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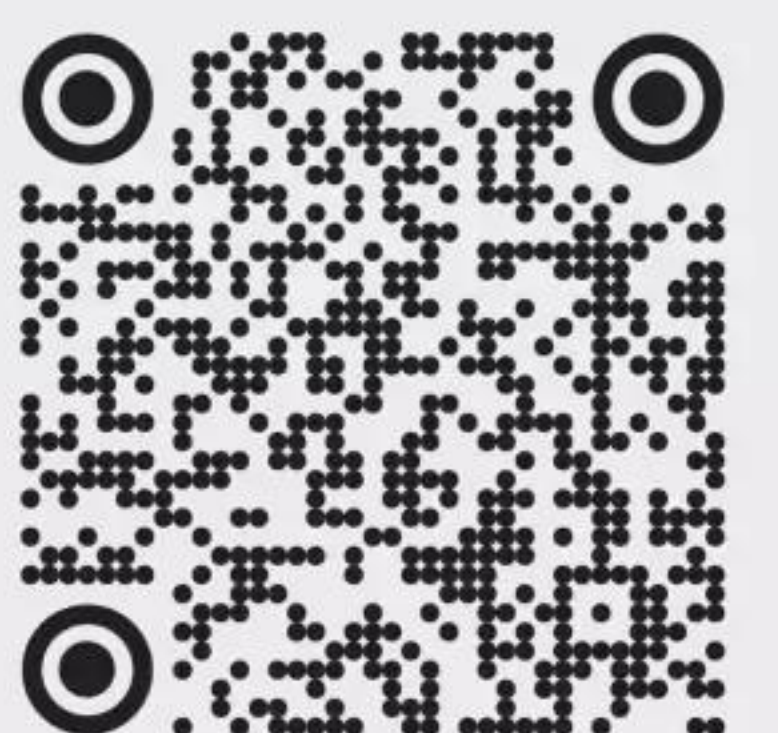


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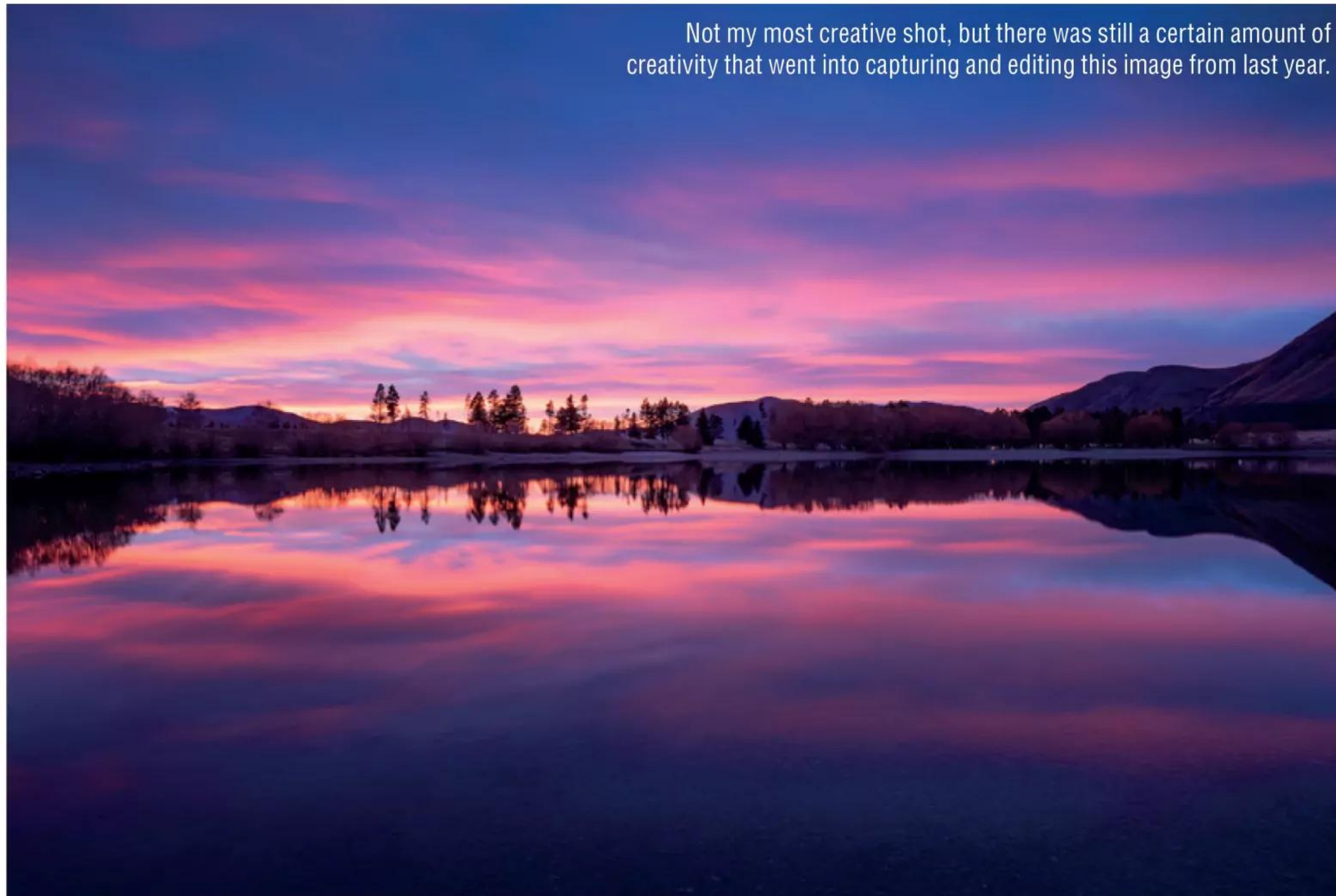
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Not my most creative shot, but there was still a certain amount of creativity that went into capturing and editing this image from last year.

# ON CREATIVITY...

MIKE O'CONNOR, EDITOR

**W**hat does creativity mean for you? For some photographers, creativity starts and ends with the camera itself, while for others it only occurs later in the editing suite. Creativity can come from pre-visualising a shot before you capture it, or being inspired by something you see and putting your own spin on it. For each of us it's different, and we all express it in different ways.

And yet creativity is also something we as a culture have a habit of commodifying – reducing it to a list of activities or a series of tips to simplify the process of reaching the end point. As the great photographer and writer Guy Tal writes in his book *The Interior Landscape* (2022), the easier something is to accomplish, the less creative it is likely to be, and the more likely it is that others have already done it before us. Tal's idea is that we owe it to our own creative instincts to continue to find ways to make our work more difficult and time-consuming if we want to make the most from it.

This is a challenging perspective, because it's the complete opposite of what the photography industry and our culture as a whole tells us. Technological innovations in the newest cameras, step-by-step guides, AI automation, hacks of all kinds, and courses on mastering your camera all offer a plethora of quick and easy recipes for success, but as Tal believes, they ultimately cost us in creativity.

Now I'm fully aware of the irony of a photography publication like ours mentioning this, especially so as we publish our fair share of tips and tricks for taking better photos. But I also think this is where there is room for different interpretations of creativity. Not everyone wants to take purely unique and creative work – if they did, nobody would photograph the Opera House, or take a photo of a jetty at sunset, as it's all already been done. At the same time, you could also say that 'pure' creativity is a myth – everything we create is influenced by something, one way or another. For many of us, just being able to get out of the house and do something we think is creative is enough, and that's totally fine.

The other idea is that if you want to make the most of any skill, you have to follow in the steps of others, and it's only in doing this that you can find your own path. So, what do you think? And to go back to my earlier question, what does creativity mean for you? I'd love to know. 🌟







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Two Australian photographers have been recognised in Red Bull Illume, the annual search for the world's best action sports photographs.

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2024

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AUSTRALIANPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

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You're a photographer, right? Well, there's no two ways about it - you're going to have to take family photos! Here are a few tips from seasoned family shooter and AP Editor Mike O'Connor that'll have you capturing your family (and your friends) like a pro.





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2023 was a bumper year for Panasonic Lumix, but the company's most intriguing camera was surely the G9 II. But is this the M43 camera that can dethrone the OM-System OM-1 from the top of the heap? Tim Robinson finds out.



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Nikon have partnered with Swedish lifestyle brand Gaston Luga to produce a sleek, urban camera bag. Mike O'Connor takes it out.

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Melbourne photographer Ted Grambeau's incredible image of James 'Jimmy' McKean riding one of the world's most spectacular and dangerous waves at Shipstern Bluff, Tasmania. The image won the Energy category of Red Bull Illume, the annual search for the world's best action sports photos. See some of the finalists on page 22.

## THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



### PAULA HEELAN

Paula is an outback photographer, photojournalist and author based in south east Queensland, Australia. See more of her work at [paulaheelanphotojournalism.com](http://paulaheelanphotojournalism.com)



### STEVE THOMAS

Steve been pedalling, paddling, and trekking his way around the globe for 35 years, and makes his living from capturing images and words from his travels. See more at [stevethomasimages.com](http://stevethomasimages.com)



### SHREYAS YADAV

Shreyas is a nature and wildlife photographer from India, and a specialist in digital post processing. See more at [shreyas-yadav.com](http://shreyas-yadav.com)



### TIM ROBINSON

Tim is the producer of Snap Happy TV and a keen bird photographer. Find out more at [worldviewproductions.com.au](http://worldviewproductions.com.au)





# HEART OF THE NATION

BY ROB CIANFLONE

For the first time in the history of the tournament, last year's FIFA Women's World Cup was to be hosted by Australia and New Zealand.

As you might expect, the Matildas performance in the tournament captured the attention of the nation. When I captured this image, Australia and England were facing off in the semi-final. It was the furthest any Australian team, male or female, had ever reached in a FIFA World Cup.

I was high up in the catwalk for this match in a position that was only allowed for two photographers. Safety briefings were required in advance for access, and my equipment had to be tethered to me. Only a small backpack which I also had tethered to the catwalk structure, carrying spare batteries and cards, was allowed.

From this position I used two Canon R3 cameras coupled with the 100-300mm f/2.8 lens with 1.4 convertor, and a 24-70mm lens. This combination allowed for both wide angle and action shots to be captured across the pitch. Our cameras were tethered to ethernet cables where the images would be sent direct to our editors in the Getty Images office in Sydney who would edit, caption, and file the images to our clients in less than a minute.

At the end of the match, while England celebrated their win, there was a lot to capture on the pitch. From the corner of my eye, I noticed the Matildas had formed a huddle, but this time it wasn't just in a shape of a circle as usually happens. This time the huddle resembled the shape of a heart. The image was used around the country in newspapers and other media for several days.

Even though the shape of the huddle was just a coincidence and not planned, I think it encapsulated the way Australians had fallen in love with the Matildas.

**CANON EOS R3, RF100-300MM F2.8 L IS USM + EXTENDER RF1.4X @ 222MM. 1/2000S @ F4, ISO 4000.**











# QUICK SNAPS

## TWO AUSTRALIANS MAKE WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR PEOPLE'S CHOICE

**T**WO Australian photographers have been shortlisted in the prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice vote, selected from more than 49,000 entries.

Recognised in the shortlist are Cooma, NSW photographer Charles Davis, for his image *Duckling Huddle*, and Sydney photographer Ofer Levy, for his image *Neighbourhood dispute*.

The photographs were chosen by the Natural History Museum, London, and an international judging panel.

The public can vote for their favourite image either online or in the flagship Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition at the Natural History Museum, London. Voting closes on 31 January.

The winner and top four images will be announced in February and displayed online, joining the winners of the fifty-ninth competition announced earlier this year.



TOP: *Duckling Huddle* by Charles Davis. Here, a wood duck and its brood are caught in a late spring snowstorm in Smiggin Holes, NSW.

BOTTOM: *Neighbourhood Dispute* by Ofer Levy. In this shot, a mudskipper fiercely defends its territory from a trespassing crab in Roebuck Bay, WA.



## LEICA ANNOUNCES SUMMICRON-M 28MM F2 ASPH LENS

**LEICA** has announced the Summicron-M 28mm F2 ASPH, a compact wide-angle M-mount lens for the company's rangefinder cameras.

In case you thought you'd seen one of these before, you'd be right, as the lens is an update to Leica's existing 28mm F2, although the new version, which features a new body design and an integrated lens hood, comes with a \$400-odd price increase.

Like its predecessor, Leica says it has positioned the lens as ideal for

photojournalism, street and daily environmental photography, and promises sharpness even when wide open at F2.

Inside, nine lenses in six groups provide for images that are 'extremely rich in contrast and detail.'

Leica says the focus ring can be adjusted in a 'remarkably quiet and smooth way.'

The Leica Summicron-M 28 f/2 ASPH. is available now from Leica Store. It retails for \$8,290.





## QUICK SNAPS



### PENTAX WG-90 RUGGED COMPACT SET TO LAUNCH

**RICOH** has announced the WG-90, an update to its WG series of rugged cameras.

The WG-90 is built around a 16MP Type 1/2.3 (6.17 x 4.55mm) BSI CMOS sensor, and features a 28mm to 140mm equivalent 5x optical zoom lens with integrated ring light.

As you'd expect, it's pretty rugged and durable, and features water resistance down to a depth of 14m, shockproof against a fall from a height of 1.6m, and freeze-proof against temperatures as low as -10°C.

The WG-90 is available in two new

colours: blue and "Classic" black, and is now branded as a Pentax. The switch in branding, according to Ricoh, was to capitalise on Pentax's reputation for, "developing dustproof, waterproof and weather-resistant products."

No local pricing or availability has been confirmed yet, but it's expected to be available globally early this year.

*Keep an eye on the Pentax Australia website, [pentax.com.au](http://pentax.com.au), for more.*

### SIGMA ANNOUNCES 70-200MM DG DN OS LENS

**SIGMA** has announced the 70-200mm F2.8 DG DN OS lens for Sony's E-mount and Panasonic and Leica's L-mount full-frame cameras.

The new 70-200mm in the company's "Sports" series of lenses features an internal focus design, and is made up of 20 elements in 15 groups, including six 'fluorite-like' FLD elements, two super-low dispersion elements, and three aspherical lenses.

According to Sigma, it uses dual "High-response" linear actuators to drive two focus groups. A built in stabilisation system promises up to 7.5EV of correction.

The lens has a minimum focus distance of 65cm at its widest focal length, and 100cm at the long end.

The lens weighs 1345g in the L-mount form, and 10g lighter for E-mount. The lens ships with an Arca-Swiss compatible tripod shoe along with a barrel-type hood.

No local pricing or availability has been confirmed, but in the states it will retail for \$1,499 (\$2,286 AUD).

*You can find out more about the 70-200mm F2.8 DG DN OS at Sigma's website, [sigma.com](http://sigma.com)*



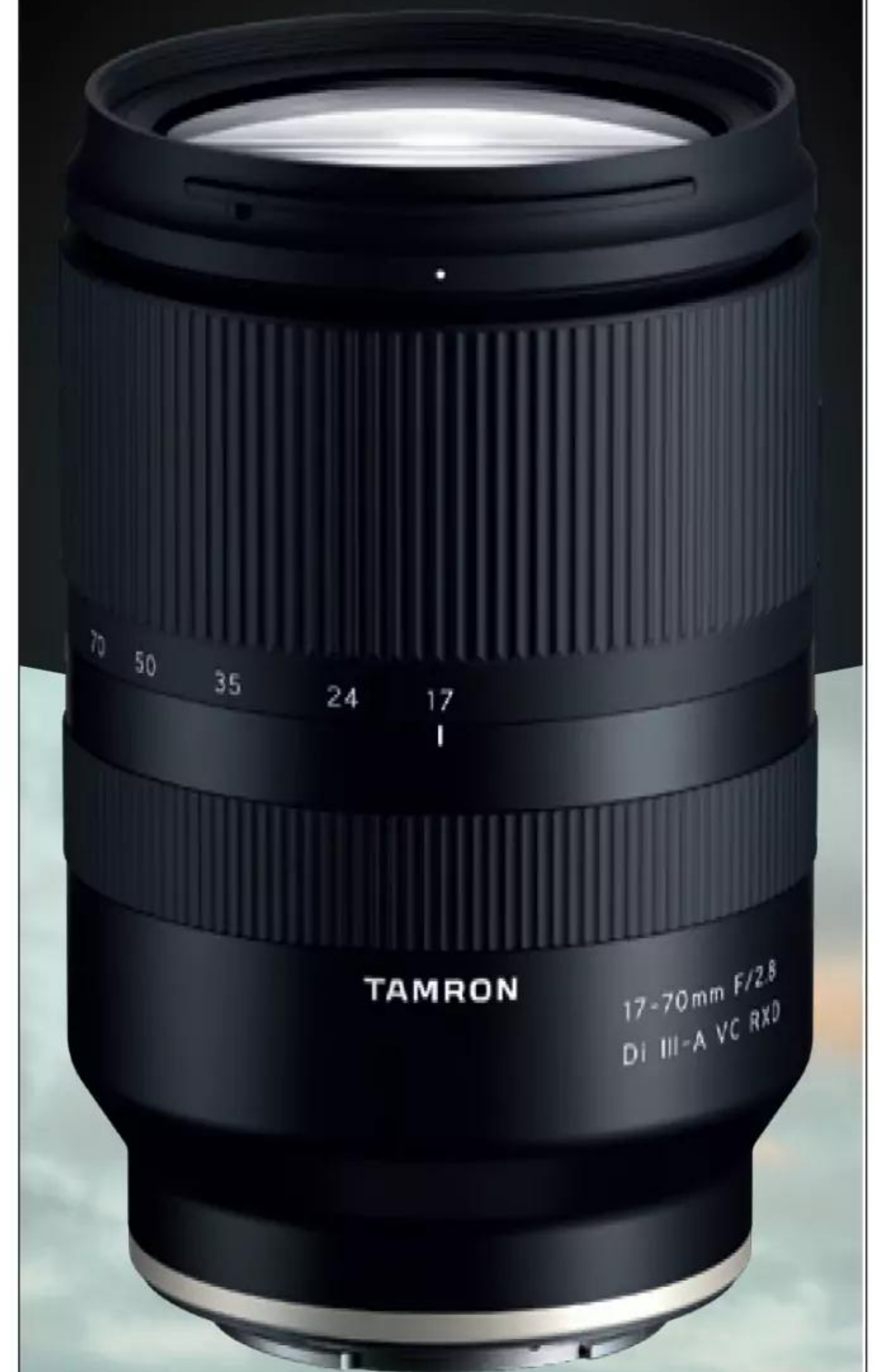
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## THINK TANK LAUNCHES NEW CABLE MANAGEMENT POUCHES

**THINK** Tank has released new versions of its Cable Management pouches.

Like the early versions of the pouches, the new v3.0 pouches feature clear front and back panels to make finding gear easy.

The pouches have a wide top zipper opening for easy access and back-pocket mesh organiser slots. A fold-away main compartment divider provides more organisation, and the cases are made out of double-diamond ripstop material that has been DWR-treated.

The pouches also include three bungee cable ties (called 'whips') for organising cables and other accessories, and a foam divider.

The pouches start at \$33 for the 15 x 8 x 3.5 cm pouch, and up to \$57 for the biggest version. They should be available locally now.



You can find out more about the Cable Management pouches on the Think Tank website, [thinktankphoto.com](http://thinktankphoto.com)

## HEAD ON PHOTO FESTIVAL LAUNCHES PETITION AS FUNDING THREATENS FUTURE

**SYDNEY'S** Head On festival, one of Australia's largest photography events, has launched a petition to Creative Australia (formerly Australia Council for the Arts) in a desperate plea for funding.

According to Head On, despite reaching more than 450,000 people at Bondi Beach, Paddington Reservoir Gardens, TAFE NSW Ultimo and dozens of other venues this year, the festival has shed staff and will have no choice but to shrink future events without more funding.

Festival Director Moshe Rosenz-

veig OAM revealed that despite being a mainstay of the Australian photographic community for more than a decade, the organisation has never received funding from Creative Australia, with him learning in December an application for \$100,000 in federal government funding had been knocked back.

"I can be stoic and say 'well, that's life', but the reality is it's very difficult and getting more difficult," he told the Canberra Times.

"It all leaves Head On with more financial support from foreign countries than it

receives from the Australian government."

In 2023, photographs by more than 700 artists from 30 countries were on show, with more than half by NSW photographers. Outside of Sydney, the festival is highly regarded internationally, and has partnerships with festivals and organisations in Europe, North America, Asia, UK, China, and New Zealand.

According to Rosenzveig, the festival runs on a budget of about \$500,000, with about half of that coming from government funding and half from photo sales and entry fees. Despite this, it's only about half what the event needs to be sustainable.

According to the AAP, the festival received \$140,000 from Create NSW this year, and just under \$90,000 over the past two years.

The Head On Foundation launched its petition in December.

"We, the signatories of this petition, wish to draw attention to our shared concerns over the persistent shortfall in funding and the consequent downscaling of the Head On Foundation and Head On Photo Festival, a cornerstone organisation that plays a vital role in enriching our community's cultural and creative life.

We need your support now more than ever before!" it states.

You can sign the petition for yourself at [bit.ly/47pxy0b](http://bit.ly/47pxy0b)







AI continues to evolve, with video the next frontier.

IMAGE: CHIKORITA/CREATIVE COMMONS.

## MIDJOURNEY TO DEBUT AI VIDEO IN JANUARY

AI generation company Midjourney will be able to generate videos by the end of January, according to new reports.

According to Decrypt, Midjourney will begin 'training' its video model in January 2024, with its "text to video" model set to be released in a few months.

The move is not a complete surprise, as a number of AI platforms have already launched AI video capabilities. Stable Diffusion, for example, is working on an AI video generator, Meta just showcased its EMU

video generator, and Adobe has introduced generative AI to video with its Premiere Pro and After Effects software.

The update comes following Midjourney's recent v6 update, boasting improved prompt following and more realistic images.

Whether 2024 is the year where AI-generated video hits the mainstream remains to be seen, but it's an interesting space to follow, especially as it raises challenging questions about authenticity and how reality is perceived.

## PANASONIC ANNOUNCES LUMIX S 100MM F2.8 MACRO LENS



**PANASONIC** has announced the Lumix S 100mm F2.8 Macro lens for full-frame L-mount cameras.

The 100mm F2.8 Macro weighs just 298g, and is 82mm long and 74mm in diameter. The lens comprises 13 elements in 11 groups, including three aspherical, two UED, and one ED elements, and uses an internal focusing design. It'll set you back \$1,999, and is available from February.

You can find out more at [panasonic.com.au](http://panasonic.com.au)

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## KODAK SET TO FINALLY RELEASE SUPER 8 CAMERA EIGHT YEARS AFTER IT WAS ANNOUNCED

**THE** nearly eight year wait for Kodak's new Super 8mm camera is almost over, with the company (finally) giving it an official announcement.

First announced at CES 2016, the Kodak was billed as being able to shoot on film, using Super 8 cartridges, and record audio to an SD card.

Now available for pre-order, the Super 8mm camera features a detachable wide-angle 6mm 1:1.2 C-mount lens, an on-board sound recorder and external microphone connectivity, a micro HDMI output, and a 4' LCD viewfinder.

The camera can shoot 16:9 (widescreen) and 14:9 full-frame.

At launch will be three different Color Negative Film stocks, including TRI-X Black & White Reversal Film and Ektachrome Color Reversal Film.

And while the ability to shoot super 8mm film hasn't changed, the pricing sure has.

In 2016, The Wall Street Journal quoted

Jeff Clarke, Kodak's then-CEO, that the camera would sell for a projected price of between \$400-750 USD (\$600-\$1,130 AUD).

The last update on the camera was in 2018, after Clarke had departed the company, and with it came confirmation that the price would also increase to \$2,000-3,500 USD.

However, the Super 8 Camera is now officially available for pre-order for a whopping \$5,495 USD (\$8,315 AUD), with keen buyers able to register their interest to buy at [kodak.com](http://kodak.com). As many film photographers will also know, processing film has significantly jumped in price in recent years, making the whole setup a potentially very expensive proposition.

According to Kodak, the camera will initially launch in the US and later become available in other countries.

"Kodak will contact customers in sign-up order when a camera is available for purchase in your region," the company states. 🌐



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# YOUR BEST SHOT

PORTRAIT

We've run the theme of portrait a few times over the years, and it never fails to bring plenty of interesting shots out of the woodwork! As always, images that try to show a glimpse into the life of the subject are the ones that really catch our eye.

**THIS  
MONTH'S  
WINNER**







## ROB LORD

*The Break*

### EDITOR'S COMMENT

Rob Lord's self-portrait is a great example of getting in low and close to the action – something we love to do with portraiture (more on this in our family photography article on page 42!). Here, he tells us this shot was taken after mounting the camera on a tripod at the other end of his snooker table. "I triggered the shutter remotely with a 10 second delay to allow me to get into position for the portrait," he explains. The low angle, gripping expression, and lovely bokeh in those out of focus balls brings the viewer right into the drama of the shot, something you just couldn't have captured by being far away.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Nikon D750, 60mm lens. 0.6s @ f7.1, ISO 100.



## OWEN JENKINS

*Marie*

### EDITOR'S COMMENT

What makes a great portrait can often be the feeling it evokes in the viewer – in fact we'd argue an image that raises questions is oftentimes more interesting than a technically perfect shot. Case in point this month's winning image captured by Owen Jenkins during covid. He tells us that visits to his mother Marie were through a window with a table providing a couple of metres of separation.

At first glance this is just a traditional portrait, but Marie's expression of puzzlement and the details in her face makes the viewer question the context of the image – is she unhappy being photographed, or just unsure of what's happening? It's a portrait that makes you think, and for that reason it was a winner this month.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Sony A7R III, Sony 50mm F1.8 lens. 1/200s @ f2.5, ISO 800.

Thanks to the team at Blonde Robot, Owen Jenkins has won a Peak Design Travel Tripod Aluminium. Travel Tripod is the most portable, packable, and easy-to-setup professional tripod in the world. For years, traditional tripods have suffered a critical flaw: needless bulk and wasted space, the result of a spatially inefficient design. By redesigning the tripod from the ground up, Peak Design created the world's most portable travel tripod—one that packs to the diameter of a water bottle—without sacrificing height, stability, or load capacity.

MORE INFO:  
[PEAKDESIGN.COM](http://PEAKDESIGN.COM)







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## PETER MORTON

*Ari*

### HOW I DID IT

I took this photo of my nine-year-old grandson when he visited me last year. We were out for a walk, and he stopped to look at the reflections in the shop window. I think he really just wanted to check out his hair!

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Leica Q2, 28mm lens. 1/400s @ f1.8, ISO 100.



## POLLY FENTON

*Untitled*

### HOW I DID IT

This shot was captured several years ago, in a tin shed in the Omo Valley of Ethiopia. We were photographing the beautiful Nagudo of the Suri tribe - they love body scarring and many bracelets for adornment. They are a happy and engaging people, but were serious when having their photos taken.

We just used natural lighting from the doorway. The background was blackened with burning in Photoshop. In Lightroom I increased the exposure, clarity and vibrance slightly and decreased the shadows.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Fujifilm X-T2, 18-55mm lens @ 50mm. 1/80s @ f4, ISO 3200.





# ANNA CROSS

*My Brother and Tom*

### HOW I DID IT

This image shows my brother in his happy place, on his farm and with his cat on his knee.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Apple iPhone 14, 1/50s @ f1.8, ISO 125.



# MARGARET METCALFE

*Brandon*

### HOW I DID IT

This is my godson Brandon, who was in the struggles of teenagehood and trying to find himself. The tattoo was new and his way to capture his heritage. The image was shot in my little home garage studio with a beauty dish.

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Canon 5D Mark IV, 24-105mm f/4 lens @ 74mm. 1/125s @ f8, ISO 160.

ALL NEW

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## UPCOMING COMPETITION THEMES



**APRIL 2024**  
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31 January 2024



**JUNE 2024**  
FRAMING  
31 March 2024



**AUGUST 2024**  
WATER  
31 MAY 2024



**OCTOBER 2024**  
RURAL  
31 JULY 2024



**DECEMBER 2024**  
SPORT  
30 SEPTEMBER 2024

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2. The image file must be the same as your name, for example Jane Smith.jpg. If you enter multiple images, each new image file name should be appended with a unique number, eg Jane Smith2.jpg
3. A maximum of three images can be entered per person.
4. Images must be in JPEG format.
5. Email file size must not exceed 7MB.
6. Please include the following information about your entry in the body of your email: Name, image title and up to 200 words explaining how you created your image. Please also include technical details including camera, lens, focal length, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, tripod (if used) and a brief summary of any software edits.

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## PHOTO COMPETITION: RED BULL ILLUME



Category Winner & Overall Winner, Krystle Wright. "One day as I was driving to my local crag, an idea hit me like a lightning bolt where I conjured the concept of illuminating a crack from within on an iconic trad climb. After all, the crack is the feature of trad climbing and I wanted to search out the perfect fissure. Moab UT has always brought me back time and time again and teaming up with Angela VanWiemeersch, we found 'Seventh Serpent' in Long Canyon. As per usual, my timing is atrocious and a heat wave had descended onto Moab which meant we only had a few precious shaded hours in the afternoon to rig the lights into the crack. I'll always be a nervous wreck in these situations but when I raced back across the canyon to set up my position to capture, what a spectacular feeling it was to witness the crack come alive as the darkness enveloped around us."



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT: RED BULL ILLUME

BY THE AP TEAM

Australian photographer Krystle Wright has won Red Bull Illume, the world's largest imagery contest that celebrates adventure and action sports, and also becomes the first woman ever to win the competition in its 17-year history.

Wright's shot of climber Angela VanWiemeersch illuminated in a crack, deep within Long Canyon, Utah, United States convinced the judging panel of more than 50 photographers. It also won the Innovation by MPB category.

Originally from Queensland, Wright is an adventure photographer, cinematographer, and director, who has specialised in adventure sports for many years. She was previously a category finalist in 2013 and has made the top 25 in 2013 and 2019.

Wright described the win as 'incredible'.

"I wanted to earn my place in this industry and my work to get recognised. Red Bull Illume is the only platform that truly recognises what we do," she said.

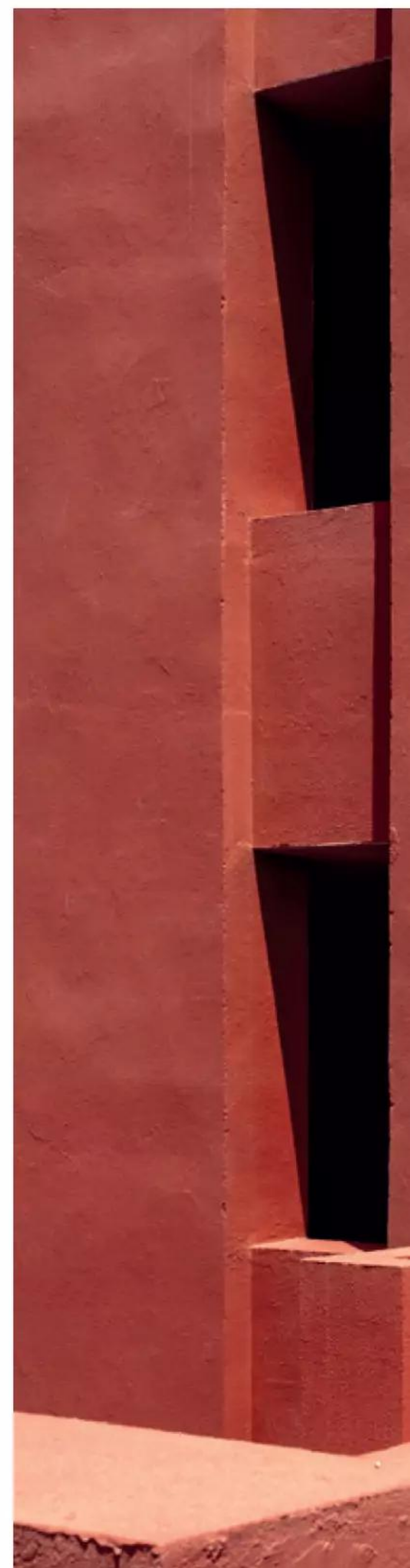
In addition to Wright, Melbourne photographer Ted Grambeau also won the 'Energy' category of the competition, with his image of James 'Jimmy' McKean captured at Shipstern Bluff, Tasmania.

Winning images were selected blind by an international 52-member jury who judged the shots without any information about the image, or the photographer. Wright and Grambeau take a share in a prize pool valued at more than €200,000 (\$327,000 AUD) for their wins. 🌟





PHOTO COMPETITION: RED BULL ILLUME







# PHOTO COMPETITION: RED BULL ILLUME



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT:  
Radiant Photo Category Winner,  
Jb Liautard;

Energy Category Winner, Ted  
Grambeau. "One of the most  
extreme days at the incredibly  
challenging Shipstern Bluff on a  
remote stretch of coast in  
Tasmania Australia.";

Emerging with Canon Category  
winner, Gonzalo Robert Parraguez.  
"I think this is one of my favorite  
photos as it included a bit of  
everything. To get to the waterfall  
you had to drive two hours, walk  
ten minutes and then to take this  
photo I had to do a 15 meter  
rappel as the waterfall is in a  
deep canyon.";

Masterpiece by Sölden category  
winner, Lorenz Holder. "La Muralla  
Roja is a huge apartment complex  
in the Spanish town Calp. This  
building is just a miracle itself –  
there are stairs, small corridors,  
platforms and concrete walls  
everywhere and it's very easy to  
lose orientation.";

RAW Category Winner, Léo  
Grosgrurin. "This was for me one  
of the most difficult shots to take.  
In a windy week, a lot of larch in  
the valley were losing their thorns.  
So we were looking for the most  
beautiful larch around Briançon  
in France, and fortunately came  
across this magnificent tree with  
the waterfalls as a backdrop."





# THE SHOWCASE

BY PAULA HEELAN

For many aspiring photographers, putting on an exhibition of your work is a target that's both lofty and daunting. So, if it's a goal of yours, where do you start? AP takes a look.







**F**rom choosing a gallery to the nerves of an opening night, holding a solo photography exhibition is rewarding, and daunting, in all kinds of ways. It's not only a chance to share your creativity and get discovered – it can lead to new opportunities including invitations to exhibit elsewhere, a higher profile, openings to shoot for other projects, media interviews, great sales and most of all, an enjoyable experience.

So, how do you do it?

### **FIND AN AFFORDABLE GALLERY**

Unless you have a gallery in mind, the first place to look for a suitable venue is usually in your community, especially if you are exhibiting images taken locally. You could approach a café, a restaurant, a public space, a library, a private gallery or, as I did for my most recent exhibition, a council owned and operated gallery. Curators are incredibly helpful, insightful, and encouraging.

To see my work expertly hung in light filled, well-appointed rooms at the purpose-built Rosalie Art Gallery in southeast Queensland was thrilling. The small gallery fee for a month-long exhibition and 25 percent commission for each work sold was very reasonable – particularly when the show was almost a sell-out.

I exhibited 30 images in total -25 were 50x70cm prints, plus one lead image that was 50 x 90cm.

### **APPLYING TO SHOW**

Once you have selected a venue, it's important to carefully prepare your approach to exhibit. Whether it be in person or a more formal, written application if required, you should provide a blurb about your work and include any achievements, credentials, experience, and awards. Put forward your reason for exhibiting – what's your aim? And advise if you intend to print in colour, black and white or a mix.

You'll also need to outline your ideas and intentions for your proposed exhibition. Explain clearly how you will present your work – framing (or not) and any deadlines needed along the way.

I applied to exhibit in October 2022 and on acceptance in November, I was given a choice of dates to exhibit for 2023. I wanted plenty of time to prepare - so I chose to start the exhibition on May 28, 2023 and it ran for a month. That gave me six months to prepare. I held a 'meet the artist day' once the exhibition opened which was like an opening day. Interestingly, I was also invited to run a photography workshop any time that suited me during the month of the exhibition, but I declined because the cost of insurance was too high.





**“CONSIDER WHAT MIGHT BE POPULAR WITH YOUR AUDIENCE, AND WHAT MIGHT SELL. PERHAPS PORTRAITS OF LOCAL PEOPLE, RURAL OR URBAN LANDSCAPES, STREET PHOTOGRAPHY, PEOPLE AT WORK OR PLAY.”**

### **CHOOSE A THEME**

Consider what might be popular with your audience, and what might sell. Perhaps portraits of local people, rural or urban landscapes, street photography, people at work or play.

You'll need a consistent body of quality images, so only use your standout work. I found once I decided on a theme and title, in this case People and Places in the High Country, shooting for it was surprisingly enjoyable. Fun and enthusiasm soon outweighed any pre-exhibition nerves. And while I already had a file of possible images to exhibit, those that made the final cut were those shot for the exhibition. It created a sense of achievement and pride to present new, previously unseen work.

Once the theme is decided, your project will likely take on a life of its own, which can be full of surprises. For example, as my exhibition consisted mostly of environmental portraits, I needed to approach people I hadn't met before to invite them to take part.

I found that once my subjects understood the images

were for a local exhibition and I'd earned their trust, they were generally keen to be involved and would even offer their own ideas, including possible props, for more interesting shots.

Like anything, it can take some time to set up a shoot – and you should be prepared to return if necessary to reshoot if something can be improved. Because I was shooting portraits, I found a small gift to my sitter was a nice way to thank them for their time. I also provided images via email to my subjects.

### **PRESENTING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS**

You've got your shots – now what? Framing is an important decision. Do your images warrant different frames and sizes? Or would they look better uniformly framed? Should you present your work in good quality, expensive frames or good looking, less expensive frames? I decided on the latter – keeping my work at affordable prices. This I believe, led to more sales. If your work is well known, you may have the standing to charge more.





TOP LEFT: Not only is the process of holding your own exhibition a cracking experience, by the end of it, you will have gained a new audience which you can then leverage for feedback, networking, and patronage.

MIDDLE: Hanging a small storyboard is a nice way to enhance an image. Providing a little background info, and perhaps a small, framed image next to the main one, can highlight your subject's story. It's your show – you can make the creative decisions.

ABOVE: In an attempt to capture environmental portraits I attended local shows, rodeos, and events. I captured this portrait behind the scenes. Happy to take part, Mitch, with his Paul Newman looks, gave me enough time to take several, natural images in between his rides. Canon 5D Mark IV, Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 lens @ 70mm. 1/80s @ f2.8, ISO 100.









Ensure your work looks appealing on the walls and be careful not to overwhelm the gallery space with too many images. Carefully curate your work – this is often where the gallery’s curator will step in. Trust their advice.

A nice way to enhance your photographs is to hang a small story board with just a few sentences next to each image. For example, if you are showing a portrait of an artist, you could include his or her name, their unique talent, the medium they work in and perhaps a snippet of some interesting, quirky information. You might also like to hang a smaller, framed image to highlight the subject’s work – for example a closeup of the artist’s hand holding a crayon over a colourful crayon box. I did this for a few of the prints and believe these helped sell some of the images - people enjoyed the background info. Ultimately though it’s your show – you make the creative decisions.

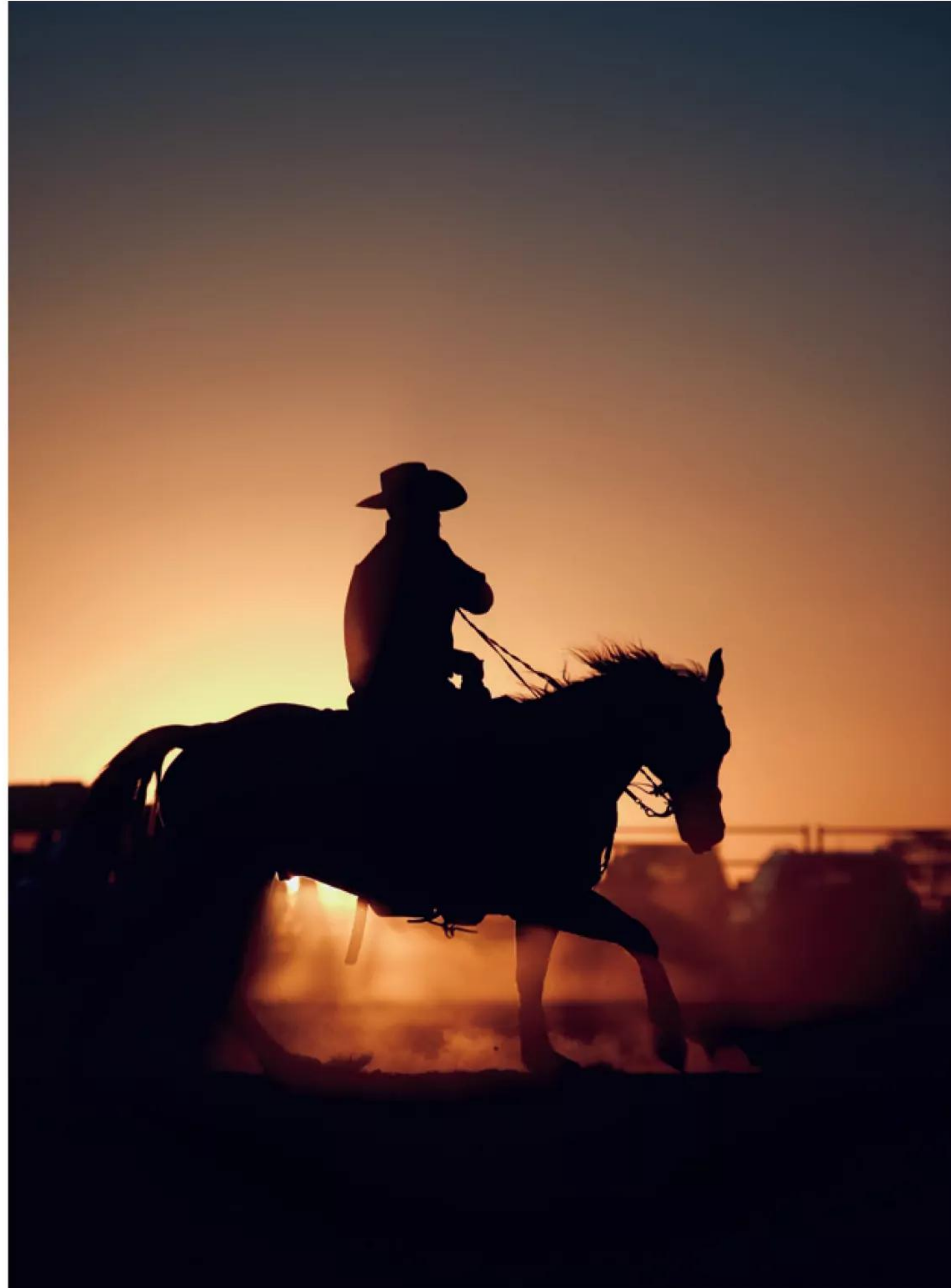
### PRINTING AND FRAMING

Choosing a good printer is important. For my exhibition I used my local town printer. I ordered a few each week – right up to a week before the exhibition. Rather than printing them all at once, I selected the shot and printed after each shoot. This also allowed time for a change of mind on the chosen image.

My printer knew I needed more than 30 images (50cm x 90cm) for my exhibition and offered a good discount. Most of my images were 16 x 20 inch, all on matte paper at 310 GSM.

The printer was also very particular when printing my work - making sure each print was as good as it could be.

When it came to framing, I wanted to keep the cost down - not knowing if I’d be stuck with images or not after the show. In the end, after scouting around and



LEFT: While some portrait shots were pre-arranged and posed, others were taken spontaneously. This image of a cattleman was taken early on a chilly, foggy morning. It’s a familiar winter scene in this part of world and was popular with viewers. Canon 5D Mark II, Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 lens @ 200mm. 1/1000s @ f5.6, ISO 200.

ABOVE LEFT: To help decide on an exhibition theme, I considered what might be popular. I chose to shoot local people and places. This one was taken at an agricultural show. I asked this young man, who was showing his prize cattle, to move into a nearby shed. This way, I was able to avoid the harsh, outdoor light. Canon 5D Mark IV, Canon EF 50mm f/1.4 USM lens. 1/320s @ f2.8, ISO 100.

ABOVE RIGHT: I shot this silhouette at a local rodeo. I waited until sunset, knowing I’d have a good chance at capturing the iconic mix of fading light, dust, orange sky, a cowboy and horse. Competitors were practicing on twilight in an arena before the event – it’s all about timing. Canon 5D Mark IV, Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 lens @ 200mm. 1/2000s @ f3.2, ISO 125.





## PROMOTING YOUR WORK: RUNNING AN EXHIBITION

**RIGHT:** Promoting your exhibition is key. Generate as much media attention as possible by sending out press releases with your lead image.

**CENTRE:** Chose a lead image for your exhibition to help promote your show. Hang it in the most prominent position in the gallery and perhaps print and frame it a little larger than your other photographs. The curator chose this image as my lead – Firefighter, Captain Julie Proud of Crows Nest Fire Station - perfect for the exhibition theme of people and places in the high country. Canon 5D Mark IV, Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 lens @ 137mm. 1/200s @ f2.8, ISO 160.

**BELOW:** Holding an opening night, or perhaps a 'meet the artist' day, gives you a wonderful opportunity to meet and talk to your viewers in person.

ROSALIE GALLERY

People & Places in the High Country  
Paula Heelan

Exhibition on display 31 May to 25 June 2023  
Meet the Artist Day - 10.30am - 3.30pm Saturday 3 June  
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Image: Paula HEELAN / Firefighter: Captain Julie Proud Crows Nest Fire Station 2023  
Photograph / 55 x 75cm / © Paula Heelan

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## “THIS IS THE TIME TO FLOOD YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA WITH EXHIBITION NEWS, OPENING DATES AND TIMES...”

getting quotes, I chose frames from IKEA. These were almost the same as the ones I chose for the Head On exhibition I showed in a few years ago. They looked good and only cost about \$25 each. I bought some black, some white and some natural - so prints would look better in frames that suited them. It's worth mentioning that although the non-glass in the frames was lightweight - it wasn't non-reflective, but I thought people could put the prints in their own frames if they didn't like the ones I sold them in. In the end, I loved how they looked as they were clean and uniform. I put the 'hero' image (more on that below) in a larger, proper glass, white wooden frame which cost nearly \$200.

### **CHOOSE A STAR IMAGE**

I really recommend you choose your best image to lead your exhibition. Print and frame it larger than the others and hang it in a prominent position – perhaps near the gallery entrance. Your lead image can also be used in media promotions and news for your exhibition.

### **PROMOTE, PROMOTE, PROMOTE**

Generate as much media attention as possible by sending out press releases with your lead image. Private and public galleries will most likely send media releases for you, but they will still need your help to word them. This is the time to flood your social media with exhibition news, opening dates and times. Get the word out before and during your show and keep a guest book for comments.

My gallery generated print and digital promotional material via online platforms including email, web, and social media, and worked with the regional council network and several media outlets to engage local, regional, and national audiences. They even provided me with a comprehensive exhibition report.

Depending on your venue, you may like to arrange a 'meet the artist day' or an opening night. Attend your exhibition as often as you can during its run. It's extra special for both the photographer and the visitors if they can meet and talk in the gallery, and it gives you a priceless opportunity to meet your viewers in-person!

Not only is the process of holding your own exhibition a cracking experience, by the end of it, you will have gained a new audience which you can then leverage for feedback, networking and patronage. Putting your work out there, in a public space, makes you findable. Having people view and comment on your work inspires you to carry on confidently and do more – good luck! 🌟





# THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

BY STEVE THOMAS

Drone photography has really taken off (sorry!) in the past 10 years or so, and yet many stills' photographers have yet to spread their photographic wings into the high-flying world of aerial photography. Here are some tips for taking to the skies.

**T**hese days drones are very much a part of everyday life, and it's amazing to think that it was only a little over 10 years ago that Chinese company DJI launched their first consumer flying camera drone – the Phantom. Up until that point, aerial photography was something for the elite, usually involving expensive helicopters or small plane flights, and so when a highly affordable flying camera came on the market it was truly a game-changer.

Seeing the world from above offers an extraordinary opportunity for photographers, even if we are now somewhat blasé about aerial images that would have had our jaws dropping a decade ago - such is progress!

Drones and their cameras have evolved at a rapid pace, and what's more they are now highly compact and pretty affordable. Here's what you need to know to get started with drone photography.

## THE BEST DRONES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Before the ink even dries on the page there will probably be a newer and better drone on sale. In 2024, the current generation of drones are very much focussed on video creation, with photography seemingly an add-on bonus. It means that most have similar stills photography specs, with many specs not changing from model to model.

Unless you have endlessly deep pockets to keep up with the latest and the greatest, then you're probably best to spend your money on a slightly older model or a good second-hand drone. DJI Australia offers refurbished ex-demo drones for sale and rent, which is a good way to test the waters – although preferably not literally!

And although they are much easier to fly than the early generation drones, there is still a steep learning curve when it comes to flying these machines. You will almost certainly crash a few times early on, and maybe even lose, or write off, your drone.



caption xxxxx  
caption italic



I'd had this overhead selfie ride shot in mind for a year. After checking the light out at various times of day and also assessing what else may happen on the road at those times, I settled on the harsh midday light. Shooting JPEG on a small sensor gives little room to edit in post, so instead of going black and white, I ran it through the RNI Aero iPhone app to give the image an infrared effect. DJI Spark. 1/320s @ f2.6, ISO 100.





## “IF THERE’S ONE THING THE DRONE (AND ACTION CAMERA MANUFACTURERS FOR THAT MATTER) LOVE, IT’S ACCESSORIES...”

As such, it’s advisable for new pilots to avoid the higher end models as it’s a whole lot of money to potentially crash and burn, and, as many photographers likely realise, the results of drone photography simply may not be what they’d hoped for.

If you do buy new then I can recommend the DJI Care Refresh plan for peace of mind, where in most cases they will replace or repair badly crashed or lost drones.

### DO YOU REALLY NEED ALL THOSE ADD ONS?

If there’s one thing the drone (and action camera manufacturers for that matter) love, it’s accessories. Buy any drone and you’ll see all sorts of fancy ones tempting you to part with your hard-earned, most of which you will probably never need or use.

In my opinion, the essential accessories are spare batteries, a multi-battery charger, a power bank, spare props, memory cards, and the often-forgotten lens cloth.

If you are purely shooting still images, then filters will probably not be a big issue for you. However, if you are shooting video in bright daylight then you may want an ND/CPL filter – although many will argue that with fixed aperture drones this is only a major benefit when flying low and shooting moving objects, where the motion blur is more beneficial and apparent.

Finally, for still images if you want to take the glare of water or to slow the camera down for a long exposure, there are many magnetic filters sets out there, with Polar Pro being the high-end favourite. That said, Freewell and Kaze offer lower-priced and solid alternatives, and the DJI Mavic 3 Pro even comes with its own filter set included.







## PHOTO TIPS: GETTING STARTED WITH DRONES



ABOVE: I'd had this ricefield shot in mind for months, and drove out many times around sunset to catch the best light at the right time of the year. Unfortunately, as it was in a valley the shadows fell fast and early, meaning the light only lasted a few minutes. From this angle, it almost looks like the African continent! DJI Spark. 1/400s @ f2.6, ISO 100.

LEFT: Shooting at sunrise and into the sun is tricky at the best of times, and with no aperture control on a drone it's often worth avoiding, as you risk blowing out the sky and being stuck with shadows you can't recover. Here, I waited for the dog to walk by and while I did have to shoot into the sun, I compromised by angling the camera down and excluding it entirely. DJI Spark. 1/320s @ f2.6, ISO 100.

### FIVE QUICK TIPS FOR BETTER, SAFER DRONE FLIGHTS

- Charge and update everything over WiFi well before you leave home, as updates to apps, firmware, and fly zones happen frequently, and changes can leave you stuck with a bricked drone in the field. Also, carry as many batteries as you have. A grunty power bank can charge the spares between flights.
- Flight time is limited, so have a plan in mind and do your research using apps such as Photo Pills and Google Maps/Earth. Use these tools to take an aerial view in advance and check where the light will be at a given time. Naturally, check that you are not near a restricted or dangerous zone, and watch what the wind is doing too as strong gusts could cost you your drone, or chew up your battery quickly. Avoid the rain too as it will affect the optics of the lens.
- Drones don't go down well with birds – especially if you happen to be in an area where flocks are nesting. If in doubt, don't fly or choose another location.
- If you're flying over water or near to an object or person, play on the cautious side and give yourself a margin of error. Don't fly too low, as drone signals are prone to fluctuation.
- You can also fly most DJI drones directly from the app with your mobile device. The flight range and some functions may be limited in doing this, although in some drones you may even have access to more flight modes (such as with the DJI Spark).





**“REGULATIONS DIFFER  
DRAMATICALLY FROM  
COUNTRY TO COUNTRY,  
AND DEPEND ON DRONE  
WEIGHT AND SIZE...”**







## RULES, REGULATIONS, RESOURCES, AND THE FUTURE

If there's one thing that's moved faster than drone technology in the past decade, its drone rules and regs. And while getting your head around these can be confusing and downright bewildering at times, you do need to know the laws and play by the rules, even if every other YouTuber out there openly flaunts them and posts videos from places where flying is prohibited.

Regulations differ dramatically from country to country, and depend on drone weight and size. Drones under 250g are often allowed to fly with few or no regulations, and most drone flight apps (such as DJI GO) generally warn of proximity to restricted zones and will simply not allow the drone to take off or fly in regulated areas, such as close to airports, in busy urban areas, and military and government buildings.

In many countries you need to apply to their aviation authorities in advance and register drones if you plan a flying visit – which is a near impossible task. This is probably why many people just fly anyway, which is unadvisable, as pilots imprisoned in Myanmar and Iran have found out.

By contrast, in Australia the rules are clear and can be found at [casa.com.au](http://casa.com.au), where you can also find links to relevant apps.

**The main points are as follows:**

- A drone cannot fly above 120 metres
- You cannot fly within 30m of people or over populous areas, or photograph people without their permission
- The drone must be within sight at all times
- If your drone weighs over 250g (the Mavic Mini series is just under this) you cannot fly within 5.5km of a controlled airport
- You cannot fly in fog, at night, or over fires or emergency operations
- You need to register your drone if you fly for business or as part of your job, and this includes selling photos or videos taken from a drone.

LEFT: Here, I had intended to capture a direct overhead shot, but in some cases and with some subjects a birds eye view can look too flat and washed out. In the end, I settled on this angled shot with the shed positioned neatly in the top third. Again, I ran this image through the RNI Aero iOS app to give it an otherworldly feel. DJI Spark. 1/1000s @ f2.6, ISO 100.





**UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT DJI MODELS**

DJI make a bewildering number of different drone models - here are some of the more popular options. There are of course other brands on the market, and those with security and privacy concerns regarding DJI may wish to check out the Skidio 2+ or the Autel Nano series.

**DJI Mavic 3 Pro** - This drone really is the bees' knees, excluding the hugely expensive and bulky DJI Inspire series. With all the horsepower and flight time you can get from a modern drone packed into a small body, and with three separate focal length cameras, there's very little you won't be able to capture. The main camera can produce 48MP split/upscaled images and has variable aperture, which is a huge plus. This is simply the best high-end portable photography drone out there. From \$3,099.



**DJI Mini 4 Pro** - The latest Mini is a pint-sized beast, and if you have some basic flying experience this could well be the best sub 250g drone around - although as with everything bellow the Mavic Pro series, you're limited to a fixed focal length and aperture on its 12MP 1/1.3 CMOS sensor 24mm f1.7 camera. That said its still capable of shooting 48MP stills, which adds a small but noticeable amount of detail to the RAW/DNG files. From \$1,219.



**DJI Air 3** - Bigger than the Mini, smaller than the Mavic, the 720g Air 3 has both a wide-angle and 3x telephoto camera capable of capturing 48MP stills. The earlier (and lighter) Air 2S is also a good buy, especially second hand, although it has just the one lens. From \$1,156.



**DJI Mini 3** - Sneaking in just beneath the 250g limit is the DJI Mini 3. Surprisingly, it has a longer flight time than its bigger brother the Mini 4 Pro, and yet shares the same sensor and lens. This is an ideal drone to pick up as a starter, and it may well be all you need until you wish to go to the top of the drone rung. From \$846.







## GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY

With all that out of the way, it's time to take to the skies. As with regular photography, light is the key to great drone imagery, perhaps even more so given the limitations of the cameras and the comparative lack of editing leeway in the files. Aim to shoot at sunrise, and in golden hour and blue hour if you can.

In most situations being lower is better, because as you fly higher you lose detail, along with a sense of place and scale. When it comes to angles, shooting directly down is the classic shot, but as with any image you do need to find shapes, leading lines, and textures to make these images work. Don't be afraid to move the camera around and frame your scene using the grid to help, and be sure to fill the frame, as cropping in post with relatively small image files can leave you with limited wiggle room.

Angling the camera up a little is great for showing landscapes, such as beaches, as it allows you to show the expanse of a scene, but do try to limit the amount of sky you have in your frame. Drone sensors struggle with high dynamic range, and you may lose some of

the effect of being at altitude, turning your shot into 'just' another landscape.

Most drones have DNG/RAW shooting options – use them and set the frame to the biggest available aspect ratio, as the more room you give yourself to edit the better. Always try and stick with the lowest ISO as the small sensors struggle with noise as you lift it.

Using AEB bracketing is advisable in most situations, and then you can either use the best exposure or merge them in HDR, which gives much more dynamic range to edit.

To get a wider, taller, or just bigger image file, consider using an in-built panorama mode found in most of the current generation drones. This works by taking several images and then stitching a low-res version in the app, leaving you to stitch the full res files together in post.

Long exposures are possible with drones if you use ND filters, but if you don't have them to hand you can position the camera and then shoot 10-12 images in sequence and then stack them in post to give the long exposure look. Good luck! 🍀

ABOVE: Wind and water always make me nervous when flying, but I wanted some crashing waves on this remote bay to add contrast to what would have been an otherwise flat image. From there, it was a matter of choosing a fast enough shutter speed to freeze the breaks. DJI Spark. 1/240s @ f2.6, ISO 100.





KEEPING IT IN

# THE FAMILY

BY MIKE O'CONNOR

The idea of photographing your family may send chills up your spine, but family photo shoots can also be brilliant fun. Here are a few pointers.

This was a staged shot, but a good example of visualising and using lights to 'build' the frame. In my mind I knew that a black background would emphasise the tangle of christmas tree leds, and it was simply a matter of getting the settings right and then waiting for the right expression. In set-ups like these, take tons of shots until you get the right moment, and choose a fast enough shutter speed to ensure what you do capture is sharp. Sony A7 III, Sony 85mm f1.8 lens. 1/200s @ f1.8, ISO 1250.









I'm guessing many of you are (by default) the photographer in your family, which means you and your camera are trotted out at every milestone to capture all those important moments. And while this can be a drag when you've got the Christmas turkey to stuff, it's also a real honour – and something I enjoy more and more as I've become comfortable behind the camera. These days, I've been photographing my own family for many years, and nowadays I'm often asked to capture other people's families as well.

In this feature, I wanted to share a few tips I've picked up along the way for dealing with the trickiest of subjects – kids who don't like their photo being taken, as well as sharing a few tips for how you can capture milestone photos you and your loved ones will cherish. So, let's dive in.

# 1

## KNOW YOUR GEAR INSIDE OUT

If you've got 20 members of the extended family standing around in your garden while you fiddle around with your exposure compensation, you're making life hard for yourself. People have short attention spans and learning what your gear does inside and out will massively increase your success rate of keeper shots. Key is to learn your buttons and shortcut menus so you can quickly change any commonly used settings in your sleep. A classic example is knowing how to set a shutter delay if you're setting up a shot on a tripod, or knowing how to quickly change the camera drive mode to shoot a burst. Most importantly, before you gather everyone around for a shot, get the camera in the right settings and ready to go – nobody likes retakes!

# 2

## WORKING WITH TRICKY, FAST-MOVING SUBJECTS

Family means kids, and working with these slippery little buggers is one of the toughest challenges in all photography. This could be a whole article on its own, but here's a couple of points to help. Firstly, most kids won't be used to someone sticking a big ol' camera lens in their face, so let them be curious. Show them what it is, what it does, and don't worry too much if they want to touch buttons - it's just a tool after all. Recently, I did a family photography session where my friend's six-year-old did not want to take part at all. He spent the first 15 minutes pulling faces in every photo while his parents looked on in horror. To disarm him, I joked along with him and showed him the photos I was taking on the back of the screen as we went along. After a while he got bored of messing around and started to relax, allowing me to start taking much nicer images.

If you're struggling with a particularly difficult subject, remember to relax, and don't be afraid to give a troublesome kid a job to do. By the end, I had my friend's son acting as my assistant, suggesting locations around the house to shoot, and helping me carry my gear which he really enjoyed. Make your subjects feel part of the process and they'll enjoy it much more.



LEFT: My youngest daughter Clara a couple of months after she was born. This was a relatively straightforward shot captured in the afternoon to give a rim-light (or halo) around her. My wife kindly held the wriggling subject while I shot at a shallow depth of field of f4. I could have shot at f1.8, but wanted to ensure her whole body was sharp. Sony A7 III, Sony 85mm f1.8 lens @ f4, ISO 200.

RIGHT: One of the most chaotic scenes I've ever photographed, as my then three-year-old daughter was wowed (and incredibly hyped-up) by a visually overwhelming 3d Van Gogh exhibition I took her to in Sydney. Once I settled on the right ISO for the low-light in the room, it was a matter of waiting for a moment of calm in all the chaos, as hundreds of people milled around. Sony A7C, Sony FE 24mm F1.4 GM lens. 1/30s @ f1.4, ISO 800.







### 3 USING AVAILABLE LIGHT

It's likely that much of your family photography will be captured with available light, and while you shouldn't shy away from using flash if you're comfortable using it, it does become just another variable to manage. These days I'm quite happy to just look at what the light is doing and move my subjects in and around it, or manipulate it subtly with a pop-up reflector which I always bring in my camera bag. A couple of things to try – diffused window light is great for intimate portraits. Position your

subject(s) next to a window and watch how the light falls on their face. If the lighting is unbalanced, you can move them closer or further away from the window.

Like with all photography, you'll want to avoid shooting in the middle of the day, but sometimes you won't have a choice, especially with capturing family events. In these situations, position your subjects with the sun behind them so they're not squinting into the bright light. Your camera should be able to handle the high dynamic range.





## PHOTO TIPS: FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHY

RIGHT: An example of using window light. Here, it was just a matter of positioning my wife and daughter next to morning light in our old house. After a B&W conversion I burned the right side of frame in post to emphasise the light. Sony A7 III, Sony 85mm f1.8 lens @ f1.4, 1/125s @ f1.4, ISO 100.

BELOW: Exploring the Aquarium in Sydney harbour. This is one of those shots I always wished I had my 'real' camera with me to capture, but even a smartphone shot is better than no shot! Here, I wanted to capture some of the excitement and awe in my daughter as the sealife soared overhead. Vivo X70 Pro+. 1/170s @ f2.2, ISO 56.







## 4 IDENTIFYING AND WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT

My favourite type of photography is candid, and of my own family, it's the candid photos I've captured over the years I enjoy the most. Early on, I realised that you can pre-empt many moments by anticipating the action and having your camera set to a high drive mode with continuous autofocus – especially when shooting fast-moving kids. In fact, high drive mode is probably your best bet of capturing something special, even in posed photos, as it will allow you to pick up those little things – the moment two people share an affectionate glance, the moment someone breaks into laughter, or the moment someone falls off a chair. Our modern cameras let us capture lots of photos, so don't be afraid to take heaps. I also love to get close and low, especially when photographing kids. People might look at you funny the first time you lie completely flat on the ground with your camera inches from their face, but they'll understand when they see the results!

## 5 CHOOSING THE RIGHT GEAR

I strongly believe that knowing your gear is more important than the gear you use, but if you were to ask me what my dream kit would be for a family photo shoot it would probably be relatively simple - a fast general purpose lens like a 24-70mm f/2.8, or a couple of faster primes such as a 35mm, and my favourite portrait lens, an 85mm. When it comes to camera bodies, being able to flip out your rear screen is invaluable for getting low and can be useful for framing images as well. Finally, my trusty pop-up reflector has saved my bacon on more than one occasion, especially so if you have harsh shadows to work with. Bigger is better, and they shouldn't set you back more than about \$50. Kids love em too.

## 6 POST SHOOT

With family photography, you'll quickly realise that in an era of instant sharing, people want those family photos right now. My advice is to turn them around quick so people aren't seeing Uncle Chester's 50th birthday shots on his 52nd. With editing, I've always found kids' skin doesn't respond well to too much clarity or sharpening, so ease off that slider. I also like to warm up the colour temperature of family photos a little to give those warm fuzzy vibes, but be careful you don't over-cook it and turn your subjects into Oompa Loompas. Finally, if you do find yourself forced to shoot in crappy light, the old failsafe of black and white can look great and make those blown highlights disappear. 🌟



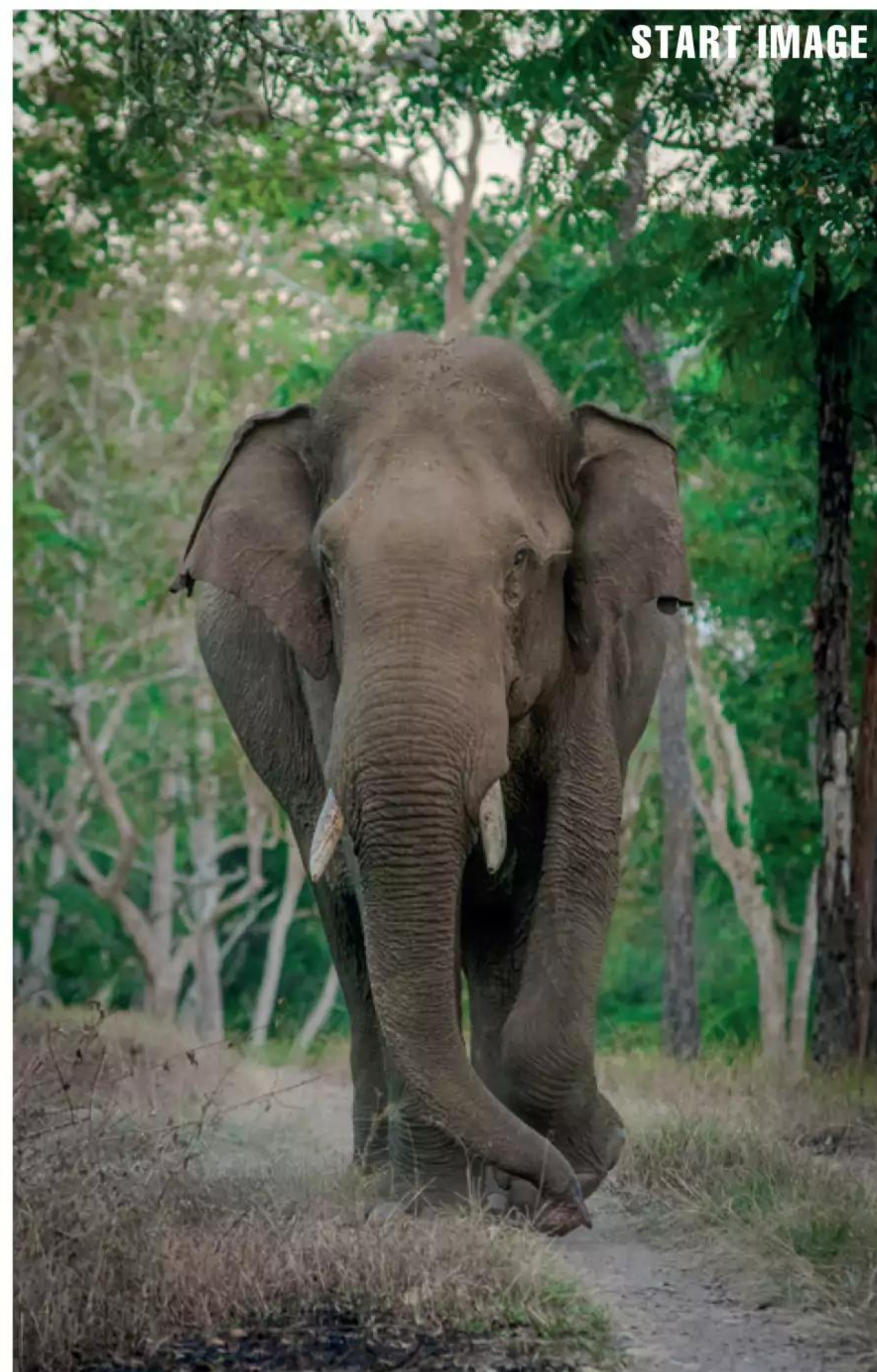
ABOVE: Candid moments in the backyard. I like to use depth in photos to add interest, and in many cases it doesn't matter if parts of the frame are in focus or not. Here, a straight on shot of my daughter with the apple in her mouth would have been nice, but by adding my youngest daughter in the foreground adds context. Google Pixel 7 Pro. 1/150s @ f9, ISO 46.

ABOVE LEFT: A simple family portrait. For this shot I was lying flat on the ground to be at eye level with the kids. I asked the parents to look at the kids to make the shot appear more natural. Sony A7 IV, Sony 85mm f1.8 lens @ f4. ISO 1600.









# LENS BLUR IN ADOBE LIGHTROOM: A STEP-BY- STEP GUIDE

BY SHREYAS YADAV

Adobe's new lens blur feature uses AI to replicate a shallow depth of field and bokeh in your images. In this step-by-step guide, we explain how it works and how to use it.

**A** new update to Adobe Lightroom introduced in October 2023, Lens Blur (which is currently in 'Early Access' status as we go to print) can blur the background or foreground in your image by making a depth map of the image using Adobe's AI Sensei technology. The tool also lets you add bokeh to out of focus areas in your images.

And while the Lens Blur tool does automate the process considerably, you still have control over the final result. So far, despite being only in Early Access, I've been impressed by the results and have found it's saved me time in post processing, which means more time for the fun bit – photography!

It's worth noting that this kind of editing will likely fall foul of many photo

competition rules around image manipulation, such as our own Photographer of the Year, so keep this in mind if you plan to use it with a key image.

The tool is found in the Develop module under the Basic panel and has its own heading – 'Lens blur'. So, with that out of the way, let's dive right in.

## HOW THE LENS BLUR TOOL WORKS

According to Adobe, the Lens Blur tool analyses the image and creates a Depth map to distinguish between the foreground, the main subject, and the background. Once the depth map detects different depth levels, the Lens blur tool can then apply a blur effect selectively to specific depth ranges.



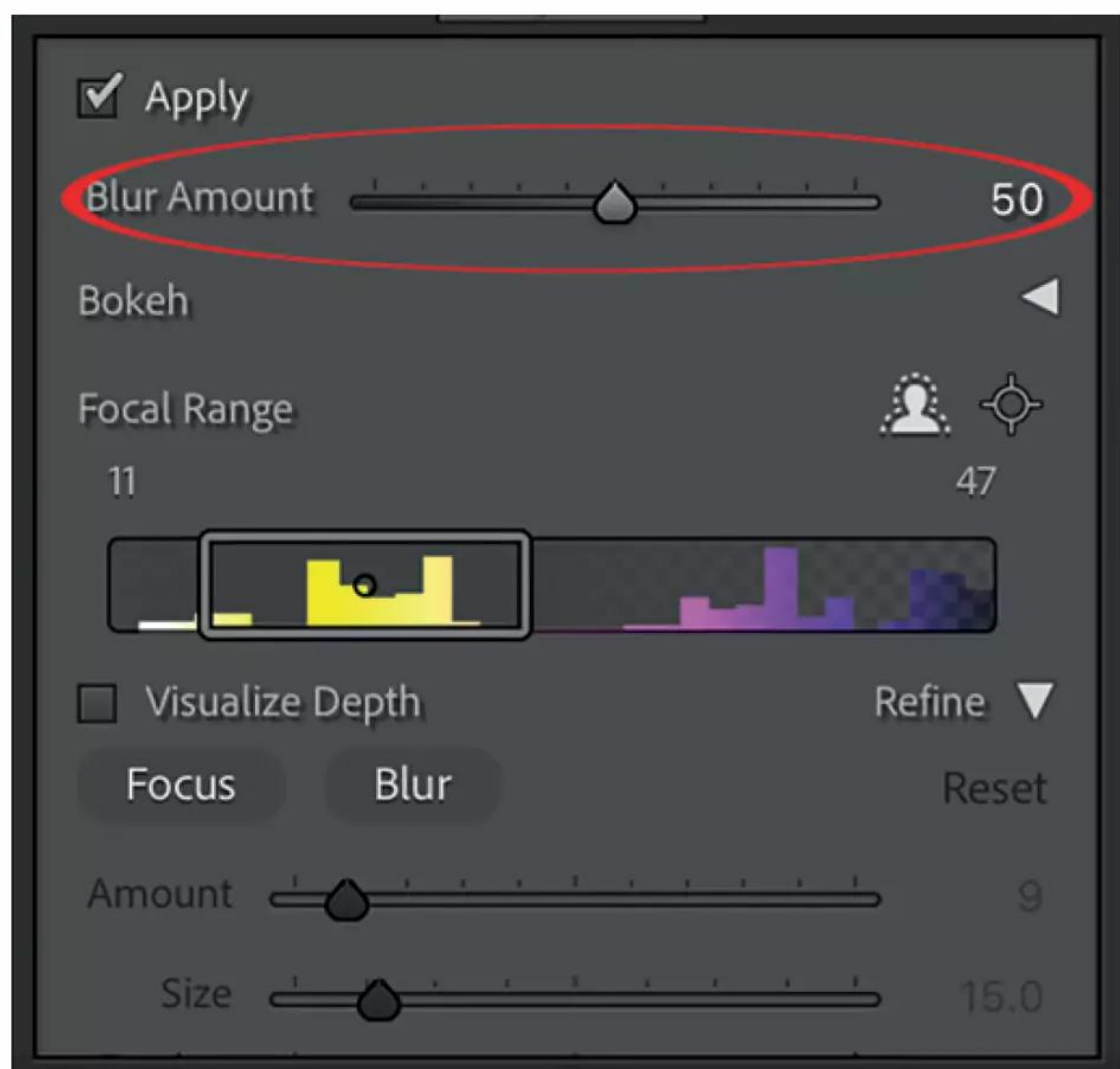
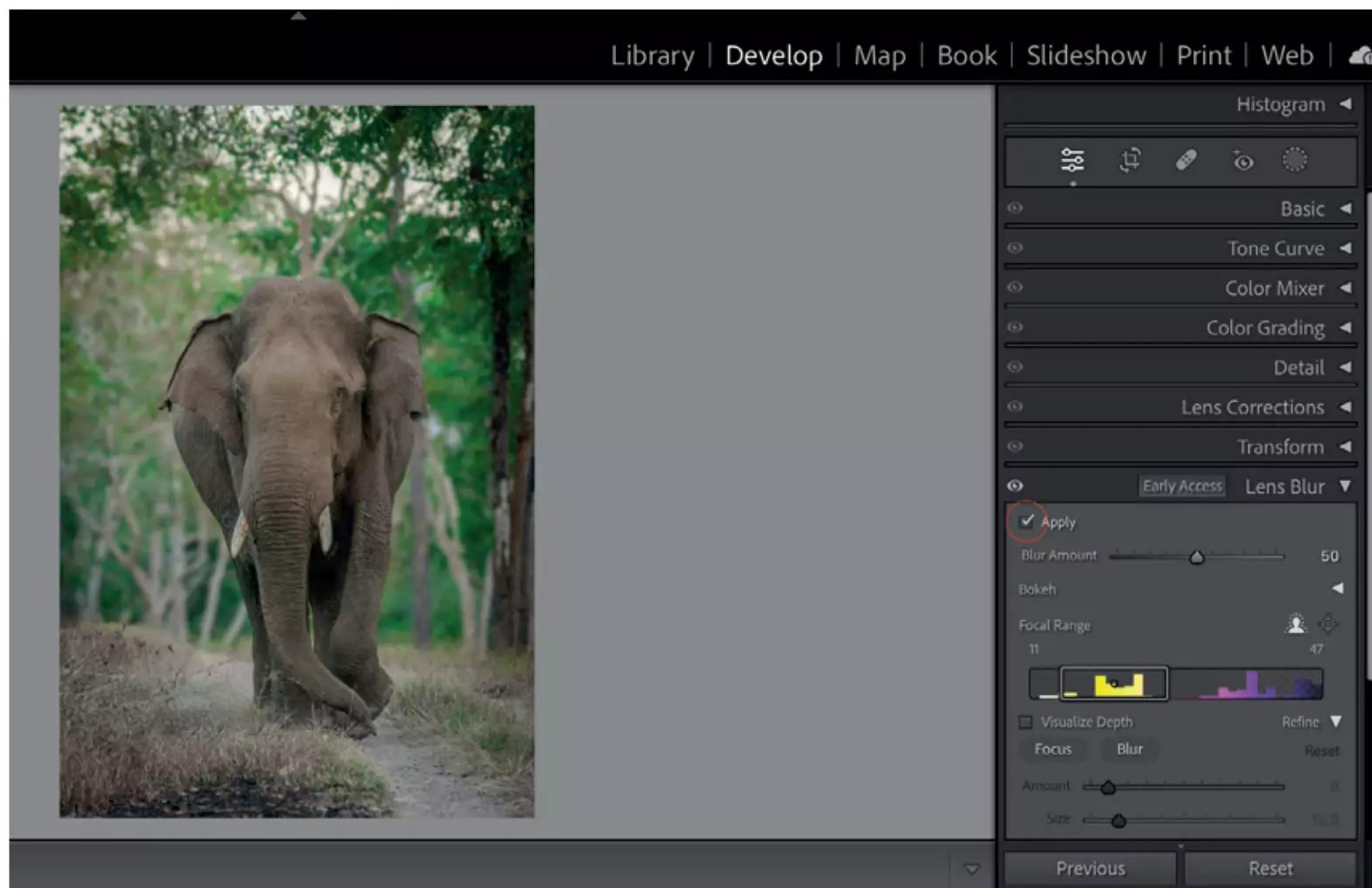


# USING THE TOOL

## STEP 1

### START THE MAPPING

Once you open the drop down for lens Blur you'll notice a tick box next to the word 'apply'. Ticking this will start the depth mapping process on your image. It generally works best on images with a clear distinction between the foreground, subject, and the background, but you may be surprised how well it works on other images too.



## STEP 2

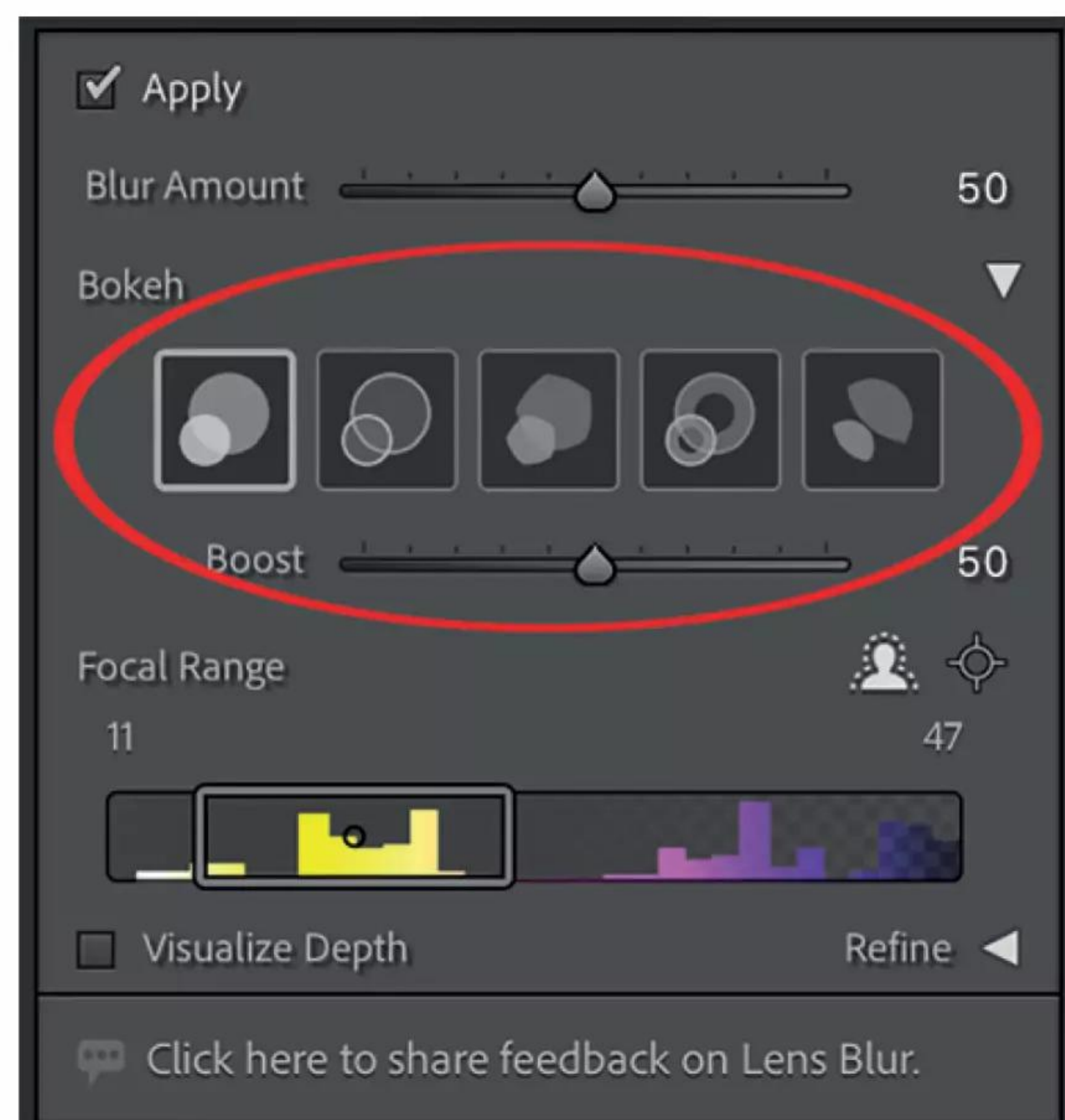
### SET THE INTENSITY

Next, we'll select the Blur amount. This controls the intensity of the Lens Blur effect. The higher the amount, the more prominent the lens blur in your image. I would start with 50 (the default) and then adjust based on the image preview.

## STEP 3

### CHOOSE THE BOKEH EFFECT

Now, we'll select our desired Bokeh Effect from the dropdown. There are five options; Circle, Bubble, 5-Blade, Ring, and Cat Eye. I find the circular and bubble bokeh effect the most useful for my images. Under the Bokeh effect you'll see a Boost slider, which increases or decreases the intensity of the Bokeh Effect that you have selected.





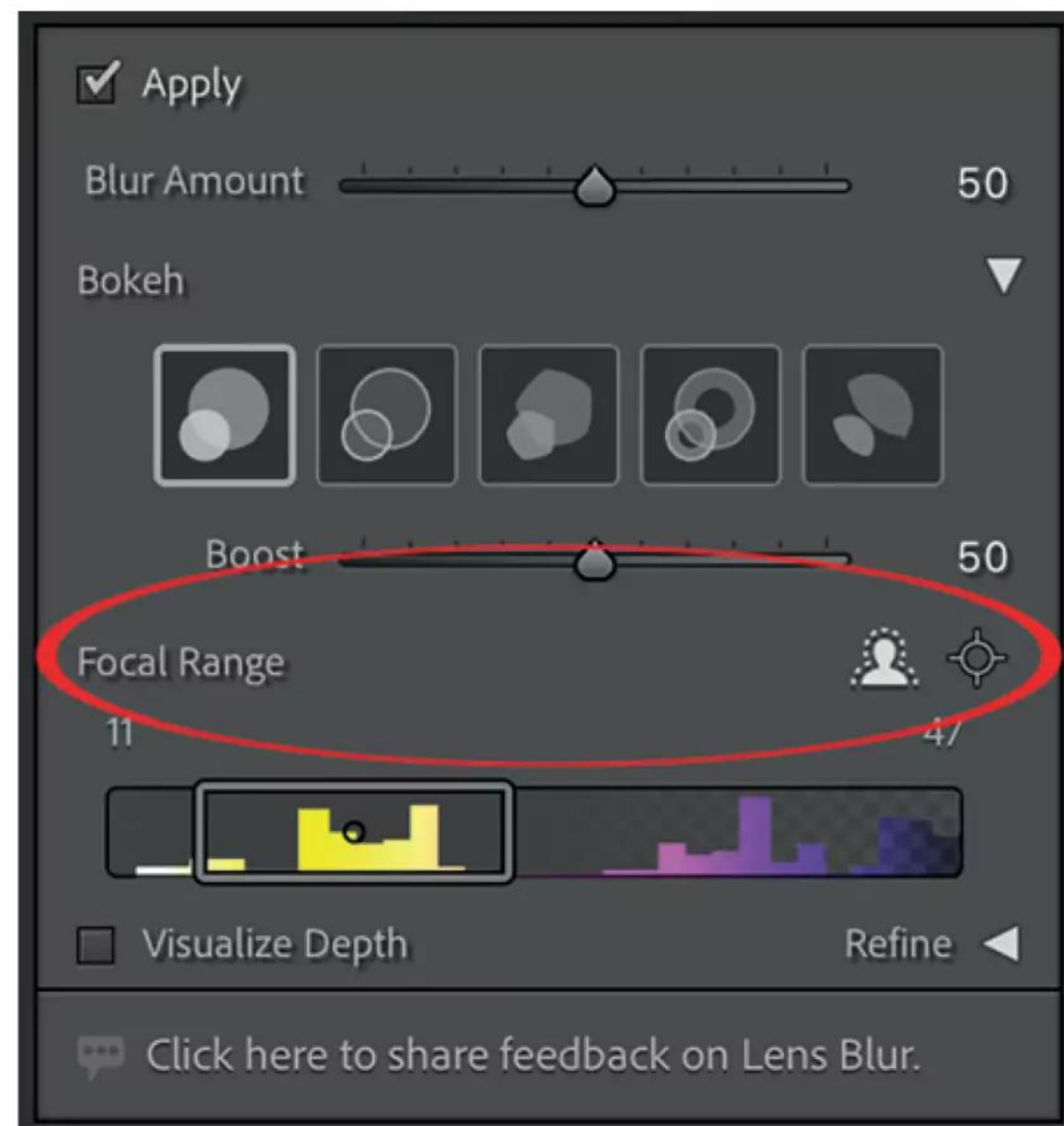


STEP 4

SET THE FOCAL RANGE

Next up is where the real magic happens. We'll now set the Focal Range, which defines different depth levels in the image and the areas that are in and out of focus. It is a graphical representation (like a bar chart). You can choose to set the Focal range based on one of three options - Subject Focus, Point/Area Focus, or manually. The first two options are situated on the right side of the panel and marked by a symbol of a head and shoulders and a target symbol. First up is Subject focus – the head and shoulders. Selecting this uses AI to automate the focal range process by masking your subject and then applying the blur effect to areas around the subject. Next, Point/Area Focus (symbol: a target) allows you to select a specific point or area on the image, and then adjust the Focal range manually.

Finally, if you'd like to control it yourself, you can use the slider on the graph below to drag the focal range to your desired area. By first ticking Visualise depth you'll also get a visual reference to the areas being selected in different colours (these are displayed as warm and cool colour tones – see the breakout box at the bottom of the page for an explanation). This can help you to apply the lens blur effect more accurately. I generally use Subject Focus in most cases and then Adjust the Focal range if needed.



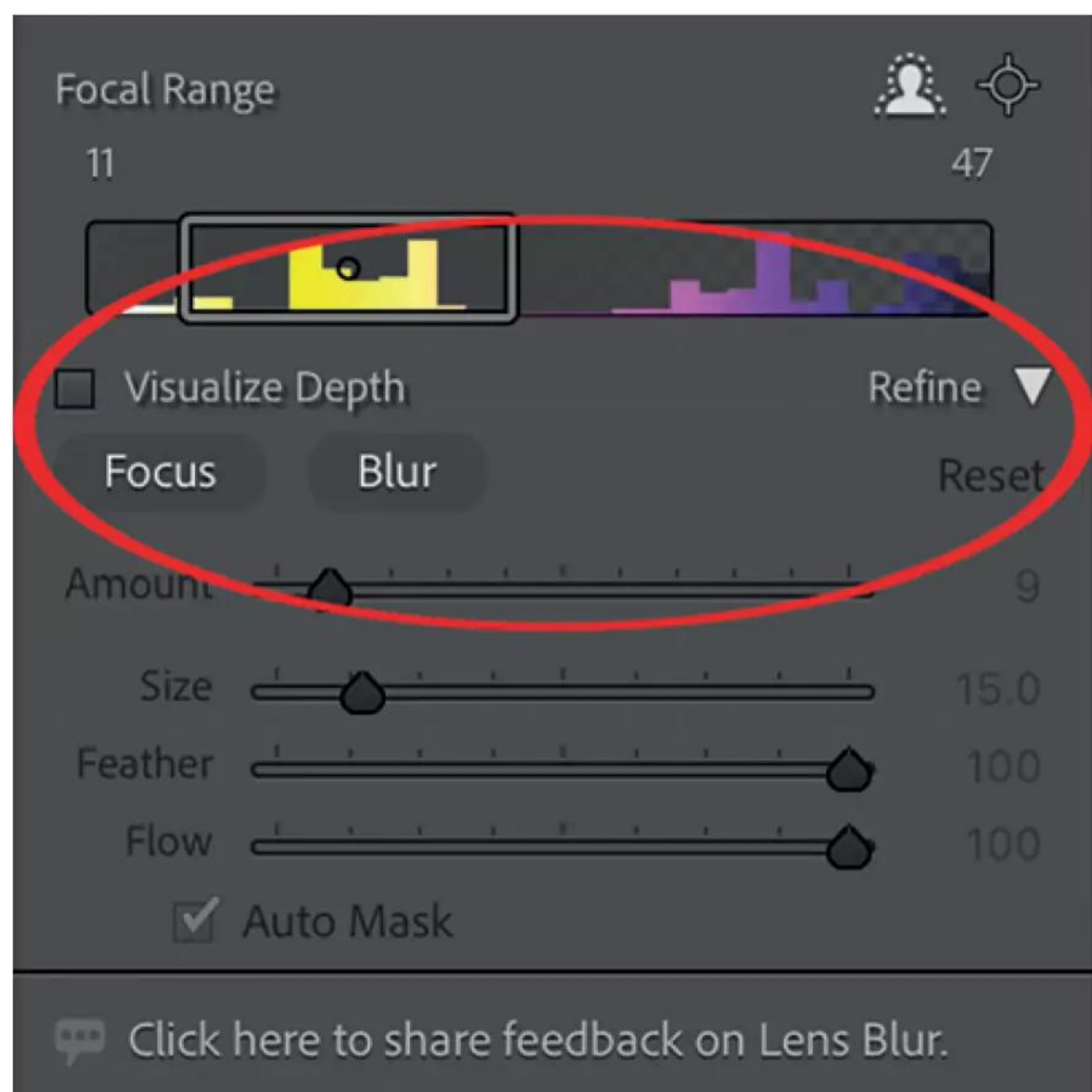
STEP 5

REFINE THE EFFECT

Finally, we can also refine the effect. I find this is more useful in images where there is less distinction between the foreground, subject, and the background, as the tool does struggle with images like this on occasion. Under the Refine dropdown next to the Visualise depth tickbox you have two options, Focus and Blur. If you select Focus, you can paint with a brush over the areas that you still want to keep in focus. It's worth adding that this option won't recover areas that are out of focus in your original image, it will just exclude certain areas from the Lens Blur you've applied.

The second option is Blur. This works in the opposite way. Like with Focus, you can paint with a brush over the areas in the image, but instead it'll add in lens blur. There are also additional sliders that will help you to fine-tune your brush, just like when you apply any other brush in Lightroom. These are Amount, Size, Feather, and Flow.

Also, I should add that there is an Auto Mask tickbox at the bottom of this window that was added recently – I haven't been able to find any information from Adobe on what this does, or see any noticeable difference when editing my images with it applied or not. Hopefully by the time you read this it's been updated. And one more thing before I go - if you want to see a before and after at any point, click and hold the cursor on the eyeball symbol. You can see it where you select the Lens blur dropdown.



**VISUALISE DEPTH**

When you select Visualize Depth, the overlays on the image show the following colours:

- Warm or Yellow:** Covers the area that has a near focal range.
- Cool or Blue:** Covers the area that has a far focal range.
- White:** Covers the area that is currently in focus if you're adjusting the Focal Range controls.





TESTED: PANASONIC LUMIX G9 II



# PANASONIC LUMIX G9 II

It has been six long years since the original G9 was released. So, has the wait for its successor been worth it? Tim Robinson finds out.

The latest release from Panasonic's Lumix camera division is its new flagship Micro Four Thirds (M43) mirrorless camera, the Lumix G9 Mark II.

Remarkably, it has been six years since the original G9 was released, and it's exciting to see just how many technical advancements have taken place in that time. Today, our expectations for our cameras have never been higher.

I was an early adopter of the G9, and as much as I loved it, it had begun to feel like a bit of a dinosaur when compared to other cameras on the market, especially so with the release of OM System's flagship OM-1, which really pushed the M43 format forward.

So with a new body design, a new autofocus system, and a new sensor, on paper

at least, the updated G9 II ticks a lot of boxes on my wishlist for a M43 camera.

So look at what sets the G9 II apart.

## THE BUILD

The changes with the G9 II start with the body, which is marginally narrower but slightly taller than the original G9 (134 x 102 x 90mm vs. 137 x 97 x 92 mm). Visually, it's very similar to the S5 II, although there are some differences – the G9 II doesn't have a cooling fan in its viewfinder housing, so is a little lighter, and the smaller M43 mount creates space for a second function button on the front – but overall, the two cameras are almost identical.

Panasonic made a wise choice here for users familiar with the S5 series, or who want to swap between the two models. However, it's worth noting that while a big-

ger body is to be expected on a full-frame camera like the S5, for a M43 camera many users expectations are a bit different and some may be looking for something a bit more compact than the G9 II.

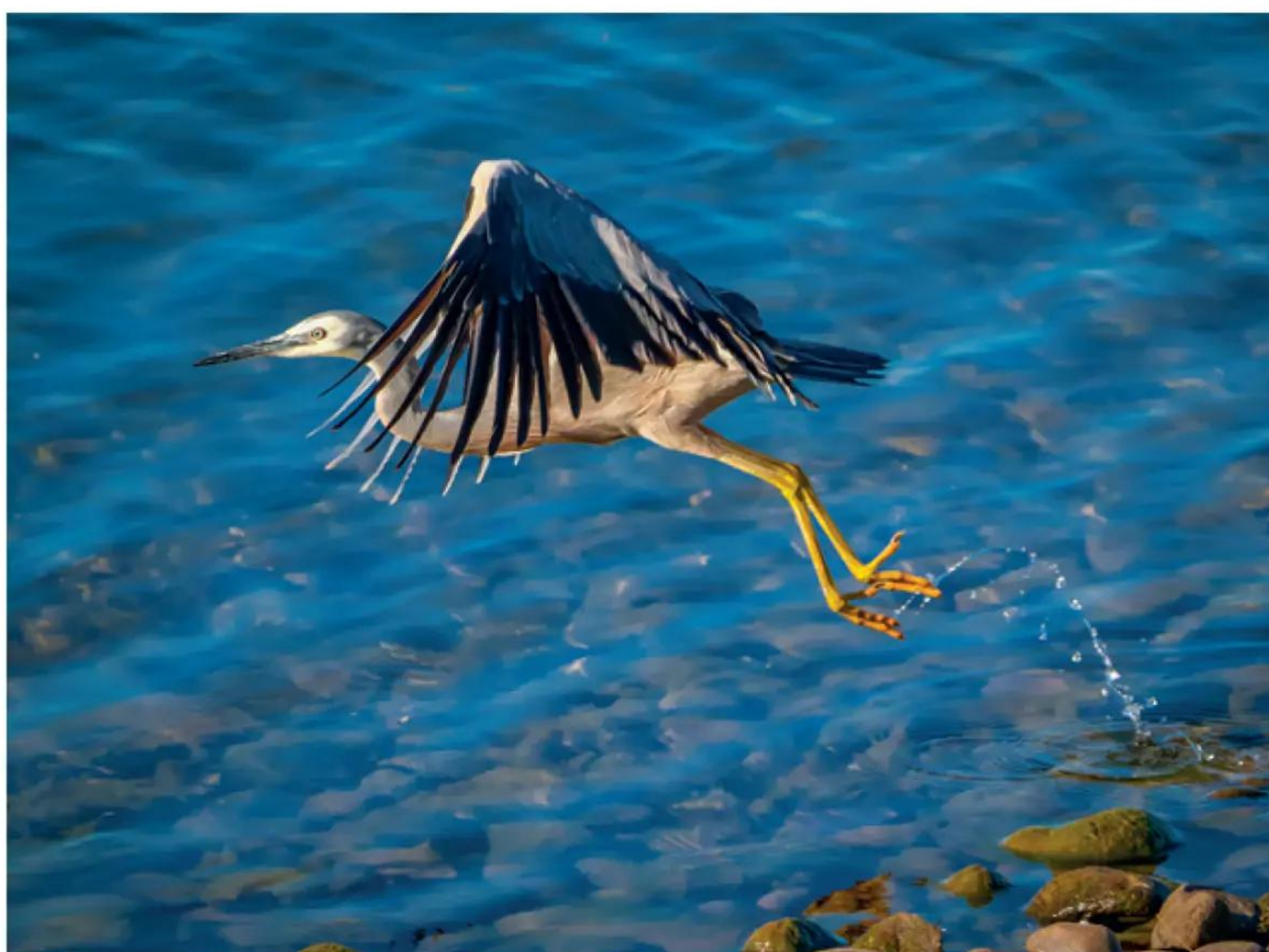
That said, to me the G9 II feels well sized and balanced in my hands. The body is dust, splash and freeze resistant, features the same 3.68m-dot high-resolution OLED viewfinder as the original G9, a higher resolution 3', 1.84-dot vari-angle screen, and an improved 8-way joystick design that now supports diagonal movement.

## IMAGE QUALITY

The Lumix G9 II is a camera that is unashamedly geared towards action and wildlife photography. One distinct advantage that the M43 system has over full-frame cameras is the size and weight of the lenses.

Being that the sensor is smaller, the image projected onto it has a 2x crop factor which effectively doubles the focal distance of the lens.

That means that my 100-400mm lens, which itself only weighs 1kg, has the equivalent full-frame focal distance







LEFT: Fruit bats flying over the moon, captured with pre-burst mode. Panasonic Lumix G9 II, Leica DG 100-400/F4.0-6.3 lens @ 400mm. 1/1000s @ f6.3, ISO 1600.

OPPOSITE: Panasonic Lumix G9 II, Leica DG 100-400/F4.0-6.3 lens @ 334mm. 1/2000s @ f4.7, ISO 800.

of 200-800mm. That's a whole lot of lens in a very small package.

On the flip side, M43 sensors do not typically handle low light and dynamic range as well as larger sensors do.

The G9 II contains a new 25.2 megapixel sensor with an improved processing engine, but at the time of writing this review there was no RAW support for the image files so I was working purely with JPEG.

That said, the quality in the fine detail is good and I would be comfortable shooting up to ISO 3,200, but for action shots I think you could push further, which is not something I would have done with the original G9.

Noise reduction software is also getting really advanced, so the results would be acceptable if a higher ISO is needed to get the shot you are after.

That said, whilst the detail holds up well at 6400-10000 ISO, if you pixel peep you will notice some strange artefacts, which I assume is the in-camera noise reduction at work.

I am very keen to examine the RAW files once Adobe adds support for them, as

I suspect Lightroom will process the files better than the G9 II's internal processor.

### AUTOFOCUS

The G9 II implements the same Phase Hybrid Autofocus system as first seen in the Lumix S5 II, and it's a hugely welcome addition. In fact, I'd go as far as to say this new autofocus system alone is a valid reason to upgrade to the Mark II.

It is fast, accurate and very dependable, and wildlife and action photography is much easier with the new AI tracking modes. The system is capable of recognising motorcycles, cars, humans, and the eyes of many animals.

As well as taking plenty of bird photos, to test the vehicle tracking modes I took a trip down to Sydney Motorsport Park to photograph classic motorcycles at a club race event.

These bikes were passing me at close to 200km/h and I was able to pan along with them, holding focus on the bikes with 99% accuracy - I was very impressed.

Another feature that makes this the perfect fit for an action or wildlife photographer is the high-speed capture capabilities.

The G9 II can shoot up to 60fps with continuous autofocus or 75fps in AF-S. In addition, a large buffer memory allows you to capture image sequences of three seconds or more – that's a lot of images!

One of my favourite features in this camera is pre-burst. It can capture up to 1.5 seconds before you press the shutter button.

This mode is a game-changer when it comes to photographing birds or unpredictable subjects. I used this mode to capture fruit bats flying across a full moon - I would never have had the reaction time to capture this without pre-burst.

The only downside is that in using this mode it is easy to overshoot and fill up your cards quickly.

Did I mention cards? One of the great features of the G9 II is it allows the use of an external solid state hard drive to capture both photos and video.

This is great news for a few reasons: SSDs have a large capacity, fast write speeds, and are relatively affordable.

And in case you're wondering how you use the camera with an SSD attached, the secret is to get a cold shoe holder for about \$30 that'll lock the cable in too - very trick.





## TESTED: PANASONIC LUMIX G9 II

SCORE  
8

### RESULTS

#### HANDLING ★ ★ ★ ★

Great size, weight and balance for extended shooting sessions. It has a lot of custom buttons (in all the right places) that will be familiar to existing Lumix users.

#### FEATURES ★ ★ ★ ★

Packed with a lot of features that makes it versatile for a number of genres.

#### AUTOFOCUS ★ ★ ★ ★

A huge step up from previous Lumix models, and a game-changer if you are already in the Lumix ecosystem.

#### IMAGE QUALITY ★ ★ ★ ★

Excellent. If you pixel peep you may see some interesting artefacts as a result of the internal processing, but nothing that would turn me off using this camera for professional work.

#### VALUE FOR MONEY ★ ★ ★ ★

Some may feel the G9 II is expensive, but this is a feature-packed camera. The value is also found when you are part of the Lumix ecosystem as Panasonic's M43 lenses are high quality and well priced.

#### FINAL WORD

There are many amazing cameras on the market, but Panasonic have hit a home-run with the G9 II. If you are a M43 shooter into action and wildlife photography like I am this system is an excellent option. In fact, after this review I went straight out to buy my own!

#### SPECS

Sensor	CMOS sensor
Format	Micro Four Thirds
Resolution	25 megapixels
Lens mount	Micro Four Thirds
Autofocus	Contrast Detect (sensor), 779-Point Phase Detection
LCD	3.0" Fully articulated TFT LCD
Viewfinder	3.68m-Dot 1.6x-Magnification OLED LVF
Video	5760 x 2880 @ 30p, 5760 x 2880 @ 23.98p, 4096 x 2160 @ 120p
Weight	658g (Including batteries)
Storage	Dual SD card slots (UHS-II)
Price	\$3,299
More info	panasonic.com.au



ABOVE: Panasonic Lumix G9 II, Leica DG 100-400/F4.0-6.3 lens @ 300mm. 1/1000s @ f6.3, ISO 800.

#### STABILISATION

The G9 II has an updated five axis image stabilisation system which offers up to eight stops of shake reduction. The improvements are especially obvious when shooting video as you can maintain a steady shot even when walking or running, and there is no noticeable corner warp when using a wide-angle lens.

This system also allows you to shoot handheld photos at lower shutter speeds, even in high-res photo mode.

This mode uses pixel shift technology and combines eight images to output a whopping 100 megapixel file – handy for the occasional landscape.

#### VIDEO

As a full-time video producer, I am always interested in video specs. I'm pleased to say that while the original G9 had impressive video capabilities, the Mark II does not disappoint either.

The formats and codecs are professional grade with capture up to 10-bit 5.7K 60/50p in Pro res and all-intra file formats.

In addition, the built in V-Log picture profile boasts 13+ stops of dynamic range and a custom LUT can be

recorded directly to camera using the 'Real-time LUT' feature.

Panasonic's Dynamic Range Boost mode reduces noise in the shadows while retaining information in the highlights to capture a vibrant image in any lighting condition.

Another feature worth noting is the high frame rates of up to 120p in 10-bit 4K with no sensor crop.

#### THE WRAP-UP

Six years is a long time in the photography world, but it's been worth the wait with the Panasonic G9 II.

If you are a fan of the original G9, then the Mark II will not disappoint. It brings with it a much more reliable autofocus system, faster capture rates, a better sensor, and low-light capabilities.

Combine this with handy features like pre-burst, and you have a camera that is a real all-rounder, something you could never say about its predecessor.

The result is a feature-packed camera that really sets a benchmark for the M43 system. The G9 II is a no-brainer for any action or wildlife photographer looking to add a M43 system to their kit - I recommend it highly. 🌟

Australian  
**Photography**  
**GOLD AWARD**





TESTED: NIKON GASTON LUGA GL X

# NIKON GASTON LUGA GL X CAMERA BAG

Nikon has partnered with Swedish lifestyle brand Gaston Luga for a new camera bag. It is any good? Mike O'Connor finds out.



Camera backpacks are dime-a-dozen these days, and yet Nikon has seen fit to lend its name to a new bag developed by relatively obscure Swedish brand Gaston Luga.

## THE BAG

Out of the box, the GL X is a nicely made bag, manufactured from a 'premium', water-resistant material, described on the tag as 100% recycled polyester with a TPU coating. It feels and looks a bit like PU leather.

Gaston Luga's website does mention that its bags are not made from animal-based materials, which means no leathers, no adhesives, and no colourings sourced from animals. In addition, the company's materials meet PETA's requirements and are approved as PETA-approved vegan materials - all good things.

Moving to the look of the thing it doesn't

scream 'camera bag', and seems more of a hybrid lifestyle / camera backpack suited to urban environments. This is further reinforced by the subtle branding - there's a small Swedish flag on the side, and only very subtle Nikon branding on the front which all help sell the clean aesthetic.

On the rear, the bag fully opens like a suitcase and can fit both a 14" laptop and tablet alongside a detachable camera holder with adjustable dividers that attaches to the bag with velcro. It's large enough to hold a couple of camera bodies and a few lenses, with room to spare. There are also two tripod or bottle holders on each side, and a small compartment on the front of the bag that could be used to hold cards or papers.

The bag is relatively comfortable to wear with decent padding for the shoulders, although the straps are still quite thin, so if you're carrying a bit of weight you may find it uncomfortable over time, especially as there's no waist strap to cinch it to your back.

Finally, the bag has a nice and quite hip roll-down top compartment that is secured to the body of the bag via some well-made metal buckles that also carry subtle Nikon/Gaston Luga branding. It all adds up to make for a really premium looking bag.

## IN USE

Loaded up with gear and with the rolltop secured, the GL X holds its shape well, although if you do have a big telephoto on your camera body you may notice a bit of

a bulge on the bag as it doesn't have an internal frame to keep its shape rigid.

Despite this, it comfortably held my laptop, Sony (sacrilege!) A7 IV and 100-400mm lens, a bunch of clothes, a drink bottle, a tripod in the side pocket and a few chargers and small cables - all the kinds of things most photographers find themselves lugging around.

Although I didn't get to test the GL X's waterproofing, which is rated to 16000mm, the zips on the front of the bag are all seam-sealed, which is reassuring, but the zips on the rear don't appear to be, which is an unusual choice, especially as this is the part of the bag you're likely to be going in and out of the most.

Speaking of which, when it comes time to taking your camera out of the bag, it's relatively quick, although it likely won't be as fast as you can take a camera out from a satchel or side-bag.

## THE WRAP-UP

I really enjoyed using the GL X, and maybe just because it was nice to use a camera accessory that could double for an everyday non-camera related item as well. It's nicely made, albeit with some curious design choices like the zips, reasonably priced, has (I think) some decent environmental credentials, and it looks great too. That said, if you're not a Nikon shooter, you'd probably never look twice at it, which is a bit of a shame.

All-in-all this is a camera bag that's well worth a look if you're in the market for a bag that can double for other duties too. 🌟

BELOW: The included camera cube will easily fit three compact lenses and a telephoto, along with a camera body.







TESTED: TAMRON 35-150MM F/2-2.8 DI III VXD LENS (Z-MOUNT)



# TAMRON 35-150MM F/2-2.8 LENS

Tamron's new superfast super zoom for Nikon is here. But is this one-stop-shop the lens solution you've been waiting for? Anthony McKee finds out.

One afternoon back in 1994 a sales rep dropped by the newspaper, told me to sell all my other lenses, and promptly handed me a new Tamron Adaptable-II 28-200mm f3.8-5.6 lens. It was a compact lens, weighing just 508-grams, and it did cover most of my working range, but it was two stops slower than my usual lenses and its minimum focus distance was only 2.1 metres!

To amateur photographers, the new Tamron 28-200mm was a superzoom but for professional photographers the lens had too many design compromises, from distortion and chromatic aberration through to a lack of overall sharpness. I didn't swap my lens kit, however, superzooms have improved a lot in recent years and Tamron's latest offering could actually deliver what most serious photographers want from one of these lenses - performance and speed!

The Tamron 35-150mm f/2-2.8 Di III VXD was originally released for the Sony E-mount in late 2021, but more recently this same lens has been released for the Nikon Z-mount. Although it doesn't have the 10x zoom range that some superzooms have, the Tamron 35-150mm f/2-2.8 does qualify because its 4.3x zoom covers the wide-angle, normal and medium telephoto range. What is remarkable about the lens though, is that it's maximum aperture is f2 at

the 35mm setting; this creeps to f2.2 at 50mm, f2.5 at 70mm, f2.7 at 85mm and f2.8 at the 135 and 150mm settings.

## THE BUILD

While all of us want an amazingly compact, ultra-fast superzoom lens, it's the laws of physics that govern lens design, and so a 35-150mm f/2-2.8 lens was always going to be rather large. The lens is 158mm in length (200mm when zoomed out) and the filter size is 82mm. Weighing 1165-grams, the Tamron 35-150 is 360-grams heavier than the Nikon Z 24-70mm f2.8 and just 200-grams lighter than the Nikon Z 70-200mm f2.8. This lens is also twice as heavy (and twice the price) of most other superzoom lenses on the market, including the Nikon Z 24-200 lens. Ignoring its size though, the Tamron 35-150 does feel good in your hands once you start working with it.

The lens is both solid and well built, with weatherproofing ensuring you can feel confident using the lens in most conditions. The zoom control fits easily in your hands and rotates firmly with just under a quarter of a turn between the 35mm and 150mm positions. A lens lock on right of the lens prevents the lens from zooming out if it is in the down position but I didn't need to use it.

Just in front of the zoom ring are three

buttons (positioned at the top, bottom and side) that can be assigned a variety of tasks (including AF-ON or AE-AF Lock) using the camera's control menu. Also on the lens barrel are the AF/MF switch and a Custom Switch with three settings; by downloading the Tamron Utility software to your computer and connecting a USB-C cable to the small USB port beneath the lens you can use Custom Switch to define and switch between some of the more advanced functionality of the lens, including preprogramming focus distances (useful when shooting video) and adjusting the feel and functionality of the focus ring.

The lens uses Tamron's VXD (Voice-coil eXtreme-torque Drive) AF motor to drive focus and it is reasonably fast; when working at the 35mm setting the lens takes less than half a second to get from its closest focusing distance of just 15cm to infinity, while at the 200mm setting the lens takes just over one second to get from its minimum focus distance of 60cm to infinity.

## IMAGE QUALITY

Overall the results from the Tamron 35-150mm f/2-2.8 Di III VXD are very impressive, and compared to superzooms of old, the sharpness was excellent and there was no obvious signs





LEFT: Street musician Daniel strumming the blues on Elizabeth Street. Nikon Z6, Tamron 35-150mm F/2-2.8 Di lens @ 35mm. 1/320s @ f2, ISO 3200.

of distortion or chromatic aberration. I was even impressed working around bright lights with the fact there was almost no lens flare except in the most extreme conditions.

The Tamron 35-150mm f/2-2.8 is not a lens I would take on holiday with me; it's just too bulky. What appeals to me about this lens though, is that it is a "tweener" that straddles nicely between the two most popular professional lenses - the 24-70mm f2.8 and the 70-200mm f2.8. Most pros spend their careers walking about with a camera on each shoulder, one with the 24-70 f2.8 attached and the other with the 70-200 f2.8. And why? It's because the 24-70 has never been long enough for most situations, and the 70-200 has never been wide enough!

Hence the magic of the Tamron 35-150mm f/2-2.8 Di III VXD; like most superzooms it gives you a mix of wide-angle through to telephoto, but this lens also gives you the benefit of fast apertures that you need to shoot in low light, or drop a background out of focus with shallow depth-of-field.

## THE WRAP-UP

This lens is never going to be wide enough for landscape and architectural photographers, and it's never going to suit the majority of sports shooters either, but it is perfect as an all-in-one lens for people and portrait photographers. Knowing you can spend an entire day just using the one lens makes life rather easy; it lets you concentrate on moments rather than fumbling around with different lenses.

Funnily enough, I still keep in touch with that sales rep who tried to sell me that superzoom back in 1994. Nowadays, Vince Benefield works for Photo and Video in New Zealand and while I'm sure he'd happily sell me a Tamron 35-150, I doubt he'd bother telling me this lens would replace all my other lenses again. We both know that it is impossible to fit the scope of modern optics into one lens. That being said, the new Tamron 35-150mm f/2-2.8 could well be the only lens that many professional and keen amateur photographers need to keep happy. 🌟

SCORE

9.2

## RESULTS

### HANDLING ★ ★ ★ ★

At 1165-grams, the 35-150mm f/2-2.8 Di III VXD is very solid in your hands but it is easy to shoot with. Zooming and focus are very easy to control.

### FEATURES ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A maximum aperture of f2 makes this lens fast at the wide end, and weather-proofing ensures this lens can cope with most conditions.

### IMAGE QUALITY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The image quality from this lens is exceptionally good and it will deliver professional results from almost any situation.

### VALUE FOR MONEY ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Considering a 24-70 f2.8 and 70-200 2.8 will cost you \$6000 all up, the Tamron 35-150 is actually a very good buy, particularly for people who shoot in the mid-range of zoom settings.

### FINAL WORD

This is not the superzoom you would take travelling, but if you love people photography and loathe changing lenses all the time, this could well be the lens for you.

### SPECS

Focal length	35-150mm
Maximum aperture	f/2
Lens mount	Nikon Z
Lens format	Full frame
Image stabilisation	No
Minimum focus distance	0.33m
Maximum magnification	0.18x
Optical design	21 elements in 15 groups
Filter size	82mm
Dimensions	(D x L) - 89mm x 158mm
Weight	1165 grams
Price	\$3,499
More info	tamron.com.au

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# MIRROR IMAGE

If at first you don't succeed, try again. Sometimes you must be patient to get that image.



WITH ALAN BOYD

**M**y love of travel and photography has taken me to many beautiful and captivating locations around the world, many not on regular tourist trails. My favourites would have to be Namibia, Iceland, Norway, Canada, and Cuba.

Landscape and aerial photography are my passions. More and more I am enjoying getting a bird's eye view from my drone; however I still get a thrill from a good old camera shot.

This image is from one of my last trips before Covid hit and overseas travel was not on my horizon for the next few years. It was captured on an autumn workshop in the Canadian Rocky Mountains in early October 2018 and I was one of the lucky participants.

On the first day of our workshop the seasons changed. What was to be an autumn workshop turned into a winter one. A month's worth of snow came four weeks early and it changed our focus entirely. I learned a long time ago to be prepared for the unexpected and this trip was just that. But you go with what nature serves up, and we had a wonderful time, got some great photos, and made some lasting friendships.

Wedge Pond is an iconic location for landscape photographers. It is in Kananaskis Country, Alberta, Canada. The pond (we'd call it a lake) is surrounded by forest, and is about one kilometre in circumference. We visited it during the workshop however the weather was adverse and the photos not memorable.

At the conclusion of the workshop my host and I spent a few more days together, re-visiting some of the locations which we felt may have yielded some better shots. Wedge Pond was one of those and on one of our last days the weather forecast looked good, and we planned a morning visit to get the sunrise.

Coincidentally, my guide had heard on the grapevine that there had been a grizzly bear sighted in the car park and he was hoping for a bear photo, though I was not so keen.

We arrived at the location early and, armed with our camera gear and cans of bear repellent spray, we headed to the lake and waited for sunrise. I was not disappointed (though we saw no bears) and nature turned on a magnificent display for us. The wind was calm, so the lake was almost mirror-like and the golden sun's rays on the snow-capped mountain tops were in-



credible. It only lasted a few seconds, but the memory will last a lifetime. The overall look is very surreal, and it almost had to be seen in person to believe it.

Very little post processing has been added to the final image. It has received numerous awards, including national and international gold medals, and is an image that I am proud to have taken. 🌟

**CANON 5DS R, CANON 16-35 MM F2.8 L LENS @ 18MM. 1/8S @ F14, ISO 100.**





**APS ONE FRAME**



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Many of us only get time for photography when we're older, but there's plenty of ways to keep it enjoyable as we age.



# AGE IS BUT A NUMBER!

WITH ROZ ZITO



For many photographers like me, aging arrives too soon in their learning curve. When I was young, I was busy earning a living,

paying off a mortgage, and raising my family. 'Serious' photography was put on the backburner until after I retired.

But now with plenty of time to improve my photography, I find myself needing to find ways around my age-related limitations. For my favoured genre of animal photography, I have moved to mirrorless in a search for lighter gear and sought out lighter tripods and gimbals. Unfortunately, my sherpa (aka my husband) is not getting any younger either.

I have tried a multitude of harnesses that allow me to take the weight off my neck while hobbling along. The best puts the camera front and centre and allows me to lift it as needed. Periodic

rests on a portable stool help relieve the compressed discs in my back. Phones have excellent cameras, and I use mine more and more for travel, street, and food photography.

I've used my car as a mobile hide to photograph wildlife like kangaroos, and on Instagram I've seen fantastic numbat photos taken from a car window in Dryandra, WA. I've brought this same thinking to my backyard, which has become a key hunting ground for shots and allows me to position myself perfectly for a good clean background in front of my birdbath. A top New Zealand bird photographer I know has a perch stocked with the favourite food of Tui set up in his garden.

Most photographers will be familiar with the idea that you should get down low for a better perspective on your subject, which is all very well. But if I lie down, I can't get back up! However, as you might expect, I've found some workarounds with a bit of creative thinking.

For the shot featured here we were in Africa on safari and had requested

a private vehicle with a driver who understood what a photographer wants. It cost more, but I would rather save up to get exactly what I want and go less often, than accept second best. We got up at 4am and watched this leopardess wake at dawn. When she began to move, our driver turned the vehicle and raced off through the bush to position us looking up at the road. He felt reasonably sure she would cross it on her way to hunt impala coming down to the river to drink. We all waited with bated breath. Would she come?

She came – and I took this shot as she set her paw on the road, looking at us below her with a deadly transfixing gaze. Photographic magic, achieved by finding a creative way to get low.

I have read much about how to keep dementia at bay. Having strong interests like photography which stimulate the mind is important for that. We should never hang up our cameras and allow ourselves to atrophy. As Clint Eastwood once said, 'Don't let the old man in!' (Or, I might add, woman!) 🌟

Canon EOS-1D X Mark II, EF200-400mm f/4L IS USM lens @ 400mm. 1/400s @ f4, ISO 200.



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**Main Image: "Penguin Hole"** by Robin Moon  
APS Gold Medal Winner 2023  
Australian Digital Photography Awards (ADPA)

# Who We Are?



**Australian Photographic Society**

A non profit organisation catering to enthusiasts, amateurs and professionals in photography.

Facebook/Australian.Photographic.Society/  
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# IMAGE DOCTOR

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BY ANTHONY MCKEE

THIS  
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WINNER



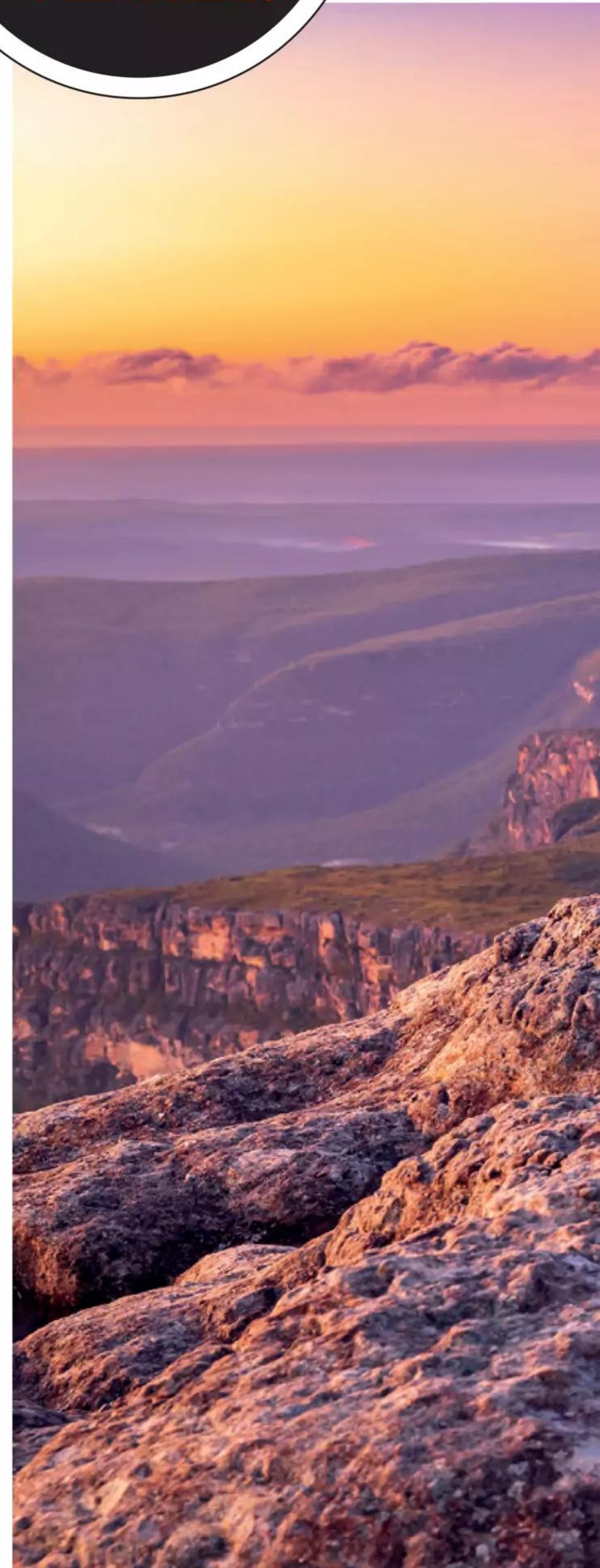
## A LITTLE CROP

"I shot this image while wandering around Senso-ji temple in Asakusa, Tokyo. Three ladies in traditional kimono were being photographed and I joined in. The light was being diffused through the open parasol, and her bowing head added to the coyness. Photographing in public is difficult as many people walked through the shot."

**ANTHONY'S TIP:** Hi Peter, isn't Japan a wonderful place for making photos! I do enjoy this image, but the first thing I notice as I look at it is the bright pavement across the bottom of the frame. If I was shooting this I would have just crouched down just enough to lose that bright pavement from my frame, or simply zoom a little bit more. As we are dealing with this image in post though, the simplest way to improve this image is to simply crop out that bright pavement at the bottom of the frame.

Now, while we are cropping I would also trim some of the right hand side of the image to keep the image square. That umbrella is rather bright, and by cropping both the pavement and some of the umbrella we will reduce the overall brightness of the picture and start to enjoy more of the colours within the frame, from the bright yellows in the dress to the red fence and green hedge behind this woman. Simple!

TITLE: Geisha with Parasol  
PHOTOGRAPHER: Peter Thompson  
DETAILS: Fuji X-S10, 18-300mm Tamron lens @ 260mm. 1/400s @ f5.6, ISO 1600.







### DIFFERENT VIEWS

“I captured this image from a hard to reach location on top of The Castle in the Budawangs, NSW; we wanted to capture the sunrise, so we climbed up the evening before and camped overnight which meant carrying overnight packs up. This image was taken just as the sun appeared from sunrise through some clouds on the horizon. This low angle of light gave the softness and warmth for the image. I chose the aperture of f/8 and focused on the distant Pigeon House Mountains. This provided some sharpness for the nearby rocks but also softened them. I decided to not keep everything in sharp focus by focus stacking. The longer exposure also added to some smoothing of the sky which also had graduated colour change from left to right of the frame”.

**ANTHONY'S TIP:** This is a great location Gavin, and well worth the climb. Some people get excited about distant horizons, but in this scene I think the foreground has just as much to offer. In this instance I would probably have shot in the vertical, used a slightly wider lens setting and my tallest extension on my tripod to capture the reflections from the water in the foreground. This would also help narrow our view (and contrast) across the sky while still enjoying that mountain in the distance. Feel like another hike!?

TITLE: The Castle Sunrise

PHOTOGRAPHER: Gavin Kellett

DETAILS: Canon R5, RF24-70mm lens @ 50mm. 2.5s @ f8, ISO 400.







### ALL THE ELEMENTS

“I photographed my son at some local bush bike jumps, and wanting to try something different I took many shots from various angles and heights. For this image, I got down low and concentrated on capturing the wheels in focus and preferably off the ground while also fighting the lowering sun in the background. I then cropped and converted to black and white to reduce distractions and increased the contrast.”

**ANTHONY’S TIP:** Hi Julia, one of the reasons I love photography is the challenge of trying to combine multiple elements within an environment into the one photograph. In this instance you mention the bikes, the rocks and the sunset. I am not too sure why you opted to include only half your son in the picture; that is not necessarily a bad thing, but I think if you are going to do this it has to be for an interesting reason, such as an amazing moment of bike tire hitting rock with dust flying, or something similar. In this instance I might have also moved back, positioned myself square on to the bike and used a longer lens to create more of a graphic effect. Otherwise, good work.

TITLE: Untitled  
PHOTOGRAPHER: Julia Yenne  
DETAILS: Nikon D780 with a 24-70mm lens 70mm. 1/1000th at f2.8, 640 ISO.

### EXPOSURE HEADACHES

“I love this image but got really negative feedback from a local photography group. This image was taken during book week of my daughter (as Dorothy) in the south east of South Australia. I was wondering if you could help with how to keep the

sky looking magical without over exposing the other elements? When I just select the sky, it doesn’t include the water element and so they end up looking mismatched. Changing colour tones makes the human subject look like an Oompa Loompa... Please help!”.

**ANTHONY’S TIP:** Hi Mary, and what would those camera club judges know!?! (Editors note - time for another story on judging!). Personally, I enjoy this image although I would be inclined to crop it to square; this will pull our attention into the centre and it will look a lot better. As for the colour manipulation, I’m not too sure what you are referring to. In late evening settings like this it is near impossible to capture the sky and the foreground all within the same exposure, hence your decision to use a flash was more than appropriate in this instance. If you do want to try and recover some colour and detail from the foreground though, I would recommend shooting in RAW mode and then using an exposure adjustment brush in Lightroom (or some similar RAW adjustment tool) to pull out some detail in post. You can also use an adjustment brush to selectively change colours within the scene. Otherwise, great effort.

TITLE: Not in Kansas Anymore  
PHOTOGRAPHER: Mary Irwin-Davies  
DETAILS: Canon 90D, Canon 10-18mm lens @ 16mm. 1/60s @ f9, ISO 100.







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### A LITTLE TO THE RIGHT

“This shot was captured at the recent setting Supermoon over the top of Sail Rock on Magnetic Island, and off the coast of Townsville, North Queensland. It was a mad rush as I awoke with only minutes to spare before the moon set behind the hill. Fortunately, I had set up the camera on a tripod the night before and I was able to run with the camera and tripod for 200 metres to the shoot location. I hope you like it!”

**ANTHONY’S TIP:** Hi Peter, I love the show a full moon puts on for us every month, and how if you pick the evening (or morning) right you also get a choice of a dark or light sky against the moon. I’m not sure what options you had in this situation, but I feel this image would have looked better if you had moved a few metres to your right, to create more separation between the moon from the rock. Aside from the fact that we want to celebrate the moon, I think we also want to celebrate that tall rock; juxtaposing it in the composition, rather than treating it as a tittle on an “i” would make it look better. Having created more room for the moon, I would then have shot the image in the horizontal. Otherwise, good work; keep shooting for the moon!

TITLE: Super moon over Sail Rock  
PHOTOGRAPHER: Peter Abraham  
DETAILS: Sony A6000, Sony 55-210mm lens @ 210mm.  
1/100s @ f6.3, ISO 320.



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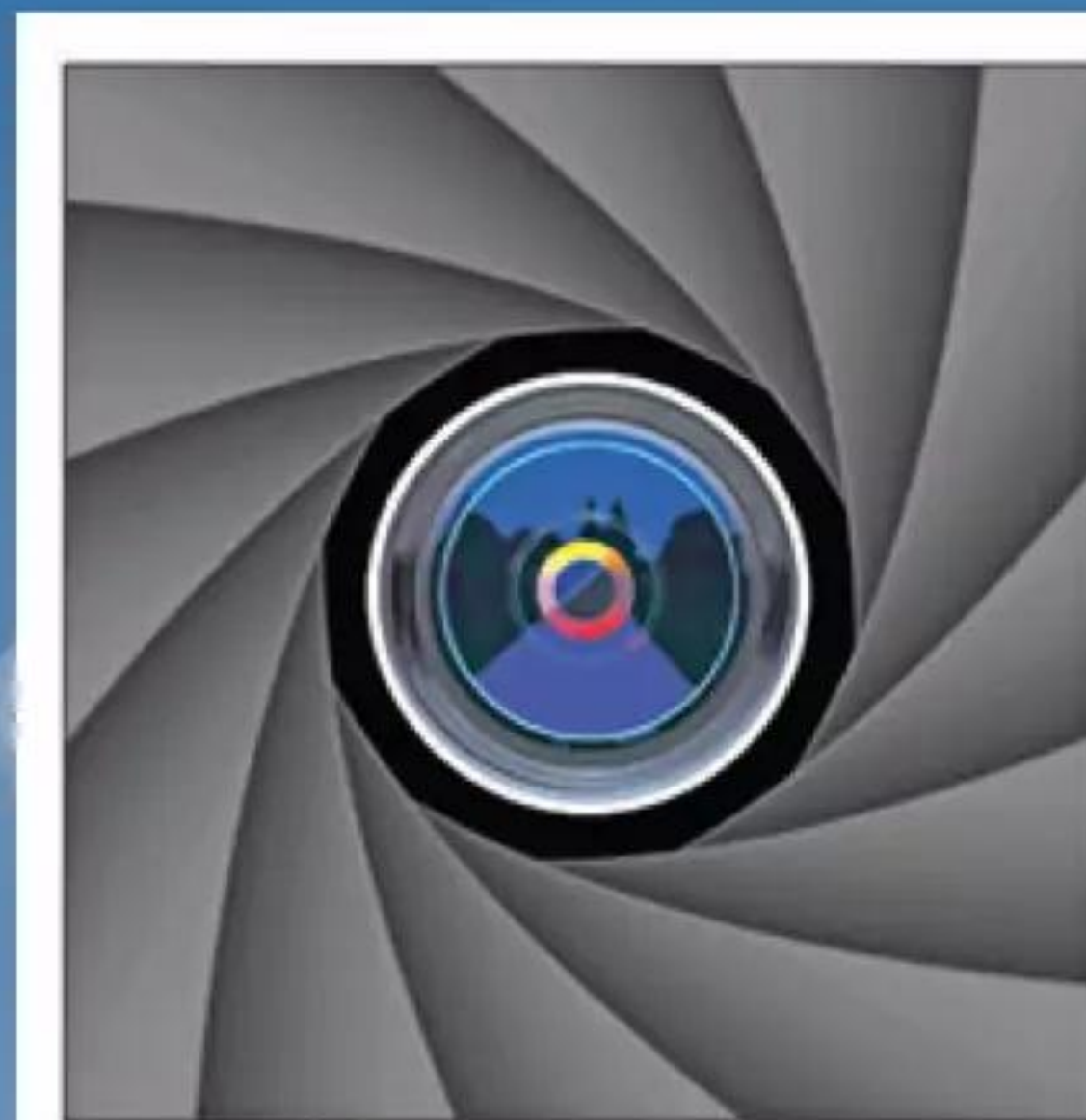
- Email entries to: [imagedoctor@australianphotography.com](mailto:imagedoctor@australianphotography.com) with “Image Doctor” in the subject line.
- Include your name, image title and up to 150 words about how you created it.
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