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AMAZIAG ABSTRACT

LEARN HOW TO THINK BEYOND THE EVERYDAY AND CREATE MESMERISING WORKS OF ART





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Welcome to the world's No.1 weekly digital photography magazine. If you're already a

reader, thanks for your continued support and involvement; if you're new to *Photography Week*, you've come to the right place! In addition to expert advice, brilliant tips and step-by-step tutorials, every issue features interactive galleries of brilliant photos, how-to videos on

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But that's not the whole story. Photography Week is more than a magazine – it's a community of like-minded people who are passionate about photography. To get involved, just follow any of the links below and share your shots and comments.

Jeff Meyer, Editor

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WHAT'S HOT

THE WEEK'S TOP HEADLINES IN PHOTOGRAPHY

NIKON'S NEW ZOOM COULD BE THE ONLY LENS YOU NEED

Nikkor Z 28-400mm f/4-8 is Nikon's most versatile lens for full-frame Z mount



distance of just 0.2m at the widest angle and 1.2m at the maximum telephoto position, while offering a maximum reproduction ratio of 0.35x.

It features a stepping motor

ikon has unveiled the Nikkor Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR, a full-frame superzoom for its Z-mount mirrorless cameras that sets a new standard for an all-in-one zoom lens with its phenomenal 14.2x zoom ratio. The lens is also compatible with APS-C DX Nikon cameras, such as the Z50 and Zfc, on which the effective focal range becomes 42-600mm.

It features a stepping motor (STM) for fast autofocus, and built-in Vibration Reduction provides up to a 5-stop benefit. Despite its impressive telephoto reach, the lens has a compact and lightweight design, weighing approximately 725g, which makes it the perfect lens for travel and everyday use.

Superzoom lenses offer an all-inone solution, covering everything from wide-angle to telephoto focal lengths, and opening up new possibilities for your photography or filmmaking. The Whether you're shooting sports or wildlife, or in any scenario where subject distance varies continuously, this lens enables you to adapt to any situation with ease. Its versatility means you could rely on just this one lens to capture a wide range of scenes, eliminating the need to switch between multiple lenses.

longest-range superzoom previously

available for Nikon cameras was the

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

F-mount DX-format DSLRs.

HLD, which could only be used on Nikon

The Nikon Z 28-400mm f/4-8 VR will go on sale from mid-April priced at £1,399 / \$1,299.

What's more, the lens excels in closeup photography, with a minimum focus

FEATURE



SHOOT ABSTRACT

Think outside the box to cross the line from reality-based images to mesmerising abstract photo art

Words Kim Bunermann

bstract photography is a dynamic and varied genre that presents endless opportunities to explore and unleash your creativity. In the early days of photography, there was little room for abstract frames. The first cameras served the sole purpose of capturing scenes as they appeared in real life, providing a more accurate depiction than paintings.

However, like most art forms, photography evolved, and began to find its creative voice as a reaction against expressionism in the 1920s, when photographers such as Albert Renger-Patzsch freed the medium from its initial function. This period saw the emergence of movements such

as New Objectivity and New Vision, where photographers embraced a fresh approach to discovering the technical possibilities of photography to showcase structures, forms and angles in innovative and exciting ways.

To create frames that offer a fresh and unique perspective on familiar subjects, the key is to break away from preconceived notions by transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. This often means removing subjects from their usual context, which renders the functions of objects less important. Instead, the focus shifts to the optical characteristics of materials and colours.

To experience subjects in a new and extended way, we need to train

our eyes and develop the necessary observation skills, while also trusting our vision. Breaking traditional photographic rules is an important part of this process, even though it may be easier for some than for others. However, abstract photography is a genre that allows us to have fun, experiment and discover.

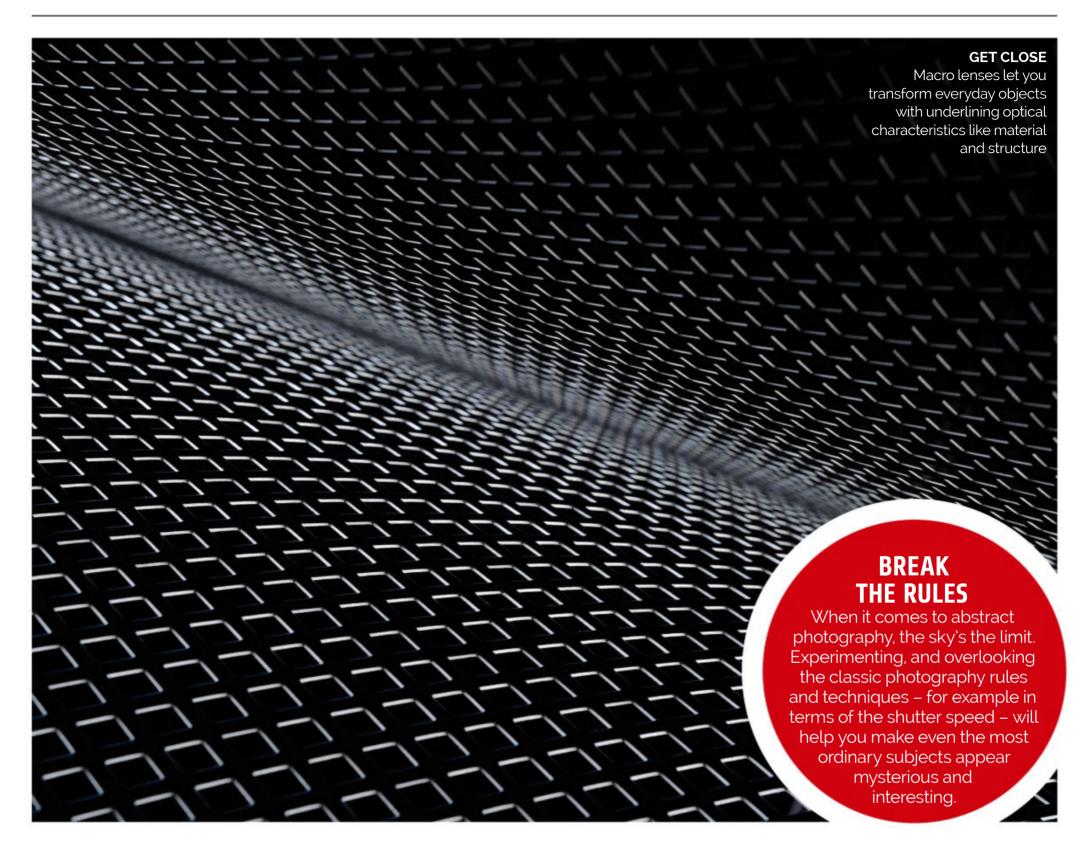
Over the next few pages we'll explore some abstract techniques that you can adapt to other photographic genres, and which will let you showcase your creative side. You'll learn how to find fresh perspectives on everyday objects and familiar scenes, and how to transform them in a game of hide and seek with the viewer.



FEATURE

TURN REALITY AROUND

Train your eye to detect the hidden visual qualities of everyday subjects



ny image that does not show reality can be considered abstract. Although people might perceive the level of abstraction in different ways, as long as the photograph causes the viewer to question what they are seeing, it can be considered a successful abstract frame. The easiest way to portray any subject in an abstract way is to free yourself mentally from its concepts and functions. Abstract photography doesn't have to explain what is depicted; in fact, the aim is not to do so.

The most important skills for abstract photography are observation and perception. Freeing your mind from the functions that the material world

and society have ascribed to the object you're shooting means you can alter the subject's context from its reality. To do this, select a subject and observe and analyse it. Take your time, move it, or move around it, get closer, and see how it looks in different lighting. Work out what makes the object interesting or unique, and concentrate on enhancing those features. Try doing this as a weekly challenge, with the aim of training your mind to look out for possibilities, and also to become more familiar with the way your camera and lens work.

In terms of the composition, aim to give the viewer direction to help them explore the image, using leading lines and a strong focal point to guide their eyes. While traditional composition rules, such as the rule of thirds and the golden ratio, are handy, it's good to think more abstractly.

Especially when you're filling the frame with the subject, leading the viewer's eye is crucial. Start by taking a wider shot of the subject, and then get progressively closer with each photo. This will help you identify where the leading lines and other visually dominant elements are in your frame. Keep getting closer until the composition of the frame provides the viewer with a mystery to solve, where the subject is transformed and incorporated into a supporting composition.





TURN REALITY AROUND CONTINUED

ISOLATE FOR ALIENATION

Get up close to your subject, and frame tight to discover fresh perspectives on ordinary items

A popular method for creating abstract frames is to isolate the subject from its surroundings, offering the audience a different view that deviates from reality. Two ways to achieve this are by incorporating negative space to give the subject room to breathe, or by taking close-up shots to fill the frame to the maximum. The latter allows the viewer to focus on the unique features of the subject's material and colour.

Here, macro lenses with at least a 1:1 reproduction ratio are recommended, such as the budget-friendly AstrHori 25mm f/2.8 2-5X Ultra Macro optic. It can focus down to 113mm at 2x magnification, or 186.4mm at full 5x magnification. However, if you're new to abstract photography, most kit zoom lenses are also suitable Often these lenses have decent closefocusing capabilities, and you always have the option to crop the frame even further in post-processing.

To achieve the best results while maintaining high quality and sharpness, choosing an aperture of f/8 works best. As the depth of field can be shallow when using a macro lens, even if you're working with narrow apertures, the focus-stacking technique comes into play. This approach is highly effective when capturing still subjects, and involves stacking several images at the post-processing stage.



FILL THE FRAME Monochromatic subjects can often create a calm and harmonic frame, letting the viewer focus on the details

COMPRESS YOUR IMAGE ELEMENTS

Bringing elements closer together can help you to manipulate reality

Depending on the subject you want to transform, a telephoto zoom lens can be a great tool. Due to its versatility, it allows you to explore scenes with a different approach and from a different perspective than a macro lens. A zoom lens has more to offer, especially when photographing architecture Due to its compressed perspective, the foreground and background appear closer together at narrow focal lengths. The Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM, for example, is a relatively budget-friendly professional lens with rapid, virtually silent autofocus.

However, telephoto zoom lenses aren't cheap, and to avoid going over your budget, it's a good idea to consider second-hand options. MPB is one provider of pre-used kit that carries out checks on the functionality of a lens before it goes on sale online.



STACK SHOTS FOR DEPTH



SECURE THE CAMERA For the highest-quality image, go to the menu and select raw as the file format, and to enable easy image alignment mount your camera on

a tripod. Now activate the live view to help you decide on framing and composition.



SWITCH OFF AF

Set your camera to manual focus (MF) and turn off any image stabilisation modes. In manual mode, select an aperture of f/11, set the shutter speed to around 1/200 sec, and adjust the ISO until you achieve a well-exposed image.



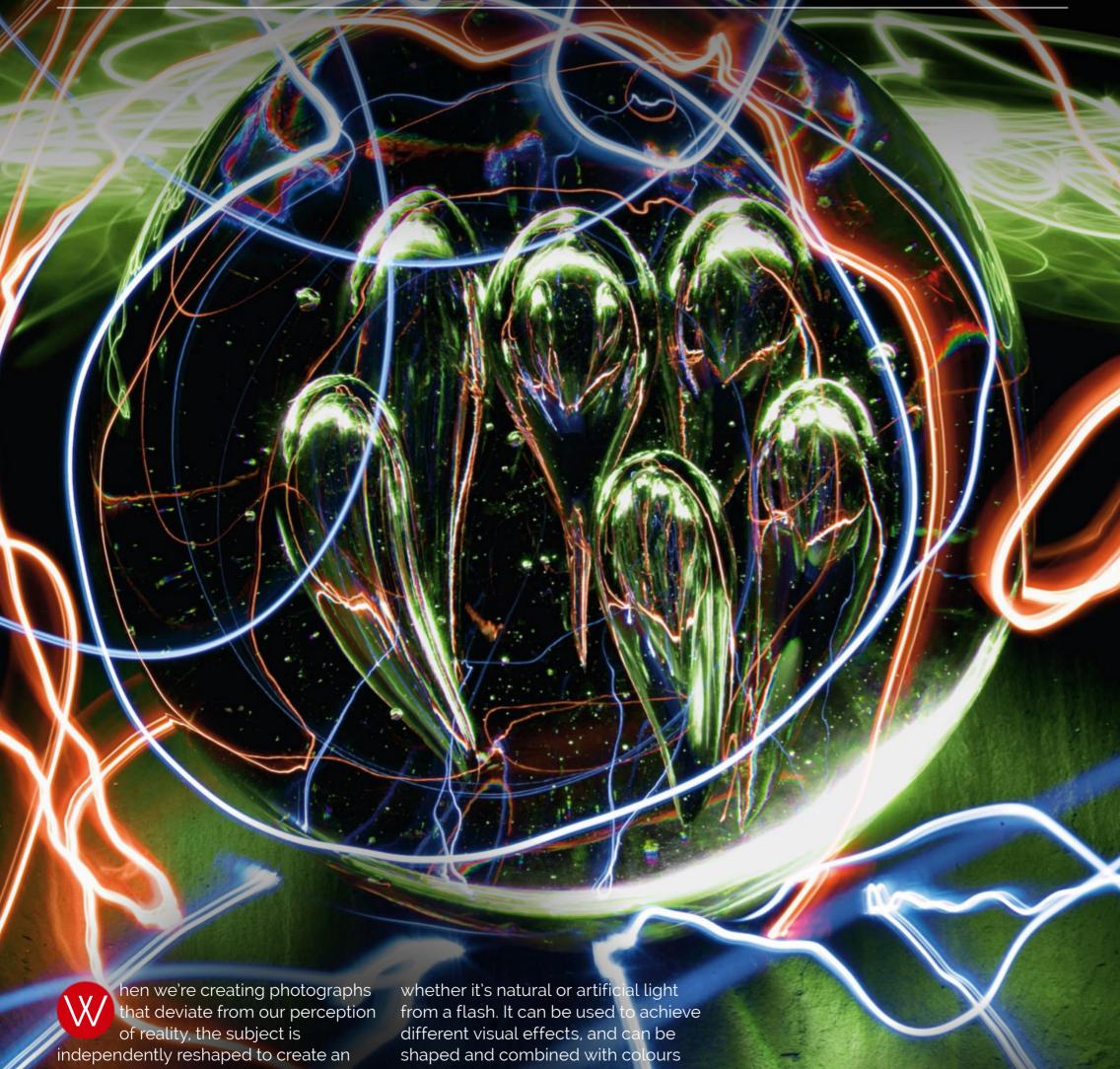
3 SET THE FOCUSSelect the two-second self-timer or use a shutter remote release to avoid camera shake and blur. Now focus on a specific area, press the shutter, and continue without reframing the scene until all the elements are captured.



4 STACK IN POST In Photoshop, select all layers and go to Edit > Auto-Align Layers. Go to Edit > Auto-Blend Layers, choose Stack Images, Seamless Tones and Colors and Content Aware Fill Transparent Areas.







that deviate from our perception of reality, the subject is independently reshaped to create an additional level of interest. This can be achieved by adapting the material and visibility of the subjects, or by using photographic techniques. One such subject is light, which offers great creative potential.

Light is a crucial tool for photography,

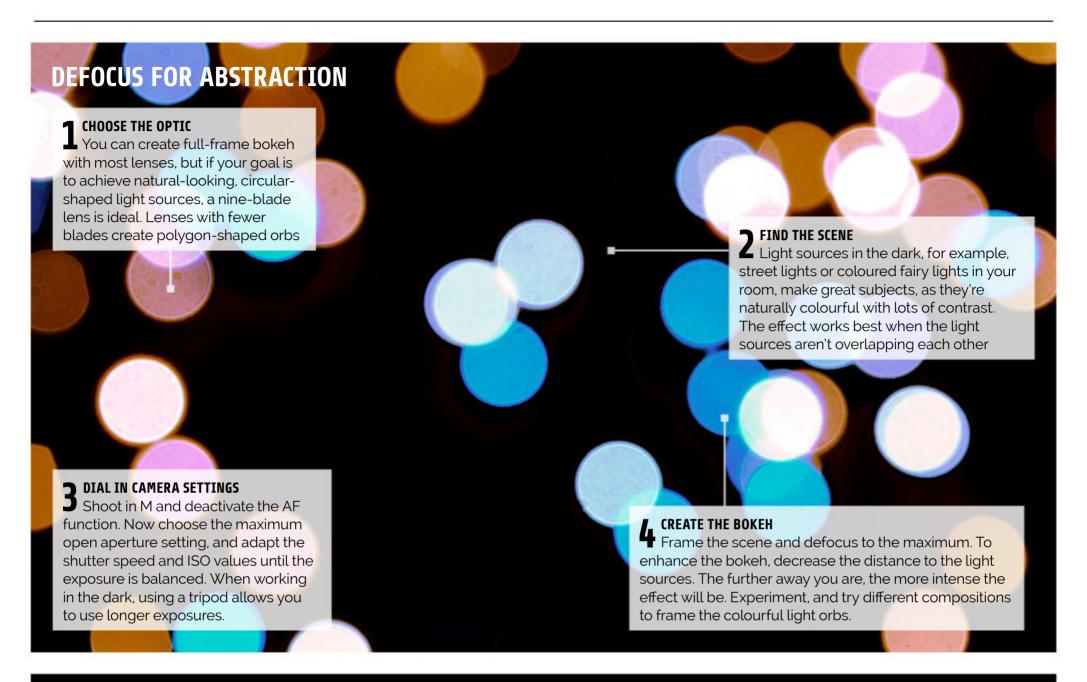
whether it's natural or artificial light from a flash. It can be used to achieve different visual effects, and can be shaped and combined with colours to create unique compositions. While the light is more controllable indoors, sunlight can also be great for creating abstract frames. For example, a strong midday sun creates high-contrast shadows that can contribute to and become part of the composition.

LIGHT PAINTING

If you're working with light and long exposures, combining different coloured lights and movements can bring your vision to life

(F)(E)(A)(T)(U)(R)(E)

LET THERE BE LIGHT CONTINUED



PLAY WITH WAVELENGTHS

Create abstract images that we can't perceive with the naked eye

When taking an abstract approach, an extended shutter speed provides the opportunity to get creative with light, such as turning an existing scene around or constructing a conceptual photograph. In both scenarios, the light sources need to stand out, so the backdrop should be dark.

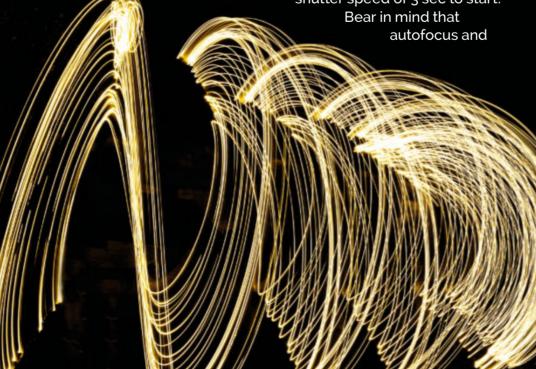
One approach is to capture the light of moving objects, such as cars, to create light trails. You can also move the camera to control the shape of light sources – this approach is called intentional camera movement (ICM), and we'll explore this further on the following pages.

To bring your vision to life, you can create a scene without access to a photo studio – all you need is some

space, and a flexible LED light source with a bundled light cone. For this project, you need a tripod to keep the camera steady and avoid blur, but you won't need a shutter remote, as the self-timer

function will suffice.

Prepare yourself by wearing black clothes, including black gloves, to help you to blend seamlessly with the dark background. Set your camera to manual mode (M) and choose a shutter speed of 3 sec to start. Bear in mind that



auto-exposure hardware in most cameras are not designed to work with monochromatic light. To ensure sharp images, choose an aperture of around f/8. Activate the self-timer and position yourself in front of the camera. Now, move the light source around to create different patterns. Be creative with shapes, and use coloured light to mix things up. This technique may take some time to perfect, as you'll need to balance the osure time and figur fast to move the light source to achieve the desired effect.

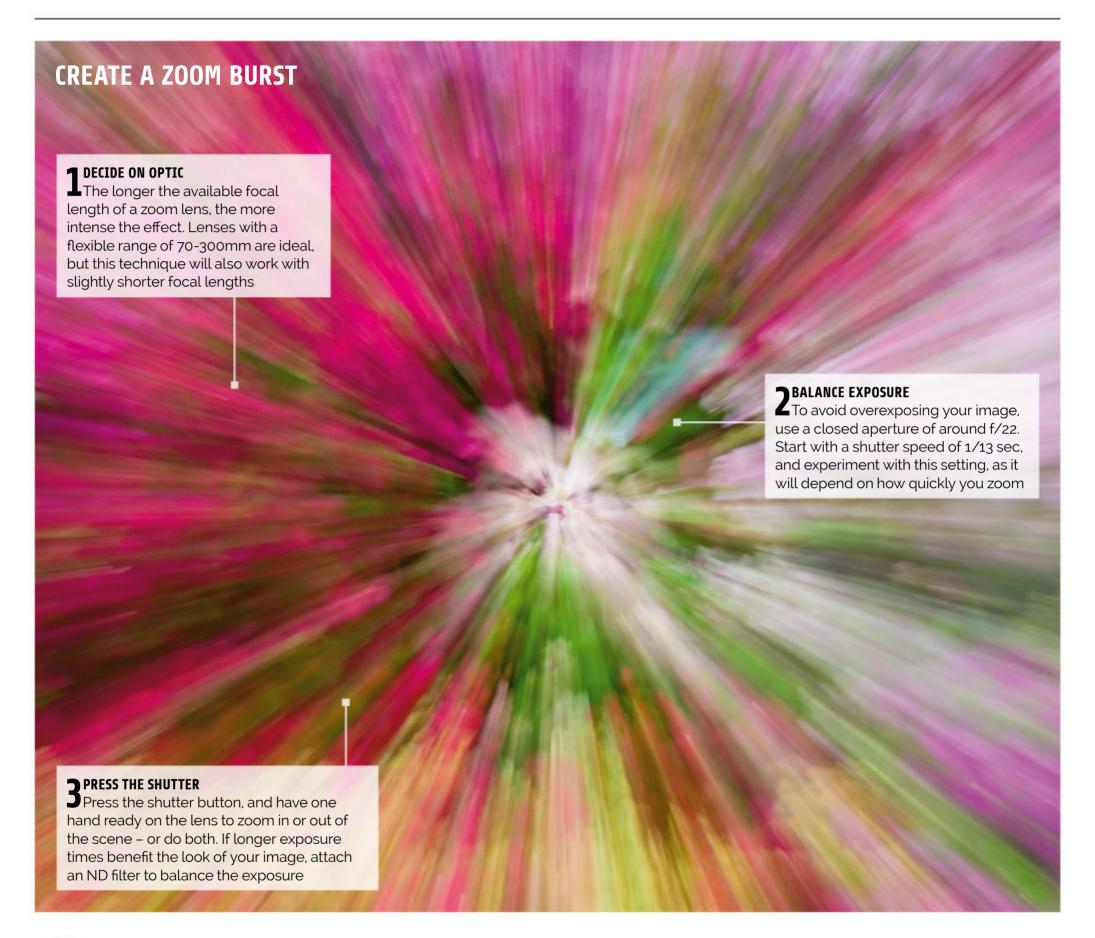
Coloured LED lights can be tricky to shoot because colours have different wavelengths that affect their visibility. For instance, blue LEDs have shorter wavelengths than red ones. As a result, you need to widen the depth of field to ensure that they appear sharp and in focus.





ADD OPTICAL EFFECTS

Achieve abstraction by using your camera and lens in a different way



he joy in creating scenes that don't depict reality is that you can experiment by playing around with both the camera and the subject. Intentional camera movement (ICM) is one technique that's especially popular in woodland and nature scenes to add a dynamic and painterly style. This approach works by setting a longer exposure time, and moving the camera while the shutter is open. These images often have a captivating abstract blur that conveys a sense of movement while blurring colours and shapes.

This technique thrives on vibrant colours and structures, which the captured scene should provide.

A beach scene, sunset or flower field are other great subjects that may also create an intense effect. When deciding on a subject to capture, analyse the scene and the direction of lines, and work out what type of movement will enhance the subject. This is often achieved by adapting the subject's shape in the movement, for example, imitating the lines of the tree trunks by moving the camera up and down.

As the name of the technique suggests, there are no rules in terms of the kind of camera movement you perform. However, it's useful to know what type of movement creates each effect. To achieve a panoramic glide effect that generates a multitude of colours, move the camera from side to side. A drop motion can be created by mounting the camera on a tripod and moving the camera downwards using a fluid ball head or tripod handle. If your camera is on a tripod, it's also worth trying a 360-degree rotation effect.





ADD OPTICAL EFFECTS CONTINUED

FAKE AN ICM IMAGE

Use your lens filter to simulate camera movement

ICM is a great technique for exploring new visual possibilities in a scene. However, if you have a specific idea of how you want the final image to appear, finding the right balance between movement and shutter speed to get the desired effect can be tricky, and you can also apply this effect in a more controlled manner with simple and inexpensive tools.

To do so, you need a clear filter that does not affect the overall image. A UV filter, which is often used to protect the lens against sand or water, is ideal for this. These filters are cheap, reusable and can be easily cleaned. To simulate the effect before shooting, you will also need a jar of petroleum jelly, such as Vaseline.

Once you have your tools, mount your camera on a tripod – it's best to activate live view mode so that you can preview the results. Work with an aperture of around f/8, and keep your ISO value low by adjusting the shutter speed until a balanced exposure is achieved. Attach the UV filter, and smear the petroleum jelly on its surface.

Control the effect by smearing the jelly in a particular pattern – horizontal lines, for example, will create vertical blurred streaks. Start with a minimal amount of petroleum jelly, and add more as needed. If you're not satisfied with the initial results, wipe the petroleum jelly off with a damp microfibre cloth, and dry the surface afterwards with a different cloth before trying again.



SHOOT WITHOUT A LENS

Go back to the early days of photography by creating a pinhole camera to shoot appealing abstracts

The camera obscura, also known as a pinhole camera, was the first camera created, and has been around since the fifth century BC. As part of his studies on how we see, the Arab scholar Ibn Al-Haytham is credited with inventing this camera, showing how light can be used to project an image onto a flat surface.

The camera obscura works without a long and it results in

The camera obscura works without a lens, and it results in soft and slightly blurred images. To make one yourself, you'll need a spare body cap, a drill, some aluminium foil, a needle and some sticky tape. First, create a card or paper template of the body cap by drawing around it and marking the centre point. Place the template over the body cap, and drill a hole with a diameter of 2-4mm.

To create the pinhole, cut off a small piece of aluminium foil and carefully prick a hole in it – the smaller the hole, the sharper your image will be. Use a piece of tape to attach the foil to the cap in the centre. Attach the body cap instead of the lens, and find a suitable subject for your shoot. In manual mode set ISO to 100 and try an epxosure of 2 secs on a sunny day.







COMBINE MOVEMENTS

Raghuvamsh Chavali explains the technique of interlacing frames



ne way of turning reality upside-down is by blending together many images of a commonly photographed subject, such as birds. This technique of interlacing frames has lots of potential for creating abstract images and, by learning how to use it, you can convey the natural movement of animals in a unique manner, as wildlife photographer Raghuvamsh Chavali explains...

"Interlacing frames involves capturing consecutive frames of the bird's movement (see image above). The technique can be used to create and showcase smoother and more fluid motion when displaying bird flight or other rapid movements, using a burst mode or video timelapse footage. With this technique, the motion appears more natural and less choppy, enhancing the experience.

"I will frequently observe birds gracefully gliding through the sky, creating picturesque scenes, like artists with their brushes. It's captivating to witness their flight patterns. While it's

common to spot them in nature, forests, countryside and lakes, I find it intriguing to see them in urban environments. I often liken the journeys of humans to those of birds, noting how both species navigate distinct paths to reach various destinations.

"That's why I began capturing what I call 'Wings Over Concrete', to create composite photographs, showcasing these distinctive flight patterns both in nature and urban settings. To apply this technique, I choose higher frame rates, such as 100fps, for fast actions and complex manoeuvres of birds in flight. When capturing regular flight patterns, I use slower rates, like 50fps, to ensure smoother playback. It's important to use the highest resolution supported by your camera, such as 4K, to capture fine details of the birds' movements and features. Use manual focus to precisely control focus on the subject, ensuring clarity in each frame.

"Then, set the frame composition before initiating recording to capture the desired scene effectively. I'll also

RAGHUVAMSH CHAVALI



Raghuvamsh Chavali is a nature and wildlife photographer. He's originally from India, and now lives in Canada. His photography involves

travelling to remote locations to create inspiring images that capture the emotional energy of the place. His work has been featured in publications such as Canadian Geographic, Smithsonian Magazine and Lonely Planet.

Chavali is also a researcher in digital and biometric data, and has patented a digital watermarking system that incorporates human biometrics into imaging systems to help prevent theft. His academic work has been published in international journals, including the IJICS and the AJPCR.

raghuvamsh.com

@chavaliraghuvamsh

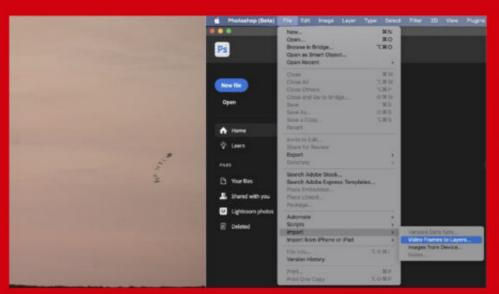
leverage features such as the Sony A7III's MF Assist, which zooms in when adjusting the focusing ring, providing a clearer view for precise focusing on the birds' movements."





COMBINE MOVEMENTS CONTINUED

BLENDING FRAMES Create one frame in post-processing



IMPORT VIDEO FRAMES

After capturing your video, carefully align and blend each frame using specialised image processing software, such as Adobe Photoshop or any other editing tool. Go to File > Import > Video Frames to Layers to import the footage.



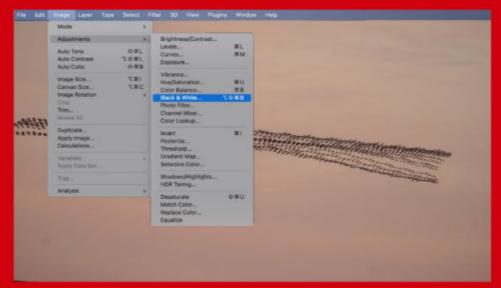
SELECTIVE FRAMING

Now go through the process of selecting the best frames and eliminating any shaky ones. Ensure that the final image is clear and crisp so that it beautifully showcases the intricate details and grace of the bird's flight path.



→ SET IMPORT OPTIONS

Now a setting window will open. Here, it is important to leave both the Selected Range Only and the Make Frame Animation settings ticked. For the best results, don't forget to enable 'Limit to Every' and select five



CREATE ONE FRAME

Then it's time to flatten the image to create one final photograph. For my work, I convert the image tones to monochrome. Instead of changing the Mode, go to Adjustments > Black & White to gain more control of the tones.

PRO ADVICE Raghuvamsh's composition and post-processing tips

EXPERIMENT WITH COMPOSITION

Embrace creativity by creating your own unique compositions. Try experimenting with different framing techniques without worrying about the traditional rules of photography. Your composition should showcase your personal style, making it recognisable in the world of photography.

POST-PROCESSING MASTERY

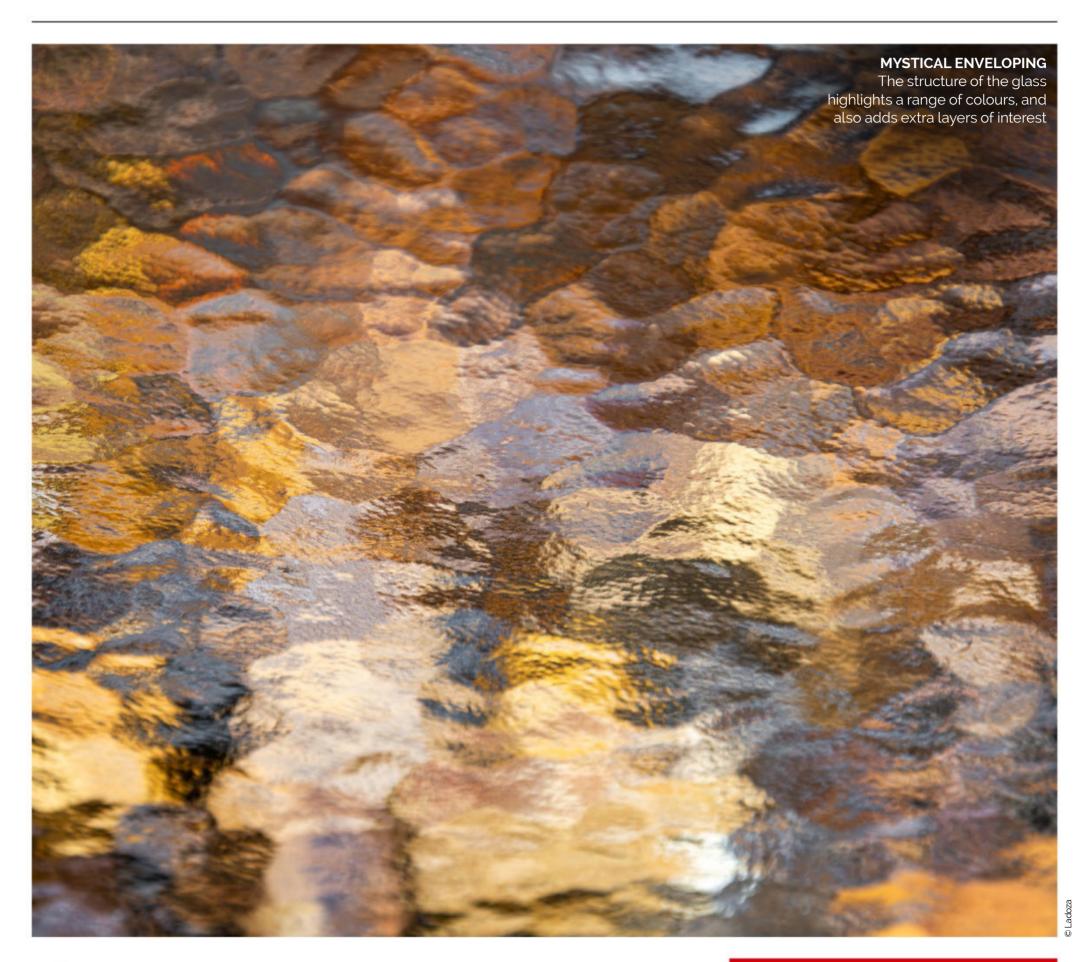
Improve your skills in post-processing by creating your own presets and editing techniques. Add your personal touch to every image through careful editing, making sure your unique style stands out in the final picture.





SHOOT THROUGH GLASS

How refracting daily scenes through frosted glass can enhance your images



s a conceptual artist with a passion for abstract art, Ladoza loves exploring different mediums and techniques to create new concepts. Photography remains key to this process. "As with music, abstract art can reflect our moods or embrace our feelings. It shifts the importance of knowing what you are looking at to how it makes you feel," he says.

"The Viewing Glass project (the working title) is still in its early days, and with every shoot I continue to learn what it is and see how my objectives are evolving. My focus isn't on the final piece, but rather on the process and exploration of an idea.

"The concept came to me while I was looking through a textured glass window. Instead of seeing the window, I saw bold, distorted shapes and colours, similar to an impressionist painting. I was inspired to create something that I could use to capture the landscape in a way that looked like a real-life oil or pastel painting."

LADOZA



Ladoza is a multi-media abstract and conceptual artist, based in Sheffield, UK. With a passion for nature and the outdoors, Ladoza takes inspiration

from the surrounding landscape to explore and develop new artistic ideas through painting, photography and other media. ladoza.co.uk ② @ladoza.uk





SHOOT THROUGH GLASS CONTINUED

PRO ADVICE Ladoza explains how to create abstract art through frosted glass

TRY, ANALYSE, REFLECT

Don't ask yourself why you want to create an image. This can get in the way of producing it in the first place. If you get an idea, try it out, then ask yourself, how do you feel about it? What have you learnt? How could you improve? That way, you can reflect and learn from what you've created and evolve from there.

CREATE A CONCEPT

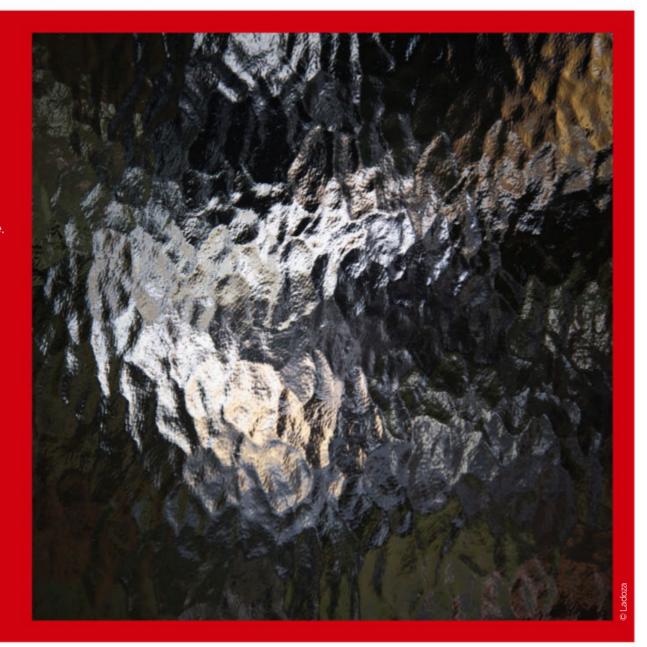
Abstract art and photography is about exploring your own concepts, not necessarily complying with what others want you to do. Knowing this can be liberating and free you up creatively.

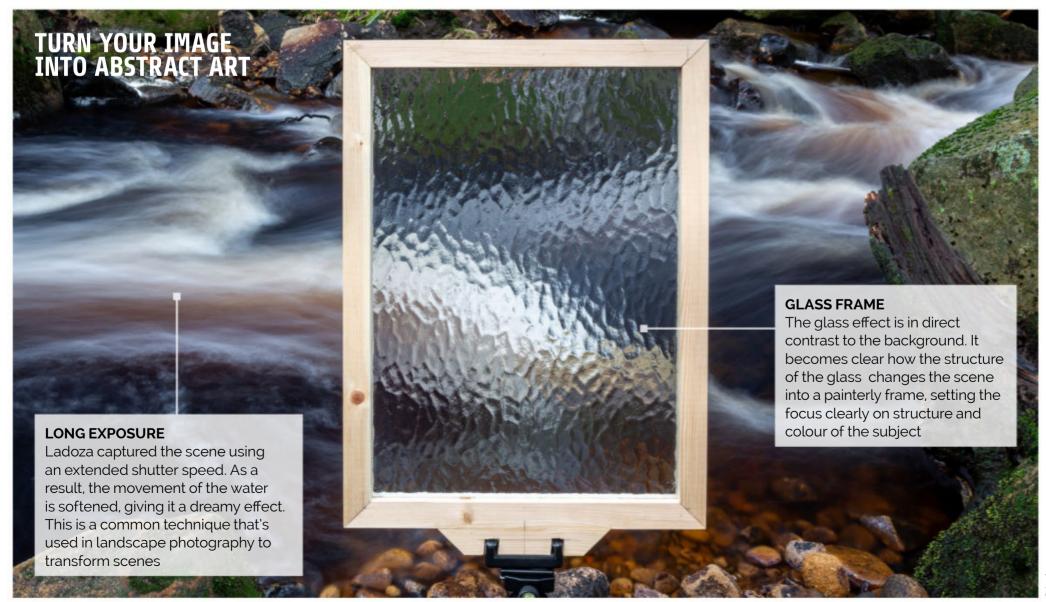
GET INPUT

There is a lot of value in being self-critical, especially if you learn how to do it constructively. Visiting galleries and thinking about why you like – or more importantly, dislike – a piece, can help in the development of your own creations.

SHOOT REGULARLY

People often say 'Get out and shoot more' when talking about photography, but what they don't say is why this is important. We only learn more by doing and reflecting. The more we do something, the more we learn from our mistakes and become better at what we do.





FEATURE

INCORPORATE FILTERS

Whatever abstract effect you want to create, there's probably a filter that can help



V filters, polarisers, and other similar filters are commonly used to protect the lens or to enhance the overall look of your image. However, there are some specialised hardware filters you may not have heard about. That's probably because they're not suitable for every photo project, as they add distinctive visual effects to the frame.

However, whenever you decide to purchase a filter, it's important to consider its material. Filters made from plastic are often cheaper, but they can negatively affect image sharpness. On the other hand, more expensive high-quality filters are made of optical resin or glass, which are less prone to scratching, which helps to maintain their quality during regular

use. Initially, you may wish to purchase a budget-friendly filter to determine whether it's worth investing in high-quality filters later on. To give you an idea, here are two unusual filters that can add an abstract touch to your photography. Both effects are also achievable in post-processing, but attaching a filter will save you hours in editing.

INFRARED FILTER

IR filters don't affect the subject's form but its colours. The tool cuts wavelengths and permits transmission of the red region of the light spectrum, resulting in frames that look surreal in their colours. When using filters such as the Hoya R72, bear in mind that setting the focus accurately before attaching the IR filter is a must. These filters cut down the overall exposure, so working with a tripod to slow down the shutter speed is advisable.



KALEIDOSCOPE FILTER

Many of us may recall playing with a kaleidoscope toy in our childhood, and kaleidoscope filters work like those, creating a unique visual experience that's akin to looking through one by splitting images into fractions, mirroring them and rotating some elements. To create this effect, the Subtle Kaleidoscope filter

from Freewell is an excellent choice, transforming ordinary subjects into mesmerising and enchanting artworks. To maximise the effect, shoot colourful scenes with small subjects and details, such as stained glass windows or fields of flowers.





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ONE TOO MANY

RUBEN ALEXANDER

"Glassware photography is challenging, and here I attempted to challenge myself even more by introducing some drama."

https://bit.ly/4a0dqnC



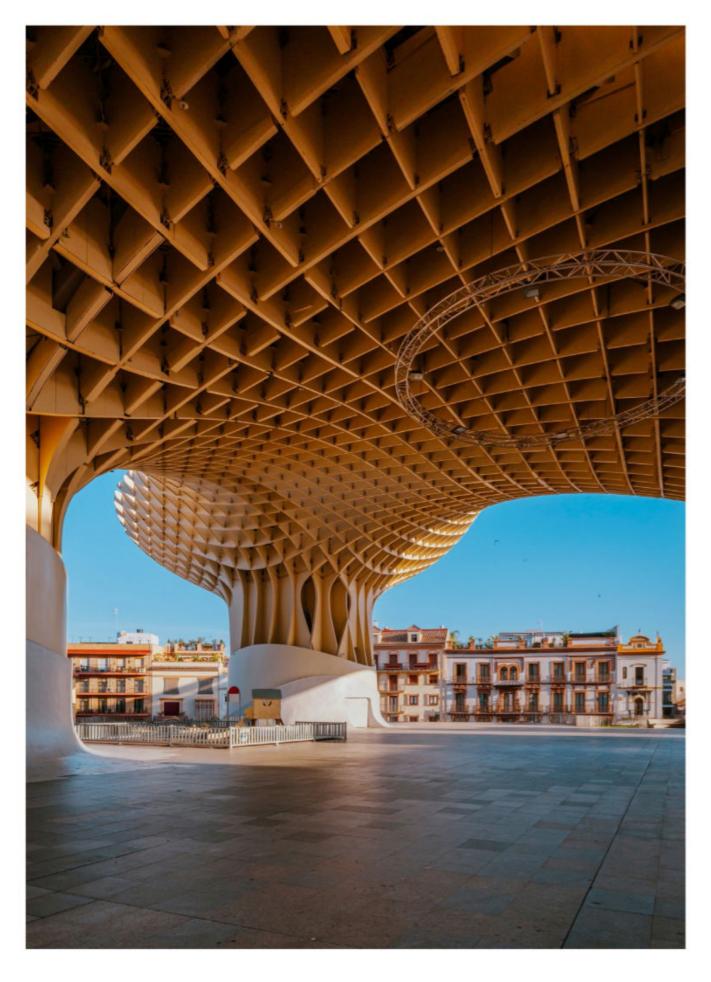
SNAKESHEAD FRITILLARY

JUSTINE GORDON

"I was so excited to find this snakehead fritillary in the park one morning recently – I took it as a sign of spring finally arriving."

https://bit.ly/4a1MQKO





SETAS DE SEVILLA RODRIGO GODINEZ

"The Setas de Sevilla ('Mushrooms of Seville') is a wooden structure incorporating a market, museum and restaurants in the old quarter of Seville in Spain."

https://bit.ly/3CziEHM





RED-HEADED WOODPECKER

TOM MORTENSON

"A colourful red-headed woodpecker with its future dinner, a prized acorn. Taken in Portage County, Wisconsin, USA." https://bit.ly/3EykdWb





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Taken a portrait you're particularly proud of? Shot a sensational sunset you'd like to show off? Then join the *Photography Week* Facebook community and share your best photos today! You'll get feedback from fellow readers and the *Photography Week* team, plus the chance to appear in Xposure, or even on our cover!

PARKCameras



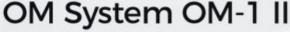
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ONSPORATION IT'S COOL, THAT

THE BEST THING WE'VE SEEN THIS WEEK



Saeed Rezvanian, Overall Winner



Hari Wibowo, Winner, Concrete in Daily Life



Andre Hidayat Arrasuli, Winner, Concrete Infrastructure

CONCRETE PROOF THAT GREY DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BORING

Photo contest celebrates the enduring power of the world's construction material

oncrete might not be the first thing that springs to mind when you think about photogenic subjects, but the Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA) wants to persuade you otherwise – and looking at the winning images from its 2023 Concrete in Life photo competition we'd say they're onto something.

Entrants were invited to submit images capturing the importance of the ubiquitous and sometimes beautiful building material across four categories: Urban Concrete, Concrete Infrastructure, Concrete in Daily Life, and Beauty and Design. Saeed Rezvanian was named overall winner for his captivating image of a child playing with a kite in Mexico's Teopanzolco Cultural Center, a concrete building which adjoins an archaeological site with Aztec ruins.

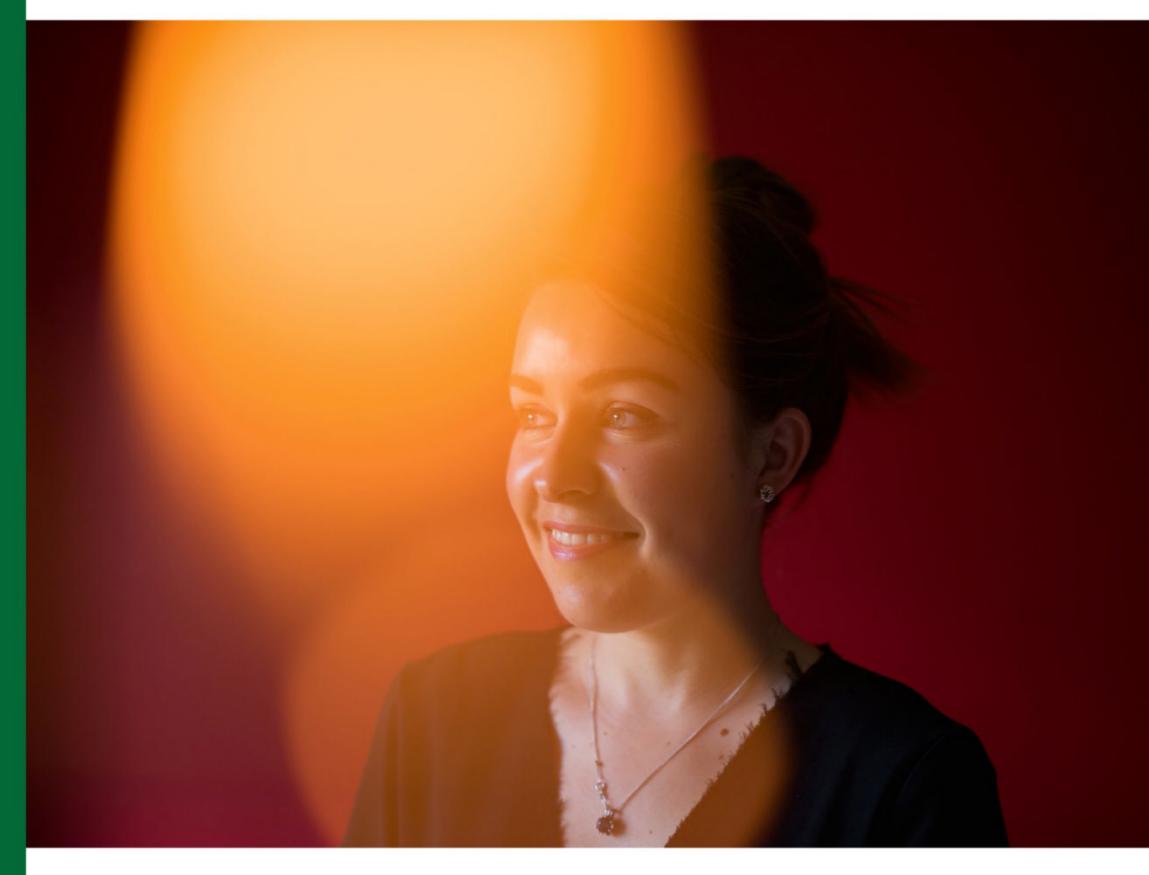
The contest attracted more than 21,000 entries – click the link to see all the winning and shortlisted images at the GCCA website.



Images © The photographer

SCOUS CRASH COURSE

ESSENTIAL PHOTO SKILLS MADE EASY



LET THERE BE LIGHT LEAK!

Jason Parnell-Brookes shows you how to add a light leak effect to a digital image using a match

ack in the days of film, if you had a gap in your camera body, light would leak in through the cracks and tinge the film with colour casts across the frame. This exposure to light, or 'light leaking', was originally seen as a problem to be avoided, but it's caught on as a

creative technique that enhances images beyond their standard exposure.

Light leaks have become a popular 'retro' effect to add to digital images – it's usually done in post-production using various techniques, but there are also ways that you can simulate a light leak in-camera, even in the digital era.

By striking a match or igniting a lighter, we can create a warm orange flicker of fire, and if we place this close in front of our lens and focus on something in the distance we can blur the flame to imitate a light leak. Here's how it's done – just be careful not to get the flame *too* close to your camera!





STEP BY STEP CREATE A LIGHT LEAK EFFECT





SAFETY FIRST

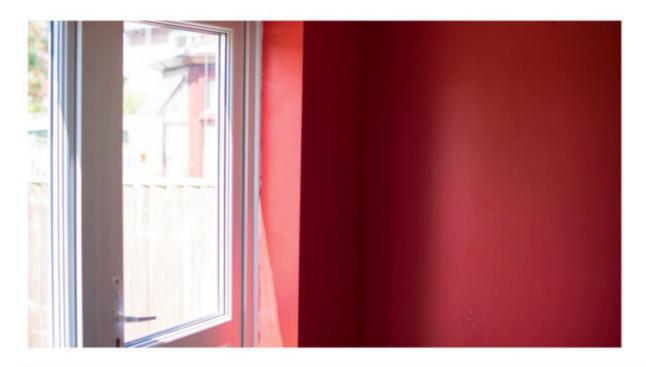
At the risk of sounding like a health and safety inspector, you need to take safety precautions where fire is involved. We brought a bucket of water to extinguish our matches (and to use in case we dropped them on the floor). We also prepared a damp towel to deal with any accidental burns.



FOCAL LENGTH

We found that a 50mm f/1.4 lens was perfect to frame a portrait nicely while simultaneously compressing the perspective enough to blur close-up foreground elements sufficiently. The wider the lens, the less perspective compression you'll get.







WINDOW LIGHT

We shot our light leak portrait indoors so that the ambient light was lower than if we were outside, which ensures our blurred flame stands out. Window light also has a lovely quality, creating soft shadows and smooth highlights that wrap around your subject.

DON'T GET BURNED

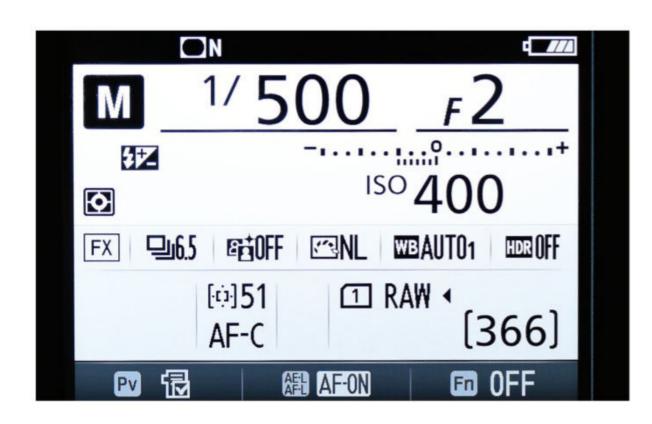
It's easy to get wrapped up in shooting and forget about how quickly a match is burning down. If you try this project with regularsized matches, get a friend or your model to warn you when the flame gets close to your finger. Regular pocket lighters also get hot quickly, and so are best avoided.







STEP BY STEP CREATE A LIGHT LEAK EFFECT





CAMERA SETTINGS

In Manual mode we set our ISO to 400 to compensate for the lower light levels indoors. We set our aperture to f/2 to blur the flame sufficiently, and our shutter speed to 1/500 sec, which was fast enough to keep the image sharp as we were shooting handheld.



MATCHES/LIGHTER

We recommend using long cook's matches, a taper or a long-necked lighter. These will give you a longer burn time before either the match burns down or the lighter gets so hot that it burns your fingers or thumb.







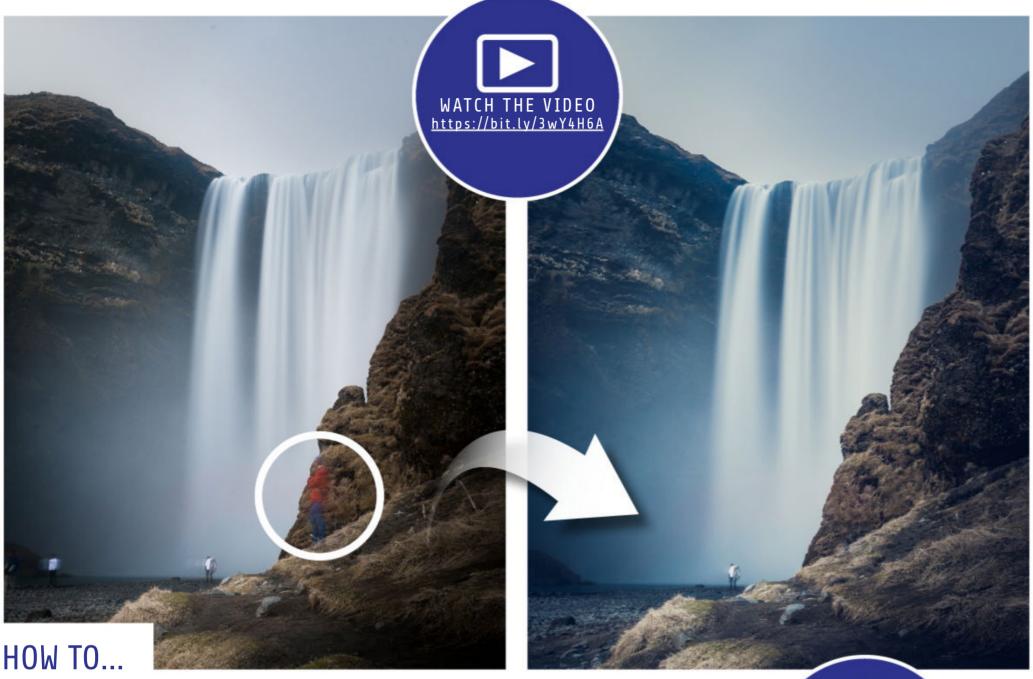
GETTING THE SHOT

We were careful not to melt the edge of our lens, but we had to hold the match close enough to the front element in order for the flame to blur. If you're not confident about doing this, use a lens hood to keep the fire away from the glass.



CAMERA RAW & LIGHTROOM

LEARN ESSENTIAL EDITING SKILLS FAST!



WHY PHOTOSHOP ISN'T THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN

Tidy up messy areas of your images in Camera Raw and Lightroom with James Paterson

any of us who've been using
Adobe editing tools for years
find that there's less and less
reason to open our images in Photoshop.
Instead, Camera Raw and Lightroom
offer almost everything we need to edit
our images. But for precise retouching
work, Photoshop has always been better
– that's until now.

The latest updates to Camera Raw and Lightroom include a Content-Aware healing feature that could be a game changer for your raw editing workflow. Content-Aware Fill lets you target an

object, then watch as Photoshop removes it. Now we can use the Content-Aware Remove tool in Camera Raw and Lightroom's Develop Module to reach similarly impressive results, by simply painting over a distracting object or detail.

Of course, the results won't be perfect every time. But, as you'll discover in this issue's video tutorial, by using the Content-Aware Remove tool with the other tools in the Healing panel, you can usually tidy up images without having to import them into Photoshop.



EXPERT TIP

We've supplied 10 profiles with your video. Import them into Camera Raw or Lightroom. In Camera Raw, go to the Basic panel, click the Profile Browser grid, click the three-dot icon and choose Import Profiles and Presets. The profiles will sync to Lightroom. Check the box and you'll see a black-and-white overlay. This seeks out edge details by dividing the image into high-frequency (white) and low-frequency (black) areas. The slider lets you fine-tune the divide. The overlay makes it easier to detect sensor spots; paint with the Healing Brush to remove them.



COMPACT CAMERA TEST

EXPERT OPINION ON THE LATEST KIT



FUJIFILM X100VI

It looks like its predecessor, but it packs in some stealth upgrades

www.fujifilm.com £1,599/\$1,599

he overnight success of the Fujifilm X100V took everyone by surprise – and no one was more surprised than Fujifilm. The X100V was launched in 2020 as the fifth iteration of the brand's premium compact, and its sudden popularity among TikTok influencers led to a six-month waiting list to buy one.

Now Fujifilm is back with the X100VI. As with its predecessor, the premium vintage aesthetic is made for street and travel photographers who want a pocket-friendly camera. The X100 range is also one of the few

true rangefinder designs still being made, with the pricier manual-focus only Leica M11 the only other option with an optical viewfinder.

Key features

Externally, little has changed from the previous model, but when you have a viral success on your hands you don't want to rock the boat. The body and fixed 23mm lens are identical to the X100V's, with the major improvements hidden inside the camera. The X100VI sees a 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, birds and vehicles. For those who own the Fujifilm X100V, the question is whether the Fujifilm X100VI is worth the upgrade.

Build and handling

The design is near-identical to the X100V, but that repetition is no bad thing. The X100 series harks back to rangefinder film cameras from the film era, and the X100VI is built to a











- 1 The body (in a silver or black finish) and the 23mm lens are identical to the X100V.
- 2 The lens has a control ring, which by default controls the camera's digital zoom.
- **3** One minor quibble is with the grip, as there isn't really a huge amount to cling onto.
 - 4 One of the X100VI's highlights is the hybrid optical viewfinder: in use, it's a great experience.
 - 5 If you prefer an electronic viewfinder, a flick of a switch swaps the screen for a 3.69m-dot OLED EVF.
- 6 The screen only has a 90° horizontal tilt, limiting its usefulness for filming as you can't flip the screen.
- 7 There are two dials on the top one handles exposure compensation, and the other shutter speed.
- 8 The shutter speed dial has a clever trick whereby you just lift and twist to set the ISO value.
- **9** Aperture is changed via a ring with two raised handles, which is easy to turn with one finger.

premium standard that feels fantastic in the hand.

Fujifilm remains committed to dials on its cameras, and there are two on top, one handling exposure compensation and the other shutter speed. This shutter speed dial also has a clever trick whereby you can lift and twist it to change the ISO. The aperture is handled by the ring on the lens, which has two raised textured handles and is easy enough to turn with one finger, and the clicks at each aperture stop are audible if you don't want to take your eye off the viewfinder. But if you just want to point and shoot, you don't have to worry about these - all the dials have an auto setting, or you can mix manual with auto to shoot in aperture priority or shutter priority modes. And like other Fujifilm cameras, if you'd prefer some manual control, you can delve into the







menu and set the camera up to cycle through aperture and shutter speed using the thumb and finger wheels.

As noted, the lens is unchanged from the X100V – although that was an outstanding revision, and offers incredible sharpness. The 23mm focal length is spot on for

a compact camera, as it works for travel, street and environmental portraiture, although I would have liked a wider aperture to expand lowlight performance and creativity with shallow focus. There's also a control ring on the lens - while you can set this to several different functions in







the settings, by default it controls the camera's digital zoom – that's digital zoom, not optical, so the camera will crop the image for a smaller pixel count. Where the X100V's 24.1MP sensor limited the digital cropping's effectiveness, the 40MP sensor in the X100VI seems made for this feature, with 50mm (20MP) and 70mm (10MP) crops still holding a lot of resolution.

The lens is compatible with the existing wide and tele lens converters released alongside the X100V. One frustration for anyone who wants to put a filter on the front of their lens, though, is the required additional purchase of a filter adapter ring (AR-X100) – it's also the only way to make the lens water-resistant.

One of the highlights of the X100 series is the hybrid optical viewfinder – one of the last remaining optical viewfinders in a world full of EVFs. Due to the rangefinder design, the





Although our lab tests showed increased noise from the X100VI compared to the X100V, many of our test shots were taken at night, and even at ISO 6400 or 12,800 images were usable

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 that you know what's in your shot. It takes some getting used to initially, but after a while it becomes second nature. If you prefer to use an electronic viewfinder, a flick of the front switch activates the 3.69 milliondot OLED EVF.

The screen is a 1.62 million-dot LCD panel, and while vloggers might be disappointed to hear that the screen still doesn't flip around so that you can see yourself while you're recording, it does tilt by 90 degrees, and still sits beautifully flush with the camera body.

One minor quibble with the build is the grip. Though it's more substantial than the X-E4's, there isn't a huge

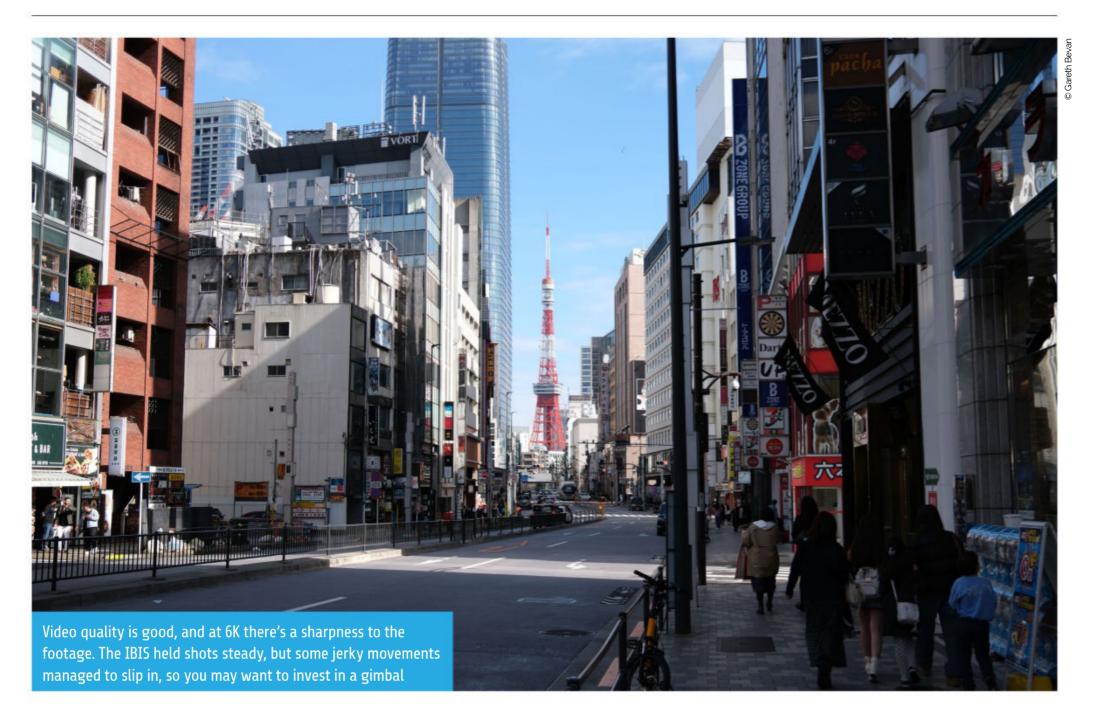












"EXTERNALLY, LITTLE HAS CHANGED FROM THE PREVIOUS MODEL, BUT WHEN YOU HAVE A VIRAL SUCCESS, YOU DON'T ROCK THE BOAT"



The lens is compatible with wide and tele lens converters released with the X100V - however, if you want to use filters, you'll need to purchase a filter adapter ring

amount to cling onto, and your little finger will be lost as to what to do with itself.

Performance

The X100V set some lofty expectations with its outstanding image quality, but the X100VI exceeds them. Edge to edge, images are sharp and detailed, with excellent contrast. Fujifilm's colour science is among my favourites, and in the standard Provia simulation colours are pleasing, with a good balance of natural colour and saturation. If you don't like that, there are always another 20 simulations to try.

In our lab tests, noise at higher ISOs takes a hit over the X100V due

to smaller photosites on this highermegapixel sensor, but in real-world use this is far less noticeable. I shot the neon lights of Tokyo at night with this camera and, even at ISO 6400 or 12,800, images were usable, and didn't look any noisier to the naked eye than images from the X100V. Peeping in the corners, there doesn't seem to be any obvious softness or vignetting in JPEGs, even when stopped down to f/2.

Autofocus is improved, and makes the older model feel significantly slower. On the X100VI, AF is quick and silent, and in continuous focus the camera had no problem holding focus on my subject as they wandered about the frame.

As well as human faces and eyes, the X100VI's autofocus also now recognises subjects including animals, birds, cars and other vehicles. Some of these options feel less essential on a 23mm fixed-lens camera, but they're good to have, and vehicle tracking worked well in my testing.





"THE X100V SET SOME LOFTY EXPECTATIONS FOR ITS IMAGE QUALITY; THE X100VI EXCEEDS THEM"



Images from the X100VI are sharp and detailed, with excellent contrast. Fujifilm's colour science is renowned, and the standard Provia simulation colours are pleasing, with a good balance of natural colour and saturation – and there are a further 20 simulations to choose from

Battery life is still a weak point for the X100 series. It was my main gripe about the X100V, and although the new processor is meant to improve efficiency it hasn't moved the needle that much. During a few intensive days of shooting I was easily burning through a battery or two a day, so it's advisable to invest in a few spares.

Film simulations are one of the top selling points for Fuji cameras, and Fujifilm has taken the number of film simulations up to 20 – adding the Reala Ace simulation to an X-Series camera for the first time.



SENSOR: 40.2MP X-TRANS CMOS 5 HR
SENSOR PROCESSOR: X-PROCESSOR 5
LENS: FIXED FUJINON 23MM F/2.0 II (35MM
EQUIVALENT) VIEWFINDER: 3.69M-DOT
OLED EVF / OVF HYBRID SCREEN: 3.0IN 1.62M-DOT 2-WAY TILT TOUCH LCD
MAX BURST: 11FPS (MANUAL SHUTTER),
20FPS (ELECTRONIC SHUTTER) IMAGE
STABILISATION: IN-BODY ONLY, 6.0 STOPS
VIDEO: 6.2K 30P, 4K 60P, HD240P, 4:2:2
10-BIT, F-LOG, F-LOG2 MEMORY: 1 X SD/
SDHC/SDXC, UHS-I SIZE (L X H X D): 128
X 75 X 55MM WEIGHT: 521G (INCLUDING
BATTERY AND MEMORY CARD)

Film simulations are lots of fun on their own, but also a quick and easy way to stylise a photo right out of the camera. For the more creative, they're also a great building block for recipes to produce even more complex and accurate film looks.

Video performance gets a boost from the new sensor and processor. The X100VI tops out at 6K 30p footage, although this has a 1.23x crop, which makes the 23mm lens a 28mm lens (or a 42mm full frame equivalent). The X100VI is also capable of 4K 60p footage without a crop, or 1080p footage up to 240p. Video recording is good - filming at 6K, there's a real sharpness to the footage. The IBIS also managed to hold my static shots steady, and panning was definitely improved, but if video is your priority there are more suitable cameras. Overall, the X100VI is a great stills camera that also shoots good video when needed.

Gareth Bevan

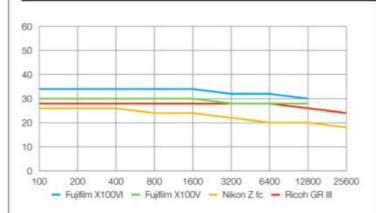
VERDICT

Fujifilm's uber-popular compact returns, and while not much has changed externally, inside it's a different story. The new sensor takes the renowned quality of the previous model and pushes it further. Image quality is excellent, autofocus is faster, and video has been greatly improved. One sore point is the battery life, which hasn't really improved from the previous model. The X100VI is also more expensive than the X100V, and it might be more than some are willing to pay for a fixed-lens compact – you'd have to value this design over cheaper but similarly specced cameras.



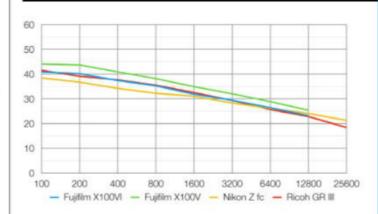
LAB TESTS

RESOLUTION (LINE WIDTHS/PICTURE HEIGHT)



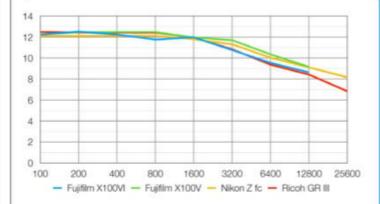
We tested the X100VI against the Fujifilm X100V, the Nikon Z fc and the Ricoh GR III. Fujifilm's switch from a 26.1MP to 40.2MP sensor pays dividends when it comes to resolving fine detail, with the X100VI leading the pack at all sensitivities, and capturing noticeably more detail than the X100V.

SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO (DECIBELS)



The X100VI can't match the X100V for image noise levels. Cramming extra pixels onto the same-sized APS-C sensor means each photosite (pixel) is smaller, making it more likely to generate noise.

DYNAMIC RANGE (EV)



At higher sensitivities the X100VI falls short of the X100V, capturing around 1EV less dynamic range between ISO 3200 and 12,800. Pixel-packed sensors benefit resolution, but impact the dynamic range.





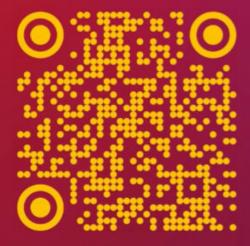


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