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**Digital**

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# Photographer

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Issue 279

**SHOOT YOUR BEST**

## BLACK & WHITE

- Perfect mono conversion
- Shoot for the edit
- Enhance detail

**GET CREATIVE WITH**

## SHUTTER SPEED

Rethink your exposures for awesome effects



**WILDLIFE ART**  
**CREATIVE BIRD PHOTOS**



**EXPERT ADVICE**

## GET YOUR SHOTS NOTICED

How to market your photography

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FUJIFILM X100VI  
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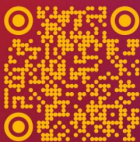
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Used Fujifilm XF 18-55mm f/2.8-4 R LM OIS



## “Stripping things back to the basics is often a great way to reset your visual goals”



Digital cameras are extremely powerful pieces of kit and there's an endless array of images we can capture with them. However, there is always a danger that we forget about the core image elements that people like to see in a photograph. Stripping things

back to the basics is often a great way to reset your visual goals. As such, be sure to read our feature on using shutter speed in creative ways. It might seem like a simple camera setting but, if you're looking to refresh your photo style, exposure duration can be a perfect place to start. Find this feature on p24 of the issue.

Next, don't miss our 13-page guide to creative black-and-white photography – a classic method of stripping images back to the essentials. From p36,

you'll learn to think in monochrome and balance the tones in any scene for maximum impact.

If you're in an artistic rut, our Shoot Like a Pro feature can help! From p14 of the magazine, self-portrait expert Jake Kehar Gill takes us behind the scenes on one of his conceptual shoots to teach us how to create mesmerising shots without even having to leave our living rooms.

If you're a subscriber to *Digital Photographer*, I'd like to take this time to highlight a wonderful new benefit you can enjoy. You now have access to a huge number of back digital issues and every future issue of the mag. Depending on which platform you use to read digital magazines, you can now find any of your favourite features, stretching back years. See p22 for details. For now, I hope you love this month's edition.

**Peter Fenech, Editor**  
[peter.fenech@futurenet.com](mailto:peter.fenech@futurenet.com)

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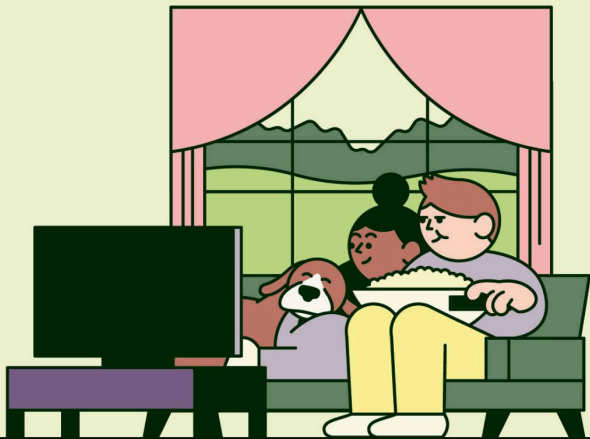


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# Contents

## Social space

### 76 Interview

The National Trust's Anna Sparham and CEWE's Petra Felgen talk about the partnership that has produced a revealing new book, *100 Photographs from the Collections of the National Trust*

### 84 GuruShots

The winning images from the 'Your Best Magazine Shot' contest, in association with the online photography game GuruShots

### 114 Pro Column

Helin Bereket blends iconic photographic styles and props from different eras to produce images that appear to be timeless

## Practical skills

### 24 Creative shutter speed

Jeremy Flint explains how you can master the art of adapting your camera's shutter speed to create beautiful exposures

### 36 Master monochrome

In our special feature, Kim Bunermann discovers the captivating qualities of black-and-white photography and how to master the monochrome genre in the digital age

### 50 Creative project

Capture the movement of birds in flight using the interlacing frames technique that combines the best of videography and stills photography to achieve stunning images

### 56 Shooting tutorial

Shooting reflections is a tried-and-tested method, but if the weather doesn't allow it, why not create your own indoor puddles?

## Editing suite

### 58 Photoshops tutorial

James Abbott shows us how the technique of noise-stacking can help produce cleaner images, even when shooting at high ISOs

### 60 Lightroom tutorial

Mimic a shallow depth of field by using Lightroom's new Lens Blur tool to add AI-powered blur or bokeh to your images

### 62 Affinity Photo tutorial

Achieve an infrared effect without the need for specialist equipment with our guide to using Adjustment Layers in Affinity Photo

## Pro advice

### 14 Self exposed

Kim Bunermann meets Jake Kehar Gill to discover the art of shooting self-portraiture and the particular challenges of being the subject and photographer at the same time

### 66 Career feature

Telling the world about your photography skills might not come easy, but as Leonora Brebner explains, marketing yourself can help you reach the right clients for your style

### 72 Career advice

This month, Claire Gillo explains how pushing yourself out of your comfort zone and taking on new challenges can benefit your career

### 112 Photo glossary

Photography is full of confusing jargon. Dive into our brand new digital photography glossary to demystify the most commonly used scientific terms and technology to make informed buying and shooting choices

## 36 Master monochrome



© MontyFu Noah

## 76 Uncovering photo history



© National Trust Images/Edward Chambers/Hername Collection/Captures © National Trust Images/Robert Thrift



© Kerry Smith

## 84 Gurushots gallery

# 24 Creative ways to use shutter speed



© Jeremy Platt

# 14 Self exposed



© John Koster GEL

# 50 Interlacing frames



© Raghavram Chiruvu



# 66 Market yourself

© Lennora Richter

## New kit and reviews

### 96 Photo Kit Leaderboard

Our new real-time guide to all the best cameras, lenses and other accessories on the market

### 104 Fujifilm X100VI

Gareth Bevan asks whether the successor to the viral sensation X100V lives up to the hype

### 106 DxO PureRAW 4

Rod Lawton finds out whether the latest RAW processor can revive images from older cameras

### 108 Lenses

We test two new lenses, the Canon RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM and the Hasselblad XCD 90V

### 110 Accessories

Fun yet functional products for photographers

# 104 Reviews



# 96 Photo Kit Leaderboard

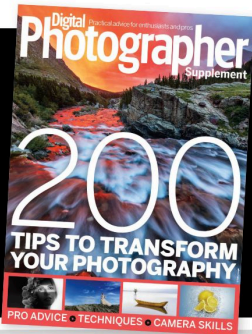
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# Gifts & giveaways

## Free ebook to download 200 tips to transform your photography

Photographic technology may change and develop, but most of the fundamentals of photography remain timeless. In this supplement, we've worked with eight professional photographers to put together a collection of 200 top tips that will help you to take better photos, no matter what genre you most enjoy shooting.

To claim your free ebook, visit <https://bit.ly/DPH279>



## Enter our Photocrowd contests online to win Affinity prizes

Every month, we team up with Photocrowd – the world's leading photography competition platform – to offer you the chance to win an Affinity Photo editing software licence (worth £60 for Mac or Windows) and have your images printed in *Digital Photographer*. Affinity Photo is a toolset engineered for modern photography professionals. Whether you're editing and retouching images or creating full-blown multi-layered compositions, it has all the power and performance you'll need. For a chance to win, go to Photocrowd and discover our latest contest. It's easy, free and fun – we love seeing your entries!

Visit: [www.photocrowd.com/digitalphotographer](http://www.photocrowd.com/digitalphotographer)

## Review test shots

We think test shots are important when it comes to reviewing and comparing the latest kit, but we know it's hard to tell the difference between test images when they are printed in the magazine. You can open, view and compare test shots from our kit reviews anywhere you see the download icon, pictured on the right.



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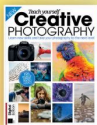
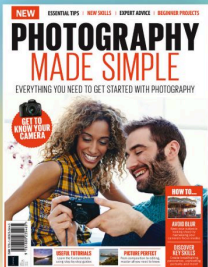
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## NIKON LAUNCHES RECORD-BREAKING FULL-FRAME Z 28-400MM

Nikon's latest Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR superzoom could be the lens to cover all your shooting needs

Nikon has announced a new full-frame superzoom for its Z-mount mirrorless: the Nikkor Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR. The lens is designed for use on full-frame cameras, however, its size, weight and price mean that you will also be able to use it on APS-C DX Nikon cameras, such as the Z 50 and Z fc, where its focal length is effectively 42-600mm.

Superzooms offer an all-in-one solution, with wide-angle and telephoto focal lengths in a single lens. The longest-range superzoom previously available for Nikon cameras was the Tamron 18-400mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC

HLD for Nikon F-mount DX-format DSLRs. The Nikkor Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR excels in close-up photography, with a minimum focus distance of just 0.2m at the widest angle and 1.2m at the maximum telephoto position, while it also offers a maximum reproduction ratio of 0.35x. It therefore promises to be able to capture subjects in exquisite detail, whether that's delicate plants or intricate tabletop scenes. And, despite its impressive telephoto reach of up to 400mm, the lens weighs just 725g.

The Nikkor Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR features a stepping motor (STM) for fast autofocus

drive, ensuring quick and accurate focusing on moving subjects. Its vibration reduction function provides the equivalent of a 5-stop increase in shutter speed, minimising blur and allowing for sharp handheld shots even in challenging conditions.

The lens supports linear manual focus operation, making it easy to focus precisely on your intended subject during video recording, which should enhance the quality of your videography no end.

The Nikon Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR is available now, priced £1,399.

[nikon.co.uk](http://nikon.co.uk)

## Sigma claims outstanding optical performance in a 'lightweight' design

Sigma has launched its 50mm F1.2 DG DN | ART, which aims to produce no-compromise optical quality in a classic 'standard' focal length for full-frame Sony E-mount or L-mount cameras. Sigma says the new 50mm has a 'lightweight' design. At 745g, it is 30 per cent lighter than the Sigma 35mm F1.2 DG DN | ART, despite having a longer focal length and the same f/1.2 max aperture.

The optical design includes 17 elements in 12 groups, including four aspherical ones. This complex design corrects spherical aberration, sagittal coma flare,

axial chromatic aberration and what Sigma calls 'double-line bokeh' – not just for edge-to-edge sharpness but also for the best possible blur.

The Sigma 50mm F1.2 DG DN | ART incorporates dual High-response Linear Actuator AF motors, driving a dedicated floating focus group designed to improve short-range performance. The AF supports fast and silent performance for both stills and video, and the lens also features 'heavily suppressed' focus breathing. It is available now for Sony E and L-Mounts, priced £1,299. [sigmauk.com](http://sigmauk.com)



## DJI Avata 2 FPV drone launches with Goggles 3

Manufacturer announces the Avata 2 drone, plus Goggles 3, the RC Motion 3 controller and a new manual controller



DJI's Avata 2 boasts a new 1/1.3-inch CMOS camera with the ability to capture HDR video at up to 4K 60fps or 2.7K 100fps. It has the option of a D-Log M mode for post-production. It features O4 radio which offers latency as low as 24ms. Alongside the new FPV quadcopter, DJI is bringing a full suite of accessories, including the new DJI Goggles 3 – a change to the previous model places the battery in the band and cameras in the device for pass-through.

The other big change is in the DJI RC Motion 3 controller, which is now smaller and lighter. The design is partly to accommodate the arrival of a new 'Easy ACRO' feature, which enables some classic FPV stunts at the push of a button.

"DJI Avata 2 builds on this by offering everyone the chance to fly like a pro with easy flips, rolls and drifts. We're looking forward to giving users one of the best FPV experiences available with next to no effort needed on their part," said Ferdinand Wolf, DJI's creative director.



The motion controller is held in the hand and pushed gently like a floating joystick; the trigger finger controls the throttle. The Avata 2 will be sold drone-only and in two different configurations: the DJI Avata 2 Fly More Combo (£879), which includes a single battery, the

Goggles 3 and the RC Motion 3 controller; and the DJI Avata 2 Fly More Combo (£1,049), which includes all the above plus a charging hub, a total of three batteries and a sling bag. A new traditional control stick, the FPV Remote Controller 3, is an optional extra at £139. [dji.com](http://dji.com)

## Ricoh launches two new GR compacts

Not some quick-fix digital effect, this is a real diffusion filter in the shutter unit that can be activated by a button



The Ricoh GR III (and GR IIIx) are pocket-sized 'street' cameras with APS-C sensors,

fast AF and a loyal fanbase of their own. Given that there is no EVF and both cameras have a fixed lens with a modest f/2.8 maximum aperture, not everyone is a fan, but if you want a big-sensor camera that you can slide into a jacket or a trouser pocket, then they are amongst the best compacts for travel and street photography.

The HDF in the name of the new cameras stands for Highlight Diffusion Filter, which is a genuine optical filter built into the shutter unit and replaces the built-in ND filter. When activated, it produces softened, spreading highlights which look very different to these cameras' regular high-contrast, high-resolution rendering, giving your images a softer, more romantic look.

This HDF version is available for both GR III models. The regular Ricoh GR III has a fixed 28mm equivalent f/2.8 lens, while the Ricoh GR IIIx swaps this for a 40mm equivalent f/2.8 lens. The Ricoh GR III HDF and GR IIIx HDF are both available now for pre-order, with the GR III HDF costing £1,049 and the GR IIIx HDF priced at £1,099. [ricoh.co.uk](http://ricoh.co.uk)



## In other news

More snippets of photography news from around the world

### NEW TAMRON 28-75MM F/2.8 DI III VXD G2 FOR NIKON Z

Tamron delivers a constant-aperture 28-75mm standard zoom that's cheaper and optically more advanced than Nikon's own. The 28-75mm F/2.8 Di III VXD G2 goes head to head with Nikon's Z 28-75mm f/2.8. The Nikon lens is itself an affordable pro-level lens, but the new Tamron will be cheaper still and is a 'G2' (Generation 2) lens with a more sophisticated optical construction. It's on sale now with a RRP of £849.

### FUJIFILM TEASE NEW XF 16-50MM F/2.8-4.8 KIT LENS

Fujifilm has revealed the development of its new XF kit lens to replace the 10-year-old Fujifilm XF 18-55mm f/2.8-4 R LM OIS, considered to be one of the best 'budget' kit lenses. It looks to have a wider wide-end at 16mm, compared with 18mm, though a slightly slower aperture of f/4.8, compared with f/4 at the top end. The release date is yet to be confirmed, but if it drops this year, it will coincide with Fujifilm's 90th birthday.



# STORY BEHIND THE STILL



**Photographer:** Chris Owen

**@**chris\_owen\_photography

**Image location:** Eithiog Nature Reserve,  
Bangor, Wales

**Type of commission:** Personal

**Shot details:** Canon R7, Canon EF70-200mm f/2.8L

IS II USM, 1/40 sec, f/11, ISO 100

**Accessories:** Tripod, shutter release cable



**About the shot:** All around the world, bridges have long been a popular subject for photographers – their dimensions, construction details and geometric shapes offer many possibilities. Chris Owen, a photographer based in Wales, chose to capture the Menai Suspension Bridge, which spans the Menai Strait between the island of Anglesey and mainland Wales. Built in 1826, it was the world's first major suspension bridge. "The bridge improved transport links by connecting Holyhead to London. It's now a grade 1 listed structure and can be viewed from the Eithiog Nature Reserve in Bangor, the oldest city in Wales," says Chris.

*Above*  
**Golden hour, Menai Suspension Bridge**

The Menai Suspension Bridge, the world's first of its kind, is highlighted with warm golden tones, accentuating the technical details of its construction and highlighting its dimensions.

"The timing for this shot was crucial. The visual goal I had in mind was to add a warm and soft-looking effect, so I took this photo during the golden hour. The hour before sunset adds magical golden hues and I used the weather forecast to plan the time and more importantly to oversee the weather," he adds. Chris aimed to shoot the often photographed bridge from a different

perspective to highlight its size and features. Here, the viewpoint was paramount. "The main challenge for me was finding the right spot to set up the tripod so I could get the composition I had in mind without injuring myself or damaging my camera gear."

Once back home, Chris started to fine-tune the frame in post-processing. "I use Adobe Lightroom for editing my work and I always shoot in RAW format for more control over the image post-processing," he says. "Here, I increased the exposure by a small amount and upped the contrast. Then I reduced the highlights and the clarity slightly and to boost the colours, I also added a bit of saturation."

# SELF EXPOSED

**Kim Bunermann** meets **Jake Kehar Gill** to discuss the art of self-portraiture and the challenges of being both the subject and the photographer at the same time

All main images © Jake Kehar Gill



As self-presentation has become an integral part of the online digital world, self-portraiture is a topic which seems more relevant than ever. However, the 'selfies' we see usually have a different quality to those visible in previous eras.

Creating images of oneself pre-dates the invention of photography and can be traced back much further into art history, where esteemed artists, such as Rembrandt or Frida Kahlo, created their self-portraits on canvas. Additionally, we might remember how the world of photography was fascinated by the reclusive Vivian Maier's self-portraits, which were only discovered after her death.

Self-portraiture is not only a way to get to know yourself better and learn how to express yourself,

it's also a brilliant genre to hone and learn new photographic skills. That's why many photography courses these days include elements where the students are given self-portrait tasks and coursework. It was and still is a way of expression and creativity.

Today, I'm visiting Jake Kehar Gill in his London studio to find out more about his self-portraiture work. Jake is no stranger to the pages of *Digital Photographer*, most recently having written an in-depth tutorial on how to shoot cinematic portraits with a timeless style back in Issue 269. I'm curious to find out what it's like to leave the comfort of being behind the camera and work exclusively with yourself. When I meet Jake in his studio, he has already prepared everything for today's shoot.

## Jake Kehar Gill



Jake Kehar Gill is a London-based photographer. He studied art and design at the City of Bath College, followed by photographic arts at the University of

Westminster in London and, in 2019, he won the CSR Emerging Talent award from Travers Smith.

On the surface, Jake's work varies between the perimeters of fine art and fashion photography, with an emphasis on the human body. However, it focuses on body, posture and garments, showing that communication is far more complex than we initially perceive it to be.

[jakekehargill.com](http://jakekehargill.com)

@jakekehargill



As expected, it is quiet, only Jake is waiting patiently and the faint echo of music playing quietly around the building can be heard. "Music is essential. Having some vibration while shooting enhances my productivity and engages the space I am working with," he says.

We sit down and talk about the advantages and disadvantages of self-portrait photography over a glass or two of orange juice. I would imagine that working with yourself as the subject has some advantages – you are always available when a shoot is planned, for instance, and of course, there's no risk of the model being difficult to work with or getting bored. As a photographer, I'm also assuming that Jake can try out all the techniques and methods he wants to and follow a more experimental approach without anyone stopping him.

"Self-portraiture can give you a better eye and understanding of the body," Jake explains. However, leaving his position behind the camera creates other challenges. I ask Jake how he tackles these. "I am a private person and feel protective over my photographs. I must be



## Honour your work

Why having a selection of your work in a printed form pays off

During a break in shooting, Jake shows me his book of his earlier work, called *Border*.

"This book acts like a portfolio of my previous work," he explains. "I created a lot of photographic work while I was studying and this book brings it all together. I was part of an exhibition showing my graduate work at Free Range Shows, but having a book is simply different," he adds.

"Creating a publication is an excellent way to showcase your work in a different light. It's more about your vision and how you execute a project. That is what will set you apart. Photographing and editing are two completely different skill sets," says Jake.

"It is not just beneficial for yourself. These days, having

a physical book to show people can bring a different level of experience to clients. It creates a longer-lasting impression than a digital portfolio does. It provides them with an in-depth look at your work and style."

Currently, Jake is working on turning his latest project *Vespertine* into a book. This will allow him to tell the visual message of his work more comprehensively than he would be able to do on social media platforms.



patient until I'm pleased with a body of work. Discipline is essential," he replies.

"When I first started self-portraiture, I used my body as a tool and learned how to frame myself in a scene. Using a mirror initially did help, but I've learnt to live without it. You must be willing to create nonsense to achieve something you're happy with. I'm not a technical photographer – I always start with an idea and work out the specifics later. If you have difficulty forming ideas, set technical limits for yourself; this will compel you to work within a framework. Knowing what you want can be a lifelong endeavour."

Jake offers an essential tip. "Tethering your photos straight from your camera to your laptop is helpful; this helps you pick up on details you might miss in camera view. It's a great tool to help you achieve the shot you want and record your progress throughout the shoot."

The genre of self-portraiture is often stigmatised due to the



SELF EXPOSED





## Jake's main gear

**1 Canon EOS R** Smaller, lighter and more affordable than many of its rivals, this high-end full-frame mirrorless camera is a great option for those who are new to full-frame cameras. The Canon app for this model allows camera settings like aperture, shutter speed, ISO, white balance and even focus to be set via your smartphone. This feature makes self-portraiture projects more convenient as you don't need to stand behind the camera to change settings.

**2 Canon RF 24-105mm f/4-7.1 IS STM** This versatile lens covers a variety of focal lengths from wide-angle to telephoto zoom and so can be used for a wide range of situations. The precise Nano USM autofocus means it's easy to get clear and sharp images, which is especially important for self-portraits. The lens also features aspherical and UD lenses, and is equipped with a five-stop image stabilizer, which provides excellent results even in low-light conditions.

**3 GY-180 off-camera flashes and umbrellas** Strobes or off-camera flashes can be useful for creating depth and professional-looking results in self-portraits. For this project, Jake used two umbrellas attached to the lights. Umbrellas are a popular choice and are easy to set up. The white umbrella diffuses light, resulting in a soft and even light effect, whereas the black umbrella provides a silver inner side and bounces light back to create captivating high-contrast light.

**4 SLIK tripod** A tripod is essential for self-portraiture. However, it does not have to be the latest or most expensive model. Jake prefers working with his SLIK tripod as it has a flexible head that can be adjusted quickly and easily. A tripod allows him to experiment with different camera angles and perspectives on his shoots before getting back in position in front of the camera.





## Tips for self-portraiture

### Take your time

Capturing shots of yourself requires some practice, so don't put pressure on yourself. With experience, you'll figure out which settings and poses work best to achieve your desired results. Consider using a mirror or connecting your camera to a laptop so that you can receive instant feedback on the composition and technical settings, and also your body language.

### Gain control

Some cameras feature an app, where you can adjust exposure settings easily from a distance. While this might save you some hassle, it is not absolutely necessary. Activate a self-timer in your camera menu or, even better, invest in a wireless shutter remote. This way, you can try out different settings and poses without having to leave your position.

### Be experimental

Trying out different photographic approaches will help you learn more about the medium and expand your skills. It's important to remember that a self-portrait doesn't necessarily have to be a clear capture of your face. You can get creative and look for reflections or other interesting elements that can add an extra layer of interest to your photo. Don't limit yourself and explore all the ways you can express yourself through self-portraiture.

### Add depth

Think about the sort of atmosphere, emotion and message you want to convey. Use props to enhance the frame's message and appeal. Don't forget to consider the light. Small and affordable off-camera flashes will give your portraits a professional touch.

assumption that photographers who capture themselves are narcissistic and self-absorbed. "There is an element of narcissism that you can't avoid. But when taking photographs, I intend to learn something new or even surprise myself; that's the best feeling. I've never been interested in pretty pictures. For me, it's not about beauty but honesty and communicating how I feel," he explains.

Indeed, browsing through Jake's self-portrait work on his website and social media shows that he is not always fully visible, with parts of his face often obscured by positioned light, perspectives or other props.

"I work a bit like a painter. It's my curiosity that leads me to the image. I must let the process take control," he says. "I usually start with one light source and build from there. Keeping things simple helps me maintain problem-solving under control. A strobe light is an excellent tool because it gives you more options."

Unusually for work that could be described as 'self-portraits',



sometimes Jake's face doesn't even appear in his work, instead only specific body parts or his stature and outlines are visible.

"I find the body intriguing. I see it as a fabric with its limitations. Sometimes, hiding more of yourself can expose additional levels of communication. If you're new to self-portraiture, I'd recommend starting with a comfortable process. Then, slowly, you can discover what you want to communicate with your audience," he says, emphasising that his work is not about flawless



visual representation of himself, as one might first assume.

I ask Jake about his influences and inspirations behind his unusual approach. "[Singer] Björk impacted me to name my project after her fourth album. She created a library of sounds over the years and put a magnifying glass over her domestic life. I applied this to my circumstances and found hereditary nuances significantly impact me. I'm also obsessed with Francis Bacon's paintings and his workings from photographs."

The time to shoot today's self-portraiture has arrived, and Jake admits that he has already taken some test shots the day before to ensure that everything turns out as he visualised. For this self-portrait, he has opted to shoot through a glass window in his studio, adding a further layer to the composition and he is also working with a black background. To the left and the right, Jake has positioned off-camera flashes and to better control the light influence, there are two umbrellas, one black and one white, attached

SHOOT LIKE A PRO

"I work a bit like a painter. It's my curiosity that leads me to the image. I must let the process take control"



to the light. He mounts the camera on a tripod and connects the transmitter for the lights and his phone to the camera. "I can select the aperture, shutter speed and ISO via this app – it's a game-changer when I'm working alone," he explains.

I settle back and watch as Jake captures his self-portraits. It's interesting to see how he is able to control the scene without being behind the camera. Unlike other photo shoots where it's possible to communicate with the photographer while they are working, it's clear that Jake is highly concentrated. As he needs to be in complete control of his facial expressions, as well as operating the camera, he isn't able to talk me through the processes as they happen.

However, it's clear that a lot of thought has gone into the concept behind Jake's work, so when he's finished the shoot,

I ask him how long it takes to create a self-portrait from the initial idea to the final shot. "It depends," he replies. "Some of them get together quicker than others, but one important thing is not to get impatient. Self-portraiture is a way of expressing, transporting emotions and getting a visual image of how someone can feel, think and so much more. As it's not about optical self-celebration, it's important to explore how someone can express themselves through photography," he says.

"Experimenting with technical aspects such as camera settings, as well as lighting, is key to adding depth and emotion. That all takes time, but it's worth exploring visual possibilities and this will be visible to the viewer."

Putting yourself under pressure seems like a contrary way of achieving honest and powerful self-portraiture, so how does



Jake handle this when it comes to delivering work for clients? "Working with clients is different. They have a brief and I need to understand what they want from my work. I use my creative practice as a blueprint to deliver the client's needs. Remember, this is a business, so using your language as a photographer to avoid commercial work is a learning curve. It also means creative limitations – that's good because it pushes you creatively

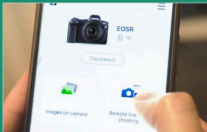
to work within a structure, and you learn more about yourself. However, I will always have an affinity for personal work."

Because Jake doesn't always shoot in a studio setup, the experimental nature of his work is visible in his compositions. Reflections on objects, as in his work with spoons, show his modern twist on the classic genre of self-portraiture, bringing contextual and environmental elements into the frame.

## Shoot like Jake



**1 Set up your tripod** You can't hold the camera when you are the subject, so by mounting your camera on a tripod, you don't just gain freedom, you can also control the composition of the photograph. Experiment to find suitable angles and perspectives.



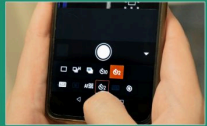
**2 Connect the camera** Open the app that has specifically been designed for your camera model. Now you can activate the Remote live shooting feature and connect your phone via Wi-Fi or Bluetooth. If there is no app available, connect a shutter remote release.



**3 Switch to Manual mode** As you have less control over the accuracy of the focus, set an aperture of f/9. Jake prefers this setting as it gives a larger plane of focus. Set the shutter speed to around 1/125 sec to ensure sharpness and adapt the ISO setting.



**4 Set the focus** Don't shoot in manual focus mode. Instead, select the Flexible Focus Spot option that can be controlled using your phone. If you can't connect the phone, make use of the Face/Eye AF setting. Alternatively, enable the Single Point AF.



**5 Set the timer** Select the self-timer option, which can be found in the camera menu – most cameras offer 2- or 10-second timers. Even if you can use a remote release, using a timer is better as it gives you the time to relax your face before taking the picture.



**6 Take test shots** Now, take your first self-portrait. Get into position and press the remote shutter release. Take a few shots and then check the results. If necessary, adjust the exposure settings, the camera angle or the composition.

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# CREATIVE WAYS TO USE SHUTTER SPEED

Master the art of adapting the shutter speed to create beautiful works of art

Words & photos by Jeremy Flint

**S**hutter speed control might seem like a basic skill for a more advanced photographer. It is one of the first aspects of camera work that we learn when starting out in photography and, therefore, it might be easy to assume there isn't much more you need


to know about controlling the duration of your exposures. However, besides simply moderating how much light enters the camera, learning the various creative uses of shutter speed settings can open up a world of advanced imagery for use in any situation. As with most camera setups, it's possible to get stuck in an artistic rut, using

the same settings over and over, capturing similar images on each of our shoots. Sometimes, making simple changes to our choice of long or short exposure, subject matter and camera position can mix up our portfolios and maybe even send us down a creative path towards a new signature visual style, setting our work apart from others.



*Pictured*  
**Life in motion**

Changing your choice of shutter speed is a great way to transform a scene that might seem otherwise static and lacking dynamism



The human eye doesn't make it easy for us to see motion effects. They are visible, but our brains work to create the sharpest, highest-quality image possible. By learning to push shutter speed into less-used exposure territory, we can tell a more emotive story with our cameras. Let's dive into some simple steps you can use today.

# Capture star trails

Shoot a lengthy exposure of several minutes to create star trails

Capturing star trails is a wonderfully creative technique to convey the movement of stars. It involves opening the shutter for a long period of time, which records the stars as the earth rotates creating the

effect that they are moving. Experiment with the exposure time and find the ultimate duration that suits the curve you want. You can either capture a single frame for an extended period using a low ISO, which

results in less noise or blend a series of shorter-length frames to achieve a similar result. Personally, I prefer to shoot a single image as it takes up less space on my hard drive and is quicker to process.



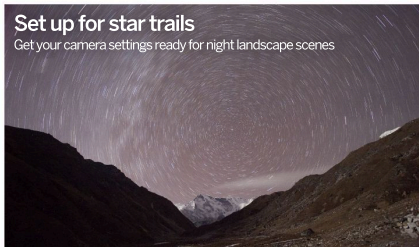
*Pictured*  
**Trail and error**

Exact camera settings can vary from scene-to-scene and experimentation is often the best way of finding the exposure sweet spot.

## CREATIVE WAYS TO USE SHUTTER SPEED

### Set up for star trails

Get your camera settings ready for night landscape scenes



- 1 Choose the right location** Seek a dark location away from the streetlights and ambient lights of towns or cities, which can be too bright to keep the shutter open for long periods. Taking photos of the night sky away from light pollution enables long exposures of a few minutes.



- 2 Check the weather** When looking for the optimum weather conditions to shoot star trails, clear skies are essential. A new moon also ensures less light impacts on your image, which is the case when a full moon is visible.

- 3 Choose the right lens** A wide-angle lens is a great choice to capture more stars in your frame. This wider field of view also allows you to add some of the landscape in the photo, broadening the subject.



- 4 Use a cable release** When the camera is mounted on a tripod, I prefer to use a locking cable release to keep the shutter open for an extended period of time and avoid any camera movement. Super-long exposures can then be recorded to give the effect you want. The longer the shutter is open, the greater the curve of the star trails you will be able to capture.



# Capture the passage of time

Use long exposure to capture images with the perfect blend of elements

Long-exposure photography is a wonderful photographic technique that involves keeping the shutter open for an extended period of time. In essence, with this technique, you are striving to create motion in different parts of the image. Landscapes and seascapes make brilliant subject

choices for long-exposure photography, such as clouds rolling across the sky or waves crashing over the shoreline.

However, creating amazing long-exposure photos requires thinking outside the box. Combining moving subjects with elements that remain fixed, such as rocks, is a great

way to introduce an advanced exposure technique into your portfolio.

Another approach worth exploring is to adjust the exposure time and shoot in a variety of different weather conditions that best suit the scene and help evoke the different moods you may wish to convey.

## Capture quality long exposures

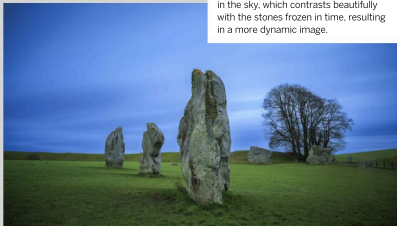
Make the most of contrasts of detail in scenes with moving elements

**1 Find the right location** When it comes to long-exposure photography, you can scout potential locations to shoot and return when the conditions are suitable to execute your shots. Cloudy skies lend themselves to long-exposure photography, especially when combined with water and wind.

**3 Use a long-exposure filter** A neutral density filter is useful for extending your shutter speed. An ND filter reduces the amount of light reaching the camera's sensor, allowing you to slow down the shutter speed.

**2 Use a tripod** A tripod is an essential piece of kit for long exposures. Mounting your camera on a tripod ensures your images remain sharp and prevents any unwanted movement from impacting your images.

**4 Shoot long exposures during the daytime** Daytime long exposure is a brilliant way to help a landscape or piece of architecture stand out. When capturing the Avebury stones (below), I chose a six-stop filter to blur the clouds and create movement in the sky, which contrasts beautifully with the stones frozen in time, resulting in a more dynamic image.



**5 Find the right subject** Use a long-exposure filter to capture waterfalls and seascapes, which look particularly wonderful when captured during an extended shutter speed. Combining their rich natural beauty and soft flowing water is a great way to give a silky, ethereal effect.



*Pictured*  
**Sharp and soft**

The most successful long exposures are those with sharp detail in static elements, as these contrast with the silky-looking liquids

# Painting with light

Work with different light sources to paint a captivating picture

Painting with light is a relatively simple technique that doesn't require specialist equipment. You can either bring your own torch or use ambient light sources that you find while on location. Light painting is best

suited to capturing images after dark when you will need to employ an extended shutter speed in order to allow sufficient time to capture the entire effect or movement of the light source. Think away from the traditional

way of waving a torch to create shapes or paint your scene and seek alternative light sources to illuminate an image. Here are some unconventional ways to light paint that go beyond the familiar approach.



*Pictured*

## Blank canvas

Light painting doesn't have to involve drawing shapes with a torch. Use a painterly effect to create rich colour palettes

## Balance painterly light sources

Work natural and artificial lighting into your images for subtle effects



**1 Paint with car lights** Use car lights to paint light on your subject. With this shot of the spectacular stones of Avebury, I opened the shutter long enough to allow time for several vehicles to pass and shine a light on this wonderful subject.



**2 Paint with streetlights** I captured this image in Norway by using a streetlight to light up the rock in the foreground. This created an amazing contrast to the northern lights dancing in the night sky above the mountains and fjords.



**3 Use a flash** Use a camera flash light to paint part of your image. I used a pulse of light from my speedlite flash to illuminate the daffodils in the foreground of this urban scene. Experiment to see what works best and what sort of light blends easily.



**4 Use a mobile phone light** Subtle light sources often work best. If you don't have a torch, use a mobile phone light or a head torch. I always carry one in my camera backpack and they make a great emergency light source you can paint with.

# Panning

Use this simple technique to blend a slow shutter speed with camera motion

Panning is a photographic technique that can be applied to create a sense of speed and flow around a moving object. Using panning, you can keep your subject more in focus while blurring your background. There are two extremes with this technique, you can either freeze a fast-moving subject against a moving backdrop or capture motion in the subject.

This is often suited to slower-moving subjects, creating a sense of movement and dynamism. Panning in this way makes for an interesting slow-motion effect, whilst giving the impression the subject was moving faster than they were. Whichever technique you prefer, both help to camouflage uninspiring backgrounds such as buildings or unwanted objects. Here are some top tips to convey a sense of motion when panning.



## Pan like a pro photographer

Ensure your panning images encapsulate the energy and detail of your chosen scene and subject



**1 Switch to Shutter Priority mode** Shooting in shutter speed priority mode gives you control over exposure and the ability to shift the shutter speed quickly, with the aperture set automatically. Around 1/30 sec works well for capturing moving subjects while moving the camera horizontally.



**2 Consider lens Image Stabilisation** When panning, switch off your Image Stabiliser to prevent unwanted corrections to movement. That said, some lenses have a dedicated panning setting, such as Mode 2 IS, which can be used to disable the stabilisation in the horizontal direction as you follow the action.

**3 Apply subject-tracking AF** Using subject-tracking autofocus is the best way to ensure the camera holds focus on your subject and prevents your camera from refocusing when you pan. With subject-tracking enabled the camera will follow the subject as it moves through the frame.



**4 Shoot slow-moving subjects** To build confidence and develop this technique, I recommend starting with subjects that are easier to capture, for example, cars, cyclists, motorcyclists or even skateboarders. Try shooting these subjects with a clean backdrop in natural or urban environments to get the best results.



## Tell a story

Reveal hidden characteristics with exposure

One of the great advantages of using the shutter speed creatively is the ability to tell a story with your images. This can be achieved by adjusting the amount of light you let into the camera. Take a moment to decide what kind of story you want to convey and execute your images by adapting

the shutter speed to achieve this. Adapting the length of exposures allows us to capture scenes in a way that we cannot see with our own eyes, so choose your shutter speed based on how much detail you want to hide or reveal. If sharpness is creating a 'literal' frame then slow it down for a unique view.

### Shoot a silhouette

Using a fast shutter speed can also be used to capture silhouettes. Silhouettes are an effective tool for visual storytelling as they remove details and focus on highlighting a subject's form and texture. The physical appearance of this impala with the golden-coloured water creates a sense of wonder about the unknown.







### Blur people

Motion blur is a brilliant tool to tell a story by conveying action, excitement and movement. When using a longer exposure time to blur any movement in people, they become less identifiable and the intentional movement transforms an image to show dreaminess and feelings of motion.

### Darken shadows

Another technique is to darken shadows when shooting in low light by implementing a faster shutter speed. Reducing shadows effectively adds contrast to a scene and increases the tonal range adding drama and excitement to the scene. These trees contrast nicely with the colourful dunes behind them.

### Slow down the shutter speed

The last step is to slow the shutter speed down to let more light in and show all the elements in the scene. This works particularly well when the subject is fixed and the detail of the subject is revealed, also creating a unique painterly lighting quality.



**HOPE  
AND  
HOMES  
FOR  
CHILDREN**



# URGENT APPEAL



## Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine is not just a humanitarian crisis for the Ukrainian people; it's a child protection emergency.

Up to 100,000 children warehoused in Ukraine's vast orphanage system – a network of over 700 buildings – risk being forgotten. Left to face the dangers of war alone as staff flee. As families are torn apart or forced from their homes, many more children are at risk of being separated from the love and protection they desperately need. Worse still, they are at risk of trafficking, or being placed in overcrowded, understaffed and poorly resourced orphanages in border countries.

### We must act now.

Born out of the Balkans conflict 30 years ago, we've championed the vital importance of family and community-based care of children and our teams are on the ground in Ukraine, Moldova and Romania to ensure this war does not rob children of the love and protection they need now more than ever. Across all three countries, we're directly supporting displaced families and unaccompanied children with material and emotional

support. We're working closely with authorities to keep families together when they are at their most vulnerable and to fight for the safe tracking, monitoring and care for children without parental care. And we won't stop when the fighting stops.

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TECHNIQUES

# MASTER MONOC

Discover the captivating qualities of black-and-white photography and learn how to master the genre in the age of digital technology

Words by Kim Bunermann  
Images by Mostafa Nodeh

*Pictured*  
**High contrast**  
The lack of colour underlines the contrast in the scene. High-contrast scenes emphasise this, adding drama and depth

# CHROME

**B**lack-and-white photography is, technically, the oldest genre in the field, dating back to the inception of early photographic technology in the 19th century. However, despite the advances in colour film processing, the practice of eliminating colours has remained popular as a style choice, offering plenty of opportunities to experiment.

With the advantages of digital cameras, monochrome photography has adapted new techniques and ways of processing images, yet working solely with greyscale tonality remains a complex task. Black-and-white photographs have a timeless quality and offer a unique perspective on reality. Being limited to shades of grey only shifts the focus to the subject and certain characteristics in the scene become more prominent. However, what some may not realise is that colour still plays a significant role in B&W photography. In the digital era, there are plenty of post-processing features available that turn your colour images into monochrome; but mastering the art of black-and-white photography requires a little more knowledge and patience.

Taking the time to learn fundamental B&W photography theory and combining it with new digital features is key. This comprehensive guide puts a spotlight on both topics and is designed to support you in creating black-and-white photography like a pro. Over the next few pages, you will learn how to focus on the essentials and simplicity of a subject, get to know the latest features of digital cameras and explore the endless possibilities of creating striking monochromatic masterpieces.

# Choose your kit

Learn how your equipment influences the quality of B&W images

When it comes to monochrome tones, choosing the right photography kit makes a huge difference in the quality of your shots. In this photographic genre, tonal range, sharpness, clarity and image noise are all key factors to consider.

If budget isn't an issue, specialist cameras such as Leica's Monochrome series are the way to go. These are specifically designed for black-and-white photography and are favoured by some professional photographers, including Alan Schaller. Models such as the Q2 don't require the use of colour filters or interpolation so that only the pure luminosity (light levels) are captured, which results in sharper and more

detailed photographs. High-resolution sensors are vital for producing high-quality monochrome shots and Leica's M10 features an impressive 40-megapixel sensor. Whereas these monochrome-only cameras can come with a big price tag, the increased dynamic range is outstanding.

However, creating successful black-and-white photography does not necessarily require breaking the bank. The newest and most up-to-date equipment can make things easier but is not a requirement. The art is to make the most of the equipment you have, know how to handle it and invest wisely in a few accessories to help you.

Most digital cameras offer black-and-white shooting modes or film simulations

that support you in capturing atmospheric shots. Generally speaking, a high-resolution sensor is beneficial. Additionally, you should ideally work with a camera that can handle noise well, as this is often amplified in black-and-white shots. Thankfully, most modern DSLRs and mirrorless cameras perform well in this area. It's important to know the extent to which your camera can deliver good results when working with high ISO values. This can be easily tested so that you are aware of the limits.

However, image noise reminds us of the days of film and can be used to create a nostalgic atmosphere. Some people even add grain to their monochrome shots in post-processing to underline this effect.

## Anatomy of a monochrome camera: Leica Q2 Monochrom

### MONOCHROME SENSOR

The Q2 Monochrom is designed only to produce black-and-white images and has no coloured filters over its CMOS chip

### CAPTURES MORE DETAILS

The monochrome sensor requires no interpolation, which means that each photosite is used to gather brightness information, resulting in richly detailed shots



### ENHANCED NOISE CONTROL

With no colour filter array available, each pixel receives more light, and the camera's ISO limit is an impressive setting of ISO 100,000

### NO COLOUR INFORMATION

Usually used for brightness and contrast adjustment; physical colour filters can be used to regain control as this sensor reacts like a classic B&W film type

## Stay sharp

The visibility of mono details begins with the choice of lens

With the lack of colour, the scene's sharpness gains more importance as structures and textures are highlighted. To create high-quality frames, the choice of lens is crucial. Prime lenses, such as the Sigma 50mm F1.2 DG DN Art, are renowned for creating images with extra crispness. This quality can be pricey and primes aren't as flexible to work with as zoom lenses. However, it's best to avoid purchasing budget telephoto and kit lenses as they may result in images that lack resolution, no matter how many pixels your camera has.

Whereas the required focal length range depends on the subject and style you want to capture, other lens features must be taken into account. Also important are the built-in stabilisation features and lenses with wide aperture possibilities (low f-stop numbers).

The former supports stability and levels out any camera movement to avoid creating blurry subjects, while the latter ensures that more light reaches the camera's sensor, allowing for short exposure times while ensuring a well-exposed frame. Also, wide apertures limit the need to push ISO settings to the extreme and therefore avoid image noise.



## Slow it down

Use a tripod to focus on the composition and to connect deeper with the subject

Tripods are a necessary accessory for certain photographic techniques, such as using long exposures to capture



water softly. However, in black-and-white photography, tripods are helpful tools because they naturally slow down your composition process. This process gains importance when working with monochrome tones, as the reduction of colours means that minor discrepancies can negatively influence the scene. Using a tripod will support you in readjusting the frame and exposure for good while allowing you to connect with the subject on a deeper level.

When choosing a tripod, prioritise your photographic needs. Consider your preferred camera and lens set-up; compact cameras and wide-angle lenses do not require top-notch sturdy tripods but, due to their weight, telephoto lenses do. Don't forget the importance of a tripod head – it might be worth purchasing a flexible option, such as the Manfrotto 324RC2 Ball Head, to allow for extreme perspectives and angles without any hassle.



### Pictured Simplicity

Mono images work best when they are simple and allow the viewer to focus on the subject

*Pictured*

**Emotional impact**

B&W images can convey strong emotions and create a sense of drama or mood that may not be apparent in colour shots



## Think in black and white

Train your eye to identify strong subjects with tonal distribution

Whereas photographic genres like street photography benefit from the absence of colour, which eliminates distracting elements in the background, minimalistic scenes like landscapes are more challenging to capture. This is because scenes in black-and-white work well when contrasting boundaries within the scene's elements are present.

In colour photography, this means the colour contrast, but in monochrome, those elements can only be distinguished based on their luminosity levels. If this is not taken into account, monochrome tones merge, making it difficult to draw clear visual lines. Although it may seem simple to step back from focusing on shaping the scene based on coloured elements,

our eyes are not accustomed to focusing solely on contrast. To train your vision, study portfolios of renowned black and white photographers. This will help you develop a better understanding of scenes that work well in monochrome schemes.

When out shooting, a simple yet effective way to ensure that contrast is present is to close one eye and squint



**MIX IT UP**

Combine contrary elements, such as foliage and stones framed in front of clouds or water. To enhance their textural qualities, using a long-exposure technique to capture the scene is best as it highlights soft characteristics to the maximum.

**Pictured elements**

The road provides a lighter tone, which draws the viewer in and along the frame.



## Balance your monochrome scenes

When composing, think in layers to give your frame a dynamic look

As there are no colours to add impact, composition strategy can make or break a black-and-white image. As we work with a reduction in tones, simple composition techniques are most effective to draw the viewer in. Analyse the scene, identify a strong focal point and look out for leading lines you can integrate into the composition. Don't forget that the distribution of elements due to their colour isn't effective in black and white, so seek lines of differentiating luminosity only. If the scene you are capturing is shaped by similar mono tones, you can separate them by changing your perspective and adding some mid-ground. Here, additional foreground elements can help the distribution of the frame while also adding interest.

## Add depth to the frame

Reveal the shapes and textures of the subject to add monochrome interest

Monochromatic tones underline the subject's form and shape. On a clear day around midday, the sun creates high-contrast scenes, revealing texture and shapes from the subject. Here, simple and graphic shapes gain importance and get transformed into leading lines, which direct the viewer into and through the frame.

To go a step further, make use of the defined shadows the harsh midday sun creates on your subject. Those can become an interesting and more abstract subject themselves.

When capturing the shadows, it's best to have the sun directly behind your subject so that you can add the shadows in the foreground and add interest to your composition. A bright, sunny day also reveals

the textures of objects, adding dimension and depth to your frame. To create a visual interplay between image elements, look for scenes with contrasting textures. Here, you can introduce a secondary dimension and visual counterpoint, creating a real sense of interest.



with your viewing eye. This simplifies the scene into what is light and what is dark, revealing the contrast.

Once you have found a suitable subject, keep an eye on the light. This is a key element that affects luminosity and defines the scene's elements by adding or minimising contrast. To understand the power of how light can transform your subject, start to photograph the same scene at different times of the day. You will notice that the subject appears significantly different and may even lose its impact under specific lighting and weather conditions.

# Gain tonal control

Dive into the black-and-white colour theory to get the best possible images in-camera

Whether you are using a DSLR or mirrorless camera, both offer a variety of Picture, Creative Styles or Picture Control options. An option in many cameras is the Black and White setting, which allows you to see a monochrome translation of the scene rather than having to visualise it. This helps you to decide whether the scene is suitable and rearrange the frame accordingly.

Here, the biggest concern is losing the colour image due to this style setting. Ending with a monochrome frame isn't ideal and is a big limitation when the client's expectations change. What often gets forgotten is that when shooting B&W

in RAW format, the camera records the frame's colour information. This not only gives you the freedom to decide whether it will end up as a monochrome image but also opens doors in post-processing, as fine-tuning through various colour channels requires colour information. Activating the B&W style in-camera will therefore help you visualise, analyse and optimise the subject.

When using your camera manufacturer's RAW conversation software, the image will appear in black and white, along with any other in-camera adjustments you have made. When opening the RAW file in other editing software, such as Photoshop,

**ADD PHYSICAL FILTERS**

These filters add depth and drama to your black-and-white shots but aren't available in-camera. **Polariser:** adds contrast and creates a more punchy, high-contrast B&W image while cutting out unwanted reflections on non-metallic surfaces. **Graduated ND filter:** This half-clear, half-dark filter reduces the contrast between sky and foreground elements to achieve a balanced exposure in one frame.



the software won't recognise the Picture Style information. This means that the photograph appears in colour and requires manual conversion to monochrome.

However, when you set your focus on black-and-white photography, in-camera settings and adjustments are best to use to achieve maximum precision in detail. To manually convert the shot later takes just one click.

*Pictured*  
**Small details**  
With the absence of colour, small elements like raindrops can be visually enhanced

## Use in-camera filters

Enhance contrast and drama to cut the time spent in post-processing

Black-and-white photography requires more fine-tuning than colour images. Even when photographers predominantly used film, manual editing happened in the dark room. These days, editing programs such as Photoshop or Affinity make this possible. However, enhancing elements like the sky or luminosity distribution can take time.

It is often overlooked that cameras feature genius settings that let you fine-tune settings directly in the camera. Colour filters are integrated into most models, which are key to maximising the effect of monochrome

images. When shooting B&W analogue, these come in physical form and are used in front of the lens of monochrome cameras.

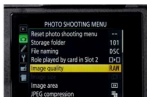
In black-and-white photography, five colour filters are commonly used: red, orange, yellow, green and blue. Each colour filter lightens the respective colour but darkens the colours found opposite it in the colour wheel. This way, different shades of grey are created that ensure image elements are clearly separated in their luminosity. They also enhance the overall contrast to make mono images pop. Some cameras feature colour filters within



the Detail settings of the B&W style, but if not, go to the Picture Profile settings. Select any PP and set the Colour Mode to Black & White. Click on Colour Depth and R, G, B, C, M and Y settings are available. Here, you can combine colours or simply adjust their intensity.

## Set up your camera

Create and tune mono images in-camera without losing colour information



**1 Shoot in RAW** Select RAW as the file format so that the camera is still recording the scene's colour data. As a RAW file type, choose Uncompressed to ensure high quality and avoid data compression.

**2 Switch to Live View** When working with tripods or an optical viewfinder, enabling the live view on your screen can help you compose your image. This way, you will be able to oversee the preview in monochrome.

**3 Select mono** In the camera shooting menu, the monochrome feature's name differs from the camera brand. Watch out for Picture, Creative Style or Picture Control to enable a B&W preview.

**4 Adjust parameters** Every scene requires different adjustments in contrast and sharpness to highlight specific features like textures or material. It is advisable to start fine-tuning these options in-camera.

## The Monochrome Circle

Discover how different coloured filters affect the grey shades in a monochrome image

### RED FILTER

- Lightens reds
- Strongly darkens blues

**Use for:** Landscape/outdoor to maximise contrast in skies and appearance of haze and fog as well as for increasing tonality differences between flowers and foliage.

**Creative purposes,** as its striking effect is sometimes also used as an alternative to true infrared photography

**Avoid in:** Portrait photography, due to its extreme effect, especially on skin tones

### YELLOW FILTER

- Lightens yellows
- Slightly darkens blues

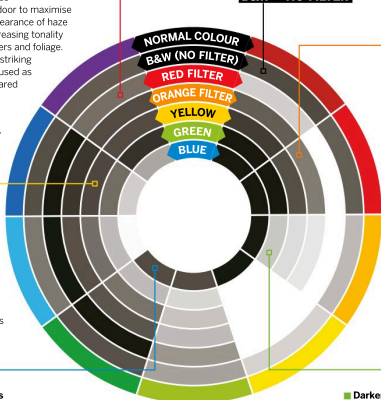
**Use for:** Landscape/outdoor frames to add contrast in skies while separating shades of green and increasing contrast in foliage. Portrait photography to create pleasing skin tones

### BLUE FILTER

- Lightens blues
- Darkens most colours

**Use for:** Landscape/outdoor frames to increase the appearance of haze and to make black-and-white photographs, as it reduces contrast across the image

### B&W – NO FILTER



### ORANGE FILTER

- Lightens oranges
- Darkens blues

**Use for:** All genres, great all-rounder. Landscape/outdoor frames to add contrast in the skies.

Portrait photography to soften blemishes for a healthy skin look. Architecture shots to add depth and increase contrast between materials

**Avoid in:** Landscape/outdoor frames when you want to enhance fog and haze visibility

### GREEN FILTER

- Lightens greens
- Darkens yellows and oranges

**Use for:** Landscape/outdoor frames to make foliage and vegetation more vivid

**Avoid in:** Portrait photography, as it mutes skin tones and lips

# Fine-tune mono shots

Learn how to handle grey shades to maximise visual effects in post-processing software

When uploading your black-and-white shots to your preferred image editing software program, there are some essential steps to bear in mind. First and foremost, don't change the colour profile from RGB to Greyscale. Doing so will discard the image's colour information and leave you with monochromatic tones only. This is a significant limitation when it comes to editing, as the colour information is crucial to control luminosity and heavily influences the visual outcome of black-and-white photographs.

Instead, make use of the Black & White Adjustment Layer, which allows you to control the colour's grey shades via luminosity individually. In general, working with Adjustment Layers only is the way to go. This has the benefit of maximum control over the editing process, as you can always go back to the specific layer to reset or readjust settings.

These days, the possibilities for editing are limitless, but to give you an overview of some simple but clever techniques, we have rounded up the most effective ones...

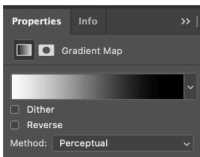


*Pictured*  
**Clear subject**

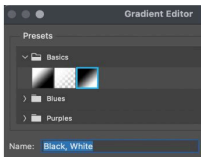
The subject should be the main focus of the image and stand out from the background

## Learn advanced conversions

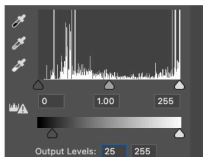
Use Photoshop's Gradient Map to create high-contrast mono conversions



**1 Create Gradient Map** Click on the half-white and half-black circle found at the bottom of the Layers panel. Now select the Gradient Map. Then a window will appear in the Properties panel.



**2 Open dialog box** Simply click on the gradient shown and the Gradient Editor opens. Under Presets, you will find a Basics folder. Open it and select the third option shown named Black, White.



**3 Add Level Adjustment Layer** To reduce the contrast, set the black output level to around 25. To enhance the contrast, set the white point to 10, mid-tones/brightness to 1, and the black point around 200.

## Apply toning effect

Add a special touch to your greyscale frames

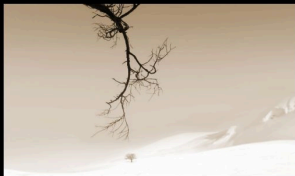
### HIGH KEY

Add a Curve Adjustment Layer. Now raise the curve via the anchors to lighten the grey tones in your image. Keep an eye out so that you don't lose any details in the highlights.



### SEPIA

First, add a Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer. Now set the Hue value to around 30, while dragging the Saturation slider to around a value of 25. Tick the Colorize box.



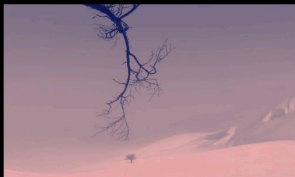
### CYANOTYPE

Add a Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer. Set the Hue value around 220 and Saturation to 35. Tick the Colorize box. Open the Curve Adjustment Layer and add contrast via an S-curve.



### SPLIT-TONE

Use Split Tone panel or Gradient Map Adjustment Layer. Set shadows to one colour and highlights to another. Complementary colour combinations such as red and blue work best.



## The top four

When fine-tuning B&W images, use these simple yet powerful techniques

### CONTROL LUMINOSITY

Use the colour information to visually set elements apart in mono. Add a Black & White Adjustment Layer and a window opens showing colour tones from Red to Magenta.

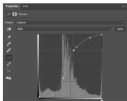
This adjustment works similarly to the in-camera colour filters but with access to specific sliders, you have maximum control over the luminosity levels.



### S-CURVE

To enhance or decrease the contrast of your black-and-white shots, add a Curve Adjustment layer. Here, most frames benefit from a classic

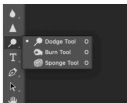
curve. Click on the anchor points and adjust these into an S-shape. However, it is worth experimenting with settings as each frame is different.



### DODGE AND BURN

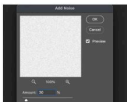
To fine-tune specific image elements in contrast and luminosity, use Dodge and Burn tools. With these, you can target the tonality of

subjects (Dodge) or add contrast (Burn) by painting in the frame. Don't forget to specify the tonality range to either work on shadows, mid-tones or highlights.



### TEXTURE OVERLAY

Adding some fine-grain noise or a pattern overlay is a clever technique to add a more classical analogue touch to your monochrome shots. Texture filters are available or alternatively, raise the texture slider in your RAW Editing Converter. Here, bear in mind that the latter can not be fine-tuned after the setting has been applied.



## TECHNIQUES



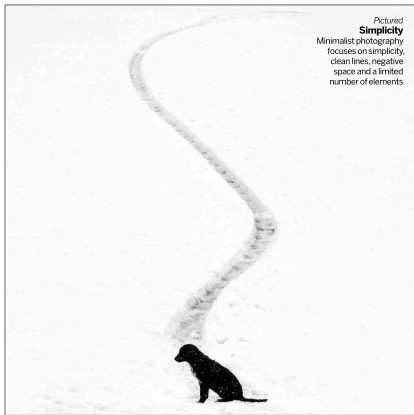
*Pictured*  
**Focus on composition**  
Composition is vital, so consider the placement of elements to create a balanced image

*Pictured*  
**Timelessness**  
B&W images have a timeless quality that gives them a more lasting feel than colour images



*Pictured*  
**Drama**  
By involving dominant dark grey tones, you can create a strong and impactful photograph





*Pictured*  
**Simplicity**  
 Minimalist photography focuses on simplicity, clean lines, negative space and a limited number of elements

## Pro advice

**Mostafa Nodeh** gives insight and advice on monochromatic photography

### Hey Mostafa, what fascinates you about black-and-white photography?

When we remove the colour, we are compelled to explore the relationship between different image elements, which makes us discover different ways to show the subject. By doing so, we can deconstruct what the viewer expects, making it possible to define the form of expressing our subject through stronger elements of the scene.

Psychologically, different shades of grey and deep contrasts between black and white are captivating and create a connection that draws our attention to the subject. For this reason, many photographers use black

and white to give importance to different connections in the photo and to evoke and strengthen emotions and atmosphere.

### What is it that draws you to create conceptual work?

Unlike other forms of photography, such as surrealism, fine art and abstract, conceptual art photography is a style that relies on specific ideas to convey its message. This genre of photography uses all methods to communicate its intended message. The general product may resemble other forms of photography, but the underlying idea is what defines conceptual art photography.

“A great B&W photo is one that portrays the true beauty of the subject. By not relying on colour, you can appreciate it in all its simplicity, splendour and majesty”

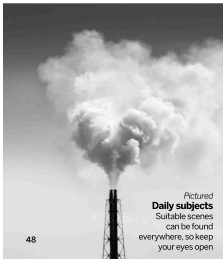


**Pictured  
Calm tones**  
Muted colours  
create a sense of  
calm and relaxation  
in the photograph

### What are the main challenges to master?

Focusing on a subject solely is not as easy as it sounds. It requires an eye for detail and time. For example, instead of taking several photos of different subjects, first try to spend a whole day or even longer photographing one subject only. Choose a tree and explore the subject. Shoot it from a wide angle, get close with a macro lens, shoot its leaves, and shoot it with a long lens.

Also, make use of different angles of the camera, and get creative in discovering compositions; the outcomes might surprise you and can be spectacular! Sometimes, all you have to do is move your camera slightly, whereas, on the other hand, some scenes benefit from a dramatic change of view.



**Pictured  
Daily subjects**  
Suitable scenes  
can be found  
everywhere, so keep  
your eyes open

### What makes a great black-and-white image stand out for you?

In my opinion, a great monochrome photo is one that honestly portrays the true beauty of the subject. It's the same when it comes to paintings. If you remove the colours, you should be able to see the subject's beauty. The same principle applies to photographs. By not relying on colour, you can truly appreciate the simplicity, splendour and majesty of the subject.

### Do you have any tips for photographers who are new to the mono field?

My advice is to never delete your photos, especially when you are in the early stages of photography. When you've spent some time improving the art of black-and-white photography, you can go back and analyse your older work. This will show you how far you've come as a photographer and give you a better idea of where you stand. You may also find that a photo you previously thought was useless or lacking in interest just needs a touch of professional editing to turn it around.

### What is next for you and your work?

This month, I have a solo exhibition in a gallery in Toronto, Canada, under the management of Firouze Aghadashlou. I would like to thank Firouze Aziz for inviting me to Canada. After that, I will continue to spend my free time travelling and enjoying time in nature. I enjoy being outside and focusing on a goal and

## Mostafa Nodeh



Mostafa Nodeh is a self-taught artist and photographer living in Gilan, Iran. He is known for his minimalistic black-and-white landscape

photographs, which are deeply rooted in themes, ideas and symbolism inspired by concept photography. What stands out in Mostafa's work is his preference for simplicity and an avoidance of any distracting factors that prevent him from conveying a clear message.

Mostafa's photography art invites viewers to take a break from the fast pace of modern life and has been featured in various publications, attracting a large international audience.

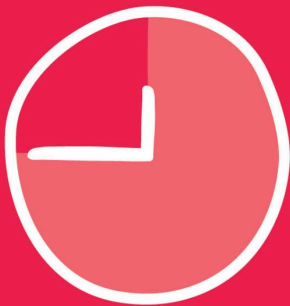
@nodehphoto

[www.linktr.ee/mostafanodeh](http://www.linktr.ee/mostafanodeh)

that is my photographic ambition.

This is my way to relax and escape from the real world. Landscapes in nature have always fascinated me because they are always changing. I can go back to a place and it will always be different from when I saw it last due to the time of day, year or weather conditions. I will continue to be a spectator in the great theatre of nature.





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# INTERLACING

Capture the movement of birds in flight using a technique that combines the best of videography and stills photography for stunning creative images

**Words and images by:** Raghuvamsh Chavali

**Difficulty level:** Advanced

**Time taken:** 3 hours



Video is the rapidly developing genre of the moment – moving images seem to have taken over the content creation world and all of the major social media platforms have shifted their focus away from stills photography and towards video. However, there are some dramatic aspects of a scene that a still image can capture far more concisely. Luckily, there are techniques that can bridge the gap between video and photography, making the most of both creative outlets.

The technique of interlacing frames isn't just about taking stunning photos of birds in flight; it's about mastering a skill that opens doors to a whole new realm of photographic expression. By stitching together multiple frames into a single, seamless composition, photographers can capture the fluidity, grace, and intricate patterns of avian movement in a single image, like never before. This technique offers a unique perspective on the natural world, allowing photographers to document the beauty and diversity of bird flight in a way that static images simply cannot match, but that also might be lost in a video clip.

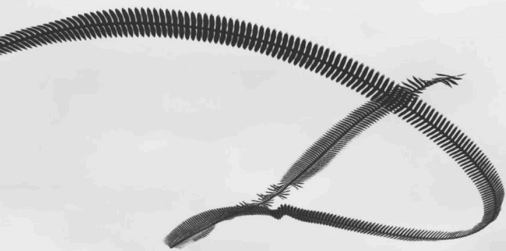


# FRAMES

## What you'll need

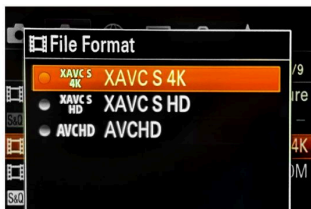
- Camera with 4K video mode
- Sturdy tripod
- Pan/tilt head
- Adobe Photoshop (or similar)

*Pictured*  
**Flight of fantasy**  
The technique of interlacing frames allows us to document bird flight in a way that a simple static image could not





**1 Frame Rates/Duration** Choose higher frame rates, such as 100fps, for fast and complex manoeuvres of birds in flight – a smaller fps number might miss key moments. Opt for slower rates, such as 50fps, when capturing regular flight patterns to ensure smoother playback.



**2 Resolution** Use the highest resolution supported by your camera, such as 4K, to capture fine details of the birds' movements and features. This will result in greater pixel density in each frame, allowing larger reproductions and greater cropping freedom in post-production.



**3 Manual Focus** Use manual focus to precisely control focus on the subject, ensuring clarity in each frame. I used the Sony A7III's MF Assist feature, which zooms in when adjusting the focusing ring, providing a clearer view for precise focusing on the birds' movements.



**4 Capture the scene** Set the frame composition before initiating recording to capture the desired scene effectively. Arrange the landscape or environment so that it leaves space for the subject to move through it, ensuring that the birds are best placed for interest.



**5 Capture the subject** Wait for a bird to appear in the sky and press the record video button to capture each movement as it passes the camera. Capture shorter video clips as you might shoot a burst of still images, as this will make finding the right frames easier later.



**6 Review images** Play your clips to see how the birds move through the scene. Select a clip with a capture of multiple movements to give you a greater choice of 'shapes'. Next, we will align and blend each frame using image processing software, such as Adobe Photoshop.

## The setup



### PAN/TILT HEAD

A versatile video head allows for quick and easy recomposition of your scene

### SONY A7 III

Any camera with 4K video recording can work for this technique. I use the A7 III for its advanced video options

### STURDY TRIPOD

To ensure your subject sequence aligns with the background, camera support is essential

## Raghuvamsh's creative tips

### 1 Develop personal projects

Dedicate time to personal projects that fuel your creativity and passion. These projects will allow you to explore ideas without being constrained by client expectations.

programs or volunteering. This contributes to social good but also enriches your professional experience and network.

### 2 Step outside your comfort zone

Challenge yourself to explore new genres, techniques or locations that push your boundaries. Embracing discomfort fosters growth and innovation in your photography.

### 4 Develop your style

Experiment with different techniques and editing styles to develop a unique visual signature that sets your work apart. Sometimes, the only way is by trial and error.

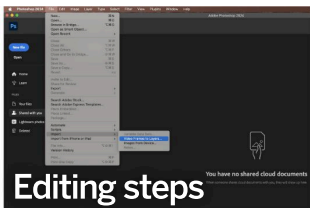
### 3 Give back to the community

Use your skills and resources to give back to your community through pro bono work, mentorship

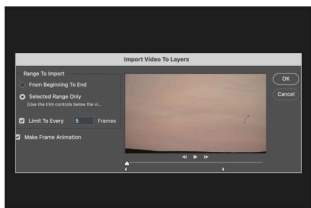
### 5 Continuous learning

Stay up-to-date with the latest trends, technologies and techniques in photography through workshops, courses and online resources. Try new software techniques too and revisit your older images.

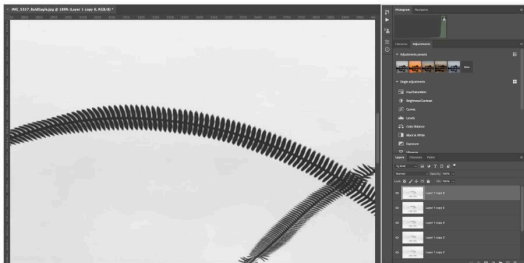




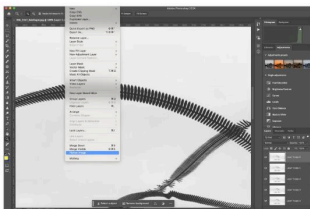
**1 Convert video** We need to make each frame of the captured video an editable layer in Photoshop (or similar program) so we can separate each of the bird's movements. Go to File > Import > Video Frames to Layers to access each frame individually.



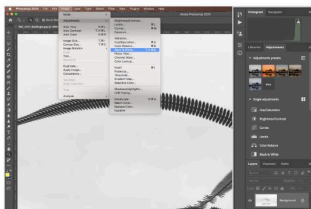
**2 Choose Import Options** Check the Selected Range Only and Make Frame Animation options in the Import Video To Layers dialogue. Click the Limit to Every box and select five frames as a good starting point. Any less than this may result in the frames overlapping.



**3 Select your frames** Go through the process of selective framing to eliminate any shaky or out-of-focus frames. If the quality drops from frame to frame, this could disrupt the flow of the movement sequence.



**4 Flatten your layers** With all of the best layers selected, we need to flatten these down. Select all layers, change mode to Darken and Flatten the Image (Layer > Flatten Image). This will lock in the position of the bird from each video frame.



**5 Convert to mono** Ensure the final image is clear, crisp, and beautifully showcases the intricate details and grace of the bird's flight path. Next, go to Adjustments > Black & White and convert the image to monochrome to focus more on detail than colour.

*Pictured*  
**Early bird**

A capture of a single bird in flight doesn't really do justice to the complex movement involved and the image is rather still and flat

INTERLACING FRAMES



**BEFORE**

*Pictured*  
**In full flight**

By using the interlacing technique to convert video footage into a series of still images, the full spectacle of a bird in flight is revealed

**AFTER**



# Shoot reflections

Create puddles at home to capture artistic layers of objects with more control

A captivating photograph needs to have depth, layers and visual appeal but it should also stand out by presenting an interesting subject or by using different photographic approaches to showcase creative techniques. Here, using reflections can offer an opportunity to show a different aspect of everyday scenes. Reflections can be found everywhere, both indoors and outdoors, through windows, mirrors or water, such as the surface of a lake, river or the sea. Even small and inconspicuous puddles on the streets around your home have the potential to create a unique view.

Water is a versatile surface to work with; it is flexible and adds depth, creating distortions and sometimes double exposure effects without the need to work extended shutter

speed settings. In this respect, puddles are great to work with because they are often surrounded by scenes that differ from the usual landscape and beach subjects, while their surface isn't affected by a current.

However, relying on the weather conditions to create puddles exactly where you want them can be frustrating. So, in this tutorial, we will show you how to easily create an indoor puddle at home. This comes with benefits, as outdoor water surfaces cannot be controlled, wind may cause ripples on the surface or the sun can burn out image elements. Working with a puddle indoors allows you to be more experimental. Here, we will show you how to incorporate different layers of interest and how to achieve an appealing interplay between structure, shape and colour.

#### Inset

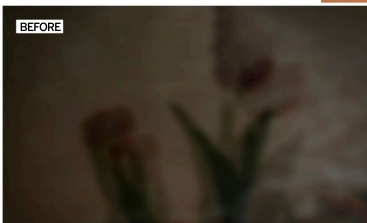
##### Blurred element

Without taking the technical approaches into account, the subject doesn't stand out and lacks sharpness, resulting in an undefined frame

#### Main

##### Arty reflections

By activating supporting camera features and setting an accurate focus, the reflection stands out more and has been transformed in its shape and colour



**1 Create a puddle** Use a glass container that is large enough to provide a good field of view. Fill it with water and lay it on a coloured fabric – darker colours usually work better to enhance reflections. Bear in mind that scratches within the container are likely to be visible but they can add interest.



**2 Choose a subject** Generally speaking, any subject is suitable for this project, so move the water container around the house to see what sort of reflections you can catch. Often, subjects with distinctive forms and details look best as the water surface breaks them up, creating artistic layers and patterns.



**3 Find your perspective** Now analyse different points of view in the same way you would with an outdoor puddle – here, you have the benefit that you can move it around to achieve the maximum effect of the reflection. Now try zooming into or out of the scene to explore all the visual possibilities.





**4 Shoot in RAW** Capturing clear reflections isn't easy, so it's best not to rely on your camera's auto modes. However, some support modes can be beneficial. If shooting handheld, activate the Image Stabilisation to level out any movement. Shoot in RAW format so you have more freedom to crop in post-processing.



**5 Adjust settings** To create an interplay of sharp and soft reflections, a wide depth of field is needed. Choose  $f/8$  and an enhanced shutter speed of  $1/200$  to keep it sharp and adapt the ISO value. Under- or overexposing the scene might help the aesthetics. Go to the White Balance menu to add colour via presets.



**6 Ensure sharpness** Reflections tend not to provide as much contrast as usual scenes, so you can't rely on your camera's autofocus. Focus manually on the darkest areas of the subject to make it stand out. If you are struggling to get a clear focus, mount the camera on a tripod to boost your control.



# Enjoy cleaner high ISO shooting

## Meet the editing pro



James Abbott is a professional photographer and photography journalist specialising in shooting and editing techniques. His first book was recently released and covers professional image editing skills in both Adobe Photoshop and Affinity Photo.

@jamesaphoto jamesaphoto.co.uk

Apply noise stacking in Photoshop to reduce noise in handheld shots



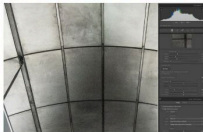
In the editing world, there's often more than one way to achieve the desired result and, for reducing noise in high ISO images, one approach that works well is noise stacking. This is where you shoot three or more exposures at high ISO handheld, in a burst and then blend them together in Photoshop, taking advantage of the irregularity of noise to achieve a cleaner image.

## What you'll be using

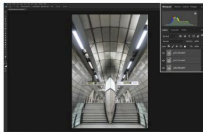
- Lightroom RAW processing
- Export as Photoshop Layers
- Auto-Align Layers
- Smart Objects
- Stack Mode



**1 Process RAW files** In Lightroom, process your three (or more) RAW files using the controls in the Basic Tab and other areas depending on what needs to be done. At this stage, don't worry about Noise Reduction because we'll cover that in the next step along with the syncing settings.



**2 Adjust Color Noise Reduction** By default, Lightroom applies Color Noise Reduction at 25, which is often much higher than necessary. Reduce Color Noise Reduction to 15 – in the majority of situations, this will be sufficient. Leave Luminance Noise Reduction at zero and sync all settings to all your shots.



**3 Export as Layers** With all the noise-stacking exposures selected after syncing the settings, right-click on the thumbnails and go to Edit In > Open as Layers in Photoshop. When the photos open as Layers in Photoshop, select all Layers in the Layers panel and go to Edit > Auto-Align Layers.



**4 Crop and convert** After aligning the images to account for any movement between shots, you may need to crop the empty image edges out with the Crop Tool set to Original Ratio. Next, right-click on the selected Layers and go to Convert to Smart Object, which will group them into one Layer.



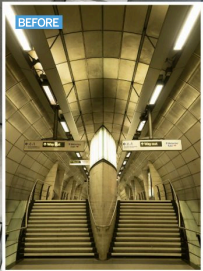
**5 Set the Stack Mode** Go to Layer > Smart Objects > Stack Mode > Median to change the Stack Mode of the Layers within the Smart Object you created. This will blend the images, with the irregularity of high ISO noise meaning it will be reduced. Right-click on the Smart Object and Select Flatten Image.

## KEY TIP A USEFUL SOLUTION

This technique is limited to inanimate objects because any movement in the image will result in some ghosting of the moving element. But noise stacking is ideal when you don't have a tripod and are shooting in low ambient lighting.

**Inset  
A noisy start**  
To ensure a fast enough shutter speed to support handheld, this image was taken at ISO 6400, so it has some noticeable colour and luminance noise.

**Main  
A clean finish**  
After the three exposures were blended together, the noise in the image has been greatly reduced. The result is that it now looks like it was taken at a lower ISO setting.



BEFORE

AFTER

← ♿ ♫  
Use the accessibility  
and safety signs for CTS

↑ **Way out**

↑ Waterloo  
East →

← **Way out** → Waterloo  
East

← ♿ ♫  
Use the accessibility and safety  
signage for CTS

↑ **Way out**

↑ Waterloo  
East →



# Mimic a shallow depth of field

Use Lightroom's new Lens Blur tool to apply AI-powered bokeh to your images

There are plenty of reasons why you may not have been able to capture the desired shallow depth-of-field when shooting, but with the new and improved AI-powered tools in Lightroom, there is some

light at the end of the tunnel. The recently added Lens Blur tool is an early access feature that allows you to defocus backgrounds and, although it isn't yet perfect, it can produce impressive results.

## What you'll be using

- Basic adjustment
- Lens Blur
- Blur Amount
- Bokeh
- Focus/Blur refinements



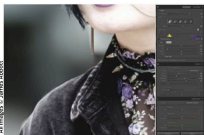
**1 Process the image** Using the Basic controls, such as the Tone Curve, Lens Corrections and Crop Tool, process your image so you have the best starting point possible. Doing your usual processing first makes the application of Lens Blur easier because you can then see how it affects the final image.



**2 Apply Lens Blur** Scroll down to the Lens Blur tab and click on the Apply checkbox to apply the effect. Either accept the automatic subject selection or use the Subject focus button or the Point/Area Focus Tool to select the subject. Select the Bokeh type and adjust the Blur Amount from the default of 50.



**3 Check the image** Zoom into the image and scroll around the subject edges, looking for blur in areas that should be sharp. If you find any, click on the Focus button, set up the Brush controls and paint over the area. Auto Mask sometimes works well but, if not, switch it off and paint with more care.



**4 Paint in Blur** When looking for areas of blur you may, conversely, find patches of sharpness in blurry areas. If so, click on the Blur button and paint over the affected areas once the Brush has been set up. Once again, Auto Mask may cause blend problems so you may find it's better to switch it off.



**5 Finishing touches** Once you've added the desired amount of Lens Blur, you can make any further adjustments as required. For this image, a Radial Gradient was used to create a targeted vignette to further isolate the subject from the background. Once you are happy, Export your image to print or share.

## KEY TIP

### TAKE CONTROL WITH FOCAL RANGE

The Focal Range shows a visual representation of the depth of sharpness and you can adjust the guide to change the depth of focus. When trying this control, zoom in on the image so you can be sure that the focal point is sharp.

#### Inset Minimal bokeh

This street portrait was taken at f/2 with a Fujifilm X100V camera, but as a result of subject distance, the background has only defocused slightly.

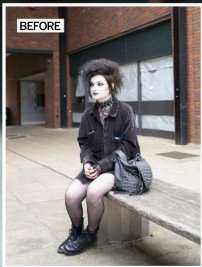
#### Main An imperfect improvement

Lens Blur has done a great job of defocusing the background while maintaining a sharp subject. Some of the woman's hair has blended superbly, but not all of it.

AFTER




BEFORE





# Achieve an infrared look

Get the effect without specialised camera kit

 Infrared light is present all around us but is invisible to the human eye. Capturing infrared light images requires specialised camera equipment that only records the red wavelengths. This creates

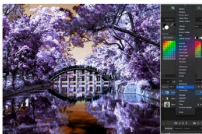
distinctive-looking images – green or yellow objects are transformed into red tones, while blue and cyan subjects appear darker. If you don't have an infrared camera, here's how to simulate this style in Affinity Photo 2.0.

## What you'll be using

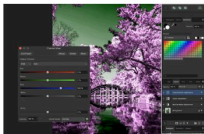
- Black and White Adjustment Layer
- Invert Adjustment Layer
- Channel Mixer Adjustment Layer
- HSL Adjustment Layer
- Selective Colour Layer



**1 Work on brightness** To achieve the infrared look, start by adjusting the colour brightness. Add a Black and White Adjustment Layer on top of the Background Layer and change the Blend mode from Normal to Luminosity. Decrease the Blue and Cyan sliders while boosting the Green and Yellow sliders.



**2 Invert to negative** Now, let's begin the infrared colour processing that would be done in-camera with a converted model. Click the Adjustment Layer icon and choose the Invert option to convert the image into a negative. An additional Layer will be added, so here, change the Blend mode to Colour.



**3 Adjust colour channels** Add a Channel Mixer Adjustment Layer. In the Channel Mixer window, select RGB and choose Red as the Output Channel. Drag the Red slider to zero and the Blue slider to 100 per cent. Select Blue as the Output Channel and set the Red slider to 100 per cent and the Blue slider to zero.



**4 Underline blue tones** To fine-tune the colour of blue elements add an HSL Adjustment Layer, select the Cyan colour, then increase the Saturation value and decrease the Luminosity slider. To adjust tones, select the dots in the blue section of the colour wheel and experiment with Saturation and Luminosity.



**5 Work out red hues** To achieve the maximum infrared look, the final step is to intensify the red tones. To gain control, add a Selective Colour Layer on top of the HSL Adjustment Layer. In the window, select Reds as the Colour and increase the Magenta slider, while also decreasing the Cyan slider.

## KEY TIP

### ADD SOME GLOW

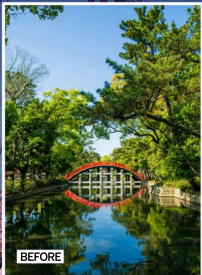
Due to its effect on film, infrared photos are often associated with a glow. Adding this touch to your images can enhance their effect. Add a Live Filter Layer and click on Blur to find the Diffuse Glow option. Experiment with settings while choosing a smaller Radius of about 8px.

#### Inset

**Classic landscape**  
The subject was captured using a traditional photographic approach that has reproduced the colours faithfully, but the image is missing something special

#### Main

**Infrared character**  
By recreating the infrared treatment in editing software, the landscape scene has been transformed with a distinctive look and a captivating view of reality



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**What's inside:** Get the most from your camera kit by applying our secret steps to improving image quality. Next, learn to shoot incredible street scenes, capture panoramas and Nikon's Canon EOS R3 vs Nikon Z 9 head-to-head test.



### Issue 275

**What's inside:** With exclusive advice from the winners of the Photographer of The Year competition, discover the essential techniques you need to know right now. We also round up the best kit of 2023 in our annual Gear Of The Year Awards feature.



### Issue 274

**What's inside:** Shoot golden-hour colours in our dazzling sunset landscape Creative Project, capture wildlife shots in challenging conditions and, in our main feature, you can dive into our complete 10-page guide to landscape photography composition.



### Issue 273

**What's inside:** Portrait photography needn't be complex. Find out how to capture top-tier images with ease. Plus, we have a special feature on becoming a photo-editing maestro, a cityscape shooting tutorial and a full review of the Lumix G9 II.



### Issue 272

**What's inside:** Filters still have a place in the landscape photographer's kitbag, so we cover the ones you should own and how to use them. In our regular Shoot Like a Pro feature, we shadow a photographer on a magazine editorial shoot for key tips.



### Issue 271

**What's inside:** Autumn is a popular time for landscape photography. Our cover feature explores how best to capture this colourful season. If you love black and white photography, don't miss our tutorial on shooting and editing film-noir scenes.



### Issue 270

**What's inside:** Demystify video in our behind-the-scenes guide to working as a videographer. Get the best quality from your RAW files, both at the shooting and processing stages. Shoot amazing architectural images with our pro advice.



### Issue 269

**What's inside:** Read Ross Hoddinott's top tips for mesmerising macro photography. We also review the awesome Nikon Z 8 full-frame mirrorless camera to see whether it takes the crown as the best model in its class and price bracket.



### Issue 268

**What's inside:** Astro photos can inspire like no other genre. Find out how to shoot nightscapes like a pro. Dive into our career advice pages to learn how to take your first steps towards your dream photo job. Plus, shoot and edit summer landscapes.



### Issue 267

**What's inside:** As part of our ongoing Masterclasses series, seasoned pro photographer, Jeremy Flint explains how to master exposure. We also round up the best photo editing apps today and explain how to get incredible shots from your smartphone.



### Issue 266

**What's inside:** Shoot great images at the most popular times of day – sunrise and sunset. Go behind the scenes with a luxury car photographer. Learn how to capture impossible macro photos and shoot emotive weddings like an expert.



### Issue 265

**What's inside:** Who doesn't love shooting at the coast? Overcome the challenges of capturing stunning seaside masterpieces. And, if you think you know your camera, think again! Read our hidden camera features guide and get the most from your gear.




### Issue 264

**What's inside:** Master the art of fine black and white photography with expert Kav Dacifar. In our career guide, learn how to widen the audience for your photos and discover the latest features you will need when buying your next telephoto lens.

# HOW TO MARKET YOURSELF

Learn how to tell the world about your photography and use marketing to reach the right clients for you

Words and images: Leonora Brebner

 Marketing yourself as a photographer can be a pain point for many of us. All the usual questions pop up – how do you do marketing? How do you book your next client? How do you make yourself stand out from the crowd? Although understanding these questions and finding the answers can seem both difficult and daunting, finding the right information that hasn't been buried in the depths of a treasure trove of experience can be equally hard.

I always say that having a photography business is more about business than it is about photography. Of course, having the talent and skill is crucial for success but you need to think with a business head to get your

work in front of the right clients and must think outside the box to grow your career to where you want it to be. I could sit you down and discuss all the cringe-worthy ways I have tried to get new clients and also all the challenges I have had, but that would be a whole different feature. Instead, I have listed the five key points that I wish I had been told earlier on in my career. Had I known these, it would have saved me a lot of trouble, sleepless nights and second-guessing myself.

Over the next few pages, we'll examine some approaches that work and highlight some of the common missed opportunities that you can start taking advantage of to grow your photography business.

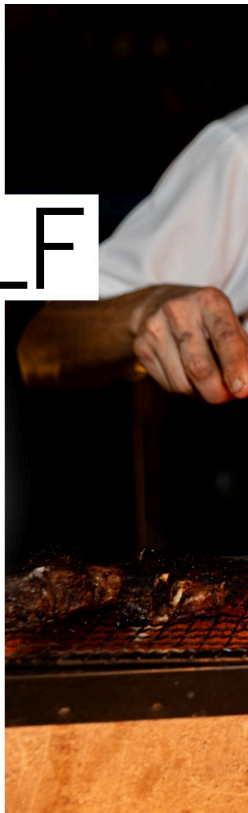
## Catch up on our career features



ISSUE 277: SWITCHING CAMERA SYSTEMS

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## Leonora Brebner



With qualifications in culinary art, hospitality management and digital marketing, Leonora is an expert at crafting delectable-looking dishes and

photographing them in a way that communicates her brand identity. She works both in the UK and internationally.

[lrbcreative.com](http://lrbcreative.com)

[youtube.com/@leonorabrebner](https://youtube.com/@leonorabrebner)

*Pictured*

### **Sure-fire winner**

With the correct alignment of brand style, client needs and visibility, a photographer can find their dailies filling up quickly

## Portfolio

Your portfolio is, hands down, the most important part of your business. This is what you want to give as a first impression, what you want the client to know and how you want to be portrayed. Creating a photography portfolio in the shape of a website is a crucial way to reel in potential clients and immerse them in your work. Of course, it is key to use your best photos and list the services you offer. If you have reviews it is vital to include them but if you are just starting out, do not worry as it won't detract from getting booked. However, an often-overlooked aspect is using your SEO (search engine optimisation) to attract organic leads. Work on identifying keywords within your photography niche and include them on your website. This will help your ideal client find you simply by searching what they are looking for on Google. Nailing all of these things will do one thing – encourage the client to book you.

Below

### Making a splash

Creating a portfolio in the form of a website is a crucial way to display your work and reel in potential clients

Below right

### Rosy future

A self-confident approach to reaching out to clients and showing them your portfolio can set you ahead of the competition



## The truth about networking

Network to secure paid jobs is the one piece of advice everyone seems to give. But why? I am still trying to figure that one out. When I first started my photography business, I spent a lot of time networking, trying to crack the secret code to landing clients simply by sparking up a relationship with someone. However, I stopped as quickly as I started. I agree that networking can be beneficial in some situations but times have changed. Focus on your craft and do your own research on clients and businesses you want to work with. This approach will be far more beneficial than trying to cultivate relationships that, most likely, won't land you a paid job. In fact, networking encourages favours over paid work. Personally, I can't remember the last time I went to a networking event but my business has never suffered because of it.

Referrals are another story, though. These are based not solely on your photographs themselves but on how well you have worked with a client, so learn to harbour those types of relationships instead.

## Sales and Marketing 101

Although it may be daunting and uncomfortable at first, putting yourself out there as a photographer is crucial to getting noticed. By this, I mean taking a chance and reaching out to clients, sending over your portfolio and proposing how you can make a change to their life or business through beautiful photography. This is where the magic happens! Such a self-confident approach will set you ahead of your competition and encourage clients to work with you based on your eagerness to work with them. Essentially, it shows passion and determination. Over time, this will become your biggest asset.





### Starting afresh in a new location

Of course, being a freelance photographer comes with its perks: you can work from anywhere, travel for a living and still make money. Although moving to a new location can seem daunting in terms of feeling as if 'you're starting again', look at it as a way to begin anew. Moving to Dubai, I researched differences in the market and had a rethink on how I presented my photography. In the end, what really worked for me was simply having a physical copy of my tailored portfolio professionally printed in an A4 booklet format and handing it out to the restaurants and hotels in the Emirates that I wanted to work with.

Although this 'cold call' approach may seem hard and somewhat embarrassing, it was a successful one and that is how I booked my first shoots out here. Another way that I started getting my name known was by refining my pitch and appeal on Upwork, a website for freelancers. That meant that I could hit the ground running: If, like me, you can work with clients remotely, focus your attention on this, as it will allow for multiple sources of income without having to rely on commissions from where you currently live. It certainly makes it easier to travel around.

### Pricing yourself

I would easily say this is one of the biggest frustrations in the photography industry. Pricing varies massively depending on genre, experience and the nature of the project itself. Although I can't necessarily tell you what to charge, I can't stress enough that you need to take everything into account when pricing yourself. I am a food photographer and, apart from the all-important factors



of time and creativity, I include the pricing of backdrops, props, the ingredients needed, cleaning and packing up my studio, dishes that need to be washed – the list goes on.

Remember, you're charging for the entire photography process. If you're struggling to price yourself or know that it's about time to raise your prices, I recommend you make a note of the entire process from the initial idea to the concept to delivery, then include everything involved in a cost breakdown when proposing a price to the client. Honestly, this will educate them on all the behind-the-scenes elements of their shoot. If this process is followed properly, clients won't second-guess you, trust me.

Top

#### Hot take

Moving to a new location can be daunting but see it as a way to reassess your strategy and begin anew

Above

#### Toast to success

Consider all aspects of the process from concept to delivery when proposing a price

# WHY THE FUJIFILM GFX100 II IS SO MUCH MORE THAN FULL FRAME

Discover the next generation of medium-format cameras with the Fujifilm GFX100 II and professional automotive photographer Rupert Cobb

In the competitive world of automotive photography, innovation is key. But you never want your camera to get in the way of creativity, as professional photographer (and also musician, record producer, mix engineer... the list goes on) Rupert Cobb knows all too well. He often shoots from the sidelines of world-famous motor racing events, yet he captures his most unique and detailed car images at his drive-in infinity cove at Gun Hill Studios, near Lewes, UK. Rupert's genius lies in blending inspiration with cutting-edge camera technology. Here, we'll explore how he's used the ground-breaking Fujifilm GFX100 II to redefine his workflow and image quality.

Traditional medium-format cameras are slow and bulky, but the Fujifilm GFX100 II is fast and agile. Where medium format was once resigned to fine art photography and still-life, the GFX100 II can meet the demands of professional photographers and videographers of all genres. Whereas once upon a time, there was a clear choice between resolution and speed, the GFX100 II offers

both for creatives such as Rupert. "The main use of the GFX is in the studio, using tungsten-bounce lighting in an infinity cove. Recently, we were privileged to shoot the 2011 Le Mans Ferrari 458 and Valentino Rossi's 2011 Ducati motorbike. The medium format gave us so much more to play with," he says.

## Outstanding resolution, fast processing

The 102MP CMOS II HS (high-speed) sensor is 70 per cent larger than 35mm full-frame and offers exquisite image quality for cropping or downsizing. "You always want to work higher than the output and downsample, then it all comes down smoothly." Its improved pixel structure also extends the sensitivity to ISO 80 for the lowest noise performance ever.

The X-Processor 5 high-speed processing has double the signal readout of the previous GFX100, bringing many improvements, including subject-detection AF – with AI deep learning – and heat management. "The GFX100 II behaves better for long exposures



with heat control. We use it mainly on a tripod, with long exposures up to 30 seconds when I'm light painting the cars," he explains.

## The benefit of medium format

Rupert first came to Fujifilm gear after 30 years with another brand, when he tried the X-T2 as an on-the-road automotive camera. "Fujifilm gear is pretty robust, but I wasn't expecting the X-T2 to be as good as it was," he says. Later, he aimed to recreate an iconic record cover, struggling to achieve the desired result with his 35mm camera.

Fujifilm's medium format provided the wider angle of view he was after. "I hired a GFX100S first and suddenly it worked. When you make the sensor bigger, all of the perspective changes. And even when you shoot a wide angle, the back of the car doesn't seem to shrink away as much."

## Fujifilm's colour science & heritage

Rupert was impressed by Fujifilm's colour science. "When I changed gear, people would look over my shoulder and say, 'What is it you're doing there because there's something different.'" Given how important accuracy is in high-end commercial work, one of Rupert's favourite elements of the GFX100 II is how it handles and records tones.

"If I need Ferrari red, I get Ferrari red. The camera's colour space is gorgeous, with such rich tonal reproduction and definition," he says. The GFX100 II supports the HEIF format, giving pros 10-bit image files with over a billion colours and better image quality than jpeg files, despite being 30 per cent smaller.





filming with the Fujinon GF 110mm F5.6 TS Macro and its manual control soon.

### Putting you in control

Rupert prefers a fully manual approach to shooting and the GFX100 II offers exceptionally intuitive handling for him to do this. "One of the key things I love

about the GFX range and the Fujifilm ethos is that the cameras are engaging and you feel like part of the process rather than a spectator," he says. The two-inch display on top of the camera shows Rupert's settings at a glance, while the 9.44m dot HD electronic viewfinder and three-way tilt screen allow for flexible composition approaches.

Then there are the connectivity options; Ethernet, full-size HDMI and USB-C, for seamless integration and tethering. "I can confidently have the RAW files from the GFX100 II on a massive 4K screen and ask clients, 'Is that what you're after?'," he says.

### The ultimate professional camera

Rupert loves collaborations and connecting with his clients. "A shoot with the GFX100 II which was initially the Ferrari 458 became a far bigger narrative after a few calls, adding Valentino Rossi's Ducati from the same era and a modern Langen motorcycle that was customised in homage to the era of these historic machines."

Rupert describes his approach as both timeless and inventive, much like the Fujifilm GFX100 II camera that he uses. It isn't just a high-speed, high-resolution camera; it's a modern machine for creativity and the ultimate medium-format camera for professional photographers and videographers.



Like all Fujifilm cameras, the GFX100 II offers instant Film Simulations – including a brand new Reala Ace option – drawing on the company's renowned films. Rupert can use these to give his customers images on the same day. "I love being able to shoot on Velvia within the camera and grading a jpeg while having the RAW ungraded. I could be shooting at Goodwood and provide pictures that day that look like they're in the era of the event, then go away and work on the RAW files for the press release."

### Adapts to every adventure

The GFX100 II is an exceptionally versatile camera, with up to eight stops of image stabilisation for handheld work, up to 8fps burst shooting for news and events and a design that's much smaller than most full-frame DSLRs. Rupert turns off IBIS on a tripod in the studio but uses a low-speed continuous burst for candid shots of people. "We promised ourselves when we got it that we'd use it as our studio camera, but I've already taken it out a few times," he admits.

### A truly hybrid powerhouse

As a hybrid shooter, Rupert has enjoyed the truly hybrid nature of the GFX100 II. There's 4:2:2 10-bit video recording at 4K/60p, 8K/30p, FHD/120p. Combine the camera

with ATOMOS HDMI devices, and you can record 12-bit Apple ProRes RAW at up to 8K and 29.97fps. "The fact that it's got ProRes is rare. I also love 4:2:2. It cuts perfectly with my Panasonic VariCams and I can use the Panasonic LUT on the Fujifilm so that my footage matches."

Whether you're a stills photographer starting out in video or a seasoned storyteller, the GFX100 II's video format modes are versatile too. Cine recording formats include Premista, 35mm and anamorphic 35mm with a mount adapter, while two 35mm full-frame anamorphic recording modes give you in-camera de-squeeze monitoring options.

### The extensive range of GFX lenses

The GFX100 II is served by a huge selection of weather-resistant GFX lenses for creatives to cover every angle in their own way. "One of the things that Fujifilm has done that's unique is to stay away from 35mm," says Rupert. "I've got an all-rounder in the GF 45-100mm lens and two tilt-shift lenses." He's looking forward to

### FUJIFILM GFX100 II SPECS



- Megapixels: 102MP
- Lens mount: Fujifilm G
- Autofocus: Intelligent Hybrid AF
- Stabilisation: Up to 8-stop, 5-axis
- Video: 8K30p, 4K60p, FHD120p
- Screen: 3.2-inch Tilt-Type Touch LCD, 2.36m-dot
- EVF: 9.44m-dot, 0.64-inch OLED
- Battery: approx. 540 frames (CIPA rating)

The Fujifilm GFX100 II is available now, priced £6,999 (body only). For more information visit [fujifilm-x.com](http://fujifilm-x.com)



# Career advice

This month **Claire Gillo** explains how to push yourself out of your comfort zone and create new challenges

## Feeling flat

I photograph very repetitive subjects in a basic studio setup and I'm not feeling fulfilled by the work. I've worked really hard to get to where I am and to build my client base so I don't want to throw it all away but it's not as much fun as I imagined. Do other photographers feel like this? **Anonymous**

There is an assumption that being a photographer is a glamorous lifestyle full of exciting photo shoots, but that simply isn't the case.

Much of being a professional photographer is doing work that isn't exciting but pays the bills. If that's not the path you want to take, only you can change it.

My advice would be not to completely cut off your bread-and-butter money but to try and work time into your schedule to shoot other projects that might not be financially rewarding but that give you the creative challenge you appear to be craving. That seems like a good and sensible way to steer the ship while not having to make a drastic change.



Studio work can sometimes get a little repetitive so it won't be for everyone

Also, try to work out what you enjoy and don't enjoy about your current work. While we can all

get bored doing the same thing every day, there is also comfort in routine and knowing our craft.

## Public speaking



I've agreed to do a talk for a camera club but now I'm having regrets. Public speaking doesn't come naturally to me and, having never done a talk before, I'm unsure about what I should be covering and what could make an interesting talk. Help! **Alison Howard**

Firstly, take pride that you have been asked to do a talk as there was a reason the club chose you. I can empathise with your anxiety about speaking in public – I'm not a natural in front of a crowd, however, try to override the doubts creeping in and find confidence in yourself.

When it comes to curating a talk, my advice is to make it honest. You are the number one expert in your photography so if you start from a place of honesty, you can't go wrong!

Public speaking can be daunting but also rewarding to share your work as a photographer at the same time

Remember, you don't need to know everything about other people or other's photography, only yourself. Don't compare yourself to others and don't try to imitate what they do. Be yourself and you'll be fine. Also, take deep breaths at the start of the talk to get your nerves under control. People will understand if you are nervous, it's only normal.

Another option is to ask the camera club to do a Q&A-style stage interview, where someone else sits on the stage with you and asks you questions. Get a list of the questions beforehand so you can prepare your answers, which might make the whole prospect feel less daunting. However you do it, best of luck!

## Video gimbal

I want to expand my business by offering video services as well as stills, so I'm looking for a gimbal that doesn't break the bank! Do you have any suggestions? **Mark Burrell**

What a great way to expand your business! A gimbal will enable you to create smooth video footage with professional results, so let's start at the top. The Zhiyun Crane 4 retails around £599 and what makes this model so good is its smooth action and features such as a built-in light and Bluetooth shutter control plus touch screen and app control. A better budget option might be the Zhiyun Weebill 3S. This model retails at £319 and includes a built-in mic and LED light plus Bluetooth shutter control and is suitable for both DSLR and mirrorless users. Finally, if you are a mirrorless shooter, the DJI Ronin-SC is your best budget option at £266 on Amazon. This gimbal comes with an 11-hour rechargeable battery life. What you go for depends on your setup.



If you want to branch into video work, investing in a gimbal like the Zhiyun Crane 4 is a must





'Five-year-old party'  
by Liv Mann-Tremblay



'Covid rules everywhere' by Sheri D'Rosario

## How do I push myself creatively?

Photographer **Maria Reaney** explains why she started a personal lockdown photography project and how it shows the benefits of working with others



### Hi Maria, could you explain your project **Little Faces Big Feelings**?

**Little Faces Big Feelings** is a poignant photographic collection documenting and highlighting the profound impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people worldwide.

For the collection, I decided to bring together 16 female artists from internationally diverse backgrounds to shed light on the social and emotional challenges faced by children during the lockdowns and afterwards.

This historic and pivotal time was hugely significant to humanity and it compelled me to reach out to others. My passion for history and psychology inspired me to gather images together that both celebrated the highs and documented the lows of this incarceration in our own homes. The images in the show capture the experiences and stories of young people navigating a disrupted world. From the closure of schools and public spaces to the upheaval of their daily routines, these photographs reflect a spectrum of emotions, including boredom, longing, contemplation, playfulness, curiosity and frustration.

In an unprecedented time, this collection is now a powerful historical document,

highlighting the emotional toll of the pandemic. The final images chosen from the project are currently being exhibited at the Library of Birmingham until 29th June.

### Do you enjoy working with other photographers and is this something you'd want to do again in the future?

I relished every moment of it. To bring together a collection of stories from around the world brought me solidarity, love and hope for the future. I gained so much from the experience and it will

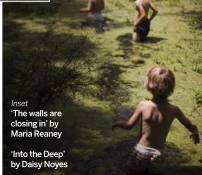
be something I want to do again. I feel that bringing similar stories together, with different perspectives, allows us to gain even greater insights into our human consciousness.

### What logistical aspects do you need to be aware of when curating an exhibition such as **Little Faces Big Feelings**?

After deciding on a theme and selecting work that reflects your ethos, the next big logistical step is to locate a space to exhibit the work. Try and find a gallery space which reflects your intentions for the exhibition. For example, I'm showcasing the **Little Faces Big Feelings** collection in the Spotlight area at the Library of Birmingham as it's an amazing community gallery. Bear in mind accessibility issues as well as travel and parking for the venue.

### What advice would you give to others wanting to pursue a similar project?

My advice to anyone pursuing a similar project is just to go for it. Never be afraid of what you don't know... simply go and find out! As for advice, when it comes to curating the show, bear in mind your audience and what you want to communicate to them. Consider how they feel in the space and what they will take away from it. Use the space wisely and position the art so you get the maximum visual impact. Finally, think about your marketing. Create an online presence as well as sending out a press release to individuals and businesses within your chosen industry.



Inset  
'The walls are closing in'  
by Maria Reaney

'Into the Deep'  
by Daisy Noyes

Maria's show is on at the Library of Birmingham until the 29th June. To find out more, follow @littlefacesbigfeelings and @maria\_reaney on Instagram

### Natural depth

"My still-life images are inspired by naturally lit Old Masters and modern vivid still-life paintings," says Ronni. "I am constantly learning how to be creative with natural light, it feels like an organically creative tool in my photography that complements my style." By using natural light, Ronni has created depth within the frame. "I feel that I can be more creative and use it to my benefit by adding richness or using harsh light to bring out natural shadows for a bright and vibrant image," she says.

### Old Master palette

When setting the scene, the use of colours was key for Ronni to complement the Old Master-inspired photo she wanted to create. As she explains, the creative process began not with a camera but with a notebook and pen. "Thinking about what I want to achieve and what kind of props, backdrops or mood I need to execute my idea, helps me set up," Ronni says. "To achieve the colour palette of an Old Master, I used warm colours like brown, ochre, amber and muddy gold, and muted the whites to cream or grey. The tones are highlighted by the natural light, giving the image the feel of layers of colour. It was also important to use props that match the age of the image."

**Hero subject**

"I wanted the plums to be the hero of the image – it's the reign of the Victoria plum – and also integrated some vibrant sunflowers," says Ronni. Her goal was to evoke an appreciation of the seasonality of the plums and sunflowers – and of autumn in general. "I used the vintage blue and white bowl to show a seemingly full bowl of plums cascading onto the board and table and giving a voluptuous juicy eyecatcher that the viewer is first drawn towards," she says. "The sunflowers were placed behind the board so I could bring the plums to the forefront. The leaves from the plum tree have been placed on the right side of the frame to balance the green in the sunflower leaves. I feel that this brings the image together and the darker backdrops help the subjects pop out."

# WHY SHOTS WORK

**Name:** The Reign of the Victoria Plum

**Date:** August 2023

**Kit:**

- Nikon Z5
- Nikkor Z 14-50mm 1/4-6.3
- Focal length: 50mm



"I am inspired by natural simple produce, the intricate detail on food that we take for granted, the miracle of seasonal food and the nostalgia food gives me."

**Different textures**

By integrating various materials, Ronni has added several layers to the composition. "I used an old, worn, dark wood, mottled backdrop, which was softened by having some highlights picked out by the natural light. Rather than being dark, this gives it subtle details, providing texture and depth to the image," she says. "The use of the ochre velvet cloth not only adds texture but also gives a luxury and sumptuousness to the frame." To make the textures and subjects visually tangible, perspective was crucial. "First, I captured the image from a side view at eye level," Ronni says, "but I felt it would work better from a higher angle to give the impression that it was placed on a sideboard or a wall."

**Ronni Allen**

Ronni Allen is a commercial food photographer and stylist, based in Oxfordshire, UK. Her images help food and drink manufacturers, chefs and restaurants highlight the passion, the stories and the emotions behind their products and allow them to maximise their products' visibility on social media platforms.

Ronni is also a food still-life photographer, selling her art in the form of prints and cards. She has an interest in independent businesses, seasonal food and sustainable food production, which influences both of her genres. She was a finalist in the 2022 Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year contest and has also been shortlisted in 2024.

[ronniallenphotography.com](http://ronniallenphotography.com)  
 @ronniallenphotography

# UNCOVERING PHOTO HISTORY

**Anna Sparham** and **Petra Felgen** on their revealing new book, *100 Photographs from the Collections of the National Trust*

Words by: Kim Bunermann

Photography is now a widespread medium but in the digital world, the importance of preserving historical images for future generations has been overlooked. Although creating images hasn't always been as easy as it is today, the invention of photography allowed people to record moments of time for eternity, offering us glimpses of life in the past.

The task of preserving this history today falls to charities such as the National Trust. Established in 1895, the Trust now looks after 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline and more than 500 historic properties across England, Wales and Northern Ireland; including their history, art and photographic collections.

To bring these historical photographs to a wider audience, the National Trust has partnered with CEWE, Europe's market leader in photographic books. With decades of experience in bringing memories to life, CEWE shares the National Trust's values of conservation of resources and environmental protection. We talked to Anna Sparham of the National Trust and Petra Felgen from CEWE to find out about the book and the partnership...



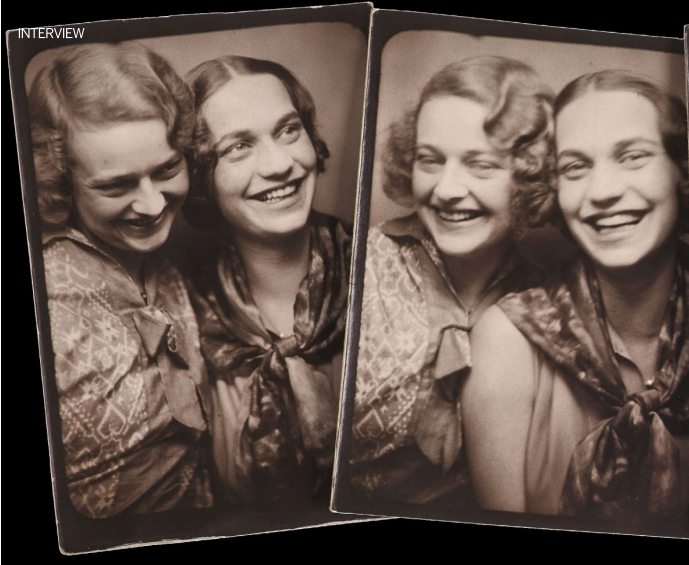
*Pictured*  
**Hardman**  
**Electric Welder**  
The Electric Welder of 1936 by Edward Chamber Hardman, from 'The Hardmans' House, Liverpool

© National Trust Images/Edward Chamber Hardman Collection/Captures. © National Trust Images/Robert Thirtle



Pictured  
**William Ewart  
Gladstone portrait**  
William Ewart Gladstone  
in 1890 by Eveleen  
Myers, from Wallington,  
Northumberland

© National Trust Images/Robert Thurst (caption)



**Hi Anna, what was the inspiration behind curating this collection of 100 images from the National Trust?**

Anna: Interestingly, the National Trust has only had a national curator of photography post since 2019 and I'm the second person to take that on. The photography collection has been somewhat sidelined in terms of expert curation, so the inspiration behind creating the book was to raise the profile of the collection by showcasing some compelling images and the research that has been done in the past, as well as new research I've done.

The book is an introduction to the half a million photos we hold. Even though it only includes 100 images, it's all about raising awareness and allowing people to associate the National Trust with photography, which is not commonly known. Furthermore, the book aims to increase the potential for engagement both internally and externally. The Trust is a vast organisation, with many properties and staff members, so it's important to raise

awareness internally. This will facilitate future activities, such as publishing or displaying collections for in-person engagement.

**So Petra, how did the partnership between CEWE and the National Trust come together for this project?**

Petra: When I moved to the UK, I began visiting National Trust estates and was thrilled by what I saw. As Anna mentioned, I also had no idea about the extensive photography collection that the National Trust possessed. Whenever I visited the estates, I saw that all the visitors were taking photos – and, as the managing director of CEWE, I thought to myself, 'That is our target group!'

I read about the Trust's various sustainability programmes, which align with our values at CEWE. We organised volunteering activities for our employees, focusing on sustainability, and discussed with colleagues from the National Trust. During this time, we met Anna, who introduced us to the photography aspect of

the National Trust. As we exchanged thoughts and ideas for about a year, our excitement grew. Our values and ideas were in sync and we came up with an amazing partnership.

**What kind of historical or cultural significance do these photographs hold within the context of the National Trust's mission and heritage conservation efforts?**

Anna: Generally speaking, the collections of the National Trust are unique in that they are embedded in the properties themselves, where they are also associated with the people who originally owned them. That's unlike many museums, where collections are sourced from various places and for various reasons. This allows the National Trust to share stories and narratives in greater depth, inspiring people through the knowledge to potentially help bring the places and history to life.

The mission is to conserve heritage but there are lots of challenges in preserving photographs. Many of these photographs



**Pictured  
Photobooth portraits**  
Early photobooth portraits  
of Elizabeth Kerr-Smiley  
and her companion, from  
Scotney Castle in Kent

© National Trust Images/Matthew McInnes (copyright)

are over 100 years old and so are fragile and vulnerable and, therefore, require special measures to preserve them. The book and essays shed light on the context of these conservation measures and why some of the photographs may not always be on display.

**What criteria did you use to select the photographs included in this book?**

*Anna:* We wanted to represent a time frame from the 1840s to the present day and provide a geographical spread of the Trust's properties across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Each image needed to stand alone and be eye-catching with a real visual appeal. My natural kind of approach to exhibitions in the past and books like this is to ensure that there is real diversity. This was key to making the book as representative of the collection as possible, which included looking at the makers and why they created these photos. I wanted to get this across in the text as well as make sure that there were elements of surprise.

## 100 Photographs from the Collections of the National Trust

This book showcases 100 photographs selected from the many thousands held in collections at National Trust properties, spanning the history of photography from the 1840s to the present day. It includes works by well-known photographers, such as

Julia Margaret Cameron, Edward Chambré Hardman, Dorothy Wilding, Angus McBean and Jane Bown, as well as remarkable images captured by lesser-known practitioners. The book is available via [nationaltrust.org.uk/shop](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/shop), shops at National Trust locations and other online and High Street retailers, priced £10/€12.





© National Portrait Gallery/Adam Beard (capture)

**Pictured**  
**Lord Compton**  
**family portrait**

Lord Compton's family  
photographed at the  
studio of Camille Silvy in  
1860, from an album at  
Belton House, Lincolnshire



We had to keep in mind that our target audience wasn't a specialist one and so we aimed to make the collection accessible to a wider audience. We believe that everyone has a connection to photography in some way or another – photography is a universal interest and our content will resonate with people who are passionate about photography as well as those who simply snap pictures with their phones to record memories.

**Petra:** When I saw the book, I found it fascinating to discover that the feelings and stories people tell through their photos have remained fairly constant through the centuries right until today. It's always something close to people's hearts, such as family moments, travels and other special moments. People want to share their own stories, and the book captures that essence perfectly.

#### Were there any specific challenges that you had to overcome during the curation process?

**Anna:** Yes, there were some physical challenges... as the collection is not as well researched and documented as others, some descriptions in the catalogue database were particularly thin. I needed to physically travel to the properties to research and gather more information. The expertise lies in joining the dots; finding images that carry meaningful stories and have something to say.

In some cases, I didn't know the stories behind the images until I'd done the digging. From a curatorial perspective, it can sometimes be challenging to edit and select photographs that balance an interesting story with visually striking aspects, while also ensuring that you have a good geographical and genre coverage. There are many images that I could have chosen from a certain period, particularly the late 19th or early 20th century. However, with limited space available and the timeframe in mind, I needed to also find strong photos from later periods.

#### How does CEWE's involvement help the National Trust to preserve and promote our cultural heritage?

**Anna:** It emphasises the importance of being relatable. By creating a strong connection between the book and the collection, and linking various common factors, just as Petra explained in the beginning. It's not only about bringing collections and places to life but also about recognising that the topics photography covers haven't changed much over time. It is about making these relatable points and promoting history in a relevant way.

Many of the photographs in the book come from albums. I had the privilege of browsing through many of these and discovering photos associated with common interests in this day and age. There is a direct connection between those carefully crafted photo albums,

cherished and looked after for many years, and the photo books that CEWE produces.

**Petra:** We feel a close connection, not only to the products we produce but also to the entire topic of photography. The industry struggled with the digital transformation, which brought about a significant shift and unfortunately, some companies, such as Kodak, which had previously been synonymous with photography, did not survive. However, the development of mobile phones and social media platforms has created a new love for photography. People no longer feel the need to print their photos because they can easily share them on WhatsApp, Instagram and other platforms.

Although people admit to having forgotten most of the photos they have taken, they still

value the importance of capturing memories. It's just that they'd never think of sitting down with their loved ones and flipping through their mobile phones to relive past events. We believe that by keeping the interest in photography alive and showcasing collections, like the one of the National Trust, we can share memories across generations. It's far more emotional to have something tangible to share and old photo albums are the perfect example.

The Victorian albums are delicate and you can see how many people have already looked at them over the years. It's something valuable that can be shared with generations to come.

**Anna:** Definitely. The idea is to not only encourage people to take photos and make connections but also to print them and preserve those memories in a tangible form.



Pictured  
**Anna Atkins**  
cyanotype  
Hedysarum specimens  
cyanotype by Anna  
Atkins from 1854. From  
Lacock Abbey and Fox  
Talbot Museum, Wiltshire

## INTERVIEW

Many of us complain about having countless pictures but never taking the time to print them. This collaboration also may inspire and motivate people to print photos and hold on to those precious memories in a physical way.

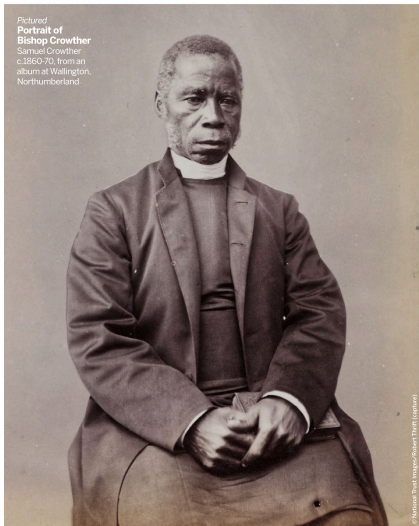
### **Are there any standout or memorable photographs in 100 Photos that you would like to highlight?**

**Anna:** I think it's discovering the little things in images that make them stick for me. For example, I came across an album called 'Photographs of Great Victorians and Trevelyan's of Wallington'. While I was going through this album, I found a portrait of Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a formerly enslaved African who became the first Bishop of West Africa. I was struck by the strength of his portrait. The Hardman collection is also close to my heart, and I've done a lot of work with them up in Liverpool.

I also discovered a series of four early photo booth portraits, which were loose in a box at Scotney Castle, near Tunbridge Wells. I don't think they'd been catalogued at that time. They are from the late 1920s to early 1930s and are instantly familiar. We've all had our pictures taken in a photo booth and I love the immediacy of it.

Also, I wanted to bring a good balance of women photographers into the book, including a portrait of William Ewart Gladstone by Eveleen Myers, which is crisp and striking. Anna Atkins was one of the earliest female photographers in the world and her impressive cyanotype work is still used as inspiration for alternative, sustainable processes today.

**Petra:** One of my favourite photographs is 'Lord Compton's family portrait'. I love how typical it is – the kids aren't interested in having their photo taken and they're doing their own thing. One looks miserable, the



*Pictured*  
**Portrait of  
Bishop Crowther**  
Samuel Crowther  
c.1860-70, from an  
album at Wallington,  
Northumberland

*Pictured*  
**Spirit Photography**  
'Spirit photography' by  
sisters Gertrude and  
Marion Ketton, from  
Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk



other looks ahead. It's interesting to see how family portraits have changed over the years, while also remaining the same. An image that surprised me is titled 'The Supernatural Sisters', which shows that, even back in Victorian times, they were experimenting with photography. It's amazing to see what the sisters were able to accomplish without the technology we have today.

### **Anna, you mentioned the importance of balancing male and female photographers. Was it difficult to find many female photographers throughout the centuries?**

**Anna:** It would have been difficult if I was determined to get a 50/50 gender balance. There were a lot of women who took up photography professionally in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many of them set up studios, creating a flurry of women photographers at that time. I couldn't include



© National Trust Images (Leah Reed, copyright)

each of them because their styles and dates might be too similar, so I had to be selective. We have around a quarter of the photographs in the book made by women, but there are many more beyond them. However, I didn't want to include them just because they were women. Certainly, contemporary female photographers cover fields and areas that are of real interest and connection to the National Trust. For example, Ellen Carey's experimental work. Even if women sometimes were not behind the lens, they would often be heavily involved in the creation process.

**Petra:** I find Anna's comments interesting and it's fascinating to see the parallel version of this today. You do see the stereotypes, such as men carrying big cameras and lenses.

However, when it comes to our customers who create products with a keen eye for detail, we find that the majority of them are women.

**Anna:** Yes, stereotypes are there and this

collection makes us learn so much more. I'm new to the Trust as well, so this introduction to its collection is not only for everyone but also for me – it triggered this level of extensive research I wanted to do. Women in photography have always played a significant part throughout my career. Understanding more, to recognise the stereotypes and to challenge them – there is so much to dig out.

**What's next for the partnership... do you have any plans in place to strengthen the relationship between CEWE and the National Trust throughout the year?**

**Anna:** We plan to print reproduction images for some displays at certain properties that are featured in the book. This will provide a unique opportunity to compare the photograph in the book with the original and the reproduction. As sustainability is a key factor for both of us, the book is printed on FSC-certified paper. For

## Anna Sparham



Anna Sparham has been the national curator of photography at the National Trust for the past two years. She is a trained photographer, after

completing her degree at Nottingham Trent in 2001. Anna has over 20 years of expertise in the fields of photography and heritage, spending 15 years at the Museum of London and working with historic collections. Anna also previously freelanced, working with contemporary galleries and community engagement. [nationaltrust.org.uk](http://nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Petra Felgen



Petra Felgen is the Managing Director for CEWE UK & Ireland. She spent nine years at CEWE, primarily as head of international marketing, based in the company's

headquarters in Germany. Before that, she held various brand and marketing roles for 15 years, including nine years at Saatchi & Saatchi. CEWE is Europe's leading photo printing company, with the Group providing award-winning products to retail partners in 21 different countries across Europe.

[cewe.co.uk](http://cewe.co.uk)

some of the displays, we have the opportunity to work with different paper types, including recycled paper from CEWE. Going forward, CEWE will support us in getting selected albums conserved and digitised offering new photographs, and there will be engagement opportunities too. One of them is the 'Blossom Watch', which recently started.

**Petra:** Yes, following those long, dark winter months, spring has finally arrived and seeing and capturing blossoms is a favourite thing for many people. When they see something beautiful while exploring the Trust's estates and they naturally take photos – the idea is to encourage them to print the image so that they have something tangible to admire and share. Therefore, we are accompanying that campaign with events where people can print their photos instantly at CEWE photo stations or nearby stores. This is just one of many campaigns and there are more to come...



TOP PHOTOGRAPHER WINNER: Erik E Ersson Sweden



**GuruShots** CHALLENGE

# YOUR BEST MAGAZINE SHOT

We joined up with online photography game GuruShots to print the winning images from the **Your Best Magazine Shot** challenge



GuruShots is billed as the world's leading photography game. It's an online platform that gives global exposure to people who love taking photos. GuruShots members start as Newbies and compete with other photographers to win challenges, increase their ranking on the site and eventually progress to 'Guru' status.

Challenges are voted on by Gurus and the wider GuruShots community and there's a fresh

competition brief, such as the Night Photography challenge, every day.

All the winners receive prizes from GuruShots' sponsors, including Lowepro, Kodak and Lensbaby. For more information, visit [www.gurushots.com](http://www.gurushots.com)





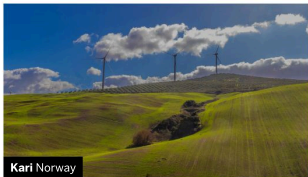
TOP PHOTO WINNER: Marian Nichitov Romania



GURU'S TOP PICK WINNER: Ernestas Balčikonis Denmark



**Sami Arous** Sweden



**Kari** Norway



**Viktor Borsós** Hungary



**Kerry Smith** United States

**Daniel Reeves** United States



**Unnamed** Germany

**Luca Sharabidze** United States

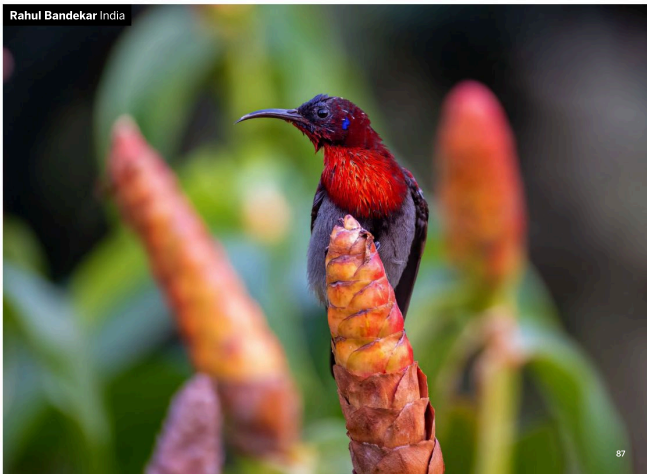


**David Feldt** Sweden



**Sophia De Silva** Australia

**Rahul Bandekar** India





Vincent Graumer France



Bryony Herrod-Taylor United Kingdom



Arta Berzina Latvia



Konrad Uznański Poland



Robert Kinnie United States



Salvijs Bilinskis Latvia



Kim Wright Australia



Saurav Dutta Germany



Mike Boettcher United States



Will United States



# SHOT OF THE MONTH



**Photographer:** Joshua Bailey

**Title:** A lone snowdrop

**Location:** Solihull, UK

**@joshbaileyphotography**

**About the shot:** "After recently moving to our new home in Solihull, near Birmingham, UK, I ventured out into the garden in search of something to photograph. After searching for some time, I noticed a small, delicate, lone snowdrop growing in the grass. This little flower was so beautiful that I couldn't resist photographing it. The water droplets on the grass glistened in the sunlight, which added detail to the image. By using an  $f/2.8$  aperture, I created a soft and blurry background, whilst keeping the detail and focus on the flower. The contrast between the white in the flower's petals, the twinkle of the water droplets and the warm green colour of the grass all created a vibrant and interesting photograph."



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Every issue, we'll be sharing the best images from our Instagram community. Tag us on **@dphotographermag**



**WIN! SAMSUNG  
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MICRO SDXC MEMORY  
CARD WITH SD ADAPTER**

Every issue, one *Digital Photographer* reader wins a Samsung 256GB PRO Plus MicroSDXC memory card with SD adapter.

Boasting up to 180MB/s and 130MB/s read/write speeds, the card is perfect for high-res stills and Ultra HD video. It is the go-to card for the modern content creator using mirrorless, smartphone, action cam and drone cameras. Find out more at [samsung.com/uk/memory-storage](http://samsung.com/uk/memory-storage)



## THE BEST OF **MACRO STUDIES**

The winners of our latest contest with Photocrowd have been revealed

**F**or our latest competition in association with Photocrowd, we challenged you to submit your best creative colour images. After working through all the entries, the winners have been selected. As a prize, the expert winners will receive a licence for Affinity Photo professional editing software. Congratulations to all of the winners – as usual, the standard of submitted images was extremely high and it was a difficult task to select the best ones.

### **1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE WINNER**

#### **Little World**

**Photographer** ruxxna

There is a lot to like about this image – the detail, colour and composition, which makes great use of negative space. Using three subjects is a well-known compositional trick, as the human brain reacts positively to elements that come in threes. The frame creates an unusual take on the macro brief. Well done!

## **WIN! Prizes from Affinity**

Enter our Golden Hues contest before 29th May for a chance to win Affinity Photo

Set out at one of the photographers' favourite times, the Golden Hour. Use the magical light to transport the atmosphere you've experienced when looking through the camera's viewfinder! Enter at [photocrowd.com/digitalphotographer](http://photocrowd.com/digitalphotographer) from 15th May for a chance to win a licence to Affinity Photo editing software (worth £49 for Mac or Windows), a toolbar for photography professionals,

Whether you're editing and retouching or creating multi-layered compositions, Affinity Photo has non-destructive editing, RAW processing, real-time edits and colour management as standard. Winners will be notified by email and can choose between Mac, Windows or iPad versions. The winners will be revealed in issue 281 of Digital Photographer, on sale from 5th July.





## 2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE

### Top-lit mushroom on a log with bokeh

**Photographer** Paul Nash

What lovely bokeh! The choice to make a feature out of the de-focused background means the subject stands out with some wonderful separation, while the spotlighting effect makes the mushroom glow. The painterly lighting style and colour palette tie it all together to form a gorgeous macro study.

## 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE

### Little Spies

**Photographer** Madison

We all like a game of hide and seek, and that theme also extends to the insect world, apparently. This is a playful image which makes perfect use of the rule of thirds, placing both subjects' eyes on the ideal intersections. The calming green background has produced a luscious colour theme, which allows the eyes to pop. Nicely spotted.





**RUNNER UP (above)**  
**Baby snails & mushrooms**

**Photographer** Dariagufo

The clean background to this image ensures that the foreground detail is highlighted and the focus is on the three subjects. We like the subtle light gradient too, demonstrating perfect exposure control. The focus is expertly done, while the depth of field is spot-on.

**RUNNER UP**  
**Watery Wasp (above left)**

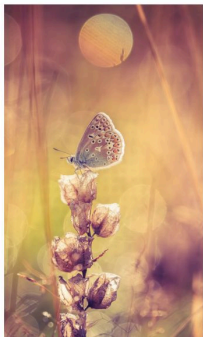
**Photographer** Tony North

There is an astonishing level of detail in this photo! The water droplets on the insect's head are like the cherry on a finely detailed cake while the colours work wonderfully together. It's a clean frame and a simple one, but it has been brilliantly executed.

**RUNNER UP**  
**Tucked Away (left)**

**Photographer** Ijnicol

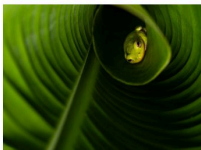
The tunnel-like effect in this image draws the viewer in and leads us directly to the subject. This choice of framing makes great use of the available environment, telling a story of the animal's habitat without this becoming a distraction. The fresh colour also demonstrates excellent white balance control.



**RUNNER UP Rising sun meadow (above)**

**Photographer** Carl Harris

The light in this shot is amazing, creating a glow that makes the most of the low sun. We're guessing that this must have been a tricky exposure to manage and the fact that the detail has been retained in all the right places is a testament to the skill of the photographer.



### 104 Fujifilm X100VI

After the unexpected success of the Fujifilm X100V, does this latest version bring some worthwhile upgrades to the table?



### 106 DxO PureRAW 4

Rod Lawton finds out whether this RAW processor can revive images from older cameras

# Kit intro

The expert and independent reviews of gear we've bagged this issue



### 96 Photo Kit Leaderboard

Check out our exciting new Photo Kit Leaderboard feature – a real-time guide to all the best cameras, lenses and other photography accessories on the market

### 104 Fujifilm X100VI

Can lighting strike twice? Gareth Bevan takes the successor to the viral sensation X100V for a test to see whether it lives up to the hype

### 108 Lenses

Every month, we take two professional optics into the field. This issue, we put the Canon RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM and the Hasselblad XCD 90V lenses to the test

### 110 Accessories

It's the little things that can enhance your photography, so we've rounded up the best photo gadgets and gifts to add to your kitbag

## Our ratings

Our team of trusted and expert reviewers score gear thoroughly to help you make better buying choices.

Don't go there  
Could be better  
Solid performer  
Excellent bit of kit  
Best on the market



## Product awards

Digital Photographer's awards are given out when a product really catches our attention. Here are our three most used accolades.



## Lab testing

Some of our product reviews also have in-depth lab data, graphs and scores. This means that the kit has been subjected to more rigorous testing. Lens tests are carried out using Imatest, and cameras are tested in our laboratory using DxO Analyzer hardware and software to check the image noise and dynamic range.

# Digital Photographer Photo Kit Leaderboard 2024

Our real-time report on the very best gear available for you right now



Welcome to the *Digital Photographer Photo Kit Leaderboard!* The digital world

moves fast and photo kit comes and goes in no time at all. The continuous march of development and progress means there can be a confusing array of potential cameras, lenses, software and accessories to choose from. Some products see yearly updates and replacements while others stick around

for longer, a testament to their quality, usefulness, value and popularity.

We review a huge variety of items, but these summaries are often time-specific to the tech generation in which the products were launched. A five-star review might be awarded for ingenuity, marking something that is ahead of its time, but several months later, the competition has caught up. Conversely, as a product's price drops over

time, its value proposition may render it eligible for a bump up in our ratings.

This Leaderboard does not replace our in-depth reviews, instead, it provides a real-time snapshot of the photography industry, helping you decide which gear is right for you, right now. The longer a piece of kit is ranked, the more points it will accrue – and that means the better it performs in our annual Gear of the Year Awards!

## KEY SPECS

What features should you expect as standard in a camera today?



### VIEWFINDER TYPE

The advent of mirrorless cameras has meant that most new cameras offer an electronic viewfinder. While some photographers still prefer an optical VF, an EVF model allows more camera settings to be displayed along with a virtual horizon.



### SCREEN RESOLUTION

Most enthusiast and pro cameras have a main LCD measuring at least 3 inches, with 3.2in being more common. Look for a minimum of 2 million dots to offer detailed playback.



### SHUTTER TYPE

A camera might quote a blistering frame rate of more than 15fps, but this might be in electronic mode. Always check for a mechanical maximum rate of at least around 7fps



### VERTICAL GRIP

Fewer pro cameras include a built-in vertical grip now, however, the likes of the Nikon Z9 and Canon EOS R3 retain them. They aren't essential for everyday shooting but check for accessory grip availability.



## Sony Alpha 9 III

The world's first full-frame global shutter camera retains its crown as our Camera of the Month

For a third month,

this full-featured

Sony has retained its

throne at the top of our leaderboard. It truly is a tech monster and so far, there have been no new cameras released to knock it off the top spot.

We've got our eyes on the other brands

to see how they react to the global

shutter headline feature, with Canon,

in particular, the one to watch. As it

stands, the A9 III is the most well-

rounded camera on the market with



specifications that cater for a whole mix of photography specialisms. Will May bring the camera that offers it some much-needed competition?

■ [Read our review in Issue 276](#)



+20 POINTS

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 24.6MP **Sensor** Full-frame EXMOR RS CMOS (35.6mmx23.8mm) **ISO range** ISO 250-25,600 (native), ISO 125-51,200 (expanded) **Frame rate** 120fps max **Storage** 1x SD UHS-II, 1x CF Express Type A **Battery** NP-FZ100 **LCD** 3.2in TFT (2,095,104 dots) **Viewfinder** 0.64in Quad VGA OLED (9,437,184 dots) 0.9" **Weight** 702g (inc battery and card) **Dimensions** 136.1 x 96.9 x 82.9mm



# BEST FULL-FRAME CAMERA

If you're after maximum quality images, its larger pixels mean that a full-frame camera is the best place to start

## 1 Leica SL3

A departure from Leica's rangefinder classics, but one of the company's best cameras

Leica is a prestige brand with a unique appeal. The company supplies a generally niche market and this is reflected in its prices. However, while it is still expensive by most people's standards, the SL3 has plenty of mainstream pro features. The camera's 60.3MP full-frame sensor is

a studio photographer's dream, the build quality is also top-notch while its autofocus features have taken a step up in speed and accuracy and. The SL3 won't be for everyone but we think it's currently the most impressive full-frame camera to enter the market.

■ [Read our review in Issue 278](#)

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 60.3MP Sensor Full-frame CMOS (36mm x 24mm) ISO range ISO 50-100,000 Frame rate max 15fps (electronic), 7fps (mechanical) Storage 1x SD UHS-II, 1x CFexpress Type B (recommended) Battery Leica BP-SCL6 LCD 3.2in 2,100,000 dots Viewfinder EVF 5,760,000 dots Weight 769g (body only) Dimensions 141.2 x 108 x 64.6mm



## 2 Nikon Z8

The Nikon D850 took the world by storm by offering an almost perfect blend of resolution and speed – and the Z 8 is Nikon's answer for the mirrorless age. With a high-resolution 45.7MP full-frame sensor and 20fps burst shooting, it matches its Z 9 sibling but has

a more affordable price. Handling is DSLR-like, which will please D850 users, while the dual card slots offer SD and XQD/CFexpress compatibility. The Z 8 is built like a tank and offers excellent value for pro photographers.

■ [Read our review in Issue 269](#)

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 45.7MP Sensor Full-frame (FX) CMOS (35.9mm x 23.9mm) ISO range ISO 64-25,600 Frame rate 20fps (RAW), 30fps (jpeg) Storage 1x SD UHS-II, 1x XQD/CFexpress Type B Battery EN-EL15c LCD 3.2in (2,100,000 dots) Viewfinder 0.5in OLED (3,690,000 dots) Weight 620g (body only) Dimensions 144 x 118.5 x 83.3mm

## 3 Canon EOS R3

Until the EOS R1 makes an appearance, the R3 remains Canon's top-of-the-line mirrorless model. Building on the technology found in the EOS 1DX III DSLR, which sits just above it,

a 24.1MP sensor, blistering 30fps electronic burst rate and futuristic Eye-Control autofocus make this a star performer.

■ [Read our review in Issue 249](#)

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 24.1MP Sensor Full-frame CMOS (36mm x 24mm) ISO range ISO 100-302,400 (native) ISO 204,800 (expanded) Frame rate 30fps (electronic) Storage 1x SD, 1x CFexpress Battery LP-E19 LCD 3.2in (4,150,000 dots) Viewfinder 0.5in (5,760,000 dots) Weight 822g (body only) Dimensions 150 x 142.6 x 87.2mm

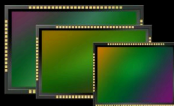


## SENSOR SIZES AND CROP FACTORS

Get to grips with the variety of sensor formats available

The range of sensor sizes can be confusing when gauging lens system versatility. As sensor size decreases, crop factor increases as less of the

frame areas is captured compared with full-frame. However, it is important to remember that the exact size and crop factor can differ between camera brands.



Type	Medium Format (Fujifilm GFX)	Full-frame	APS-H	APS-C	APS-C (Canon)	Micro 4/3
Sensor area	43.9 x 32.9mm	36 x 24mm	27.9 x 18.6mm	23.6 x 15.7mm	22.2 x 14.8mm	17.3 x 13.0mm
Crop factor	0.75x	1x	1.3x	1.5x	1.6x	2x
Comparison (50mm)	39.5mm	50mm	65mm	75mm	80mm	100mm

# BEST APS-C CAMERA

A lighter and more compact body

## 1 Fujifilm X-T5

Retro power is the order of the day with this APS-C modern classic from Fujifilm

The single-digit Fujifilm X-series cameras have settled into a niche of their own, catering not only to high-level photographers but also to video shooters. The latest version took things up a notch with the introduction of a new 40.2MP sensor, making it one of the highest-resolution APS-C models around while maintaining an electronic frame rate of 20fps. Fuji controls take some getting used to but the compact, high build quality, 7-stop stabiliser and 1/180,000 top shutter speed make this the perfect travel and documentary camera. It also has the bonus of 6K advanced video.

■ Read our review in Issue 263

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 40.2MP **Sensor** APS-C X-Trans CMOS 5-HR (23.5mm x 15.6mm) **ISO range** ISO 125-12,800 (native), ISO 64-51,200 (expanded) **Frame rate** 15fps (mechanical), 20fps (electronic) **Storage** 2x SD/SDHC/SDXC UHS-I **Battery** NP-W235 **LCD** 3in (1,840,000-dots) **Viewfinder** 0.5-inch, 3,690,000-dot OLED EVF, 100fps refresh **Weight** 476g (body only) **Dimensions** 130 x 91 x 64mm

+10  
POINTS



## 2 Canon EOS R7

With a 32.5MP sensor and rapid 30fps burst rate, the EOS R7 easily steps into the mirrorless shoes of the hugely popular EOS 7D line of DSLRs. It's a great introduction to the RF mount and offers advanced features galore, more than enough to satisfy enthusiasts and semi-pros.

■ Read our review in Issue 271



+5  
POINTS

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 32.5MP **Sensor** APS-C CMOS (22.3mm x 14.8mm) **ISO range** ISO 100-32,000 (native), ISO 51,200 (expanded) **Frame rate** 15fps (mechanical), 30fps (electronic) **Storage** 2x SD/SDHC/SDXC UHS-I **Battery** LP-E6NH **LCD** 2.95in (1,620,000-dots) **Viewfinder** 0.39in OLED EVF (2,360,000-dots) **Weight** 612g (body only) **Dimensions** 132 x 90 x 90mm

## 3 Fujifilm X100VI

The X-T5 was our first top-place APS-C camera of this Leaderboard, and this new entry has most of the same specs crammed into a pocketable body, including the 40MP sensor and 6K video. This kind of feature list in a compact makes it one of the most sought-after models. Read our expert review in this issue.

■ Read our review on page 104



+3  
POINTS

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 40.2MP **Sensor** APS-C X-Trans CMOS 5-HR (23.5mm x 15.6mm) **ISO range** ISO 125-12,800 (native), ISO 64-51,200 (expanded) **Frame rate** 11fps (mechanical), 20fps (electronic) **Storage** 1x SD UHS-I **Battery** NP-W235 **LCD** 3in 1,620,000-dot Hi-LED **Viewfinder** 3.690,000-dot EVF **Weight** 521g **Dimensions** 126 x 74 x 55.3mm

# BEST MICRO 4/3 CAMERA

## Panasonic Lumix G9II

The latest flagship for the M4/3 format has plenty of features

If you thought Micro Four Thirds was a dead market, think again. The Lumix G9 II reinvigorates the system and demonstrates Panasonic's dedication to maintaining it, despite the burgeoning L-Mount alliance. The G9 II features a 25.2MP sensor, which allows excellent telephoto images, especially when combined with the 2x crop mode of the format.

Also pushing the camera to the top of the tree is 5.8K 30p video, 60fps shooting with AF (75fps with AF locked) and

excellent ergonomics. Furthermore, coming in at less than £2,000, it offers superlative value for money, too.

■ Read our review in Issue 273

+10  
POINTS



**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 25.2MP **Sensor** Micro Four Thirds Live MOS (17.3mm x 13mm) **ISO range** 100-25,600 **Frame rate** 14fps/10fps (mechanical), 75fps/60fps (electronic) **Storage** 2x SD UHS-I **Battery** DMW-BLJ22 **LCD** 3in (1,840,000-dot) **Viewfinder** OLED (3,680,400-dot) **Weight** 658g (with battery and card) **Dimensions** 134.3 x 102.3 x 90.1mm

## ESSENTIAL VIDEO FEATURES

Consider these key features for shooting video



### RESOLUTION

While 8K is becoming more common, for most users 4K (3840x2160 pixels) is enough. Full HD (1920x1080) is fine for social media use.

### FRAME RATE

A 24/30p (fps) rate is the most common and useful for everyday videography. 120p or 240p are great for slow-motion work but check this is available at full resolution.



### CROP

On some lower-end cameras, 4K resolution is available but only in a cropped aspect, which doesn't make full use of the lens coverage. This means you will need to use a wider lens.

## BEST MEDIUM FORMAT CAMERA

## Fujifilm GFX 100 II

The latest GF-mount camera furthers Fujifilm's quest to make medium format accessible to all

Fujifilm reinvented the wheel with the introduction of its larger-than-full-frame GFX cameras. While it's still more expensive than consumer mirrorless cameras, the GFX 100 II and its siblings bring the higher resolutions associated with monster cameras like those from Hasselblad and Phase One and squash them into DSLR-like bodies. The GFX 100 II provides 8fps continuous shooting, which is astonishing for a 102MP camera, while the processor enables



+10  
POINTS

8K video. It's certainly not cheap, and although it only builds on its predecessor's work, this recent model represents the most well-rounded, medium-format camera on the market right now.

■ Read our review in Issue 277

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 102MP Sensor GFX CMOS II HS (43.8mm x 32.9mm) ISO range ISO 80-12,800 (native) 40-302,400 (expanded) Frame rate 8fps (mechanical, AF-C) Storage 1x SD UHS-II, 1x CF Express Type B Battery NP-W235 LCD 3.2in (2,360,000-dots) Viewfinder 0.64in OLED (3,440,000-dot approx) Weight 967g (body only) Dimensions 152.4 x 117.4 x 58.6mm

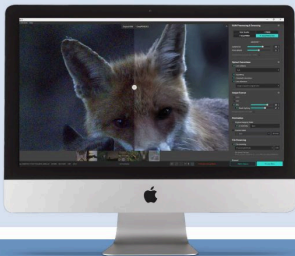
## BEST EDITING SOFTWARE

## DxO PureRAW 4

The latest update can extract incredible levels of detail

While most of the major image editing tools can now process RAW files, DXO PureRAW 4 uses a unique Linear DNG file format so that it can apply DxO's DeepPRIME noise reduction process, essential lens corrections and demosaicing from the start. It has an extensive set of features and even files from older cameras can be given a new lease of life in this powerful editing package for pro photographers. Don't miss our expert review in this issue.

■ Read our review on page 106



## BEST DSLR CAMERA

Old-school tech has life in it yet

## 1 Nikon D850

Arguably the finest DSLR ever built for enthusiasts and semi-professionals



+3  
POINTS

While Nikon's own D6 and Canon's EOS 1DX Mark III sit at the top of the DSLR tree, the D850 is far more accessible to the masses and is the better choice for enthusiasts and semi-pros. For a long time, photographers had to choose between pixels and frame rate, but despite having a 45.7MP FX-format sensor, the D850 manages to rattle off 7fps or 9fps with the optional battery grip. This is rapid in DSLR terms and the result is a camera that is simply untouchable for all-round performance. Launched in 2017, its AF system, noise performance and video features still hold their own against newer tech.

■ Read our review in Issue 193

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 45.7MP Sensor FX-format CMOS (35.9mm x 23.9mm) ISO range ISO 64-25,600 (native) 32-302,400 (expanded) Frame rate 7fps, 9fps (with MB-D18 grip) Storage 1x SD/SDHC/SDXC UHS-I, 1x xQD Battery EN-EL18c LCD 3.2in touchscreen (2,359,000-dots) Viewfinder Optical pentaprism, 100% per cent coverage Weight 1,005g (incl. battery and card) Dimensions 146 x 124 x 78.5mm

## NEW ENTRY 2 Nikon D6

While many pros still use DSLRs, firmware updates are less frequent these days. This upgraded Nikon DSLR flagship is back on the map, with increased playback and Flicker Reduction stability and it's great to see continued support for this camera.

■ Read our review in Issue 229

**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 20.8MP Sensor Full-frame CMOS (36mm x 24mm) ISO range ISO 50-302,400 Frame rate Max 14fps Storage 2x xQD/CF Express cards Battery Nikon EN-EL18c LCD 3.2in 2,359,000 dots Viewfinder EVF 5,760,000 dots Weight 1,450g (body+battery) Dimensions 160 x 163 x 92mm



## 4 3 Canon EOS 90D

Cameras such as the EOS 20D, 30D and 40D set new precedents for specification versus price. The EOS 90D was the last model in that line before Canon shifted focus to the R system, so you'll find much of the same tech and image standards but at a bargain price.

■ Read our review in Issue 219



**SPECIFICATION** Resolution 32.5MP Sensor APS-C CMOS (22.3mm x 14.8mm) ISO range ISO 100 - 25,600 (native), 100 - 51,200 (expanded) Frame rate 10fps Storage SD / SDHC / SDXC (UHS-I) Battery LP-E6NH LCD 3in (1,040,000-dots) Viewfinder Optical pentaprism, 100% coverage Weight 701g (w/ battery and card) Dimensions 140.7 x 104.8 x 76.8mm

# BEST WIDE-ANGLE LENS

For even greater frame width

## Prime lenses



### 1 Laowa 10mm f/2.8 Zero-D

Currently the widest full-frame rectilinear lens on the market. We got our hands on it at The Photography and Video Show in March and were blown away by it. **Review: TBA**

**SPECIFICATION** Price £839/\$799 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.12m Elements/groups 15/9 Mount Canon RF, Leica L, Nikon Z, Sony E



### 2 Sigma 14mm f/1.4 DG DN Art

Review: Issue 268

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,399/\$1,599 Max aperture f/1.4 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.30m Elements/groups 19/15 Mount Sony E, Leica L



### 3 Laowa Argus 28mm f/1.2 FF

Review: Issue 272

**SPECIFICATION** Price £699/\$599 Max aperture f/1.2 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 13/7 Mount Canon RF, Leica L, Nikon Z, Sony E



### 4 Viltrox AF 27mm f/1.2 Pro

Review: Issue 276

**SPECIFICATION** Price £444/\$545 Max aperture f/1.2 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 15/11 Mount Nikon Z (DX), Fujifilm X, Sony E



### 5 Fujifilm XF18mm f/1.4 R LM WR

Review: Issue 254

**SPECIFICATION** Price £849/\$999 Max aperture f/1.4 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.2m Elements/groups 15/9 Mount Fujifilm X

## Zoom lenses



### 1 Sigma 14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM | A

The 14-24mm f/2.8 is a key trinity zoom and this Sigma offers great value for money and image quality for multiple lens mounts. **Review: TBA**

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,269/\$1,299 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.26m Elements/groups 17/11 Mount Sigma SA, Canon EF, Nikon F



### 2 Canon RF 14-35mm f/4L IS USM

Review: Issue 249

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,599/\$1,299 Max aperture f/4 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.20m Elements/groups 16/12 Mount Canon RF



### 3 Sony FE 12-24mm f/2.8 G Master

Review: Issue 231

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,699/\$2,896 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 17/14 Mount Sony E



### 4 Tamron SP 15-30mm f/2.8 DI VC USD G2

Review: Issue 236

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,099/\$1,149 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.28m Elements/groups 16/13 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F



### 5 Sony FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM II

Review: Issue 271

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,299/\$2,296 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.22m Elements/groups 15/12 Mount Sony E

## IS MODES

Get steady shots with stabilisation for any occasion

Many high-end lenses feature multiple stabilisation modes. Standard (or Mode 1 as it's commonly known) is for everyday work when you are stationary and holding the camera. Tripod mode avoids introducing vibration when support-mounted and Hybrid mode (Canon's terminology) reduces rotational movements when close-up. Active mode (Nikon's terminology) should be used when shooting from a moving vehicle. Note: similar modes exist for each brand.



## CONTROL RINGS

Assign your lens a custom handling experience

Most mirrorless lenses feature control rings that can be assigned specific roles. From your camera menu, allocate the function (eg, aperture control, shutter speed, ISO) and how you want the rings to work (direction, torque sensitivity). These can be amended at any time, so try altering the assignment to discover what works best for your shoots.



# BEST STANDARD LENS

Essential for all-round use

## Prime lenses



### NEW ENTRY 1 Hasselblad XCD 90V

This lens has impressed our review team – the AF performance is excellent and it may well be the sharpest lens to come through our doors.  
 ■ Review: See page 109

**SPECIFICATION** Price £4,059/\$4,299 Max aperture f/2.5 Min aperture 1/32  
 Closest focusing distance 0.67m Elements/groups 9/6 Mount Hasselblad X



### 2 Canon RF 50mm f/1.2L USM

■ Review: Issue 218

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,449/\$2,199 Max aperture f/1.2  
 Min aperture 1/25 Closest focusing distance 0.40m  
 Elements/groups 15/9 Mount Canon RF



### 3 Nikon Z 85mm f/1.2 S

■ Review: Issue 267

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,999/\$2,597 Max aperture f/1.2  
 Min aperture 1/35 Closest focusing distance 0.85m  
 Elements/groups 15/10 Mount Nikon Z

## Zoom lenses



### 1 Sigma 24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | Art

The 24-70mm f/2.8 is a kitbag essential and this Sigma is arguably the best value model around, offering great sharpness, build and AF.  
 ■ Review: Issue 239

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,149/\$1,249 Max aperture 1/2.8 Min aperture 1/22 Closest focusing distance 0.37m Elements/groups 19/14 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F, Sigma SA



### 2 Canon RF 24-105mm f/2.8L IS USM Z

■ Review: Issue 275

**SPECIFICATION** Price £3,439/\$2,999 Max aperture f/2.8  
 Min aperture 1/22 Closest focusing distance 0.45m  
 Elements/groups 23/18 Mount Canon RF



### 3 Fujinon XF16-55mm f/2.8 R LM WR

■ Review: Issue 231

**SPECIFICATION** Price £979/\$1,199 Max aperture f/2.8  
 Min aperture 1/22 Closest focusing distance 0.60m  
 Elements/groups 17/12 Mount Fujinon X

# BEST SPECIALIST LENS

For something a little different

## Prime lenses

### 1 Canon RF 5.2mm f/2.8L Dual Fisheye



At TPS 2024, Canon indicated that VR is an area of significant interest and this dual fisheye optic truly rocks the boat.  
 ■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,099/\$1,999 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture 1/16  
 Closest focusing distance 0.20m Elements/groups 12/10 Mount Canon RF



### 2 Fujinon GF30mm f/5.6 T/S

■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £3,899/\$3,999 Max aperture f/5.6  
 Min aperture 1/32 Closest focusing distance 0.30m  
 Elements/groups 15/11 Mount Fujinon GF



### 3 TTArtisan Tilt 50mm f/1.4

■ Review: Issue 262

**SPECIFICATION** Price £249/\$199 Max aperture f/1.4  
 Min aperture 1/15 Closest focusing distance 0.50m  
 Elements/groups 7/4 Mount Sony E, Canon RF, Fujinon X, Nikon Z, Leica L, M43

## Zoom lenses



### 1 Canon RF 24-240mm f/4-6.3 IS USM

Redefining the superzoom lens, this 10x zoom optic is the perfect choice for travel photography, offering versatility and quality.  
 ■ Review: Issue 243

**SPECIFICATION** Price £909/\$899 Max aperture 1/4-6.3 Min aperture 1/36 Closest focusing distance 0.50m Elements/groups 21/15 Mount Canon RF



### 2 Nikkor Z 24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR

■ Review: Issue 246

**SPECIFICATION** Price £949/\$977 Max aperture 1/4-6.3  
 Min aperture 1/36 Closest focusing distance 0.50m  
 Elements/groups 19/15 Mount Nikon Z



### 3 Tamron 18-400mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD

■ Review: Issue 248

**SPECIFICATION** Price £699/\$699 Max aperture f/3.5-6.3  
 Min aperture 1/40 Closest focusing distance 0.45m  
 Elements/groups 16/11 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F

# BEST TELEPHOTO LENS

Zoom in closer to the action

## Prime lenses



### 1 Canon RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM

Almost 30 years after the launch of its popular EF mount 135mm, this RF version is a top performer and a sure-fire hit for R-system portrait shooters.

■ Review: See page 108

**SPECIFICATION** Price £5,799/\$5,998 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 2.0m Elements/groups 20/16 Mount Sony E



### 2 Sony FE 300mm f/2.8 GM OSS

■ Review: Issue 275

**SPECIFICATION** Price £5,799/\$5,998 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 2.0m Elements/groups 20/16 Mount Sony E



### 3 Nikon Z 135mm f/1.8 S Plena

■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,649/\$2,497 Max aperture f/1.8 Min aperture f/16 Closest focusing distance 0.82m Elements/groups 16/14 Mount Nikon Z



### 4 Canon RF 600mm f/11 IS STM

■ Review: Issue 240

**SPECIFICATION** Price £829/\$799 Max aperture f/11 Min aperture f/11 Closest focusing distance 4.5m Elements/groups 10/7 Mount Canon RF



### 5 Nikon Z 600mm f/4 TC VR S

■ Review: Issue 263

**SPECIFICATION** Price £15,499/\$15,499 Max aperture f/4 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 4.3m Elements/groups 26/20 Mount Nikon Z

## Zoom lenses



### 1 Sigma 60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG DN OS | S

Offering a huge 10x zoom, this super telephoto is a perfect choice for sports and wildlife photographers.

■ Review: Issue 271

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,099/\$1,999 Max aperture f/4.5-6.3 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.45m Elements/groups 27/19 Mount Sony E, Leica L



### 2 Nikon Z 70-180mm f/2.8

■ Review: Issue 273

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,299/\$1,247 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.27m Elements/groups 19/14 Mount Nikon Z



### 3 Sony FE 70-200mm f/2.8 GM OSS II

■ Review: Issue 258

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,479/\$2,798 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.40m Elements/groups 17/14 Mount Sony E



### 4 OM System M.Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm f/4 Pro

■ Review: Issue 258

**SPECIFICATION** Price £749/\$899 Max aperture f/4 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.70m Elements/groups 15/9 Mount M4/3



### 5 Sigma 70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM | S

■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,199/\$1,499 Max aperture f/2.8 Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 1.2m Elements/groups 24/22 Mount Canon EF, Nikon F, Sigma SA

# BEST LIGHTING

Take full control of the lighting conditions

## 1 Godox VING V860III

**SPECIFICATION** Price £223/\$229  
**Type** Speedlight  
**Compatibility** Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fujifilm, Olympus, Panasonic, Pentax  
**Output** Gv60/197 (ISO100 mVt, 200mm)  
**Power source** Internal (rechargeable)  
**Weight** 530g (incl. battery)



## 2 Canon Speedlite 430EX III-RT

**SPECIFICATION** Price £279/\$299  
**Type** Speedlight  
**Compatibility** Canon  
**Output** Gv43/141 (ISO 100 mVt, 35mm)  
**Power source** 4x AA batteries  
**Weight** 295g



## 3 Rotolight AEOS 2

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,099/\$1,399  
**Type** Portable continuous  
**Compatibility** N/A  
**Output** 11,500 Lux at 3 feet (continuous)  
**Power source** V-lock, 24V 150W  
**Weight** 1,400g



## 4 Hahnel Modus 600RT Mk II

**SPECIFICATION** Price £249/\$283  
**Type** Speedlight  
**Compatibility** Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fujifilm, Olympus, Panasonic  
**Output** Gv60/197 (ISO100 mVt, 200mm)  
**Power source** Internal (rechargeable)  
**Weight** 540g (incl. battery)



## BEST FILTERS

### 1 Hoya Variable Density II

**SPECIFICATION**  
Price £99-190/\$180-160  
Exposure increase:  
+1.67/+8.07 stops  
Sizes 32-80mm



### 2 H&Y Revoring Variable ND & Circular Polariser

**SPECIFICATION** Price £170-£189/\$46-62mm  
Exposure increase: +1.5 to +10 stops Sizes 67-82, 46-62, 37-49mm



### 3 Cokin Nuances Extreme Z-Pro Soft Grad ND

**SPECIFICATION**  
Price £148-£160 (3-stop)  
Construction Glass  
Sizes 64x100mm, 100x150mm, 130x170mm



### 4 Hoya HD Nano Mk II CIR-PL

**SPECIFICATION**  
Price £69-221/\$85-190  
Construction Glass/PL  
11mm Sizes 49-82mm



## BEST MACRO LENS

For capturing the world up close

### 1 Nikon Z MC 105mm f/2.8 VR S



In our initial review, we called this 'one of the best macro lenses we'd used'. The quality, build and weight make this a fantastic macro optic.

■ Review: Issue 245

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,049/\$947 Max aperture f/2.8  
Min aperture f/32 Closest focusing distance 0.23m  
Elements/groups 15/11 Mount Nikon Z



### 2 OM System M.Zuiko Digital ED 90mm f/3.5 Macro IS PRO

■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,299/\$1,500 Max aperture f/3.5  
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.22m  
Elements/groups 18/13 Mount M43



### 3 Canon RF100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM

■ Review: Issue 254

**SPECIFICATION** Price £1,369/\$1,099 Max aperture f/2.8  
Min aperture f/32 Closest focusing distance 0.25m  
Elements/groups 17/13 Mount Canon RF



### 4 Sigma 105mm f/2.8 DG DN Macro Art

■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £729/\$799 Max aperture f/2.8  
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.30m  
Elements/groups 12/7 Mount Sony E, Leica L



### 5 Nikon Z 50mm f/2.8 Macro

■ Review: Issue 248

**SPECIFICATION** Price £679/\$647 Max aperture f/2.8  
Min aperture f/22 Closest focusing distance 0.36m  
Elements/groups 10/7 Mount Nikon Z



### 6 Canon RF 85mm f/2 Macro IS STM

■ Review: Issue 242

**SPECIFICATION** Price £619/\$599 Max aperture f/2  
Min aperture f/29 Closest focusing distance 0.35m  
Elements/groups 12/11 Mount Canon RF



### 7 AstrHori 25mm f/2.8 Macro 2.0x-5.0x

■ Review: TBA

**SPECIFICATION** Price £2,599/\$2,099 Max aperture f/2.8  
Min aperture f/32 Closest focusing distance 37.5-45mm  
Elements/groups 13/7 Mount Canon RF, Fujifilm X, Leica L, Nikon Z, Sony E

## BEST TRIPOD

Using a tripod is the key to sharper shots

### 1 Benro MeFoto RoadTrip Pro

**SPECIFICATION** Price £240/\$296  
Construction Carbon Fibre Leg sections 5



### 2 3 Legged Thing Leo 2.0

**SPECIFICATION** Price £203/\$267  
Construction Carbon Fibre Leg sections 5



### 3 Gitzo Légende Tripod

**SPECIFICATION** Price £549/\$549 (w/ball head)  
Construction Carbon Fibre Leg sections 4



### 4 Benro Cyanbird

**SPECIFICATION** Price £235/\$190 (w/NOOP Ball Head)  
Construction Carbon Fibre/Aluminium Leg sections 5



### 5 Vanguard Alta Pro 3VRL 303CV 18

**SPECIFICATION**  
Price £449/\$296  
Construction Carbon Fibre Leg sections 3



**Price:** £1,599/\$1,599

**Website:** [fujifilm-x.com](http://fujifilm-x.com)

# Fujifilm X100VI

Gareth Bevan discovers a compact camera that packs in some stealth upgrades

The sudden overnight popularity of the X100V took everyone in the camera world a little by surprise, but none more so than Fujifilm, which has spent the time since scrambling to get enough copies in the hands of all the people who want one. Launched in 2020 as the fifth iteration of Fujifilm's premium compact camera, it wasn't until almost two years later when TikTok influencers sent the price of the Fujifilm X100V skyrocketing and its supply chain into freefall.

Hopefully, with some lessons learned and some more ambitious manufacturing targets, Fujifilm is back to give the X100 series another go with the Fujifilm X100VI.

What's changed with the X100VI from the previous model? Externally, not that much but when you have a viral success like this on your hands, you don't want to rock the boat. The X100VI sees a big bump in resolution from the X-Trans 5 sensor from 24MP to 40MP, with video now topping out

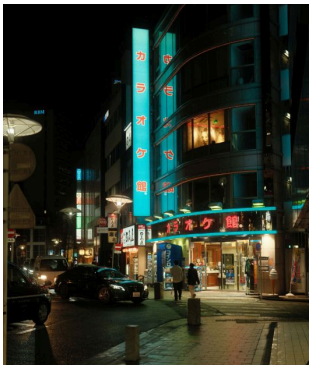
at 6K. The new X-Processor 5 also powers better autofocus with subject recognition and tracking for faces, eyes, animals and vehicles.

If you have used a camera in the X100 series before then you should feel at home with the X100VI. Fujifilm remains committed to dials on its cameras, so there are two dials up top, one handling exposure compensation, and the other shutter speed. This shutter speed dial also has a clever trick though, where you can lift and twist it to change the camera ISO. It works really well and is particularly satisfying. The aperture is handled by the ring on the lens, which has two raised textured handles and I find it easy enough to turn with one finger. The lens clicks at each aperture stop are quite audible, meaning that you don't have to take your eye off the viewfinder to alter your settings.

The lens is also unchanged from the X100V – although it was redesigned for that camera, which itself was an outstanding revision with incredible sharpness. While the 23mm focal length is absolutely spot on for a compact camera as it works for travel, street and some environmental portraiture, I would have liked to see whether the aperture could have been nudged just that little bit wider to expand low light performance and creativity with shallow focus – but that's being a little picky.







One of the major highlights of the X100 series is the hybrid optical viewfinder – one of the last remaining optical viewfinders in a world full of EVFs – and it is a lovely experience to use. Due to the rangefinder design, the viewfinder doesn't perfectly line up with the sensor but there is a digital box projected in the optical viewfinder that shifts depending on shooting distance so you know exactly what is in your shot. I find it both incredibly clever and simplistic, and though it does take some getting used to initially, after a while, it becomes second nature.

The screen is a 1.62 million dot LCD panel. Vloggers might be disappointed to note that the screen still doesn't flip around so you can see yourself while you record – it would have been ideal if this camera borrowed the tilt mechanism from the X-E4 that lifts up and over the top of the camera. The one minor

quibble I have with the build is with the grip, although it is more substantial than say, on the X-E4, there is still not a huge amount to cling onto and your little finger is lost with what to do with itself. A slightly increased hump wouldn't have shattered the defined compact camera aesthetic altogether.

The image quality from the X100VI is impressive. The precedent that the X100V had set with its outstanding image quality had raised expectations to lofty levels but I am pleased to say that the X100VI meets or exceeds them. I shoot a lot with the Fujifilm X-T5, so I know the quality that the 40.2MP APS-C sensor can achieve, and I am happy that the X100VI meets the same high bar. If you check out our lab tests, you'll see that noise at higher ISOs has taken a hit over the X100V due to smaller photosites on this higher megapixel sensor – in reality, this is far less of

a noticeable effect. I spent a lot of time out at night shooting the neon lights of Tokyo with this camera, and even at ISO 6400 or 12800, images are perfectly usable for print.

Autofocus is much improved versus the X100V. It's speedy and silent and in continuous focus, the camera had no issue holding a focal point as I moved the camera around or objects entered the frame.

A couple of sore points aside, including battery life, which has not been improved from the previous model, the X100VI is still a joy to use with its hybrid viewfinder and manual dials offering more tactile photography. Inside there are a few more reasons to upgrade – a new 40MP sensor, new processor and IBIS boost the X100VI's stills and video, and the initial samples I have shot are excellent. A downside – the price of the X100VI is the highest yet for an X100 series camera.

## Video performance

The X100VI is a photo-first camera but how do its video tools fare?

Video performance has got a boost as well from the new sensor and processor. The X100VI tops out at 6K30p footage, although unfortunately, this has a 1.23x crop – this makes the 23mm lens a 28mm lens (or a 42mm full frame equivalent). The X100VI is also capable of 4K60p footage without a crop, or 1080p footage up to 240p. Video footage is good – filming at 6K, there is a real sharpness to the footage. The IBIS also managed to hold my static shots nice and steady, panning was definitely improved as well, but some jerky movements did manage to slip in if I was overly vigorous while moving. The lens is probably the most limiting factor.

### Summary

Ease of use	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Quality of results	★★★★★

### Overall



Image quality is excellent, autofocus is much faster and video has been greatly improved. This might not be enough to tempt X100V users to upgrade, but those coming from older X100 systems will find more value here.



**Price:** £115/\$119

**Website:** [shop.dxo.com/en/dxo-pureraw-4](http://shop.dxo.com/en/dxo-pureraw-4)

## DxO PureRAW 4

This latest version can extract amazing quality from any kit, says **Rod Lawton**



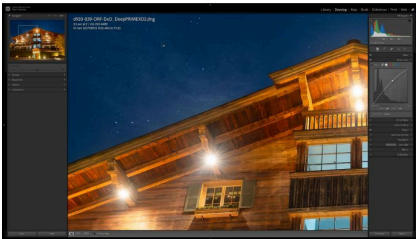
If you use Lightroom, Capture One or a similar program to view and process your RAW files, you'll have formed a good idea of the quality you can get from your images. But try DxO PureRAW 4 and you might just have to change your mind.

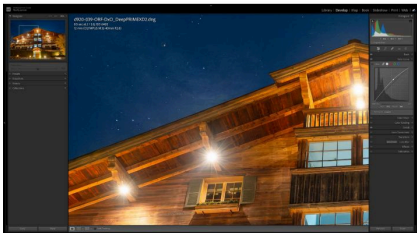
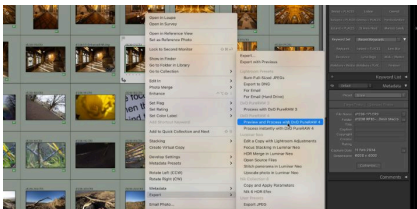
Almost all image editing tools can now process RAW files, using the software's own proprietary 'demaosaicing' process to turn the red, green and blue sensor data into full-colour images. Some do this RAW processing better than others, however, and if you use Adobe Lightroom, for example, you might end up with a completely different idea of your camera's image quality than if you use Capture One. Even the best photo editing software can have weaknesses, and sometimes that's the RAW processing quality and noise handling.

Normally, this is somewhat academic because you're at the mercy of your photo editor's own RAW processing abilities, but PureRAW 4 changes all that. It generates part-processed 'Linear DNG' files, with all of DxO's demosaicing, DeepPRIME noise reduction and lens corrections baked in, but with all the extended colour depth, dynamic range and editability of regular RAW files.

PureRAW 4 can be used as a standalone batch processing tool for converting folders full of RAW files into processed Linear DNGs, but it can also be used as an export plug-in with Lightroom Classic. For an application that does so much, PureRAW 4 is exceptionally simple to use. In both standalone and Lightroom plug-in modes, it will automatically

identify the camera and lens profile pairing that it needs and download it if it isn't already installed. Processing parameters aren't complicated either. You simply need to choose the processing settings and the output options. It's in the processing settings that you find some of the new features in PureRAW 4. For a start, it has a new DeepPRIME XD2





process that DxO says gives even better edge correction with fewer artefacts – this does not yet support Fujifilm X-Trans sensors, however. DeepPRIME XD2 now has additional controls. These include a Luminance slider for further noise control and a Force Details slider for controlling the amount of detail recovery. However, PureRAW 4 is so effective at its default settings that you might not need to bother with these at all.

The output options are fairly straightforward. You can choose the file format to export in – choose DNG if you want Linear DNG files – and where you want the processed images to be stored. New in PureRAW 4 is a powerful token-based renaming system where you can choose how your processed files are named.

The regular batch processing workflow doesn't give you any idea about what your processed images will look like, but PureRAW 4 has a new Process with Preview mode that shows a split-screen preview of your image – though you do have to keep updating the preview manually with a button at the base as you move around the image. It's also hard to see much difference when changing the processing settings.

It's hard to describe PureRAW 4's performance without lapsing into superlatives. Its ability to produce clean, sharp results at high ISOs is quite uncanny – you are left checking the EXIF data to make sure that you're looking at the same image. Improvements in image quality will vary from one camera to another, and with low-ISO shots on the best full-frame cameras, you may not see much difference. But as the ISOs go up, and especially with crop sensor cameras, the difference between what PureRAW can do and what Lightroom's default RAW processing can do is just embarrassing – for Adobe, at least.

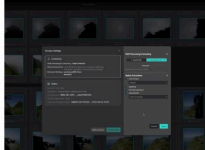
The main issue with Lightroom is that it isn't particularly good at fine detail and noise. While Lightroom's Enhance feature can do a remarkable job of reducing noise, it really can't match PureRAW 4's detail enhancement ability at high ISOs, nor its improvement in edge sharpness.

PureRAW 4 is not quite faultless. The 'Standard' detail enhancement feature can be a bit too 'crunchy' for cameras and lenses that are quite good already. However, if you've been thinking the performance of your old cameras and lenses just isn't up to scratch any more,

## Value vs price

DxO PureRAW 4 isn't the cheapest app, so is it worth it?

PureRAW 4 is available now from the DxO website for £115 (\$119) for new users and £69 (\$79) as an upgrade for owners of the PureRAW 3 version. That's not far short of the cost of a full year's Adobe Photography Plan or a full-blown photo-editing suite like ON1 Photo RAW, so is it worth it? Bear in mind that Lightroom users already have access to Adobe's own noise-reducing Enhance tool, which does some of the same work. It depends on whether you shoot RAW files, how highly you value outright image quality and, ultimately, how much of a pixel-peeper you are – we'd recommend the 30-day trial to test it on your images.



don't do anything until you've tried PureRAW 4. DxO's RAW processing software will probably change your mind about what you think your camera is capable of.

If you have already used an older version of PureRAW, you won't need any convincing about the program's spectacular transformative properties. And while new users might need some convincing, for this there is a 30-day trial, which should be more than long enough to see what this software can do with your RAW files.

### Summary

Ease of use  
Value for money  
Features  
Quality of results



### Overall



If you have PureRAW 3 and a Fujifilm X-Trans sensor, you might just as well stick with the old software until PureRAW 4 adds X-Trans support. Otherwise, the transformation in RAW image quality it produces is hard to resist.



**PRICE:**  
£2,600/\$2,099

**FOCUS DISTANCE:**  
0.70m

**WEIGHT:**  
935g

## Canon RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM

Canon has finally released a new 135mm portrait lens. **Gareth Bevan** and **Dan Mold** investigate

### Build and handling

Canon last released a 135mm professional portrait lens way back in April 1996 but has now, finally, released a sequel, albeit this time for a new mount. The RF version of the 135mm has grown in size from the EF version, with the optical image stabilisation and extra stop of aperture making this lens a bit larger than its predecessor. Cameras have also become smaller, making the setup with this lens front-heavy. The lens isn't unwieldy to use, but it will be draining to carry it around your neck for a long day of shooting. The RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM has Canon's solid L-series build quality, which includes dust and moisture sealing, and a substantial premium polycarbonate build. Joining the control ring are two welcome new function buttons.

### Performance

The lens produces an incredibly sharp image, with the autofocus proving to be accurate enough to pick out our model's eye. The bokeh and background falloff is also especially pleasing. While lenses such as the RF 50mm f/1.2L USM have a wider aperture, at this mid-telephoto length, f/1.8 should produce similar results due to the compression and focal length.

### Verdict

If you want a dedicated portrait lens for Canon, you can't do much better than the RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM lens. It offers a sharp picture, backed up by 5.5 stops of optical image stabilisation, which becomes eight stops when used with a compatible camera with IBIS.

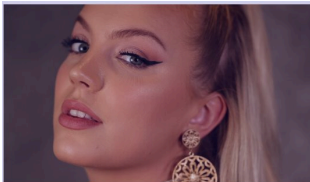
### Technical specs

Manufacturer	Canon
Model	RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM
Web	<a href="http://canon.com">canon.com</a>
Elements/construction	17 elements in 12 groups
Angle of view (diagonal)	18°
Max aperture	f/1.8
Min aperture	1/22
Min focus distance	0.70m
Mount	Canon RF
Filter size	82mm
	130.3mm
Diameter	89.2mm
Weight	935g

BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
IMAGE QUALITY	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★

### Overall ★★★★★

- 5.5 stop optical image stabilisation
- Excellent sharpness
- Customisable buttons and ring
- Large, heavy and unbalanced
- Pricier than competition



**Above**  
**Eye point**  
The AF system is quick and able to hold focus on the nearer eye of the subject. This is essential when you're working at the maximum aperture setting of f/1.8



**Above**  
**Front-heavy**  
Mirrorless Canon cameras are a lot smaller than their DSLR predecessors, making the setup with the RF 135mm f/1.8L IS USM seem imbalanced


 DOWNLOAD  
TEST SHOTS

<https://bit.ly/DPH279>


**PRICE:**  
£4,059/\$4,299

**FOCUS DISTANCE:**  
0.67m

**WEIGHT:**  
551g

# Hasselblad XCD 90V

James Artaius reviews what could be the finest lens to ever pass through our test lab

## Build and handling

To call the Hasselblad XCD 90V lens eagerly anticipated would be quite an understatement. X system users have been waiting patiently but their patience has now paid off. Not only do the V lenses share a matching aesthetic, but they also share matching practicalities – such as the same 72mm filter thread, to make your setup more uniformly useful, and the same gloriously tactile manual focus clutch that engages silky smooth fingertip focusing. Also common to the V series is the customisable control ring, which can toggle between clicked and de-clicked at the flick of a switch. Overall handling is superb and the build is right up there with the best.

## Performance

Hasselblad has made some glorious glass over the years, but the XCD 90V is probably its finest hour – this is the lens that 100MP image sensors were made for. If there's a flaw

in this lens, I can't see it with my naked eyes nor any degree of pixel peeping – and our lab manager Ben could barely find a blemish with diligent lab testing, either. This might actually be the perfect lens... and that's not something we say lightly. The quality of the out-of-focus rendition is exceptional with silky smooth transitions and a super-subtle almost Petzval-like quality to the bokeh. It delivers some of the most exquisite subject separation I've ever seen. Contrast and micro-contrast are sensational too. Focus is snappy and works wonders with the face-detect AF system on Hasselblad's latest cameras.

## Verdict

I've used a lot of portrait lenses over the years, from cheap and cheerful Chinese character glass to premium-priced pro optics. But in two decades of using lenses and half a decade of reviewing them, I have never come across anything quite like the XCD 90V.

## Technical specs

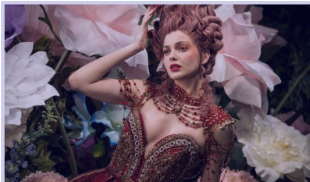
Manufacturer	Hasselblad
Model	XCD 90V
EF (35mm)	75mm
Elements/construction	9 elements in 6 groups
Angle of view (diagonal)	34°
Max aperture	f/2.5
Min aperture	f/32
Min focus distance	0.67m
Mounts	Hasselblad X
Filter size	72mm
Length	95mm
Diameter	75mm
Weight	551g

<b>BUILD QUALITY</b>	★★★★★
<b>IMAGE QUALITY</b>	★★★★★
<b>VALUE FOR MONEY</b>	★★★★★
<b>FEATURES</b>	★★★★★

## Overall



- +
  - +
  - +
  - +
  - +
- Incredible sharpness**  
**Superb bokeh**  
**Intuitive handling**  
**De-clickable control ring**  
**Premium price tag**



Above

### Colour splash

The tones from the Hasselblad are rich, punchy and natural, capturing subtle gradations of colour, while micro-contrast makes the subject jump out



Above

### Silky smooth

Focus is super snappy, which is important when shooting with a shallow depth of field. Bokeh is beautiful, offering exceptional subject-background separation

Images by James Artaius

# ACCESSORIES

A collection of the best fun-yet-functional products out there for photographers

## Manfrotto Urban Collapsible 1.5 x 2.1m background

Price £214/\$270 • Website [manfrotto.com](http://manfrotto.com)

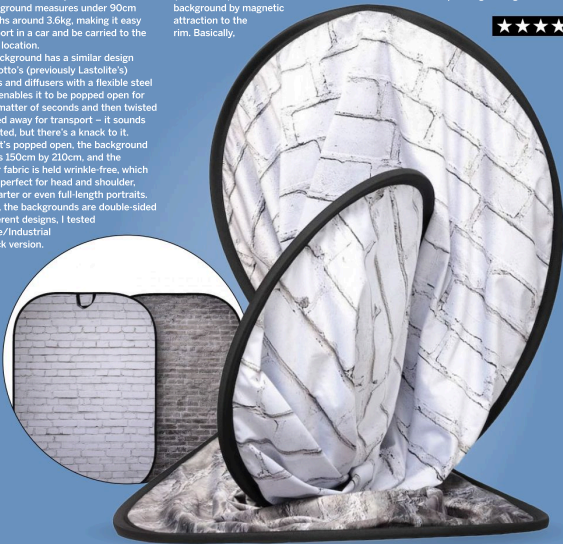
Manfrotto's collapsible backgrounds allow you to take your studio anywhere and do away with worrying about what's going to be behind your subject. When folded down into its circular zip-close fabric case, this background measures under 90cm and weighs around 3.6kg, making it easy to transport in a car and be carried to the shooting location.

The background has a similar design to Manfrotto's (previously Lastolite's) reflectors and diffusers with a flexible steel rim that enables it to be popped open for use in a matter of seconds and then twisted and folded away for transport – it sounds complicated, but there's a knack to it.

When it's popped open, the background measures 150cm by 210cm, and the polyester fabric is held wrinkle-free, which makes it perfect for head and shoulder, three-quarter or even full-length portraits. Helpfully, the backgrounds are double-sided with different designs, I tested the White/Industrial Grey Brick version.

While the background can just be propped against a wall or held up by an assistant, the easiest option is to use Manfrotto's Magnetic Background Support Kit (£173/\$205), which holds the background by magnetic attraction to the rim. Basically,

a light stand with a T-bar attachment that houses the magnets, it can accommodate backgrounds of different lengths. This stand weighs 1.16kg and can hold a background of up to 5kg in weight.



## 3 Legged Thing Wrapz

Price from £15/\$15 • Website [3leggedthing.com](http://3leggedthing.com)

Wraps aren't a new concept but they are an easy and convenient way of protecting delicate items such as cameras, lenses or filters when they are in a bag or sitting on a shelf. However, the new 3 Legged Thing Wrapz takes that idea to a new level.

For example, the Wrapz are made from a special adhesive polymer with nano-technology, unlike some wraps that have velcro pads. They have four layers, including a hook, loop, padding and waterproofing, meaning the two sides can grip each other instead of just small areas, making it easier to wrap around things. The padding also gives some protection when you have two or more items in a bag, while the waterproofing is handy if there's a light shower during your outdoor shoot.

3 Legged Thing makes the Wrapz with two patterns and in three sizes, Small (30x30cm), Medium (38x38cm) and Large (45x45cm), so there's one suitable for most of the items commonly carried in a photographer's bag, though you can always use two or more together if needed. Any of the Wrapz can be bought separately or as part of a kit with one of each size.

The Wrapz couldn't be easier to use – simply put whatever you want to wrap in the middle and fold the Wrapz around it.



## Wandr Transit Carry-On Roller Bag Photo Bundle

Price £439/\$434 • Website [eu.wandr.com](http://eu.wandr.com)

With external dimensions of 54.6x33x22.9cm, the Wandr Transit Carry-On Roller Bag is considered carry-on baggage for the likes of BA, where the maximum dimensions are 56x45x25cm, but if you're travelling with a budget airline such as EasyJet (maximum carry-on dimensions are 45x36x20cm), you'll have to put it in the hold.

The Roller Bag opens like a clamshell with one side being more than large enough to accommodate the Essential+ Camera Cube at one end. The Cube has a volume of 6.8 litres and is big enough to hold a camera body and a couple of lenses, maybe four if they are small.



That makes the Wandr Transit Carry-On Roller Bag Photo Bundle a good option for an overnight stay somewhere you want to include a bit of photography around other events.

The outer fabric of the Roller Bag is water-resistant, which proved useful on a trip to Scotland. There's also a two-stage extending handle and smooth-running wheels that are claimed to be crush-proof.

In addition, there's a large laptop pocket outside the main compartment, and a few organiser sections to help you keep track of essentials, such as your purse, passport and paperwork.



# DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GLOSSARY

We explain the essential jargon you need to demystify modern photo technology



Photography is both an art and a science and, as such, there are a plethora of confusing technical terms to get to grips with. Luckily, we don't often need to think about this jargon, except perhaps when buying a new lens or investing in new tech. However, understanding how your camera works and what these terms mean can improve your appreciation of the medium, help you make better buying decisions and shoot better images as you progress. Here are some of the ones we wish we had known from the beginning.

## Acutance

The subjective perception of the sharpness of a photographic image, as defined by the contrast between edges, independent of pixel resolution.

## Additive colour

Colour created by mixing light from different light sources, starting with black, red, green and blue light, which produces the visible spectrum of light that is captured by our eyes.

## Aspherical element

Any lens element, the surface profile of which does not form part of a sphere. Used to reduce aberrations, especially in wide-angle lenses.

## Bit depth

The pixel capacity for storage of bits (digital storage units created per captured photon of light). Greater bit depth means more colour information is captured.



## Fluorine Coating

A special lens coating incorporating negatively charged properties applied to glass elements to repel dust and water, allowing easy cleaning



## Aspect ratio

The shape of an image frame, defined by the proportional relationship between the width and the height of the image sensor.

## Chrominance

The characteristic of light that causes the perception of colour when compared with a reference of the same brightness, but different hue and saturation.

## Circle of Confusion (COC)

A disc around a point caused by a cone of light created due to imperfect focusing at a specific location. Across a whole image, a wider COC manifests as blurriness.

## CMOS

Complementary Metal-Oxide Semiconductor. This is the preferred sensor type used in the majority of modern digital cameras and replaced the Charge Coupled Devices (CCD) of older models.

## Colour Filter Array

A mosaic of coloured filters fixed above a camera's sensor photosites that enable the capture of colour information in a digital image.



## Kelvin scale

A measurement of the colour temperature of light. A high value (10,000) indicates blue/cyan tint and a low value (3,000) means yellow/red bias. The inverse of White Balance.

## Coma

The distortion of points of light within an image, usually in a conical shape at the edges of the frame and often at its strongest at the maximum aperture.

## Demoisic

A digital image processing algorithmic process by which digital cameras create full-colour images using the incomplete data collected by the sensor and Colour Filter Array.

## Diffraction

The blurring effect introduced by the interference of light travelling through a lens aperture by the diaphragm blades. Diffraction is worse at small apertures, eg. f/16 or f/22.

## Flange depth

The distance between the lens mount of a camera body and the sensor plane. This can vary between mounts, sensor-lens designs and camera brands.

## Focal plane

The position of the light-sensitive surface within the camera body which, for digital cameras, is the photosite-containing CMOS sensor surface.

## Focus breathing

A noticeable shift in the field-of-view of a lens when changing focus position, even if focal



**Hot and cold**  
Yellows are mistaken as high kelvin colours and blues as low. White balance is the inverse, so you need 9,000K to neutralise strong blue



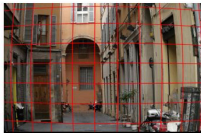
length remains constant. This is problematic for videography or when focus-stacking.

### Ghosting

Flare or haze effects in the image frame that are often caused by internal reflections within the optical system contacting the sensor multiple times.

### Gobo

From 'go-between', this is a light modifier, usually either black or opaque, that can be placed between the light source and subject to alter the properties of the emitted light.

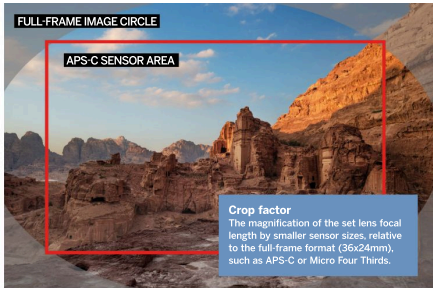


### Barrel distortion

A common lens distortion that results in horizontal and vertical lines appearing to arc outwards from the centre of the image frame.

### FULL-FRAME IMAGE CIRCLE

### APS-C SENSOR AREA



### Crop factor

The magnification of the set lens focal length by smaller sensor sizes, relative to the full-frame format (36x24mm), such as APS-C or Micro Four Thirds.

### HEIF

High-Efficiency Image File format. An emerging file format used to contain image data that is smaller than a jpeg format file but offers superior image quality.

### Hyperfocal distance

The focus distance at a set aperture that provides the widest depth of field, using the equation  $\text{Hyperfocal Distance} = \frac{\text{Focal Length}^2}{\text{Aperture} \times \text{COC}}$ .

### IBIS

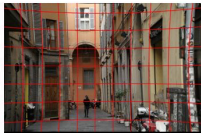
In-Body Image Stabilisation. A system of compensation for camera movements, achieved by shifting the position of the image sensor mounted on a gyro.

### Luminance

The apparent brightness of a light source or surface as measured by the intensity (amount of units) of light emitted from (or reflected by) an object.

### Moiré

An aberration caused by a digital sensor failing to correctly resolve ultra-finely detailed repeating and overlapping patterns. Manifests as wavy patterns that don't exist in the scene.



### Pincushion distortion

A common lens distortion that results in horizontal and vertical lines appearing to arc inwards from the centre of the frame from the edges.

### MTF chart

Modular Transfer Function. A graphical representation of the optical performance of a lens, plotting the resolution and contrast from the frame centre to the edges.

### Resolution

The ability of a camera and lens to render two points or lines in an image as separate, influencing apparent sharpness and detail.

### Signal gain

The amplification of a signal generated by the sensor on contact with light. As ISO is increased, the gain is turned up to simulate an equivalent sensitivity at a given exposure.

### Specular highlights

A spot of light on a reflective surface that provides a strong visual cue for the shape of an object. These are often encountered as eye catchlights in photography.

### Subtractive colour

The creation of visible colour through the selective removal of wavelengths from white light, often through absorption by pigments printed on a physical surface.

### TTL metering

Through-the-lens metering is a method of calculating exposure in flash photography by measuring the ambient light and adjusting flash output for a correct subject exposure.

### Ultrasonic motor

A type of fast and quiet piezoelectric autofocus motor that makes use of ultrasonic waves to vibrate a stator ring pressed against a rotor.

### Zone System

A standardised numerical system for calculating exposure in any lighting conditions. Created by Ansel Adams and Fred Archer, the system ranges from Zone 0 (pure black) to Zone 10 (pure white).



## 'AMARANTHINE'

Ivana Sidzimovska on the self-portraiture work of **Helin Bereket**, who blends iconic styles and props to create images that transcend time

All images © Helin Bereket



### PRO BIO

Helin Bereket's journey into the world of photography began against the backdrop of Berlin's vibrant cultural landscape. With a bachelor's degree in architecture and a master's degree in art, she embarked on a path that seamlessly blended her interests and education. Bereket's keen eye for detail and creativity allows her to craft a unique language, reflecting her personal ethos and emotions. [helinbereket.com](http://helinbereket.com)  
@helinbereket

**A**maranthine', meaning everlasting, is the new series of self-portraits by Nikon photographer Helin Bereket, which was inspired by Nikon's latest campaign 'Standing the Test of Time'. Last year, Nikon tasked photographers across Europe to showcase their understanding of an image that would stand the test of time, using its new mirrorless camera, the Nikon Z f.

With props from Charlie Chaplin's 1915 Tramp silent film, make-up and swimming costumes from the early 1920s and 1950s and a 1960s brutalist architecture backdrop, Bereket photographed herself as an actor who embodies different styles and eras. She plays all roles of the story, which is polychronic, dissonant and multilayered.

Striking different poses, Bereket blends the aesthetics of classical sculpture, grand manner portraiture, silent film, slapstick, traditional Japanese arts and contemporary fashion photography. At times, the actress is gracious and monumental, at others contemplative, calm and peaceful. Sometimes she even teases the viewer. But, ultimately, it's clear that she is a serious entertainer.

Staged in a monochromatic image taken on the Nikon Z f camera, her images transpose us to a bygone era, yet nothing is 'old' in them. As her audience, we recognise the modern architecture and the cutting-edge

photo technology deployed and so we begin to believe that we might encounter the subject in the image today. While her clothes and demeanour look timeless, they could equally be thoroughly modern.

Bereket recycles not the past but the present, our current urban space, style techniques and technology, creating a confusing structure of time, which is open to infinite interpretations. By employing elements from the past to confuse and intrigue viewers as to when the images were taken, Bereket's self-portraits challenge the audience to see beyond the surface.

**"By using elements from the past, Bereket's self-portraits challenge her audience to see beyond the surface"**



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