration is corrected automatically, both in-camera and by Adobe raw processing software. This means images look nice and clean, with

no problematic colour fringing towards the edges of the frame. As for vignetting, rather abrupt darkening of the far corners is visible at f/2.8, which can look distinctly unattractive in plainly toned areas such as blue skies. But it goes away on stopping down to f/5.6.

When it comes to distortion, uncorrected raw files show a complex pattern, with mild barrel distortion in the centre, but quite pronounced pincushion-type outward stretching at the corners. With in-camera correction set to Auto, as you need to have set for most lenses, this wavy effect actually gets more pronounced in the camera's JPEG output. Even so, it's only likely to be visible when shooting images with long straight lines, most obviously architecture or seascapes.

Flare can be more problematic than with pricier optics, with a distinct loss of contrast sometimes visible in parts of the image when shooting into the light. Often, though, you can see this in the viewfinder and take appropriate countermeasures, by shielding the front element from the sun with your hand. Stop the lens down to f/11, and you can induce quite attractive 14-ray sunstar effects around point light sources within the frame.

Verdict

VILTROX may not be the first name that springs to mind when thinking about lens makers, but it's clear the firm is intent on breaking into the mainstream market. With the AF 20mm F2.8 FE, it's produced a lens that's sure to appeal strongly to budget-conscious users of Sony's A7 cameras. Its wideangle view makes it a perfect complement to a standard zoom, and nothing comparable can come close to matching its bargain price.

Optically, it's very much a case of you get what you pay for. If you're hoping for pin-sharp corners at f/2.8 from such a cheap lens then, well, think again. But if you keep its limitations in mind and work accordingly, it can deliver very respectable results. After all, landscape photographers will likely be shooting at f/8 or smaller as a matter of course.

The one real confounding factor lies with autofocus. It's absolutely fine on the latest Sony bodies, but terrible on older ones. So everything depends on which camera you use, and whether you need a 20mm lens to focus rapidly or not. Unfortunately, those people using older, cheaper cameras are arguably the most likely to consider buying it.

Purely because of this, the lens is difficult to recommend unreservedly to everyone. For owners of older Sony models, it's in dire need of a firmware update. But for those with the latest cameras, it's an absolute bargain.

Data file

Price £125	Minimum focus 19cm
Filter diameter 52mm	Length 59.5mm
Lens elements 10	Diameter 65mm
Groups 8	Weight 157g
Diaphragm blades 7	Lens mount Sony E
Aperture f/2.8 - f/16	Included accessories Caps, hood, pouch



Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
★★★★

AP

The Heat Company Heat 2 Softshell Gloves

These gloves keep your hands warm yet let you get your fingers on your camera quickly. **Angela Nicholson** pulled them on

● £61.20 ● www.theheatcompany.com

The Heat Company was started in the Austrian Alps in 1994. Today it produces gloves, warmers and insoles designed to keep outdoor enthusiasts warm. This includes an extensive array of gloves and mittens to suit different conditions.

The firm's Heat 2 Softshell gloves combine fingerless gloves and mittens, with a flip-top to keep your fingers warm when you're not using your camera. They are designed for 'transition' seasons, and after wearing them, I'd say that translates to all but the most extreme winter days in the UK.

As you'd expect, the Heat 2 Softshell gloves are made from wind- and water-repellent material, with a goatskin palm, and they're lined with soft, cosy fleece that's very welcoming on your hands when you pull them on. A pocket inside the mitten tops can also hold a hand warmer to add extra heat when the mercury drops. That's a great idea because it means the heat is there for your fingers after they've been exposed to the elements.

Thanks to a long, knitted cuff, the Heat 2 gloves keep your wrists warm, but I find this needs to be pulled firmly up under my coat sleeves; otherwise, the gloves slip down over my hands. This slippage is more of an issue when the mitten caps are pulled over my fingers because they extend too far beyond my fingertips, reducing my dexterity.

A flip-back top on the glove's thumbs means you can also get your thumbs directly onto your camera. This cap is held in place by Velcro, so you can't just wriggle your thumbs out, you have to peel back the caps. This is fiddly with the mitten caps in place, but it only takes a second when your fingers are free. Helpfully, there are magnets to hold the mitten and thumb caps out of the way while you use your camera. These are more effective than the magnets on Vallerret photography gloves.

Fingerless gloves can be awkward to remove, but thanks to loops between the fingers of the Heat 2 Softshell gloves, you can pull them off in a jiffy.

Verdict

The Heat Company's Heat 2 Softshell Gloves offer an excellent combination of a fingerless glove and mitten, with the internal handwarmer pocket making them ideal for photographers braving cooler conditions. The design means it's easy to switch between protecting your full hand and freeing your fingers and thumbs to operate your camera, while magnets keep the flip-top covers out of the way.



Magnets

Magnets hold back the mitten top and thumb cover.

Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★★

Pull loops

Loops between the fingers make the glove easy to pull off.

Three sizes

The Heat 2 Softshell gloves are available in three sizes, 7, 9 and 10.

Wind and water-repellent

The wind and water-repellent fabric protects your hands.



At a glance

- Fingerless glove and mitten in one
- Goatskin palm
- Thinsulate insulation
- Inside handwarmer pocket

LINERS

The Heat Company offers a range of nine liner gloves that can be worn under the Heat 2 Softshell gloves if the conditions demand it. The Merino Liner Light tubes (£26.10) make a good choice because they don't cover your fingers or thumbs but have a handwarmer pocket on their back.





Tony Kemplen on the ... Hanimex Snap Shooter

A simple-to-use disc camera that fits in the palm of the hand

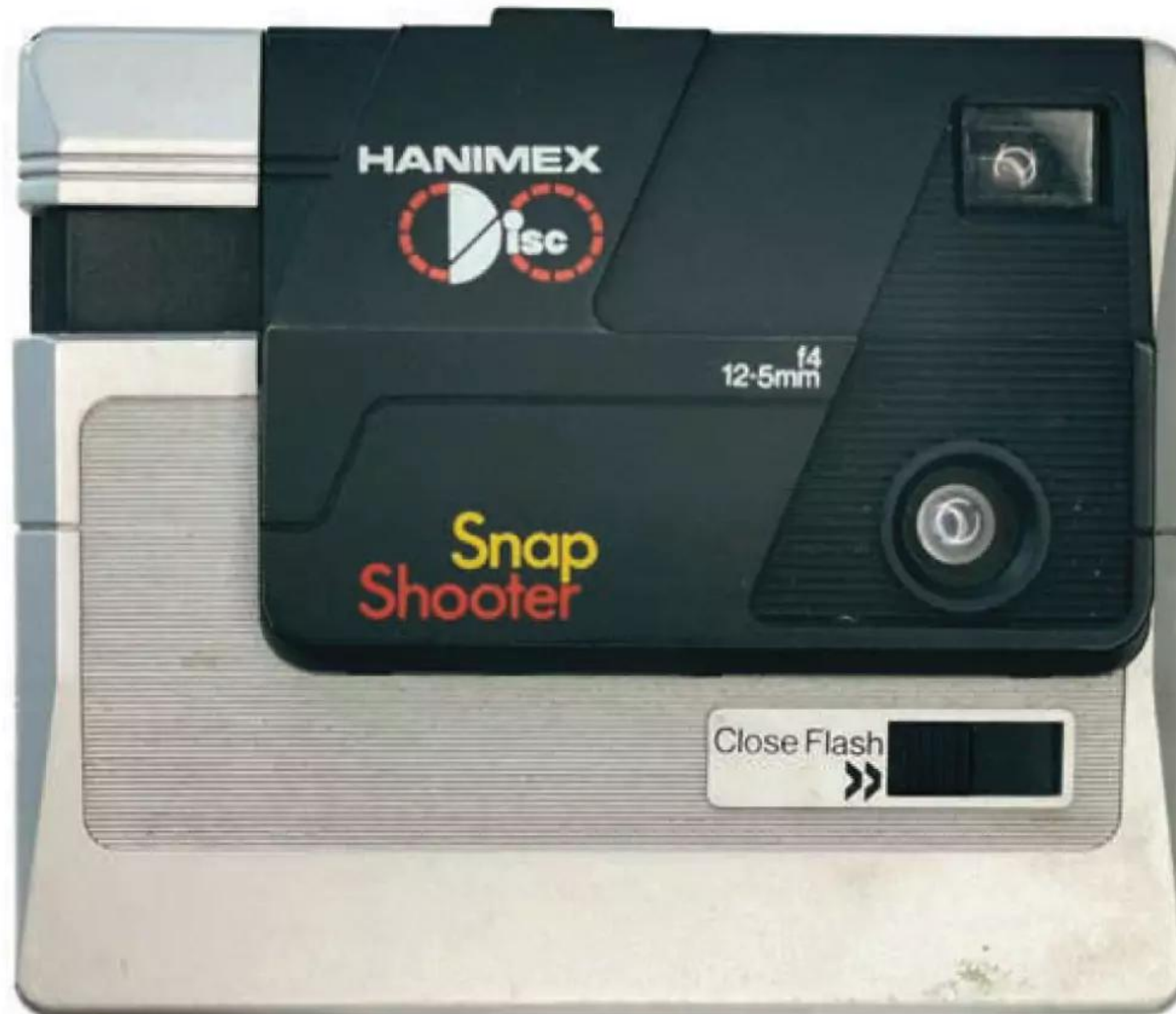
Disc cameras were a short-lived phenomenon introduced in 1982. Unlike most other cameras, which used rolls of film, they utilised a stiff circle of photosensitised acetate, which had the capacity for 15 exposures. The negatives were tiny and the quality was dire. Large numbers were made, and large numbers were discarded after a few years. At one time no self-respecting charity shop was without at least one disc camera, generally priced at a pound or less. They were by this time neither use nor ornament, though to be fair there were one or two models that would not look out of place in a display case.

Disc cameras were last made in 1990. With the last films rolling off the production line in 1999, the days of being able to use any of the cameras are definitely numbered. Unlike some other obsolete formats, there's no practical way of using anything other than a genuine disc. Inevitably supplies are dwindling, with only a handful being listed on eBay at the time of writing.

The Hanimex Snap Shooter fits in the palm of the hand, and takes no effort to operate. A simple plunger serves to both advance the film and fire the shutter in a single stroke, a



The tiny disc film frame with its surrounding markings



Like most disc cameras, the Snap Shooter has a flat, square design

system that could almost have been designed to maximise the risk of camera shake. The f/4 lens had a focal length of 12.5mm, which sounds quite wide, but when you take into account the small size of the negative it equates to around 40mm on a 35mm camera.

My particular example has a faulty shutter; it remains open as long as the release is depressed, effectively putting the camera in a permanent 'B' mode. I decided to exploit this fault by using my Snap Shooter on bonfire night at a local fireworks display. I was able to make exposures of several seconds, and while the results won't draw any delighted oohs and aahs from the crowds, they have certainly captured the clichéd starburst.

If you develop your own films, discs are simple, you just pop them straight in a developing

tank with no need for fiddly manoeuvring onto a reel or other holder. Similarly, scanning just involves laying the disc on a flatbed scanner. I like to also do a reflective scan, which I can combine with the film scan to show both the photos and the surrounding disc.

The inclusion of edge markings on film photos is a fashion which has come and gone over the years, but seems to be quite popular at the moment. Most smartphones will have a built-in filter to add edge markings to your shots, with varying degrees of authenticity. Generally they are fairly discreet, like notes in the margin, but with the tiny negatives that disc film produces, the hefty numbers and barcodes certainly make their presence felt. In this case they are arguably more interesting than the main subject!

Tony Kemplen's love of photography began as a teenager and ever since he has been collecting cameras with a view to testing as many as he can. You can follow his progress on his 52 Cameras blog at 52cameras.blogspot.co.uk. See more of Tony's photos at www.flickr.com/photos/tony_kemplen/

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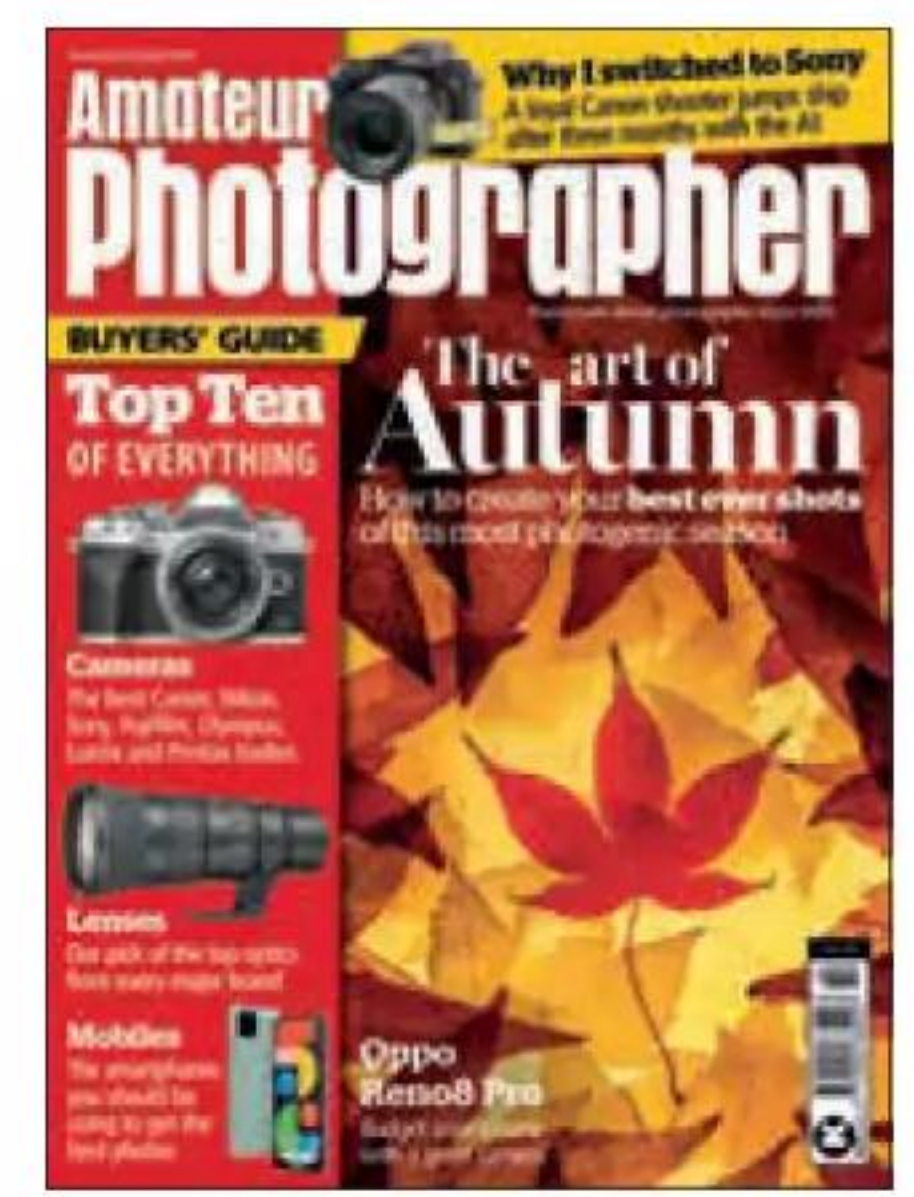


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Buying Guide

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lenses
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Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for mirrorless lenses

Lenses

Interchangeable lenses come in a huge array of types for shooting different kinds of subjects

IN GENERAL, the easiest way to expand the kinds of pictures you can take is by buying different types of lenses. For example, telephoto lenses let you zoom in on distant subjects, while macro lenses enable close-ups of small objects. Large-aperture lenses allow you to isolate subjects against blurred backgrounds, or shoot in low light without having to raise the ISO too high. Meanwhile, all-in-one superzooms cover a wide range of subjects, but usually with rather lower optical quality.



Lens mounts

On the whole, each manufacturer uses its own proprietary lens mount. Notable exceptions are Micro Four Thirds, shared by Olympus and Panasonic, and the full-frame L-mount that's used by Leica, Panasonic and Sigma.

Built-in focus motor

Lenses for mirrorless cameras invariably use built-in motors for autofocus, which are also used for electronic manual focusing. Silent, video-friendly stepper motors are most commonly employed. Manual-focus optics with traditional aperture rings are also widely available.

Filter thread

A thread at the front of the camera will have a diameter, in mm, which will allow you to attach a variety of filters or adapters to the lens.

Maximum aperture

Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds.

OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

AF Nikon AF lenses driven from camera	DC Sigma's lenses for APS-C digital	ED Extra-low Dispersion elements	LM Fujifilm Linear Motor	SP Tamron's Super Performance range
AF-S Nikon lenses with Silent Wave Motor	DG Sigma's designation for full-frame lenses	EF Canon's lenses for full-frame DSLRs	MP-E Canon's high-magnification macro lens	SSM Sony Supersonic Motor lenses
AF-P Nikon lenses with stepper motors	DI Tamron lenses for full-frame sensors	EF-S Canon's lenses for APS-C DSLRs	OIS Optical Image Stabilisation	STF Sony and Laowa Smooth Trans Focus
AL Pentax lenses with aspheric elements	DI-II Tamron lenses designed for APS-C DSLRs	EF-M Canon's lenses for APS-C mirrorless	OS Sigma's Optically Stabilised lenses	STM Canon lenses with stepper motor
APD Fujifilm lenses with apodisation elements	DI-III Tamron lenses for mirrorless cameras	EX Sigma's 'Excellent' range	PC-E Nikon tilt-and-shift lenses	TS-E Canon Tilt-and-Shift lens
APO Sigma Apochromatic lenses	DN Sigma's lenses for mirrorless cameras	FA Pentax full-frame lenses	PF Nikon Phase Fresnel optics	UMC Ultra Multi Coated
ASPH Aspherical elements	DO Canon diffractive optical element lenses	FE Sony lenses for full-frame mirrorless	PZD Tamron Piezo Drive focus motor	USM Canon lenses with an Ultrasonic Motor
AW Pentax all-weather lenses	DT Sony lenses for APS-C-sized sensors	G Nikon lenses without an aperture ring	RF Canon full-frame mirrorless lenses	USD Tamron Ultrasonic Drive motor
CS Samyang lenses for APS-C cropped sensors	DX Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital	HSM Sigma's Hypersonic Motor	S Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless	VC Tamron's Vibration Compensation
D Nikon lenses that communicate distance info	DS Canon's Defocus Smoothing technology	IS Canon's Image-Stabilised lenses	SAM Sony Smooth Autofocus Motor	VR Nikon's Vibration Reduction feature
DA Pentax lenses optimised for APS-C-sized sensors	E Nikon lenses with electronic apertures	L Canon's 'Luxury' range of high-end lenses	SDM Pentax's Sonic Direct Drive Motor	WR Weather Resistant
DC Nikon defocus-control portrait lenses	E Sony lenses for APS-C mirrorless	LD Low-Dispersion glass	SMC Pentax Super Multi Coating	Z Nikon's lenses for mirrorless cameras

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Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT							DIMENSIONS						
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4/3RDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULLFRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
CANON MIRRORLESS																	
EF-M 11-22mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£355		Ultra-wideangle lens with a compact, retractable lens design	•	•								15	55	61	58.2	220
EF-M 15-45mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM	£249		Collapsible standard zoom for EOS M-series cameras that's less bulky than the 18-55mm	•	•								25	49	60.9	44.5	130
EF-M 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£269		Compact and versatile zoom lens	•	•								25	52	61	61	210
EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM	£399		Wide-ranging 29-240mm equivalent superzoom with surprisingly good image quality	•	•								25	55	60.9	86.5	300
EF-M 22mm f/2 STM	£220		Small and bright wideangle pancake lens	•	•								15	43	61	23.7	105
EF-M 28mm f/3.5 IS STM Macro	£294		Small, retractable lens with built-in LED lights for illuminating close-up subjects	•	•								9.7	43	60.9	45.5	130
EF-M 32mm f/1.4 STM	£500		Large-aperture but lightweight prime that offers a 50mm equivalent angle of view	•	•								23	43	60.9	56.5	235
EF-M 55-200mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£330		Telephoto zoom that takes you closer to the action	•	•								100	52	60.9	86.5	260
RF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£379		Extremely small and lightweight ultra-wide zoom for Canon's APS-C format EOS R mirrorless models	•	•								14	49	69	44.9	150
RF-S 18-45mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£319		Retracting kit zoom designed for the EOS R10; small and lightweight, but offers an uninspiring range	•	•								20	49	69	44.3	130
RF-S 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM	£519		General-purpose travel zoom lens for APS-C format RF-mount cameras such as the EOS R7, R10 and R50	•	•								17	55	69	84.5	310
RF-S 55-210mm f/5-7.1 IS STM	£429		Lightweight telephoto zoom for APS-C RF-mount cameras, with decidedly slow maximum aperture	•	•								73	55	69	135	270
RF 10-20mm f/4 L IS STM	£2580		World's widest-angle full-frame rectilinear zoom includes optical stabilisation and weather-sealing	•	•								25	n/a	83.7	112	570
RF 14-35mm f/4L IS USM	£1750		High-spec, relatively lightweight ultra-wide zoom that offers 5.5 stops of stabilisation and takes 77mm filters	•	•								20	77	84.1	99.8	540
RF 15-30mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£669	4★	Relatively affordable, compact, and lightweight image-stabilised ultra-wideangle zoom	•	•								28	67	76.6	88.4	390
RF 15-35mm f/2.8L IS USM	£2330		Premium f/2.8 optic with unusually wide maximum angle of view and optical image stabilisation	•	•								28	82	88.5	126.8	840
RF 16mm f/2.8 STM	£320	3★	Small, lightweight ultra-wideangle prime is affordable but has seriously compromised optics	•	•								13	43	69.2	40.1	165
RF 24mm f/1.8 IS STM Macro	£719	4.5★	Bright wideangle prime with optical stabilisation and close focusing that gives half life-size magnification	•	•								14	52	74.4	63.1	270
RF 24-50mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£379	4★	Compact, retractable full-frame kit zoom designed for the EOS R8	•	•								30	58	69.6	58	210
RF 24-70mm f/2.8L IS USM	£2330		Image-stabilised, large-aperture, standard zoom for Canon's full-frame mirrorless EOS R system	•	•								38	82	88.5	127.7	900
RF 24-105mm f/4L IS STM	£1120		General-purpose standard zoom with useful range and image stabilisation	•	•								45	77	83.5	107.3	700
RF 24-105mm f/4-7.1 IS STM	£460	4.5★	Designed to be an ultra-compact and lightweight kit zoom, with an unusual 'Centre Focus Macro' option	•	•								34	67	76.6	88.8	395
RF 24-240mm f/4-6.3 IS USM	£800	4★	Very respectable all-in-one travel zoom with fast AF and effective IS that's well-matched to the EOS RP	•	•								50	72	80.4	122.5	750
RF 28mm f/2.8 STM	£345		Slimline, lightweight 'pancake' prime that's equally well suited to APS-C and full-frame cameras	•	•								23	55	69.2	24.7	120
RF 28-70mm f/2L USM	£3050		Groundbreaking, but huge, full-frame zoom with constant f/2 maximum aperture	•	•								39	95	103.8	139.8	1430
RF 35mm f/1.8 IS STM Macro	£520		Multi-purpose fast prime that includes image stabilisation and 0.5x macro reproduction	•	•								17	52	74.4	62.8	305
RF 50mm f/1.8 STM	£220	4.5★	Compact, lightweight standard prime uses new mirrorless-optimised optics, including an aspherical element	•	•								30	43	69.2	40.5	160
RF 50mm f/1.2L USM	£2350		Heavyweight ultra-fast standard prime that promises exceptional low-light performance	•	•								80	77	89.8	108	950
RF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS USM	£2700	5★	High-end constant maximum aperture telephoto zoom with unconventional extending barrel design	•	•								70	77	89.9	146	1070
RF 70-200mm f/4L IS USM	£1700		Small and light weather-sealed telephoto zoom promises premium optics	•	•								60	77	83.5	119	695
RF 85mm f/1.2L USM	£2800		Top-of-the-line, ultra-large aperture, short telephoto portrait prime for full-frame mirrorless	•	•								85	82	103.2	117.3	1195
RF 85mm f/1.2L USM DS	£3250		Alternative version of the 85mm f/1.2 that includes special coatings for a Defocus Smoothing effect	•	•								85	82	103.2	117.3	1195
RF 85mm f/2 Macro IS STM	£650		Relatively compact, lightweight image-stabilised short-telephoto that offers half life-size magnification	•	•								35	67	78	91	500
RF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM	£1480	5★	Superb macro lens with 1.4x magnification and spherical aberration control dial for smoothing blur	•	•								26	67	81.5	148	730
RF 100-400mm f/5.6-8 IS USM	£700	4★	Long telephoto zoom that's surprisingly compact, lightweight and affordable due to its small aperture	•	•								88	67	79.5	164.7	635
RF 100-500mm f/4.5-7.1L IS USM	£2900	4.5★	Premium ultra-telephoto zoom that's barely any larger than its 100-400mm DSLR counterpart	•	•								90	77	94	208	1530
RF 135mm f/1.8 L IS USM	£2560		High-end large-aperture portrait prime boasting optical stabilisation and weather-sealed construction	•	•								70	82	89.2	130.3	935
RF 200-800mm f/6.3-9 IS STM	£2300		Ultra-telephoto zoom for full-frame cameras with weather-sealing and relatively manageable size	•	•								80	95	102.3	314.1	2050
RF 600mm f/11 IS STM	£700		Remarkable lightweight ultra-telephoto that employs diffractive optics and a collapsible barrel	•	•								450	82	93	200	930
RF 800mm f/11 IS STM	£930		Similar design to its 600mm sibling makes it easily the smallest and most affordable 800mm prime	•	•								600	95	102	282	1260
FUJIFILM MIRRORLESS																	
XF 8mm F3.5 R WR	£799		Extremely compact, weather-resistant, ultra-wideangle prime, accepts 62mm filters										18	62	68	52.8	215
XF 8-16mm f/2.8 R LM WR	£1799		Premium ultra-wideangle large-aperture zoom lens with weather-resistant construction										25	n/a	88	121.5	805
XF 10-24mm f/4 R OIS WR	£899	4.5★	Updated wideangle zoom lens with weather resistance and improved stabilisation that gives fine results	•	•								24	72	77.6	87	385
XF 14mm f/2.8 R	£729	5★	Wideangle prime with high resolution into the corners, its performance justifies the price tag	•	•								18	58	65	58.4	235
XC 15-45mm f/3.5-5.6 OIS PZ	£259		Lightweight retractable power zoom that's set to be the entry-level kit lens for X-system cameras	•	•								13	52	62.6	44.2	135
XF 16mm f/1.4 R WR	£729	5★	Weather-sealed fast prime for X-system users	•	•								15	67	73.4	73	375
XF 16mm f/2.8 R WR	£349	4.5★	Attractively priced, weather-sealed, compact and lightweight wideangle prime	•	•								17	49	60	45.4	155
XC 16-50 f/3.5-5.6 OIS II	£359		Lightweight lens for mirrorless X-series offers 24-75mm equivalent zoom range	•	•								30	58	62.6	98.3	195
XF 16-55mm f/2.8 R LM WR	£899	5★	A flagship XF standard zoom lens with a constant f/2.8 aperture and weather-resistance	•	•								60	77	83.3	106	655
XF 16-80mm f/4 R WR OIS	£769	4.5★	Good-quality weather-sealed, constant maximum aperture zoom with a useful focal-length range	•	•								35	72	78.3	88.9	440
XF 18mm f/1.4 R LM WR	£879	5★	Large-aperture wideangle prime with weather-resistant construction	•	•								20	62	68.8	75.6	370
XF 18mm f/2 R	£430	4★	A compact wideangle lens with a quick aperture	•	•								18	52	64.5	40.6	116
XF 18-55mm f/2.8-4 R LM OIS	£599		Short zoom lens with optical image stabilisation	•	•								18	58	65	70.4	310
XF 18-120mm f/4 LM PZ WR	£899	3.5★	Optimised for both video and stills use, with a power zoom mechanism that operates internally	•	•								60	72	77.3	123.5	460
XF 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 R LM OIS WR	£699	4★	Weather-resistant zoom for Fujifilm X mount, designed to be the perfect partner for the Fujifilm X-T1	•	•								45	77	75.7	97.8	490
XF 23mm f/1.4 R	£649		Premium wideangle prime lens with fast maximum aperture	•	•								28	62	72	63	300
XF 23mm f/1.4 R LM WR	£819	5★	Replaces the older XF 23mm f/1.4 with updated optics, faster autofocus and a weather-resistant design	•	•								19	58	67	77.8	375
XF 23mm f/2 R WR	£419	5★	Compact weather-resistant wideangle prime lens	•	•								22	43	60	51.9	180
XF 27mm f/2.8 R WR	£419	4.5★	Slimline, lightweight pancake prime with aperture ring and weather-resistant construction	•	•								34	39	62	23	84
XF 30mm f/2.8 R LM WR Macro	£599	4.5★	Relatively compact and affordable macro lens offering internal focus and 1:1 magnification	•	•								10	43	60	69.5	195
XF 33mm f/1.4 R LM WR	£619		Designed to complement the smaller, cheaper 35mm f/1.4, with quicker autofocus and weather-sealing	•	•								30	58	67	73.5	360
XF 35mm f/1.4 R	£439	4★	Shallow depth of field and bokeh effects are simple to achieve with this lens	•	•								28	52	65	54.9	187
XF 35mm f/2 R WR	£299	5★	A powerful and weather-resistant lens that feels great and has the performance to match	•	•								35	43	60	45.9	170
XC 35mm f/2	£169	4.5★	Simplified version of the 35mm f/2, with plastic construction and no weather-sealing or aperture ring	•	•								35	43	58.4	46.5	130
XF 50mm f/1 R WR	£1499		The world's fastest autofocus lens promises to be a very special optic for portrait photography	•	•								70	77	87	103.5	845
XF 50mm f/2 R WR	£449	5★	Lightweight weather-resistant short telephoto prime lens that's ideal for shooting portraits	•	•								39	46	60	59.4	200
XF 50-140mm f/2.8 R LM OIS WR	£1249		A telephoto zoom with a constant maximum aperture and weather-resistance	•	•								100	72	82.9	175.9	995
XC 50-230mm f/4.5-6.7 OIS II	£315		The XC lens range is designed to suit Fuji's mid-range CSCs, and this lens has optical image stabilisation	•	•								110	58	69.5	111	375
XF 55-200mm f/3.5-4.8 R LM OIS	£599	4★	Telephoto with built-in optical image stabilisation plus aperture control ring	•	•								110	62	75	118	580
XF 56mm f/1.2 R	£899	4★	This wide-aperture portrait lens for X-series cameras has great sharpness and detail and is great value	•	•								70	62	73.2	69.7	405

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Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT										DIMENSIONS						
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO FOURTHIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULLFRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)			
XF 56mm f/1.2 R APD	£1159	4★	Adds apodisation element of 56mm f/1.2 for even more attractive background blur													70	62	73.2	69.7	405
XF 56mm f/1.2 R WR	£999	4.5★	Large-aperture short-telephoto portrait prime with high quality optics and weather-sealing													50	67	79.4	76	454
XF 60mm f/2.4 XF R Macro	£599		A short lens designed for macro work with half-life-size magnification													26.7	39	64.1	70.9	215
XF 70-300mm f/4.5-6.3 R LM OIS WR	£729		Lightweight weather-sealed telezoom that's compatible with 1.4x and 2x teleconverters for greater reach													83	67	75	132.5	580
XF 80mm f/2.8 R LM OIS WR Macro	£1249	4★	Fujifilm's long-awaited 1:1 macro includes weather-resistance and optical image stabilisation													25	62	80	130	750
XF 90mm f/2 R LM WR	£699	5★	A classic portrait lens that's sharp, with gorgeous bokeh													60	62	75	105	540
XF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 R LM OIS WR	£1399	5★	This superb zoom is both water and dust resistant, and can operate in -10°C temperatures													175	77	94.8	210.5	1375
XF 150-600mm f/5.6-8 R LM OIS WR	£1899	4.5★	Long telephoto zoom that employs a small maximum aperture to keep the size and weight low													240	82	99	314.5	1605

LAOWA MIRRORLESS

4mm f/2.8 Fisheye	£249		Lightweight fisheye lens for APS-C and Micro Four Thirds offering a circular image with a 210° angle of view													8	n/a	45.2	25.5	135
7.5mm f/2 MFT	£499	4.5★	Tiny but sharp wideangle prime for Micro Four Thirds featuring manual focus and aperture control													12	46	50	55	170
9mm f/2.8 Zero-D	£499		Compact manual-focus prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras promises very low distortion													12	49	60	53	215
10mm f/2 Zero-D MFT	£399	4.5★	Tiny, sharp wide prime for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus and auto aperture control from the camera													12	46	54	41	125
10mm f/4 Cookie	£339	4★	Slim, lightweight and affordable ultra-wideangle prime for APS-C offers decent optics													10	37	59.8	25	130
17mm f/1.8 MFT	£189		Inexpensive compact prime for Micro Four Thirds cameras with manual focus and aperture operation													15	46	55	50	160
25mm f/0.95 APO MFT Argus	£399		Manual-focus standard prime for Micro Four Thirds with ultra-large aperture at an affordable price													25	62	71	86	570
33mm f/0.95 CF APO Argus	£499		Ultra-fast manual-focus standard prime for APS-C cameras that promises minimal colour fringing													35	62	71.5	83	590
50mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO MFT	£409		Manual-focus macro lens for Micro Four Thirds with electronic aperture setting and 2x magnification													13.6	49	53.5	79	240
65mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro	£409	4.5★	Superb manual-focus macro lens that provides unusually high 2x magnification													17	52	57	100	335
9mm f/5.6 FF RL	£869		The world's widest full-frame rectilinear lens is also available in Leica M mount													12	n/a	62.4	66	350
10-18mm f/4.5-5.6	£899		Wideangle shift lens for full-frame mirrorless cameras, with manual focus and aperture control													15	37	70	90.9	496
11mm f/4.5 FF RL	£769		Compact, lightweight ultra-wideangle rectilinear prime for full-frame mirrorless accepts 62mm filters													19	62	63.5	58	254
12-24mm f/5.6 FF	£729		Remarkably small and light ultra-wideangle zoom with manual focus and aperture control													15	77	69.4	93.6	497
14mm f/4 FF RL	£599		Smallest of a trio of manual-focus ultra-wideangle rectilinear RL primes for full-frame mirrorless													27	52	58	59	228
15mm f/2 Zero D	£899	4.5★	Manual-focus fast ultra-wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras, with minimal distortion													15	72	66	82	500
15mm f/4.5 Zero-D Shift	£1249	4★	The world's widest-angle shift lens offers +/-11mm movement in any direction													20	n/a	79	103	597
20mm f/4 Zero-D Shift	£1139		Wideangle shift lens that offers +/-11mm movement and promises zero distortion													25	82	91	95	747
28mm f/1.2 FF Argus	£669		Manual-focus large-aperture wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras													50	62	68.5	106.3	562
35mm f/0.95 FF Argus	£899		Ultra-large aperture manual-focus lens for full-frame mirrorless cameras													50	72	76.8	103	755
45mm f/0.95 FF Argus	£869		Manual-focus prime lens with an ultra-large maximum aperture, that promises a natural-looking perspective													50	72	76.8	110	835
58mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO	£539		Specially designed for full-frame mirrorless, this manual focus lens provides 2x magnification													18.5	67	74	117	595
85mm f/5.6 2x Ultra Macro APO	£449	4.5★	Remarkably small and lightweight full-frame macro lens that delivers twice life-size magnification													16.3	46	53	81	291
90mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO	£539		Fully manual macro lens offering twice life-size magnification, designed for full-frame mirrorless													20.5	67	74	120	619

LEICA MIRRORLESS

14-24mm f/2.8 Vario-Elmarit-SL Asph	£2220		Ultra-wideangle zoom for Leica's SL full-frame cameras with a large maximum aperture													28	n/a	85	131	855
24-70mm f/2.8 Vario-Elmarit-SL Asph	£2300		Large aperture standard zoom lens for Leica's full-frame mirrorless cameras													38	82	88	123	856
35mm f/2 Summicron-SL Asph	£1950		Relatively small and affordable by Leica's standards. Not to be confused with much pricier 35mm f/2 APO													24	67	74.5	83	400
50mm f/2 Summicron-SL Asph	£1700		Leica's least expensive full-frame L-mount lens is half the weight of the premium APO alternative													45	67	74.5	83	402
100-400mm f/5.6-6.3 Vario-Elmar-SL	£1910		Weather-sealed and optically stabilised long telephoto zoom, compatible with 1.4x teleconverter													110	82	198	88	1530

NIKON MIRRORLESS

12-28mm f/3.5-5.6 PZ VR Nikkor Z DX	£379	4.5★	Ultra-wideangle lens for Nikon DX-format cameras with power zoom operation													19	67	72	63.5	205
16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Nikkor Z DX	£329		Extremely compact and lightweight retractable kit zoom for Nikon's DX-format mirrorless													30	46	70	32	135
18-140mm f/3.5-5.6 VR Nikkor Z DX	£599	4★	Small and light all-in-one travel zoom for DX mirrorless cameras, with impressive close-focus capability													20	62	73	90	315
24mm f/1.7 Nikkor Z DX	£289	4.5★	Compact, lightweight and affordable large-aperture prime for DX-format cameras													18	46	70	40	135
50-250mm f/4.5-6.3 VR Nikkor Z DX	£379	4.5★	Entry-level telephoto zoom for DX mirrorless featuring retractable barrel design													100	62	74	110	405
14-24mm f/2.8 S Nikkor Z	£2499	4.5★	Pro-spec weather-sealed wideangle zoom that can use 112mm filters via the included hood													28	112	88.5	124.5	650
14-30mm f/4 S Nikkor Z	£1349	4.5★	Remarkably compact ultra-wideangle zoom that accepts 82mm screw-in filters													28	82	89	85	485
17-28mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£1199	4.5★	Smaller and more affordable large-aperture ultra-wide alternative to the 14-24mm f/2.8													19	67	75	101	450
20mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£1049		Weather-sealed large maximum-aperture prime promises ultra-sharp images													20	77	84.5	108.5	505
24-50mm f/4-6.3 Nikkor Z	£439		Ultra-compact and lightweight zoom designed to be sold with the entry-level Nikon Z 5													35	52	73.5	51	195
24-70mm f/2.8 S Nikkor Z	£2199	5★	Superb fast standard zoom includes OLED display and customisable control dial													38	82	89	126	805
24-70mm f/4 S Nikkor Z	£999		General-purpose standard zoom for Nikon's full-frame mirrorless system													30	72	77.5	88.5	500
24-120mm f/4 S Nikkor Z	£1099	4.5★	Standard zoom for Z-system cameras with extremely useful focal-length range													35	77	84	118	630
24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR Nikkor Z	£849	4.5★	Billed as the perfect ultra-compact travel zoom lens, with dust- and drip-resistant construction													70	67	76.5	114	570
24mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£1049	5★	Large-aperture wideangle prime that aims to combine edge-to-edge sharpness with attractive bokeh													25	72	78	96.5	450
26mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£529	3.5★	Ultra-compact 'pancake' lens, designed for full-frame but also a good fit to DX-format cameras													20	52	70	23.5	125
28mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£249		Inexpensive, compact full-frame prime, also available as an SE version in a kit with the Z fc													19	52	70	43	155
28-75mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£949	4★	Large-aperture standard zoom that's much more compact and affordable than its 24-70mm f/2.8 sibling													19	67	75	120.5	565
35mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£849		Fast, moderate-wideangle prime designed for optimum optical performance													25	62	73	86	370
40mm f/2 Nikkor Z	£249	4.5★	Small, lightweight and affordable standard prime that focuses fast and gives decent image quality													29	52	70	45.5	170
50mm f/1.2 S Nikkor Z	£2299		Ultra-large aperture weather-sealed standard prime that promises 'elaborate bokeh'													45	82	89.5	150	1090
50mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£599		Large-aperture prime that promises exceptional edge-to-edge sharpness													40	62	76	86.5	415
50mm f/2.8 MC Nikkor Z	£649		Compact, lightweight and relatively affordable macro lens that offers 1:1 magnification													16	46	74.5	66	260
70-180mm f/2.8 Nikkor Z	£1299	4.5★	Relatively small and lightweight alternative to the Z 70-200mm f/2.8 that's also much more affordable													27	67	83.5	151	795
70-200mm f/2.8 VR S Nikkor Z	£2399	5★	Pro-spec large-aperture telezoom with optical image stabilisation and built-in OLED display													100	77	89	220	1360
85mm f/1.8 S Nikkor Z	£799	4.5★	Portrait prime for Nikon's full-frame mirrorless system that promises beautiful bokeh													80	67	75	99	470
85mm f/1.2 S Nikkor Z	£2999	5★	Pro-spec ultra-large-aperture short telephoto prime designed for portrait photography													85	82	102.5	141.5	1160
100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 Nikkor Z VR S	£2699	5★	Optically-stabilised pro-level telephoto zoom includes top-plate status panel and weather-sealed build													75	77	98	222	1355
105mm f/2.8 VR S MC Nikkor Z	£999	5★	Professional-spec macro lens that boasts optical stabilisation and offers life-size magnification													29	62	85	140	630
180-600mm f/5.6-6.3 VR Nikkor Z	£1799		Reasonably compact and affordable super-telephoto zoom, compatible with 1.4x and 2.0x teleconverters													130	95	110	315.5	1955

Stay inspired all year, never miss an issue and get AP delivered straight to your door every week. **See page 67 for details of our latest offer**

Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO FOURTHIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULLFRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
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NISI MIRRORLESS

9mm f/2.8 ASPH	£398		Weather-sealed ultra-wide manual-focus prime for APS-C and Micro FourThirds mirrorless cameras										20	67	74	78	364
15mm f/4 ASPH	£429		Ultra-wide manual focus prime for full-frame mirrorless promises minimal distortion and 10-ray sunstars										13	72	75.6	80.5	470

OLYMPUS / OM SYSTEM MIRRORLESS

7-14mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£999	4.5★	Super-wideangle zoom lens that's dustproof, splashproof and freeze-proof										20	n/a	78.9	105.8	534
8mm f/1.8 Pro Fisheye	£799		Fisheye lens with impressive image quality that's dustproof, splashproof and freeze-proof										12	n/a	62	80	315
8-25mm f/4 ED Pro	£899	5★	Weather-sealed wideangle zoom with premium optics and extended tele range that accepts 72mm filters										23	72	77	88.5	411
9mm f/8 Fish-eye Body Cap Lens	£89		Slimline lens in a body cap with 140° angle of view										20	n/a	56	12.8	30
9-18mm f/4-5.6 ED	£630		This super-wideangle lens offers an equivalent focal range of 18-36mm in 35mm terms										25	52	56.5	49.5	155
NEW 9-18mm f/4-5.6 ED II	£600		Updated ultra-wideangle zoom gains water-repellant fluorine coating and OM System branding										25	52	56.2	49.3	154
12mm f/2.0 ED	£739	5★	A wideangle fixed lens for the Micro Four Thirds system										20	46	56	43	130
12-40mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£899		Weather-resistant standard zoom with top-notch optics and a constant aperture of f/2.8										20	62	69.9	84	382
12-40mm f/2.8 ED Pro II	£899		Gains uprated IP53 weather-resistance, improved optical coatings, and the 'OM System' badge										20	62	69.9	84	382
12-45mm f/4 Pro	£599	5★	Excellent compact, lightweight weather-sealed zoom that offers 0.5x magnification at all focal lengths										23	58	63.4	70	254
12-100mm f/4 IS ED Pro	£1099	5★	Superb high-end weather-sealed superzoom lens featuring powerful in-lens IS with Sync IS										15	72	77.5	116.5	561
12-200mm f/3.5-6.3 ED	£800	4★	24-400mm equivalent superzoom includes weather-sealed construction and decent optics										22	72	77.5	99.7	455
14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 II R	£269		A redesigned variation of the standard kit lens										25	37	56.5	50	112
14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 EZ	£329		Compact kit lens for Olympus PEN and OM-D models with powerzoom control										20	37	60.6	22.5	93
14-150mm f/4-5.6 II	£550		High-powered zoom for all your needs - from wideangle to telephoto - plus weather-resistance										50	58	63.5	83	285
17mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1300		High-end, large-aperture weather-sealed prime designed for documentary or landscape work										20	62	68.2	87	390
17mm f/1.8 MSC	£450	5★	Wide-aperture, wideangle prime boasting excellent peak sharpness and low colour fringing										25	46	57	35	120
20mm f/1.4 ED Pro	£649	4.5★	Compact, large-aperture standard prime that's the first lens to wear the 'OM System' label										25	58	63.4	61.7	247
25mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1099	5★	Large maximum-aperture prime combines impressive sharpness with lovely bokeh and fast, reliable AF										30	62	70	87	410
25mm f/1.8	£370		Compact prime lens with ultra-bright f/1.8 aperture										25	46	57.8	42	137
30mm f/3.5 ED Macro	£249		New in the M.Zuiko Premium range, this macro lens features super-fast AF and weighs only 128g										9.5	46	57	60	128
40-150mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£1299	4★	This high-quality 80-300mm equivalent lens offers amazing portability for this pro class										70	72	79.4	160	760
40-150mm f/4 ED Pro	£799	4.5★	Remarkably compact telephoto zoom provides high-quality optics and weather-sealed construction										70	62	68.9	99.4	382
40-150mm f/4-5.6 R	£309		This middle-distance zoom lens has an 80-300mm 35mm-equivalent focal length										90	58	63.5	83	190
45mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1200		Large-aperture lens designed for portrait photography with premium optics										50	62	70	84.9	410
45mm f/1.8	£279	5★	Fast-aperture lens for taking portrait shots is sharp, quiet and has no colour fringing										50	37	56	46	116
60mm f/2.8 Macro	£450		High-precision macro lens that's dustproof and splashproof										19	46	56	82	185
75-300mm f/4.8-6.7 ED II	£499		Update featuring Zuiko Extra-low Reflection Optical coating said to reduce ghosting										90	58	69	117	423
75mm f/1.8 ED	£799	5★	Ultra-fast prime lens ideal for portraits and action shots										84	58	64	69	305
90mm f/3.5 Macro ED IS Pro	£1299	5★	Pro-spec macro lens with twice life-size magnification, weather-sealing, and optical stabilisation										22	62	69.8	136	453
100-400mm f/5-6.3 ED IS	£1100	4★	Large, weather-sealed optically stabilised ultra-telephoto zoom, compatible with teleconverters										130	72	86.4	205.7	1120
NEW 150-600mm f/5-6.3 ED IS	£2499		Optically stabilised ultra-telephoto zoom that offers a massive 300-1200mm equivalent range										280	95	109.4	264.4	2065
300mm f/4 IS Pro	£2200		Compact ultra-telephoto prime with optical image stabilisation, compatible with Sync IS										140	77	92.5	227	1270

PANASONIC MIRRORLESS

G 7-14mm f/4	£740	5★	For a wideangle zoom, the overall level of resolution is very impressive										25	n/a	70	83.1	300
G 8mm Fisheye f/3.5	£730		The world's lightest and smallest fisheye lens for an interchangeable-lens camera										10	22	60.7	51.7	165
DG 8-18mm f/2.8-4 Leica ASPH	£1049		Splashproof, dustproof and freeze-proof ultra-wideangle zoom with premium optics										23	67	73.4	88	315
DG 9mm f/1.7 Leica Summilux ASPH	£449	4.5★	Compact large-aperture wideangle prime with an 18mm equivalent angle of view										9.5	55	60.8	52	130
DG 10-25mm f/1.7 Leica ASPH	£1800		The world's fastest standard zoom lens, with an unusual 20-50mm equivalent range										28	77	87.6	128	690
DG 12mm f/1.4 Leica Summilux ASPH	£1199	4.5★	Compact fast wideangle quality with excellent optics and built-in aperture ring										20	62	70	70	335
G 12-32mm f/3.5-5.6 MEGA OIS	£270		Very compact with a versatile zoom range and three aspherical lenses										20	37	55.5	24	70
G X 12-35mm f/2.8 OIS II	£880		Fast standard zoom with premium optics and weather-resistant construction										25	58	67.6	73.8	305
DG 12-35mm f/2.8 ASPH OIS Leica	£880		Updated fast standard zoom with reduced focus breathing and smoother aperture operation for video										15	58	67.6	73.8	306
G 12-60mm f/3.5-5.6 OIS ASPH	£439	4★	Incorporates a stepping motor for a smooth, silent operation and features a dust and splashproof design										20	58	66	71	210
DG 12-60mm f/2.8-4 OIS Leica	£880		Premium standard zoom with useful focal-length range and weather-resistant construction										20	62	68	86	320
G 14mm f/2.5 II	£249		Wideangle pancake lens that should suit landscape photographers										18	46	55.5	20.5	55
G X 14-42mm f/3.45-5.6 X PZ POWER OIS	£369	4★	Powered zoom; impressive results in terms of both sharpness and chromatic aberration										20	37	61	26.8	95
G 14-45mm f/3.5-5.6 MEGA OIS	£189		A lightweight and compact standard zoom featuring MEGA OIS optical image stabilisation										30	52	60	60	195
G 14-140mm f/3.5-5.6 ASPH POWER OIS II	£619		Weather-resistant update to Panasonic's optically stabilised superzoom lens										30	58	67	75	265
DG 15mm f/1.7 Leica Summilux	£549	4★	High-speed prime with a compact metal body, includes three aspherical lenses to cut down distortion										20	46	57.5	36	115
G 20mm f/1.7 ASPH II	£249	4.5★	Ultra-compact fast prime with excellent optics but slower autofocus than more modern options										20	46	25.5	63	87
G 25mm f/1.7 ASPH	£159	4.5★	Inexpensive fast normal prime for Micro Four Thirds that offers very respectable optical quality										25	46	60.8	52	125
DG 25mm f/1.4 Leica Summilux Asph	£550	5★	A fast-aperture fixed focal length standard lens from Leica										30	46	63	54.5	200
DG 25mm f/1.4 Leica Summilux II Asph	£580		Updated version of this lovely fast standard prime adds dust- and splash-resistant construction										30	46	63	54.5	205
DG 25-50mm f/1.7 Leica ASPH	£1800		High-end ultra-large-aperture short telephoto zoom that's designed to complement the 10-25mm f/1.7										28	77	87.6	127.6	654
G 30mm f/2.8 Macro MEGA OIS	£300	3★	Compact lens offering true-to-life magnification capability for better macro images										10	46	58.8	63.5	180
G 35-100mm f/4-5.6 ASPH MEGA OIS	£300		Telephoto zoom equivalent to 70-200mm on a 35mm camera										90	46	55.5	50	135
G X 35-100mm f/2.8 Power OIS II	£970		Premium fast telephoto zoom with matte-black finish and improved autofocus and aperture control										85	58	67.4	100	360
DG 35-100mm f/2.8 Power OIS Leica Vario-Elmarit	£1099		Updated fast telephoto zoom promises improved flare resistance thanks to Nano Surface Coatings										85	58	67.4	99.9	360
DG 42.5mm f/1.2 Leica DG OIS	£1399	5★	Mid-telephoto high-speed Leica DG Nocticon lens with 2 aspherical lenses and ultra-wide aperture										50	67	74	76.8	425
G 42.5mm f/1.7 Power OIS	£349		Mid-telephoto lens with a 35mm equivalent of 85mm, its f/1.7 aperture promises a beautiful bokeh effect										37	31	55	50	130
DG 45mm f/2.8 OIS Macro Leica	£539		Tiny macro lens with 1:1 magnification and optical image stabilisation										15	46	63	62.5	225
G 45-150mm f/4-5.6 MEGA OIS	£280	4★	Compact, lightweight telephoto zoom comprising 12 elements in nine groups										90	52	62	73	200
G X 45-175mm f/4-5.6 X PZ POWER OIS	£400	4★	A powered long-focal-length zoom lens										90	46	61.6	90	210
G 45-200mm f/4-5.6 MEGA OIS II	£380		Telephoto zoom lens with dust and splashproof construction, supports Panasonic's Dual IS										100	52	70	100	380

ALL PRICES ARE RRP'S. STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**

Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT							DIMENSIONS					
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
DG 50-200mm f/2.8-4 OIS Leica	£1600		Premium telephoto zoom that completes Panasonic's Leica f/2.8-4 series	.								75	67	76	132	655
G 100-300mm f/4-5.6 MEGA OIS II	£570	4★	Long zoom lens with dustproof and splashproof construction, supports Panasonic's Dual IS	.								150	67	73.6	126	520
DG 100-400mm f/4-6.3 OIS Leica	£1349		High-quality super-telephoto zoom with weather-sealed construction and Dual IS support	.								130	72	83	171.5	985
DG 100-400mm f/4-6.3 OIS II Leica	£1499		Updated super-telephoto zoom promises improved zoom mechanism and adds teleconverter compatibility	.								130	72	83	171.5	985
DG 200mm f/2.8 OIS Leica	£2699	5★	Stunning 400mm-equivalent fast telephoto prime, comes with 1.4x teleconverter in the box	.								115	77	87.5	174	1245
S 14-28mm f/4-5.6 Macro	£880	4.5★	Lightweight and affordable ultra-wideangle zoom that offers unusually close focusing							.	.	15	77	84	89.8	345
S Pro 16-35mm f/4	£1499		Relatively compact and lightweight premium wideangle zoom with weather-sealed construction							.	.	25	77	85	99.6	500
S 18mm f/1.8	£800	4.5★	Large-aperture ultra-wideangle prime that's relatively compact, lightweight and affordable							.	.	18	67	73.6	82	340
S 20-60mm f/3.5-5.6	£619		Compact, lightweight and relatively inexpensive standard zoom with a wider than usual view							.	.	15	67	77.4	87.2	350
S 24mm f/1.8	£799	4.5★	Wideangle prime that's relatively lightweight and compact							.	.	24	67	73.6	82	310
S Pro 24-70mm f/2.8	£2250		Pro-range fast standard zoom includes dust- and splash-resistance, along with a focus-clutch mechanism							.	.	37	82	90.9	140	935
S 24-105mm f/4 Macro OIS	£1750		L-mount full-frame standard zoom which offers half-life-size magnification	.						.	.	30	77	84	118	680
S 35mm f/1.8	£580	4.5★	Relatively compact and lightweight full-frame prime designed for both stills and video shooting							.	.	24	67	73.6	82	295
S Pro 50mm f/1.4	£2300		Premium, fast standard prime for full-frame mirrorless with built-in aperture ring							.	.	44	77	90	130	955
S 50mm f/1.8	£429	4★	Relatively lightweight and affordable standard prime that gives fine mages but can struggle with close focus							.	.	45	67	73.6	82	300
S 85mm f/1.8	£600		This short telephoto portrait lens is the first in a new line of practical, affordable f/1.8 primes							.	.	80	67	73.6	82	355
S Pro 70-200mm f/2.8 OIS	£2599		Pro-spec fast telephoto zoom incorporating optical image stabilisation and weather-sealing	.						.	.	95	82	94.4	208.6	1570
S Pro 70-200mm f/4 OIS	£1300		Image-stabilised, weather-sealed telephoto zoom for L-mount full-frame mirrorless	.						.	.	92	77	84.4	179	985
S 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 Macro OIS	£1260		Relatively lightweight optically-stabilised telephoto zoom featuring dust- and splash-proof construction	.						.	.	54	77	84	148	790
NEW S 100mm f/2.8 Macro	£999	5★	Unusually small and lightweight short-telephoto macro that offers life-size magnification	.						.	.	20	67	73.6	82	298

SAMYANG MIRRORLESS

7.5mm f/3.5 UMC fisheye MFT	£253		Fisheye manual-focus lens with Ultra Multi Coated lens elements to reduce flare and ghosting									9	n/a	48.3	60	197
8mm f/2.8 UMC fisheye II	£249		Updated version of the Samyang 8mm f/2.8 UMC Fisheye lens, with improved optical construction	.								30	n/a	60	64.4	290
12mm f/2 NCS CS	£330		Fast wideangle prime for APS-C and Micro Four Thirds mirrorless cameras	.								20	67	72.5	59	245
35mm f/1.2 ED AS UMC CS	£359		Standard-angle manual-focus lens for mirrorless cameras with APS-C sensor size	.								38	62	67.5	74.2	420
50mm f/1.2 AS UMC CS	£299	5★	Fast telephoto prime that can produce stunning results with a super-shallow depth of field	.								50	62	67.5	74.5	380
85mm f/1.8 ED UMC CS	£319		Manual-focus medium-telephoto portrait prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras	.								65	62	67.5	81	423
300mm f/6.3 ED UMC CS Reflex	£249		A compact reflex mirror lens dedicated for mirrorless compact system cameras	.								90	58	73.7	64.5	320
12mm f/2 AF	£402	4★	Affordable large-aperture ultra-wide prime for APS-C cameras, available in E and X mounts	.								19	62	70	59.2	213
14mm f/2.8 AF	£629		Autofocus wideangle prime for Sony full-frame mirrorless FE mount cameras	.								20	n/a	85.5	97.5	505
18mm f/2.8 FE AF	£350		Compact, lightweight autofocus wideangle prime for Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras	.								25	58	63.5	60.5	145
24mm f/1.8 FE AF	£460		Boasts Custom Mode function that sets the lens to infinity focus for astrophotography	.								19	58	65	71.5	230
24mm f/2.8 FE AF	£280	4.5★	Small, lightweight autofocus wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras	.								24	49	61.8	37	93
24-70mm f/2.8 FE AF	£828		Samyang's first-ever zoom lens includes a manual focus ring that can be switched to controlling aperture	.								35	82	88	128.5	1027
35-150mm f/2-2.8 FE AF	£1319		Ultra-large-aperture zoom with weather-sealed construction and video-friendly features	.								33	82	92.8	157.4	1231
35mm f/1.4 FE AF II	£635	4.5★	Large-aperture prime with AF-stop button and custom mode switch for manual focus ring	.								29	67	75	115	659
35mm f/1.8 FE AF	£360		Smaller, lighter and more affordable than its Sony equivalent, with a dual-mode manual focus / control ring	.								29	58	65	63.5	210
35mm f/2.8 FE AF	£279	4.5★	Compact, lightweight, inexpensive autofocus prime lens for full-frame mirrorless cameras	.								35	49	61.8	33	86
45mm f/1.8 FE AF	£350	4.5★	Small standard prime for Sony full-frame mirrorless	.								45	49	61.8	56.1	162
50mm f/1.4 FE AF II	£599	4.5★	Billed as the smallest and lightest large-aperture 50mm prime for Sony FE, with completely new optical design	.								40	72	80.1	88.9	420
75mm f/1.8 AF	£380	4.5★	Small, lightweight short telephoto for full-frame Sony, also available in Fujifilm X mount	.								69	58	65	69	230
85mm f/1.4 FE AF II	£639		Relatively lightweight portrait prime with a focus hold button and custom mode switch	.								85	72	83.4	99.5	507
135mm f/1.8 FE AF	£799		Fast-aperture mid-telephoto lens designed for subjects such as portraiture and astrophotography	.								69	82	93.4	129.6	772

SIGMA MIRRORLESS

10-18mm f/2.8 DC DN | C	£600		Strikingly compact and lightweight large-aperture ultra-wideangle zoom for APS-C cameras	.								11.6	67	72.2	64	255
16mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£450	4.5★	Large-aperture wideangle lens with dustproof and splashproof design	.								25	67	72.2	92.3	405
18-50mm f/2.8 DC DN | C	£430	4.5★	Fast standard zoom for APS-C mirrorless, that's relatively inexpensive but lacks optical stabilisation	.								12.1	55	61.6	76.5	290
23mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£450		Large-aperture prime for APS-C cameras with 35mm equivalent angle of view	.								25	52	65.8	76.9	340
30mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£300	4★	A prime for Micro Four Thirds and Sony E-mount users, it's impressively sharp even at f/1.4	.								30	52	64.8	73	140
56mm f/1.4 DC DN | C	£400	4.5★	Small, lightweight large-aperture portrait prime for APS-C Sony and Micro Four Thirds	.								50	55	66.5	59.5	280
14mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£1399		World's first 14mm lens with a bright f/1.4 aperture, designed with astrophotography in mind	.								30	n/a	101.4	149.9	1170
14-24mm f/2.8 DG DN | A	£1459	5★	Superb ultra-wide zoom for full-frame mirrorless that's two-thirds of the weight of its DSLR equivalent	.								28	n/a	85	131	795
16-28mm f/2.8 DG DN | C	£750	4.5★	Relatively compact and affordable ultra-wideangle zoom designed to complement the 28-70mm f/2.8	.								25	72	77.2	100.6	450
17mm f/4 DG DN | C I-series	£550		Small and lightweight ultra-wideangle prime that boasts all-metal barrel construction	.								12	55	64	48.8	225
20mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£859		Bright wideangle prime that includes an array of features designed for astrophotography	.								23	82	87.8	111.2	635
20mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£650	5★	Small wideangle autofocus prime with a large maximum aperture and premium metal construction	.								22	62	70	74.4	370
24mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£779		Large-aperture wideangle prime boasts aperture ring, focus lock switch, and rear filter holder	.								25	72	75.7	95.5	520
24mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£550	5★	Moderately fast premium wideangle prime with metal construction, aperture ring, and great optics	.								24.5	62	70	74	360
24mm f/3.5 DG DN | C I-series	£480		Compact metal-barrelled wideangle prime that offers half life-size magnification	.								10.8	55	64	48.8	225
24-70mm f/2.8 DG DN | A	£1050		Large-aperture standard zoom for full-frame mirrorless that promises 'best in class' image quality	.								38	82	87.8	122.9	835
28-70mm f/2.8 DG DN | C	£760	4.5★	Small, lightweight and relatively affordable large-aperture full-frame standard zoom	.								19	67	72.2	101.5	470
35mm f/1.2 DG DN | A	£1459		World's largest-aperture autofocus lens for either Sony E or Leica L mount promises top-notch optics	.								30	82	87.8	136.2	1090
35mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£750	5★	General-purpose fast prime promises top-notch optics, fast quiet AF, and a comprehensive set of controls	.								30	67	75.7	109.5	645
35mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£550		Everyday walkaround prime that promises premium optical performance	.								27	58	70	65	325
45mm f/2.8 DG DN | C	£549		Ultra-compact full-frame standard prime for everyday shooting, with all-metal barrel construction	.								24	55	64	46.2	215
50mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£849	5★	All-new, designed for mirrorless version of Sigma's legendary 50mm f/1.4 'Art' lens	.								45	72	78.2	109.5	670
50mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£620	4.5★	Relatively compact everyday standard prime, with metal barrel construction and aperture ring	.								45	58	70	68	350
65mm f/2 DG DN | C I-series	£650		Compact short-telephoto portrait prime designed to deliver sharp images with attractive background blur	.								55	62	72	74.7	405
70-200mm f/2.8 DG DN OS | S	£1499	5★	Designed-for-mirrorless fast telezoom includes weather-sealed construction and declickable aperture ring	.								65	77	90.6	205	1345
85mm f/1.4 DG DN | A	£999	5★	Superb large-aperture portrait prime for full-frame cameras that's a fraction of the size of its SLR equivalent	.								85	77	82.4	94.1	630
90mm f/2.8 DG DN | C I-series	£550	4.5★	Small short-telephoto prime with all-metal construction and aperture ring that's ideal for portraits	.								50	55	64	61.7	295
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG DN OS | C	£899	5★	Relatively compact, lightweight and affordable long telephoto zoom with optical stabilisation	.								112	67	86	199.2	1140
105mm f/2.8 DG DN Macro | A	£700	5★	Weather-sealed 1:1 macro lens that delivers superlative image quality	.								29.5	62	74	133.6	715
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG DN OS | S	£2000		Unique 10x ultra-telephoto zoom for E and L mounts with a shortest focal length of 60mm	.								45	105	119.4	281.2	2485
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG DN OS | S	£1200		Ultra-telephoto zoom that aims to provide pro-spec optics and build quality in a relatively light package	.								58	95	109.4	263.6	2100

Mirrorless Lenses			IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO 4 THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY							MOUNT			DIMENSIONS			
SONY MIRRORLESS																
E 10-18mm f/4 OSS	£750	4★	Super-wideangle zoom with Super ED glass and Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	62	70	63.5	225
E 10-20mm f/4 G PZ	£750	4.5★	Ultra-wideangle powerzoom lens for APS-C mirrorless with dust- and moisture-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	13	62	69.8	55	178
E 11mm f/1.8	£500	4.5★	Lightweight large-aperture ultra-wideangle prime for APS-C cameras, aimed primarily at vloggers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	15	55	66	57.5	181
E 15mm f/1.4 G	£750		Large-aperture APS-C wideangle prime with premium optics, weather-sealing and an aperture ring	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17	55	66.6	69.5	219
E 16mm f/2.8	£220	4★	Pancake lens for APS-C mirrorless, with a circular aperture and Direct Manual Focus	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	49	62	22.5	67
E 16-50mm f/3.5-5.6 PZ OSS	£299		Tiny pancake lens with power zoom, ED glass and Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	40.5	64.7	29.9	116
E 16-55mm f/2.8 G	£1200		Premium, high-resolution, weather-resistant standard zoom for APS-C mirrorless cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	33	67	73	100	494
E 16-70mm f/4 ZA OSS Vario-Tessar T*	£839		A lightweight, versatile mid-range zoom with a constant f/4 aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	35	55	66.6	75	308
E 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	£270		Optical SteadyShot, said to be silent during movie capture, and a circular aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	49	62	60	194
E 18-105mm f/4 G PZ OSS	£499		Sony G lens for E-mount cameras with a constant f/4 aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	72	78	110	427
E 18-110mm f/4 G PZ OSS	£3300		Constant f/4 maximum aperture powerzoom for video production, for Super 35mm / APS-C cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	40	95	110	167.5	1105
E 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	£570		Lightweight, compact standard zoom designed to match Alpha 6000-series cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	55	67.2	88	325
E 18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 OSS LE	£489		Smaller and lighter than comparable lenses, this is an ideal high-magnification travel lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	50	62	68	98	460
E 18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 PZ OSS	£999		Boasts powered zoom and image stabilisation with Active Mode, making it ideal for movies	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	67	93.2	99	649
E 20mm f/2.8	£309		Pancake wideangle lens promises to be the perfect walkaround partner for E-mount cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	20	49	62.6	20.4	69
E 24mm f/1.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£839		Top-quality Carl Zeiss optic ideally suited to Alpha 6000-series bodies	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	16	49	63	65.6	225
E 30mm f/3.5 Macro	£219		A macro lens for Sony's APS-C compact system cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	9	49	62	55.5	138
E 35mm f/1.8 OSS	£399		Lightweight, versatile prime with Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	49	62.2	45	155
E 50mm f/1.8 OSS	£219		A handy, low-price image-stabilised portrait lens for the APS-C Alpha mirrorless range	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	39	49	62	62	202
E 55-210mm f/4.5-6.3 OSS	£289		Lightweight optically stabilised telephoto zoom lens for APS-C mirrorless	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100	49	63.8	108	345
E 70-350mm f/4.5-6.3 G OSS	£830		High-end long telephoto zoom for APS-C E-mount cameras includes optical stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	110	67	77	142	625
FE 12-24mm f/2.8 GM	£2900		The world's widest-angle zoom with a constant f/2.8 maximum aperture promises pro-level quality	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	n/a	97.6	137	847
FE 12-24mm f/4 G	£1700	4.5★	Compact, weather-resistant super-wideangle zoom with high-quality optics	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	n/a	87	117.4	565
FE 14mm f/1.4 GM	£1400		Remarkably small and lightweight large-aperture ultra-wideangle prime that accepts rear gel filters	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	25	n/a	83	99.8	460
FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM	£2300		Premium G Master-series fast wideangle zoom with weather-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	82	88.5	121.6	680
FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM II	£2400	5★	All-new wideangle zoom that combines premium optics, relatively compact size, and weather-sealing	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	82	87.8	111.5	547
FE 16-35mm f/4 ZA OSS Vario-Tessar T*	£1289	5★	Zeiss full-frame wideangle zoom lens that provides consistently good image quality	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	72	78	98.5	518
FE 16-35mm f/4 G PZ	£1300	4.5★	Small and lightweight ultra-wideangle zoom with superbly implemented power zoom operation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	23	72	80.5	88.1	353
FE 20mm f/1.8 G	£949	5★	Compact, super-sharp wideangle prime featuring aperture ring and weather-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	18	67	84.7	73.5	373
FE 20-70mm f/4 G	£1400	4.5★	Lightweight standard zoom with excellent optics and an unusually wide view, but a painful price	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	72	78.7	99	488
FE 24mm f/1.4 GM	£1450	5★	Compact, large-aperture wideangle prime includes aperture ring and weather-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	67	75.4	92.4	445
FE 24mm f/2.8 G	£630		Small, lightweight wideangle prime with premium aluminium construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	24	49	68	45	162
FE 24-70mm f/2.8 GM	£1799	5★	This pro-grade standard lens for the Sony full-frame FE mount gives exceptionally sharp results	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	82	87.6	136	886
FE 24-70mm f/2.8 GM II	£2100	5★	Superb second-generation pro standard zoom is smaller, lighter, sharper and more video-friendly	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	82	87.8	119.9	695
FE 24-70mm f/4 ZA OSS Vario-Tessar T*	£1049	5★	Compact lens with an f/4 maximum aperture across the zoom range and built-in image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	40	67	73	94.5	426
FE 24-105mm f/4 G OSS	£1199	5★	Excellent full-frame standard zoom with optical stabilisation and weather-resistant design	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	77	83.4	113.3	663
FE 24-240mm f/3.5-6.3 OSS	£929	3★	Ideal for travel, landscapes and more, with built-in stabilisation. Also dust- and moisture-resistant	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	50	72	80.5	118.5	780
FE 28mm f/2	£419	4★	This full-frame wideangle prime with a bright f/2 maximum aperture promises excellent sharpness	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	29	49	64	60	200
FE 28-60mm f/4-5.6	£450		Ultra-compact, retractable kit zoom designed for the rangefinder-style Alpha 7C	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	40.5	67	45	167
FE 28-70mm f/3.5-5.6 OSS	£449		Built-in Optical SteadyShot image stabilisation, lightweight, and a popular zoom range	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	55	72.5	83	295
FE 28-135mm PZ f/4 G OSS	£2379		Constant f/4 maximum aperture powerzoom for video production, for full-frame cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	95	95	162.5	105	1215
FE 35mm f/1.4 ZA Distagon T*	£1559	4★	Full-frame ZEISS Distagon lens with large, bright f/1.4 aperture	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	30	72	78.5	112	630
FE 35mm f/1.4 GM	£1499	5★	Stunning large-aperture prime that's smaller, lighter and focuses closer than its ZA predecessor	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	27	67	76	96	524
FE 35mm f/1.8	£630	4.5★	Lightweight fast prime with fine optics and quick autofocus that's well-matched to Alpha 7 series bodies	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	55	65.6	73	280
FE 35mm f/2.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£699		When coupled with a full-frame Sony E-mount camera, this prime lens promises to deliver	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	35	49	61.5	36.5	120
FE 40mm f/2.5 G	£630	5★	Sony's first 40mm prime is a compact, lightweight design with weather-sealed metal build	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	49	68	45	173
FE 50mm f/1.2 GM	£2100	5★	Remarkable ultra-fast prime offers stunning quality for the same size and weight as its f/1.4 ZA sibling	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	40	72	87	108	778
FE 50mm f/1.4 ZA Planar T*	£1500	5★	Optically excellent premium fast prime, but large and heavy for its class	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	72	83.5	108	778
FE 50mm f/1.4 GM	£1500	5★	Superb large-aperture standard prime with excellent optics and a pro-spec control setup	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	38	67	80.6	96	516
FE 50mm f/1.8	£240	4★	Features a new optical design with a single aspherical element, but slow autofocus	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	45	49	68.6	59.5	186
FE 50mm f/2.5 G	£630		Small prime boasts an aperture ring that can be switched between clicked and clickless operation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	35	49	68	45	174
FE 50mm f/2.8 Macro	£500	4★	Sony's budget macro for full-frame CSCs offers decent optics but is slow at focusing	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	16	55	70.8	71	236
FE 55mm f/1.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£849		35mm full-frame prime lens with wide aperture allowing good images indoors or in low light	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	50	49	64.4	70.5	281
FE 70-200mm f/2.8 GM OSS	£2500	5★	Compact, lightweight telephoto zoom lens for full-frame E-mount bodies	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	96	77	88	200	1480
FE 70-200mm f/2.8 GM OSS II	£2600	5★	The world's lightest 70-200mm f/2.8 provides superb optical quality and extensive controls	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	40	77	88	200	1045
FE 70-200mm f/4 G OSS	£1359	4★	G-series telephoto zoom lens, dust- and water-resistant, with built-in image stabilisation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	100	72	80	175	840
FE 70-200mm f/4 Macro G OSS II	£1749	5★	Updated telezoom boasts excellent optics and useful half life-size macro feature	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	26	72	82.2	149	794
FE 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G OSS	£1150		Sony's most compact image-stabilised telephoto zoom	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	90	72	84	143.5	854
FE 85mm f/1.8	£550	4★	Relatively inexpensive portrait lens includes dust and moisture-resistant construction	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	80	67	78	82	371
FE 85mm f/1.4 GM	£1889	5★	Stunning image quality from Sony's premium 'G Master' portrait lens	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	80	77	89.5	107.5	820
FE 90mm f/2.8 Macro G OSS	£1049	5★	Optically excellent dedicated macro lens for Sony's full-frame E-mount cameras	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	28	62	79	130.5	602
FE 100mm f/2.8 STF GM OSS	£1700		Innovative portrait lens combines optical stabilisation and an apodisation filter for smooth bokeh	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	57	72	85.2	118.1	700
FE 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 GM OSS	£2500	5★	Premium optically stabilised, weather-sealed telezoom designed to match the Alpha 9	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	98	77	93.9	205	1395
FE 135mm f/1.8 GM	£1750	5★	Large-aperture portrait prime for full-frame combines exceptional sharpness and attractive bokeh	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	70	82	89.5	127	950
FE 200-600mm f/5.6-6.3 G OSS	£1799		Weather-resistant super-telephoto, with easy-to-use internal zoom design	240	95	111.5	318	2115

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Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT										DIMENSIONS						
				IMAGE STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO FOUR THIRDS	SONY E	NIKON Z	FUJIFILM X	LEICA L	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)			
TAMRON MIRRORLESS																				
11-20mm F/2.8 Di III-A RXD	£819		Large-aperture wideangle zoom for Sony APS-C mirrorless cameras with moisture-resistant construction													15	67	73	86.2	335
17-70mm F/2.8 Di III-A VC RXD	£780	4.5★	Provides a uniquely useful combination of 4.1x zoom range, f/2.8 maximum aperture and optical stabilisation													19	67	74.6	119.3	525
18-200mm F/3.5-6.3 Di III VC	£390		Lightweight, compact, all-in-one zoom for mirrorless cameras, to cover practically any shooting situation													50	62	68	96.7	460
18-300mm F/3.5-6.3 Di III-A VC VXD	£679	3★	Superzoom lens for APS-C mirrorless cameras, available in both Fujifilm X and Sony E mounts													15	67	75.5	125.6	620
17-28mm F/2.8 Di III RXD	£899	5★	Small and lightweight fast wideangle zoom boasts excellent optics and fast autofocus													19	67	73	99	420
17-50mm F/4 Di III VXD	£749		Unique zoom for full-frame cameras that extends from the wideangle into the 'standard' range													30	67	74.8	114.4	460
20mm F/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399		Widest of a trio of lightweight primes offering half life-size magnification and splash-proof build													11	67	73	64	220
20-40mm F/2.8 Di III VXD	£879	4.5★	Billed as the smallest and lightest ultra-wideangle f/2.8 zoom for full-frame E-mount cameras													17	67	74.4	86.5	365
24mm F/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399		Compact wideangle prime designed for high-resolution full-frame mirrorless cameras													12	67	73	64	215
28-75mm F/2.8 Di III RXD	£699	4.5★	Fast zoom for full-frame mirrorless is relatively compact and has fine optics													19	67	73	117.8	550
28-75mm F/2.8 Di III VXD G2	£849		Second-generation fast standard zoom boasts new, faster AF motor and completely redesigned optics													18	67	76	118	540
28-200mm F/2.8-5.6 Di III RXD	£800	4★	All-in-one superzoom with impressive maximum aperture but limited wideangle and no stabilisation													19	67	74	117	575
35mm F/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399		Optimized Silent Drive (OSD) motor promises full compatibility with advanced autofocus modes													15	67	73	64	210
35-150mm F/2.0-2.8 Di III VXD	£1599	4★	Super-fast standard zoom for Sony full-frame mirrorless with useful close-focus distance													33	82	89	158	1165
50-400mm F/4.5-6.3 Di III VC VXD	£1250	4.5★	Telephoto zoom that's similar in size to conventional 100-400mm designs, but starts at 50mm													25	67	88.5	183.4	1155
70-180mm F/2.8 Di III VXD	£1350	4.5★	Remarkably compact large-aperture telephoto prime includes newly-developed VXD autofocus drive													85	67	81	149	810
70-180mm F/2.8 Di III VC VXD G2	£1330		Updated large-aperture telephoto zoom gains optical stabilisation while staying compact													85	67	83	156.5	855
70-300mm F/4.5-6.3 Di III RXD	£650	4★	Lightweight, affordable, weather-sealed telephoto zoom, available in Nikon Z and Sony E mounts													80	67	77	148	545
150-500mm F/5-6.7 Di III VC VXD	£1379		Long-range telephoto zoom that's similar in packed length to 100-400mm optics, comes in E and X mounts													60	82	93	209.6	1725
VOIGTLANDER MIRRORLESS																				
10.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£999		Ultra-large aperture super-wide prime for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus and aperture setting													17	72	77	82.4	585
17.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£799		35mm equivalent wideangle manual-focus prime with exceptionally large aperture													15	58	63.4	80	540
25mm f/0.95 Nokton II	£719		All-metal construction with traditional manual focus and aperture rings													17	52	60.6	70	435
29mm f/0.8 Super Nokton	£1599		Currently the world's fastest photographic lens in production													37	62	72.3	88.9	703
42.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£749		Large aperture short-telephoto portrait lens for Micro Four Thirds cameras													23	58	64.3	74.6	571
60mm f/0.95 Nokton	£1049		Unique super-fast manual-focus medium telephoto for MFT offers a 120mm equivalent view													34	77	82.5	87.7	860
NEW 18mm f/2.8 Color-Skopar	£469		Slimline, moderately wideangle manual-focus lens for APS-C mirrorless cameras, available in silver or black													17	43	59.3	23.5	115
23mm f/1.2 Nokton Aspherical	£629		Lightweight manual-focus lens for APS-C cameras that's available in both Fujifilm X and Nikon Z mounts													18	46	59.3	43.8	214
27mm f/2 Ultron	£449		Small, lightweight prime lens for Fujifilm cameras with a 41mm equivalent angle of view													25	43	59.3	23.5	120
35mm f/0.9 Nokton Aspherical	£1200		Ultra-fast manual-focus standard prime for Fujifilm APS-C cameras													35	62	72.7	64.9	492
35mm f/1.2 Nokton	£599		Fast standard prime for Fujifilm X and Nikon Z mounts is specifically designed for the smaller APS-C sensor													30	46	59.6	39.8	195
35mm f/2 Macro Apo-Ultron	£649		Manual focus macro lens for APS-C mirrorless offering half life-size magnification													16	49	60.7	58.4	265
50mm f/1.2 Nokton	£599		Large-aperture short-telephoto prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras with manual focus and aperture ring													39	58	63.9	49	290
10mm f/5.6 Hyper Wide Heliar	£749		Covers a phenomenal 130° angle of view, with optics designed to minimise distortion													50	n/a	67.8	58.7	312
15mm f/4.5 Super Wide Heliar III	£649		Compact, lightweight ultra-wideangle manual-focus prime that still accepts 58mm filters													30	58	66.4	62.3	294
21mm f/1.4 Nokton	£1149		Large-aperture wideangle prime specifically designed for Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras													25	62	70.5	79.5	560
21mm f/3.5 Color-Skopar Asph	£549		Compact wideangle prime with manual focus and aperture operation													20	52	62.8	39.9	230
35mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£849		Super-fast yet relatively compact prime, with 'Still Edition' design optimised for photography not video													30	58	66.5	59.9	387
35mm f/1.4 Nokton Asph	£639		'Classic' lens based on symmetrical optical design that only uses spherical lens elements													30	58	67	39.6	262
35mm f/2 Apo-Lanthar	£899		Promises the highest resolution and colour correction of all of Voigtlander's E-mount lenses													35	49	62.5	67.3	352
40mm f/1.2 Nokton	£810		World's first full-frame lens with a super-fast f/1.2 aperture, promising pleasing bokeh													35	58	70.1	59.3	420
40mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£749		'Stills Edition' version of this fast prime is smaller, lighter and more affordable													35	58	66.5	51.9	340
50mm f/1.0 Nokton Asph	£1699		Impressively compact ultra-large-aperture manual focus lens for Canon RF and Nikon Z-mount cameras													45	62	67.6	66.6	598
50mm f/1.2 Nokton	£899		Super-fast manual-focus prime boasts 12 aperture blades for attractive background blur													45	58	70.1	58.8	434
50mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£849		SE version does without switchable clicked/clickless aperture mechanism													45	58	66.5	58.5	383
50mm f/2 Apo-Lanthar	£869		Fully manual lens with apochromatic optics designed to completely eliminate colour fringing													45	49	62.6	61.3	354
65mm f/2 Macro Apo-Lanthar	£749		High-quality apochromatic macro lens designed for Sony mirrorless offers half life-size reproduction													31	67	78	91.3	625
110mm f/2.5 Macro Apo-Lanthar	£899		Manual-focus macro lens with 1:1 magnification and premium apochromatic optics													35	58	78.4	99.7	771
ZEISS MIRRORLESS																				
Touit 12mm f/2.8 Distagon T*	£959	5★	Designed specifically for Sony NEX and Fujifilm X-series CSC cameras. Very impressive performance													18	67	82	68	270
Touit 32mm f/1.8 Planar T*	£700	4.5★	Optimised for use with APS-C format sensors, a fast standard lens for Fujifilm X-series cameras													23	52	72	76	200
Touit 50mm f/2.8 Planar T*	£589		Macro 1:1 lens for extreme close-ups, as well as shooting portraits or panoramas as a light tele-lens													15	52	75	91	290
Batis 18mm f/2.8	£990		The Batis range is for mirrorless full-frame system cameras from Sony													25	77	78	95	330
Loxia 21mm f/2	£1230		Compact manual-focus wideangle prime purpose-designed for Sony Alpha 7-series cameras													25	52	62	72	394
Batis 25mm f/2	£980	5★	A wideangle lens for Sony full-frame users offering unrivalled quality													20	67	81	92	355
Loxia 25mm f/2.4	£1190	5★	Gorgeous but ever-so-pricey compact manual focus prime, with absolutely stunning optics													25	52	62	69.5	375
Loxia 35mm f/2	£1015		Small wideangle manual-focus prime intended for Sony Alpha 7 users													30	52	62	59	340
Batis 40mm f/2 CF	£1130	5★	Bridges the gap between Batis 25mm and 85mm lenses and features close-focusing ability													24	67	91	93	361
Loxia 50mm f/2	£740		Manual-focus standard prime with premium optics and E mount for Sony Alpha 7 users													45	52	62	59	320
Batis 85mm f/1.8	£909	5★	A high-quality medium prime for wedding and portrait shooters, developed for Sony's Alpha 7 series													80	67	78	105	475
Loxia 85mm f/2.4	£1199		A compact, manual-focus, short telephoto lens for the mirrorless Sony Alpha series													80	52	62.5	108	594
Batis 135mm f/2.8	£1749	5★	Absolutely stunning, super-sharp image-stabilised portrait lens for Sony full-frame mirrorless													87	67	84	120	614

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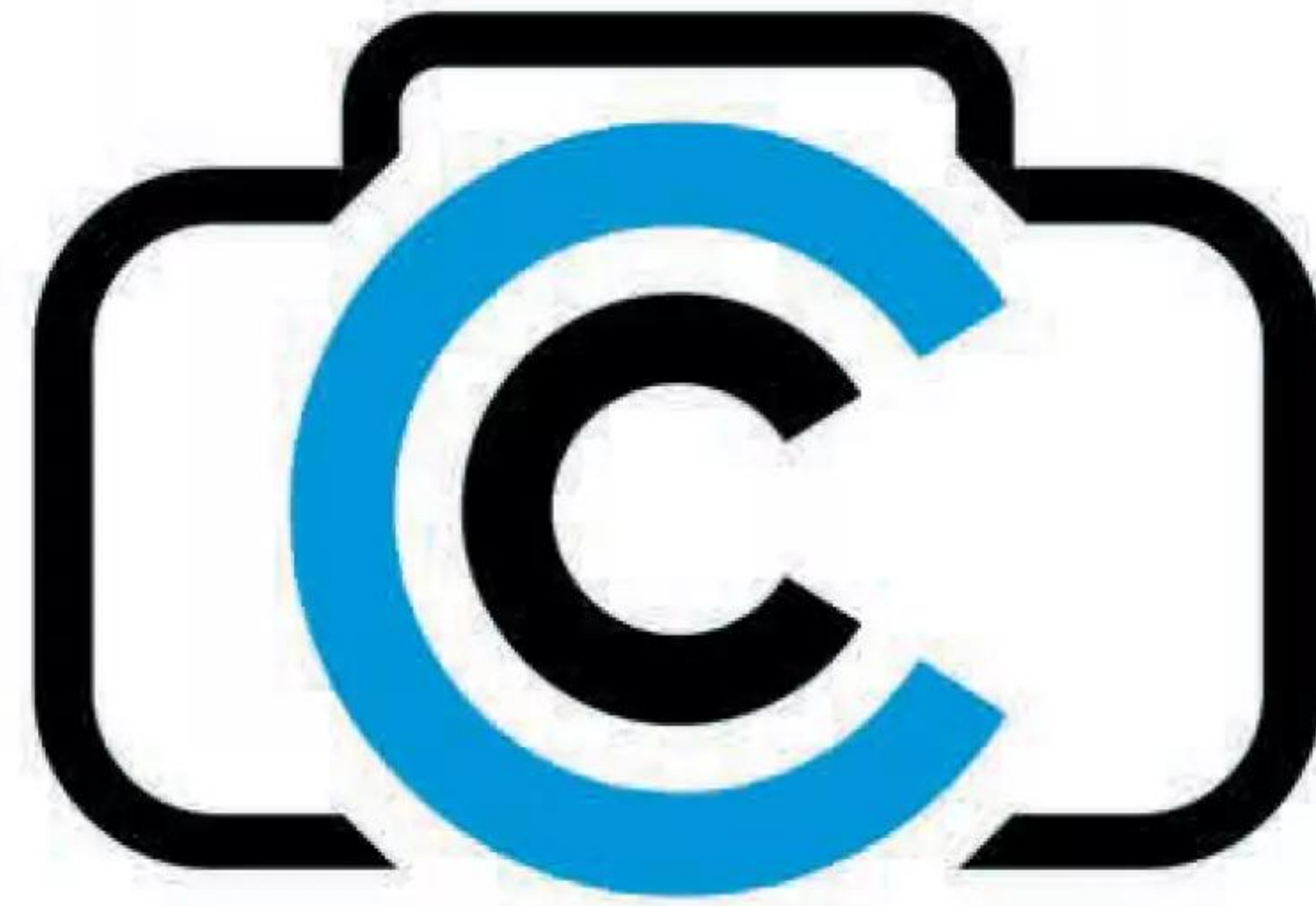
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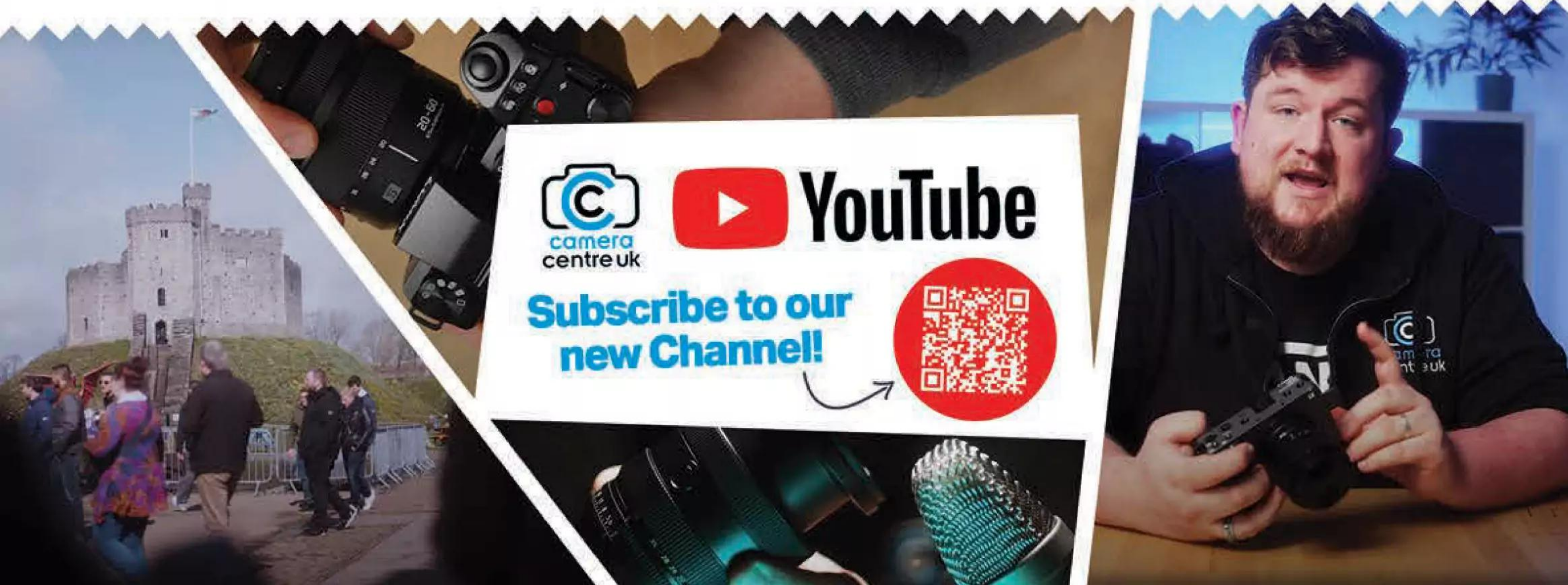
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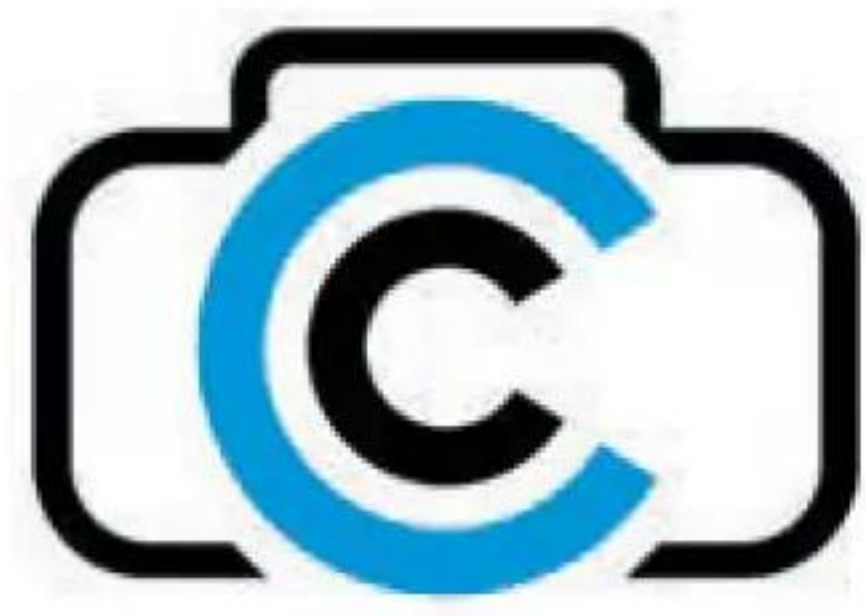
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Used Canon



Table listing Canon R series mirrorless cameras: R3 body box (£3999), R5 body box (£2799), R6 body box (£1199). Includes various lens and accessory options.

Used Canon



Table listing Canon AF lenses with prices: 200-400mm IS USM (£3999), 300mm F2.8 IS USM LII (£3499), 400mm F4 DO II USM (£3499), 500mm F4 IS USM LII (£4999).

Used Canon



Table listing Canon DSLR cameras: 5D MKIV body box (£1299), 90D body box (£899), 7D MKII body box (£599). Includes various lens and accessory options.

NIKON AUTOFOCUS CAMERAS, LENSES, FLASH, ACCESSORIES ETC USED

NIKON Z MIRRORLESS USED

Table listing Nikon Z mirrorless cameras: Z9 body box (£3999), Z8 body box (£3199), Z7 MKII body box (£1799), Z7 body box (£1199), Z6 MKII body box (£1199), Z50 body box (£499).

NIKON DSLR USED

Table listing Nikon DSLR cameras: D5 body box (£2799), D4 body box (£899), D850 body Mint box (£1999), D850 body box (£1499), D810 body box (£499/799), D800 body box (£299/599), D780 body Mint box (£1599), D750 body box (£799), D700 body (£199), D500 body box (£1299), D7500 body box (£899), D7200 body box (£649), D7100 body box (£449), D7000 body (£199), D300 / D90 / D80 body each (£149), MBD-18 (D850) (£269), MBD-17 (D500) (£199), MBD-16 (D750) (£149), MBD-15 (D7000/7100/7200) (£69), MBD-12 (D800/810) (£149), MBD-80 (D80/90) (£49).

NIKON AF LENSES USED

Table listing Nikon AF lenses: 10.5 F2.8 fisheye box (£249), 10-20 F4.5/5.6 AF-P DX VR (£239), 10-24 F3.5/4.5 AFS box (£399), 14-24 F2.8 AFS (£699), 16 F2.8 AFD fisheye (£299), 16-35 F4 AFS VR box (£399), 16-80 F2.8/4 VR DX (£499), 16-85 F3.5/5.6 AFS VR (£199), 18-35 F3.5/4.5 AFS box (£399), 18-35 F3.5/4.5 AFD (£99), 18-55 F3.5/5.6 AF VR DX (£99), 18-105 F3.5/5.6 VR DX AFS (£149), 18-140 F3.5/5.6 AFS VR box (£149), 18-200 F3.5/5.6 VR DX MKII (£299), 18-300 F3.5/5.6 VR DX (£599), 20 F1.8 AFS box (£599), 20 F2.8 AFD box (£199), 24 F1.4 G AFS Mint box (£699), 24 F2.8 AFD box (£279), 24-70 F2.8 AFS VR box (£1399), 24-70 F2.8 AFS (£399).

Table listing Nikon AF lenses: 24-120 F4 AFS VR (£499), 28-300 F3.5/5.6 VR box (£599), 35 F1.4 AFS G box (£799), 35 F1.8 AFS G DX (£99), 35 F1.8 AFS ED (£299), 35 F2.8 AFD (£329), 50 F1.4 AFS G box (£299), 50 F1.8 AFS box (£99), 50 F1.8 AFD (£99), 55-200 F4.5/5.6 AFS VR box (£149), 60 F2.8 AFS (£299), 70-200 F2.8 E FL AFS box (£1399), 70-200 F2.8 AFS VR II box (£699), 70-300 F4.5/5.6 E AF P VR (£499), 70-300 F4.5/5.6 AFS VR box (£299), 70-300 F4.5/5.6 AFD (£99), 80-400 F4.5/5.6 AFS VR box (£999), 85 F1.4 G AFS box (£499), 85 F1.8 AFS box (£299), 105 F2.8 AFS VR macro (£399), 120 F4 AFD macro box (£999), 200-500 F5.6 E ED AFS VR box (£999).

Table listing Nikon AF lenses: 300 F4 E PF ED VR box (£699), 400 F2.8 E FL AFS VR serviced (£4999), 500 F4 E FL ED AFS VR (£4999), 500 F5.6 E PF VR AFS box (£2299), TC14-EIII box (£299), TC14-EII box (£199), TC17-EIII box (£99), TC20-EIII box (£199), SIGMA NAF USED: 10-20 F3.5 DC box (£199), 12-24 F4.5/5.6 II HSM (£399), 18-300 F3.5/6.3 OS HSM (£299), 24-105 F4 DG OS (£499), 35 F1.4 DG Art (£499), 50 F1.4 DG HSM Art (£499), 70-200 F2.8 EX DG OS HSM (£399), 85 F1.4 Art box (£799), 105 F2.8 EX DG HSM OS (£299), 120-300 F2.8 DG OS HSM Sport (£1699), 150 F2.8 EX DG OS HSM box (£499), 150-600 F5/6.3 DG OS contem (£749), 150-600 F5/6.3 DG OS (£749).

Table listing Nikon AF lenses: 180 F2.8 DG OS mac box (£599), 500 F4 DG OS HSM Sport box (£1999), TC-1401 extender (£169), OTHER NAF USED: TAM 15-30 F2.8 Di USD (£299), TAM 16-300 F3.5/6.3 II VC (£399), TAM 24-70 F2.8 USD VC box (£399), TAM 90 F2.8 macro (£149), TAM 150-600 F5/6.3 Di VC (£499), TAM 200-500 F5/6.3 (£399), FLASH / ACCESSORIES USED: SB-700 (£149), SB-900 (£99), SB-910 (£199), SU-800 commander (£199), DR-6 angle finder (£149), DR-5 angle finder (£149), DR-4 angle finder (£79), MC-36A remote (£99), MC-30A remote (£59), SC-19 cable (£49), SC-28 cable (£49).

FUJI, MINOLTA/SONY, OLYMPUS, PANASONIC ETC. DIGITAL USED

GITZO CF TRIPODS/HEADS USED

Table listing Gitzo CF tripods/heads: GT3541LS (£499), GT3542 (£499), GT5532S (£499), GT5540LS (£499), GH3750QR head (£299), GH3780QD head (£299), GH5380SQR head (£299), GS3750 DQR panoramic head (£149), FUJI X DIGITAL USED: XH-2 body Mint box (£1599), X-T5 body black Mint box (£1299), X-T30 MKII + 15-45 box (£799), VG-XT4 grip (£199), VG-XT1 grip (£49), VPB-XH1 grip (£99), VPB-XT2 grip (£99).

Table listing Fuji cameras: 10-24 F4 XF R box (£399), 16 F1.4 WR box (£599), 16-80 F4 (£499), 18-55 F2.8/4 XF Mint (£399), 18-135 F3.5/5.6 WR (£399), 23 F1.4 XF (£399), 50-230 F4.5/5.7 MKII (£239), 55-200 F3.5/4.8 R box (£399), 56 F1.2 R box (£599), 60 F2.4 R mac (£349), 100-400 F4.5/5.6 R (£899), 1.4x converter (£329), Samyang 12 F2 man focus (£149), X500 flash (£349), EF-42 flash (£119).

Table listing Sony digital cameras: A1 b/o (£3999), A9 MKII b/o (£1999), A7R MKIV box (£1499), SONY FE MOUNT DIGITAL USED: 12-24 F2.8 GM (£1999), 16-35 F4 ZA (£699), 24 F1.4 G (£899), 24-70 F2.8 GM II (£1699), 24-70 F2.8 GM (£999), 24-70 F4 ZA OSS (£499), 24-105 F4 G OSS box (£69), 35 F1.4 ZA OSS box (£599), 35 F2.8 box (£499), 50 F1.2 (£1499), 55 F1.8 (£499), 100 F2.8 GM OSS (£899), 100-400 F4.5/5.6 OSS D (£1699), 200-600 F5.6/6.3 (£1199).

Table listing Olympus micro cameras: OM-1 body Mint box (£1599), EM1 MKII body box (£599), EM10 MKIII S body (£349), EM10 MKII body (£279), 8 F1.8 Pro (£499), 7-14 F2.8 ED Pro box (£699), 9-18 F4/5.6 ED box (£299), 12-40 F2.8 (£399), 12-45 F4 Pro box (£349), 40-150 F2.8 Pro (£849), 40-150 F4.5/5.6 (£149), 60 F2.8 mac (£369), 75-300 F4.8/6.7 MSCII (£399), MC20 converter (£299).

Table listing Panasonic micro cameras: OM-1 body Mint box (£1599), EM1 MKII body box (£599), EM10 MKIII S body (£349), EM10 MKII body (£279), 8 F1.8 Pro (£499), 7-14 F2.8 ED Pro box (£699), 9-18 F4/5.6 ED box (£299), 12-40 F2.8 (£399), 12-45 F4 Pro box (£349), 40-150 F2.8 Pro (£849), 40-150 F4.5/5.6 (£149), 60 F2.8 mac (£369), 75-300 F4.8/6.7 MSCII (£399), MC20 converter (£299).

Table listing Panasonic S digital cameras: Lumix S5 + 20-60 F3.5/5.6 (£1199), 70-300 F4.5/5.6 OIS box (£699), PENTAX DIGITAL USED: K5 II body box (£299), K5 body (£199), 16-45 F4 ED DA box (£149), 18-55 F3.5/5.6 AL (£49), 18-250 F3.5/6.3 DA (£199), 35-80 F4/5.6 (£49), 50 F1.8 DA (£99), 50-200 F4/5.6 WR (£99), 55-300 F4/5.6 ED HD WR (£299), OTHER PENTAX AF USED: SIG 10-20 F3.5 EX DC HSM (£199), TAM 10-24 F3.5/4.5 Dill box (£199).

BRONICA, FUJI, HASSELBLAD, MAMIYA, PENTAX ETC. MEDIUM FORMAT USED

Table listing Bronica cameras: BRONICA ETR 645 USED: ETRSi + AEII prism + 75 Ell + speed grip + 120 back (£699), ETRSi body (£299), ETRS body (£199), 40 F4 PE (£399), 40 F4 E (£199), 50 F2.8 PE (£299), 50 F2.8 E MC (£199), 135 F4 (£299), 150 F3.5 E (£99), 150 F3.5 PE (£199), 180 F4.5 PE (£299), 200 F4.5 E (£99), 250 F5.6 (£99), 2x extender (£49), ETRSi 120 back RWC late (£119), AEIII prism (£399), AEII prism (£199), Ext tube E14 or E28 each (£49), Speed grip E (£99), WLF (£149), Rotary prism E box (£149), Plain prism E box (£149).

Table listing Bronica cameras: BRONICA SQ 6x6 USED: SQAi + 80 + WLF + 120 box (£799), SQA + 80 + WLF + 120 (£599), SQAi body (£399), SQA body (£299), 50 F3.5 PS box (£349), 110 F4 macro (£299), 150 F4 PS (£299), 2x converter PS (£149), 2x converter S (£69), SQAi waist level finder (£199), SQAi prism late (£399), SQAi 120 back late (£199), SQA 120 back early (£149), Plain prism S (£199), Polaroid back (£20), WLF (£199), SQA speed grip (£99), Lens hoods various (£20/50).

Table listing Bronica cameras: BRONICA GS 6x7 USED: 150 F4 PG (£199), AE prism (£199), Speedgrip G box (£99), HASSELBLAD 6x6 USED: 503CX + 80 F2.8 CFE, A12, WLF (£2999), 500CM + 80 F2.8 CF + A12 (£1999), 503CX body (£999), 500CM body (£499), 500C body (£399), 135 F5.6 CF + macro bellows (£699), 150 F4 CF (£499), 150 F4 Black T* (£299), 180 F4 CF box (£799), 250 F5.6 CF box (£399), 250 F5.6 black T* (£299), PM 45° prism (£399), A12 magazine (£199/499).

Table listing Mamiya cameras: MAMIYA 645 MF USED: 645 Pro body (£399), Teleplus 2x conv. £39 WLF (£199), WLF Super (£99), 120 back £149, 120 insert £29, Ext tube 1/2/3 ea £29, MAMIYA TLR 6x6 USED: C330S body + WLF (£499), 55 F4.5 (£249), MAMIYA 7 RF 6x7 USED: 150 F4.5 (£399), 210 F8 (£399), Polarising filter ZE702 box (£149), MAMIYA RB 6x7 USED: Pro S + WLF + 120 RFH + 90 (£699), Pro SD body (£399), 55 F4.5 (£299), Prism early (£129), Chimney box (£149), Extension tube 1 (£59).

Table listing Pentax cameras: PENTAX 645 AF USED: 33-55 F4.5 FA (£499), 45-85 F4.5 FA (£499), 55 F2.8 D FA box (£499), 55-110 F5.6 FA (£499), 120 F4 FA macro (£499), 150-300 F5.6 FA ED box (£499), 200 F4 FA (£399), 300 F5.6 FA (£499), 400 F5.6 FA (£499), PENTAX 645 MF USED: 45 F2.8 (£299), 55 F2.8 (£399), 80-160 F4.5 (£299), 120 F4 mac (£399), 200 F4 (£199), 135 F4 leaf (£499), 300 F4 green T* (£499), 300 F4 green (£499), 1.4x or 2x converter each (£199), Auto ext tube set (£149), Helicoid ext tube (£149), REF converter angle finder (£149).

Table listing Pentax cameras: PENTAX 6x7 USED: 6x7 + meter prism (£599), 35 F4.5 fisheye (£599), 55 F4 early (£399), 55 F4 late (£599), 55-100 F4.5 (£499), 75 F4.5 box (£499), 90 F2.8 (£599), 90-180 F5.6 box (£499), 105 F2.4 late box (£699), 105 F2.4 early (£499), 120 F3.5 soft focus (£399), 135 F4 macro (£299), 165 F2.8 (£299), 200 F4 latest (£299), 300 F4 latest (£299), 1.4x or 2x rear converter grey ea (£199), Plain prism (£199), Chimney (£299), REF converter angle finder (£199), Helicoid ext tube (£199), Wooden grip (£299).

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Table listing Canon AF film bodies: EOS 3 body (£399), EOS 5 body (£99), EOS 650/50E body each (£79), CANON FD USED: T70 body (£69), 28 F2.8 (£99), 50 F1.8 (£79), 50 F3.5 mac (£149), 70-210 F4 (£99), 100-300 F5.6 (£99), 135 F3.5 (£69), 500 F8 (£299), FD auto bellows box (£99), LIGHTMETERS USED: Minolta Auto Meter IVF box (£149), Minolta Flashmeter V (£149), Minolta Flashmeter IVF (£149), Sekonic L308B (£99), Sekonic L358 (£199), LEICA DIGITAL USED: MP silver body (£1999), LEICA 35mm M USED: M6 0.72 chrome body box (£2199), M6 0.72 black body box (£2199).

Table listing Minolta AF cameras: Dynax 9xi, 7xi or 800Si body each (£99), 20 F2.8 (£299), 50 F1.7 (£99), 75-300 F4/5.6 (£99), 100 F2.8 macro (£299), 100-300 F4.5/5.6 box (£129), 100-400 F4.5/6.7 (£299), VC700 grip Dynax 700Si/800Si (£39), Sigma 50 F1.4 Art box (£399), Tamron 28-75 F2.8 XR Di box (£199), Tamron 90 F2.8 Di macro (£199), Sony SAL 1.4 TC converter (£299), MINOLTA MD USED: X700 body black (£199), X300 body blk/chrome (£99), 35-70 F3.5/4.5 (£69), 35-105 F3.5 (£149), 50 F1.7 (£99), 50-135 F3.5 (£149), 70-210 F4 (£99), 100 F4 macro + 1:1 tube (£199), 300 F4.5 (£199).

Table listing Nikon AF bodies: F5 body (£499), F100 + MB-15 grip (£299), F90X body (£99), F801/F801s body (£99), NIKON MF BODIES USED: F Photomic FTn Apollo chrome body (£399), F + plain prism Apollo chr body (£399), F + plain prism black (£499), F + plain prism chrome (£399), F3HP body (£599), F3 body (£499), F2 Photomic + DP-1 chrome (£399), F2A body black (£399), FM2N body Black (£399), FM2N body Chrome (£399), FE2 body chrome (£349), F301 body (£99), Angle finder F fits FE/FM etc (£49), DG-2 Eyepiece magnifier (£49).

Table listing Nikon MF lenses: 24 F2.8 AIS (£199), 28 F2 AIS (£399), 28 F2.8 AIS (£299), 28 F4 shift (£299), 28-85 F3.5/4.5 AIS (£299), 35 F2.8 shift (£299), 35 F2 AIS (£269), 35-70 F3.5 AIS (£99), 35-105 F3.5/4.5 AIS (£149), 50 F1.4 AIS (£299), 50 F1.4 AI (£199), 50 F1.8 AIS (£149), 55 F2.8 AIS micro (£199), 80-200 F4 AIS (£199), 100-300 F5.6 AIS (£199), 135 F2 AIS (£399), 180 F2.8 ED AIS (£349), 200 F4 AI (£149), 200 F4 AIS (£199), 300 F4.5 ED AIS (£399), TC200 converter (£99), PB-4 or PB-6 bellows each (£199).

Table listing Olympus OM cameras: OM-2N body chrome (£149), OM-2 body chrome box (£149), OM-1N body chrome (£149), OM-40 body (£99), OM-20 body (£99), OM-10 body chrome (£99), 24 F2.8 (£169), 28 F2.8 (£169), 28 F3.5 (£99), 35 F2.8 shift (£299), 35 F2.8 (£149), 35-70 F4 (£79), 50 F1.4 (£149), 50 F1.8 (£99), 80 F4 macro (£199), 135 F2.8 (£199), 135 F3.5 (£99), 200 F4 (£99), 300 F4.5 (£149), Macro bellows box (£99).



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Final Analysis

Damien Demolder considers...

Seafront Silhouettes, Thessaloniki, by Costas Mouratidis

All photographs rely on timing and coincidence.

In some, the right timing might at first seem incidental, while in others it can form the core of what is appealing about the picture and will be the element that strikes the audience first.

You might think these factors play no part at all in a still life, for example, where the camera and the subject matter are quite static. At some stage, though, the objects on the tabletop were moved to make a pleasing coincidence of forms, and the camera position was adjusted until the moment when the arrangement looked its best.

In landscapes, too, we wait, when we are patient enough, for the cloud to blow above the tree, the sheep to present themselves in a satisfactory configuration or for a sunbeam to pick out the detail to which we want to draw attention. Timing and coincidence on these occasions may not be split-second critical, but it is timing and coincidence nonetheless.

In a picture such as this seafront view of Thessaloniki, by Greek photographer Costas Mouratidis, the cornerstone of the image is immediately clear. Even before we have determined the details of



© COSTAS MOURATIDIS

the scene we might exclaim, 'Goodness, what amazing timing!'

Luck comes calling

The timing is indeed amazing, but so is the coincidence of shapes, and of the bike wheel and walking girl coming together at the same time. If you consider they are moving in opposite directions at speed it is incredible that we can see them in this relationship at all. The girl's bowed head and arched back beautifully echo the shape of the wheel, and her forward

gaze gives us a perfect profile. Consider, too, the odds of Costas having his Lumix G80 switched on, ready and in the right place, and we enter a whole new dimension of improbability.

Luck plays a huge part in this kind of picture, but the photographer has to be ready when luck comes a-calling. Costas put himself in a position to make the most of his luck, and was skilful enough to not only predict the moment but also to actually capture it.

'The girl's bowed head and arched back beautifully echo the shape of the wheel'

'I took advantage of the bike lane on the seafront,' he told me, 'and I patiently waited for a cyclist to pass by. I lowered my camera to feet level and took the shot. It was one of those moments when your first click of the day just works and the feeling fills you with excitement.'

I find this kind of thing absolutely thrilling, and can only

imagine Costas' anticipation turning to jubilation when he realised he'd got the shot. Attempting to recapture that feeling is the thing that drives my photography.

This picture was shortlisted in the Lumix Experience Facebook Group 'Best Stills' contest for 2023. 

To see more of Costas' work, visit www.costasmouratidis.com

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- Christophe

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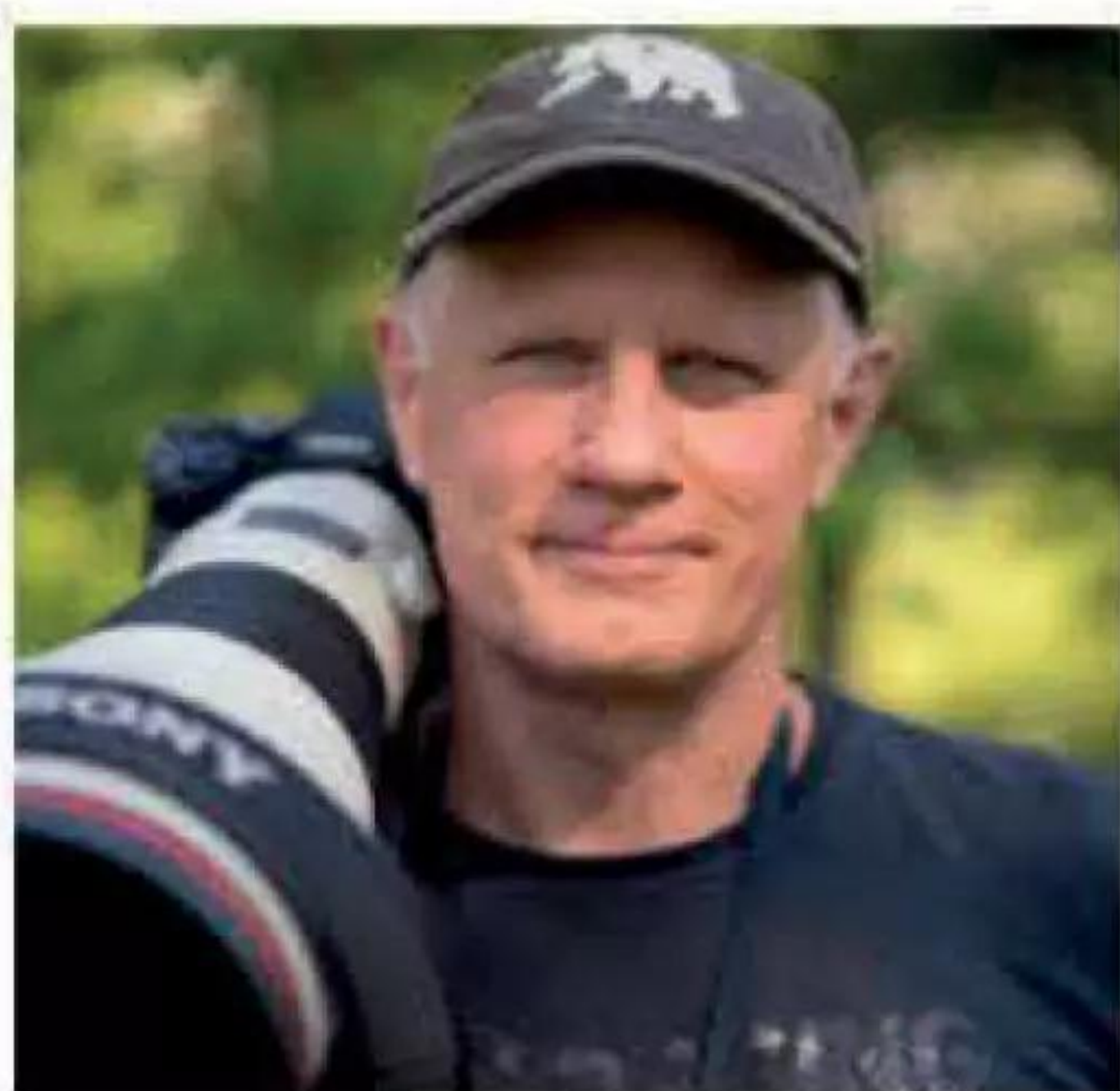
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