Tuesday 17 February 2026

Amateur Photographer

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Marvellous Mamiya

John Wade on the varied output of one of Japan's most prolific brands

Albert Watson

The fashion and portrait legend reflects on his 50-year career

Viltrox 14mm F4

Full-frame AF ultrawide under £200 – too good to be true?

Taliban tales

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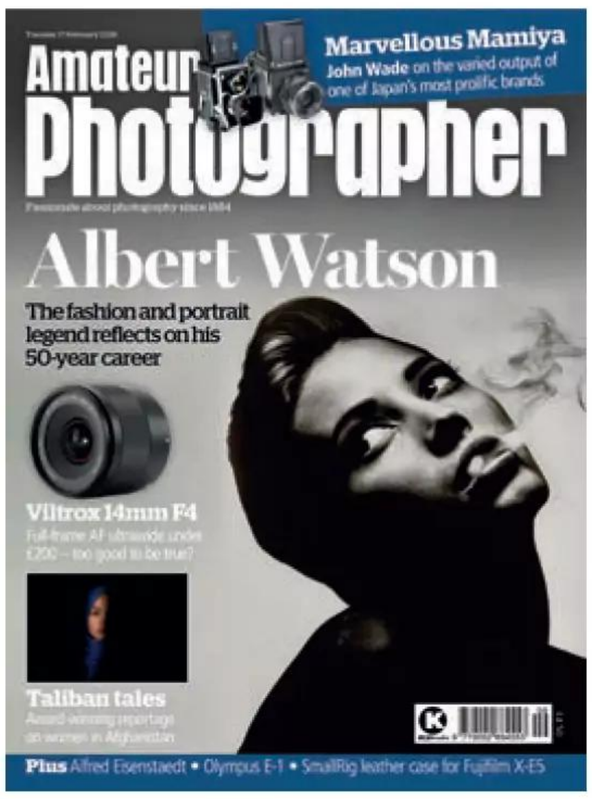
Welcome

There aren't many photographers still standing from what I'd consider to be the golden age of fashion and celebrity portrait photography so I'm thrilled to be able to bring you an exclusive interview with the great Albert Watson in this week's issue. I don't know if Albert ever used Mamiya cameras but I certainly did. I've owned or used an M645, an RB67, a C220 and a Mamiya 7 over the years, and loved them all. This week John Wade pays tribute to one of the most enduring Japanese brands with perhaps the greatest variety of camera types and designs. They're still in demand today; you can find bargains if you look. Speaking of bargains, Chinese lenses used to be considered cheap but poor-quality – but no longer, as our test of the cheap but surprisingly good Viltrox AF 14mm illustrates. See you next week! **Nigel Atherton, Editor**



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Albert Watson's portrait of supermodel Christy Turlington graces our cover this week. Read our interview on page 12

THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

PETER DENCH
Acting Features Ed

Peter interviews fashion and portrait legend Albert Watson about his long career

AILSA MCWHINNIE

Ailsa finds out more about an acclaimed work on the quiet strength of Afghan women

JOHN WADE

Our expert on vintage cameras looks at Mamiya, one of Japan's most versatile camera makers

ANDY WESTLAKE
Technical Editor

Our resident chief reviewer tests the lightweight and great-value Viltrox AF 14mm f/4 Air

ANGELA NICHOLSON

Photo gear expert Angela tests the SmallRig Leather Case Kit for Fujifilm X-E5

JESSICA MILLER
Dep Online Editor

Manager of our social media channels, Jessica picks great reader shots on page 42

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Canon PowerShot G7 X Mark III Anniversary Edition

The Anniversary Edition camera

To mark 30 years of Canon's PowerShot brand of fixed-lens compacts, the firm has released a special Anniversary Edition of the PowerShot G7 X Mark III. It comes in a new graphite finish, sports an anniversary logo on the top, a 'twill pattern' on the control ring around the lens, and comes in a special display box. Otherwise, though, the Anniversary Edition is no different spec-wise to the stock G7 X Mark III. It has a 20MP 1in type sensor, a 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 zoom, and a tilting 3in touchscreen. You get contrast-detect autofocus, complete with face detection. But there are none of the subject recognition modes that have become standard on new cameras.

There is also a new battery for the range, the NB-15L. It uses the same charger, and is fully back-compatible with other older cameras that use the NB-13L. The only difference, says Canon, is that 'to improve safety, charging is disabled if the battery has been over-discharged'.

The Canon PowerShot G7 X Mark III costs £859.99, which represents a £40 premium over the standard model. Bought separately, the Canon NB-15L battery costs £72.99.

New Canon RF lenses too

Canon has also added two lenses to its RF lens lineup. The RF 14mm F1.4 L VCM should appeal to those shooting astro, landscapes, architecture and interiors. It's a similar size to its F1.4 L hybrid range siblings but is distinguished by its bulbous front element and integrated hood. This means it's about the same size as Sony's FE 14mm F1.8 G, and less than half the weight of Sigma's 14mm F1.4 DG DN, at 578g.

This is made possible by a strikingly complex 18-element, 13-group optical design, including an array of special elements to minimise chromatic aberration and coma blur. There's also a lens control ring, an aperture ring, and weather-sealing. The Canon RF 14mm F1.4 L VCM will be available from 26 February for £2,399.99.

The Canon RF 7-14mm F2.8-3.5L Fisheye STM, meanwhile, is designed for full-frame cameras. It provides a circular image at 7mm with a 190° angle of view, zooming in to give an image that covers the frame at 14mm, with a 180° diagonal view. Also available on 26 February, it will cost £1,719.99.

The Canon RF 14mm F1.4 L VCM lens

New OM System OM-3 Astro camera

OM System has announced the OM-3 Astro camera, based on the existing OM-3 but featuring an enhanced infrared cut filter for capturing deep-sky objects. The company claims that this enables vivid red nebula capture.

The OM System OM-3 Astro will cost £1,899

Other key features include a TruePic X image processor delivering high-sensitivity astrophotography performance, a High Res Shot stacking mode producing approximately 50MP images with enhanced detail and reduced noise, dedicated astrophotography colour profiles and custom modes for easy night sky shooting.

There are also advanced in-camera tools including Starry Sky AF, Live Composite, and Night View for long-exposure imaging.

The OM System OM-3 Astro goes on sale at the end of the month for £1,899. More details can be found at bit.ly/OM3astro

© CALLA FLEISCHER PHOTOGRAPHY

The domino effect

This striking, black & white street portrait from Cuba is one of the many images in *Stories Untold*, a new book by travel photographer and adventurer Calla Fleischer. The 400-page book features over a decade of photographs from ten countries: Cuba, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Morocco, Myanmar, Portugal, South Africa, Turkey and the USA (where the South Africa-born Fleischer currently lives). Designed as a fine-art coffee table book, it's available now for £185 from bit.ly/cfuntoldstories

This image by travel photographer and adventurer Calla Fleischer is from *Stories Untold*, her new book

Compact shipments up 30%

According to the latest data from CIPA – the trade body for Japan's camera makers – shipments of compact cameras grew 30% last year. The actual numbers could be much higher, however, as the CIPA data doesn't include Amazon chart-topper Kodak, or indeed Leica. There has also been a 12% increase in mirrorless camera shipments – Sony remains number one in the market for the third year running – but a 31% slump in shipments of DSLRs.

You can see the full CIPA results at bit.ly/latestcipadata

Compacts remain big in Japan

New Billingham leisure bags

Billingham has introduced a new range of leisure bags, including two handbags and a tote bag, inspired by 'the unsung heroes of the film set.' The smallest handbag, named Dolly Grip, features a double-grip close and internal pockets; the medium-sized Key Grip, with removable shoulder sling strap, costs £359; and the largest capacity Best Boy Tote Bag, again with shoulder strap, costs £426. See billingham.co.uk

Billingham's new range of bags

Viewpoint
Gavin Stoker

Is re-issuing a six-year-old camera really the best Canon can do, asks our columnist?

Making us all feel old, Canon is celebrating 30 years of its enthusiast-targeted PowerShot compact camera range (see page 4). Now, anything that keeps us all talking about it is generally a good thing. But, from what we've seen so far, it's rather a muted celebration.

Why? Well, to mark the anniversary, it's announced a re-issue of its almost seven-year-old PowerShot G7 X Mark III from 2019 as a special edition in a new graphite colour, as opposed to black. And in a special box, it claims.

I guess we shouldn't be too surprised. Canon has recent form for choosing to tart up past glories rather than keep innovating. Its IXUS 285 HS A was brought back on sale late last year a decade after its original announcement – and with only the most minor of minor tweaks. Given resurgent demand for family-friendly compact digicams, its re-appearance did make some sense, although a straight re-issue seemed a little lazy. Its soft relaunch also meant it flew under the radar of some photo retailers, though we understand demand is currently exceeding supply.

As the 2026 iteration of the PowerShot G7 X Mark III is being marketed as a 'special edition', the inference is that supply will be limited too – and it won't be around forever.

So, is this really the best Canon can do? The answer, looking back over its long and illustrious history, is surely not.

G whizz – or G swizz?

A special edition G7 X III with the same 20.1MP 1in sensor is a product that seems to be fulfilling some imaginary collectors' niche, rather than driving the series forward for photographers. In fact, the lack of anything tangibly new seems to indicate that Canon itself has doubts over its own relevance, as least regarding the still photo market. Again,

© CANON

Canon PowerShot G7 X Mark III Anniversary Edition

we shouldn't be surprised. Of late the focus of Canon and its rivals has been largely 'video first', with content creators, online influencers and YouTubers firmly in their sights. Witness the video-centric PowerShot V1 from 2025.

That might make cold, hard, business sense, but what I'd like to see is a new, dedicated 'stills first' PowerShot. I don't mind if externally it trades on past glories with a retro look, which in turn, ironically, could win it a new audience. In this regard Canon could do far worse than look to Fuji's X100VI for inspiration.

Looking to its own range, Canon re-imagining the portable PowerShot G5 X Mark II, announced alongside the G7 X III in 2019 – perhaps now with the same large 1.4in sensor as 2025's V1 – or updating the SLR-styled APS-C sensor G1 X Mark III from 2017 with the latest tech, would be a great start.

Of course it takes time to develop a new camera, and the anniversary actually falls in May – the month the original PowerShot 600 was launched. So fingers crossed that Canon plans to release a new, up-to-date photographers' compact around that date. That would feel like something worth celebrating, while proving a more noteworthy way of marking 30 years of Canon serving photographers via PowerShot.

Gavin Stoker has been writing about and reviewing all things photographic for the best part of 25 years.

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the email address on page 3 and win a year's digital subscription to AP.

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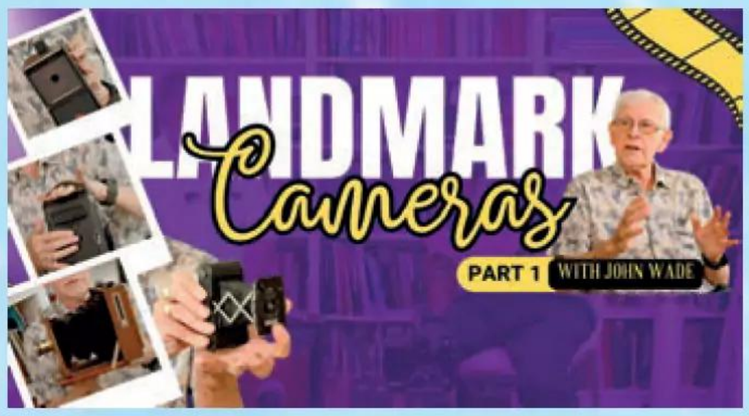

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Clockwise from left:

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Untitled #285

Fashion by Mark Power

£80, GOST Publishing, Hardcover, 520 pages, 287 images, ISBN: 9781805980001

With *Fashion*, Mark Power turns his forensic attention to the act of making itself, says **Peter Dench**

Fashion spans 27 years and 23 countries, drawing together photographs made by Power, mostly while on commission at construction sites, factories, shipyards, foundries and theatres. These are places where materials are shaped, assembled and transformed. There are no captions, dates or locations which helps free the images from their original contexts and reassembles them into something more elusive, at times even poetic.

Sequencing is central to the effect, as with many of Power's books. The pages don't follow chronology or geography but unfold through visual echoes – shapes, colour and light. It's clever without being pompous.

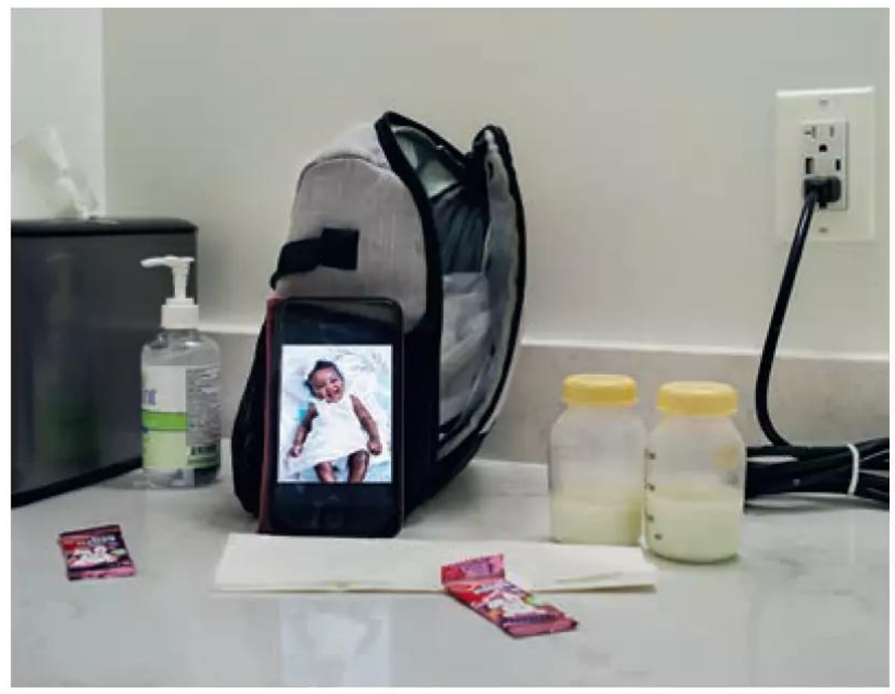
The influence of Mike Mandel and Larry Sultan's book *Evidence* (1977) is acknowledged but Power manages to avoid mimicking. *Evidence* revels in institutional absurdity, *Fashion* is more measured, finding humour in the detail like a scuffed shoe, rows of immaculate white gloves drying or a cupboard of carefully arranged brooms.

As you'd expect from one of Magnum Photos' more prolific members, the photographs are meticulously composed, often made with large-format cameras that reward slowness and precision. There's a nice rhythm to the book – vast architectural structures sit alongside close observations of tools, textures and traces of human presence. Labour is implied through marks rather than showing the body at work.

The number of pages (520) risks overdoing it. You'll need to be patient; not every sequence carries equal weight, but it does build through the repetition. Underlying the book is an argument about authorship within the commercial sphere. Power's long-standing insistence on artistic autonomy, negotiated before he presses the shutter, allows these images to transcend their commissioned origins. Ultimately *Fashion* becomes a testament to what is possible when trust and creative freedom are built into the process.

Books & exhibitions

The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography



© CORINNE MAY BOTZ / SAINT LUCY BOOKS.

Administration Specialist

Milk Factory, by Corinne May Botz

$50, Saint Lucy Books, Hardcover, 130 pages, ISBN: 9798989960248

It wasn't the book I was immediately drawn to for review from the latest stack heaved in by the postman. However, *Milk Factory* addresses an underrepresented subject – the largely invisible act of lactation in contemporary America.

Corinne May Botz photographs lactation rooms across an eclectic range of environments: corporate offices, prisons, schools, airports and government buildings. What she seeks to expose is the 'hidden architecture of care'. As a social and political proposition, it's hard to argue with the project. As a photobook, it's less convincing.

Using a large-format camera, Botz creates carefully composed, neutral images of interiors. We see breast pumps, chairs, curtained corners, improvised furnishings. The intention is that these spaces are shaped by necessity rather than care. What is revealed is how parenting is barely accommodated within systems that prioritise productivity.

The accompanying texts do the conceptual lifting. Essays by Hettie Judah and Mathilde Cohen provide historical, legal and feminist frameworks that articulate the stakes more sharply than the photographs. The first-hand testimonies from women who pump at work are among the book's strongest elements. These offer urgency, anger and vulnerability that the images themselves struggle to deliver. Perhaps *Milk Factory* would function more successfully as an interdisciplinary document than a purely photographic endeavour.

Photographing these banal, functional lactation rooms repeatedly, risks aestheticising limitations rather than challenging them. Without including the body, conceptually defensible, also drains the work of physical tension. What remains is an archive of surfaces over experience. Yet *Milk Factory* deserves attention for the conversation it amplifies. **PD**

ALL IMAGES ALFRED EISENSTAEDT AND PETER STACKPOLE, © LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION, DOTDASH MEREDITH CORPORATION

Left: 'She likes nothing in the world quite so much as tearing across the water in a motorboat with Ponti,' *Life* reported. Near Naples, 1961

Below: 'We had to cover every window with rugs and shawls to keep the daylight out. I had artificial light,' Eisenstaedt told John Loengard in 1992 about shooting Loren and her sons. He remarked on how photographers like him always leave a mess. Loren said, 'But you are not a photographer. You are a friend.' Paris, 1976

Bottom: Chaplin was the ultimate auteur. For *A Countess from Hong Kong* he orchestrated Loren's performance to be less overtly physical than usual. She told *LIFE,* 'Charlie restrains me to a new style, never flamboyant.'

Sophia by Eisenstaedt

£850, TASCHEN, Edition of 1,000, Hardcover in clamshell box, 268 pages

TASCHEN's *Sophia* is a deeply human portrait of one of cinema's most enduring icons, seen through the lens of the photographer who understood her best. Drawn from *LIFE* magazine's archives and restored from original negatives, the book is presented as a collector's edition. Nearly two decades' worth of Alfred Eisenstaedt's colour and black & white photographs of Sophia Loren have been curated in this sumptuous tome.

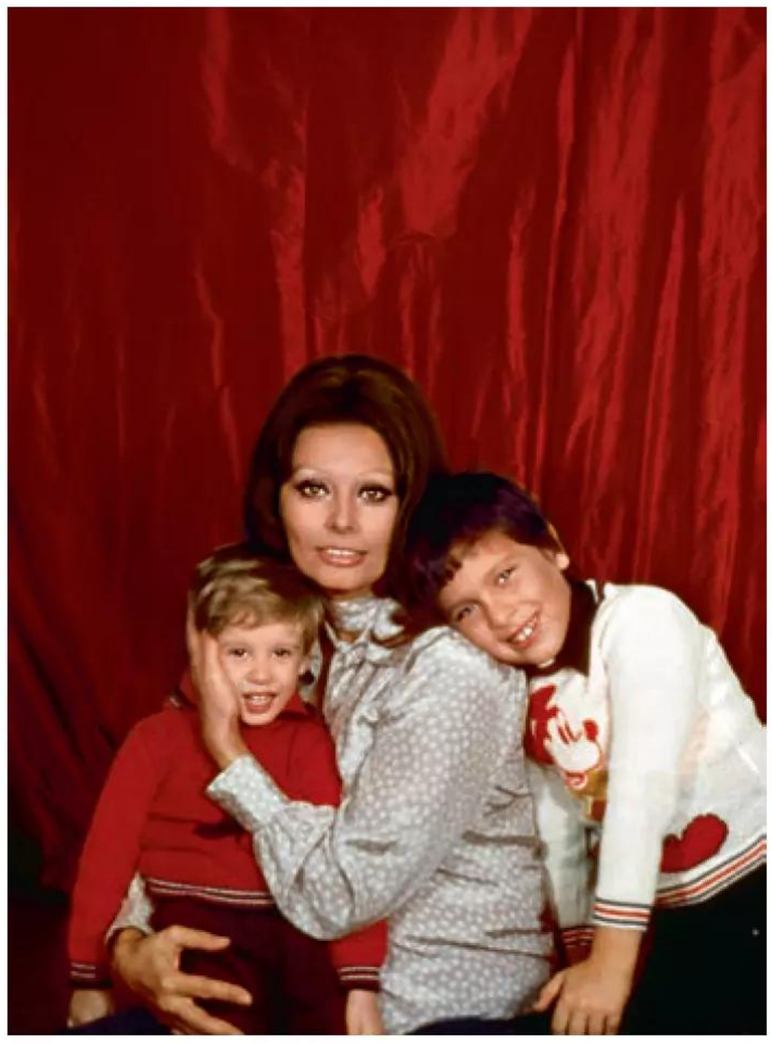
One of *LIFE*'s most celebrated staff photographers, Eisenstadt approached Loren with modesty as well as recognising her as a star. His gentle manner paired with an unobtrusive Leica allowed him to slip into her world with rare intimacy. The book combines images on sets, streets, villas and family homes. Loren comes across as radiant and spirited, grounded and good-humoured. For a life most of us will never experience, it's oddly relatable.

There are early pictures revealing Loren's slow emergence as an 'Italian' icon. She had played characters from Egypt, Spain and Greece before becoming a symbol of her nation. Her identity unformed in the eyes of audiences. Eisenstaedt's images from the early 1960s capture the moment that changed. The photographs reveal her growing confidence, her partnership with Carlo Ponti and her deep connection to Naples and family.

The 1960s brought the golden age of Italian cinema. Loren excelled and her screen partnership with Marcello Mastroianni was one for the ages. Eisenstadt captured her through period dramas, comedies and Hollywood epics. There are images of motherhood, a role Loren embraced with the same presence she brought to the screen. The photographs of Loren with her newborn son are among the book's most interesting.

Sophia could have been just another star portrait photobook. What elevates it is the relationship between Loren and Eisenstaedt who she called her 'shadow.' Here we see her at ease, unguarded, often playful, a testament to Eisenstadt's approach. There's undeniable rapport. This allows a fuller truth to emerge beyond a Hollywood pin-up.

TASCHEN editions are prone to celebration rather than criticism, and why not. With the magnetism of Sophia Loren and Eisenstadt's eye, it's a difficult book to ignore – along with the price. **PD**



© DOSP POLLY RUSYN

Stop Looking, Start Seeing: Learn a Proven Framework to Improve Your Street Photography by Polly Rusyn

£24.50, Amazon, Hardcover, 119 pages, ISBN: 9798268499957

Stop Looking, Start Seeing attempts to teach the craft of street photography with clarity, structure and scientific grounding. What is rare is that it also retains a joyfulness and spontaneity.

The book expands on Rusyn's popular weekend workshops. What emerges is a thoughtful and accessible guide written and designed to push photographers beyond instinct towards intentional seeing.

The book is built around eight progressive assignments. A total of 88 of Rusyn's own distinct photographs are used to illustrate the principles at play. It's a refreshing approach. Instead of leaning on mystique or gatekeeping, she articulates the mechanics of perception, drawing on psychology, neuroscience and graphic design to explain why certain images work and how photographers can train themselves to recognise moments before they happen.

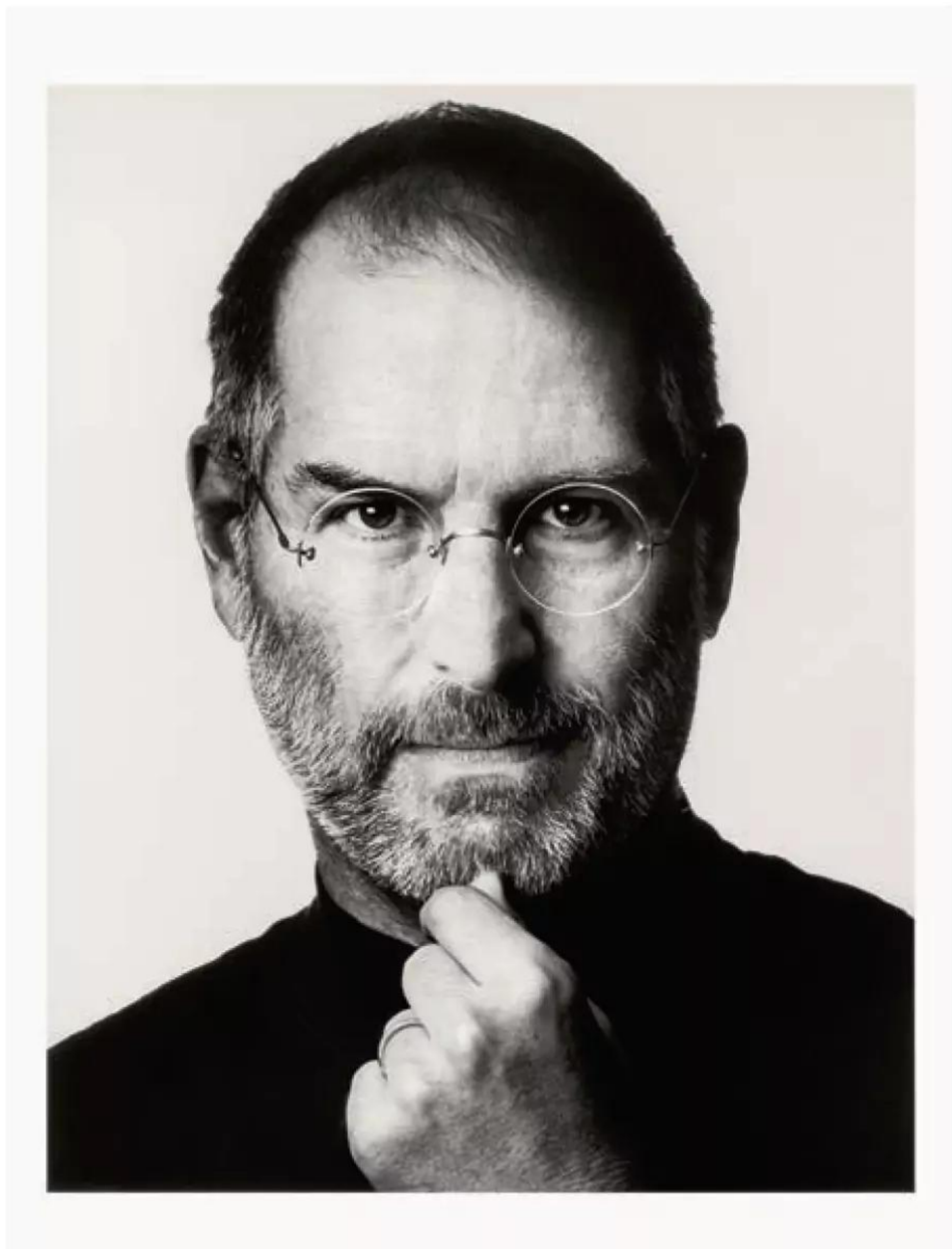
One of the book's strongest qualities is its tone. Street photography has long been dominated by male voices, often accompanied by bravado, opacity, or the suggestion of secret knowledge. Rusyn writes with warmth and humour. It's conversational, inviting the reader into an ongoing dialogue rather than a feeling of being lectured. The 'secret chapters' broaden the scope further, offering personal reflections that encourage readers to think about their motivations, blind spots and habits – both visual and emotional.

Self-published via Amazon's print-on-demand system, the page quality may not be premium but it's a book to be used not preserved. The book is also testament to independent initiative. Early reception has been enthusiastic including a five-star review and praise from respected New York street photographer Paul Kessel who commends the book for finally giving perception its due place in photographic learning.

Stop Looking, Start Seeing should help readers improve their street photography and help understand the act of looking itself. It's practical, thoughtful, genuinely encouraging. Overall a valuable companion for beginners and seasoned shooters alike. **PD**

The art of being ready

With the release of a new edition of *Kaos*, Albert Watson looks back on five decades of image-making. He talks to Peter Dench about memorability, scale, editing and why authority is established long before the shutter is pressed



When Steve Jobs, the visionary co-founder, chairman, and CEO of Apple Inc walked into the studio in 2006, photographer Albert Watson knew immediately what the problem was.'He looked around, and I knew straight away what he was thinking: you're not ready,' Watson recalls.

Jobs was known for his hypersensitivity to detail and impatience with imprecision. Watson understood that before a word was said. 'With somebody like that, you have to be completely buttoned up,' he says. Watson had done his research. There was no elaborate lighting or theatricals. Watson waited for his moment and offered a single instruction. 'I said to him, 'Imagine you're sitting across a boardroom table and everybody on the other side is disagreeing with you but you know you're right.' Then click!

The resulting portrait shot on film is stark, frontal, almost confrontational in its simplicity. It has become one of the most recognisable images of Jobs ever made. It was used on the cover of Jobs' biography and Apple's tribute, with Jobs later calling it his favourite photo. It looks effortless but was all in the preparation.

Watson is talking to me via WhatsApp from his New York studio. Thanksgiving has just passed. His son and daughter-in-law cooked a beautiful meal. After more than five decades behind the camera, Watson insists that preparation over spontaneity, is the foundation of his legacy. Whether photographing cultural icons or anonymous subjects, he believes authority is established before the shutter is released. 'You don't just say, Oh yeah, he's the head of Apple, I'll take the picture tomorrow. You have to know who you're dealing with. That knowledge becomes part of the communication.'

It's not just about psychology. It's technical, spatial and physical. Watson is famously precise about lighting, but rejects rigid setups. He explains, 'I need a few minutes to adjust because I don't really know how a person is going to react to the light.' He's scathing about being formulaic. 'I walk past rental studios and see the same big umbrella in the same position for three days. The light never moves. Faces are landscapes, noses are mountains, lips have depth. You have to respond to that.' The challenge, he says, is to do this while maintaining a human connection. 'You can't just say, 'Stand there, don't move, don't talk.' You have to talk to the person and analyse what the light is doing at the same time.' An analogy he often returns to in interviews is like driving a car. 'At first it's impossible. Then it becomes automatic. Eventually, you're driving, watching traffic, having a conversation all at once. Photography should get to that point.'

Above: Steve Jobs, Cupertino, California, 2006

Right: Jack Nicholson, Aspen, Colorado, 1981

Thinking in rectangles

If there's a single thread running through Watson's vast and eclectic body of work, from fashion and portraiture to still life, reportage and landscape, it is graphic thinking. 'I was trained as a graphic designer before anything else. Everything about photography is what you put in the rectangle. Every photographer is dealing with a

ALL IMAGES © ALBERT WATSON, 2025

Paul Simonon The Clash, Polaroid, New York City, 1991

rectangle,' he says with a soft Scottish lilt.

That training explains the coherence behind what might otherwise appear chaotic. His book *KAOS* was first released in 2017. The new edition is smaller, unsigned and more affordably priced. It jumps between subjects with little warning: Elvis Presley's Gold Lamé Suit, a monkey with a gun, a NASA spacesuit, a Scottish landscape, a Benin beach. The connection is visual, not thematic. 'I like the mix. You never know what's on the next page,' he says.

Watson traces his approach back to the photography auction catalogues he collected decades ago. 'You'd see Victorian photographs, then Walker Evans, then Avedon. That unpredictability kept you looking.' Watson was sequencing images this way long before social media. 'Now people scroll from India to China to Birmingham to Los Angeles in seconds. It makes sense to me.'

Memorability

Watson recalls that he was only a couple of years into his career when he was commissioned to photograph film director Alfred Hitchcock. The resulting portrait of Hitchcock holding a plucked goose was surprisingly strong, hinting at the graphic clarity and memorability that would come to define his later work along with the image of Mick Jagger as a Leopard, a naked Kate Moss and Mike Tyson's neck.

When I mention the word 'iconic' I sense Watson bristles a little but he's clear about what matters. 'What you're really looking for, is a secret formula of memorability,' he says and offers a simple test. 'If I say Mike Tyson, you can sketch the picture from memory. That's what you're aiming for.' Memorability, he insists, is sometimes about restraint, not the same as complexity or perfection which the Jobs portrait illustrates: 'Very simple. Well lit. But it has a certain air to it.'

That quality in *KAOS* may be difficult to define but is impossible to fake. Not all of Watson's images have endured and he admits that some of his most commercially successful fashion work didn't survive the transition to the book page. 'It worked brilliantly for magazines but when I went to make books, it just wasn't heavy enough.'

Thinking big

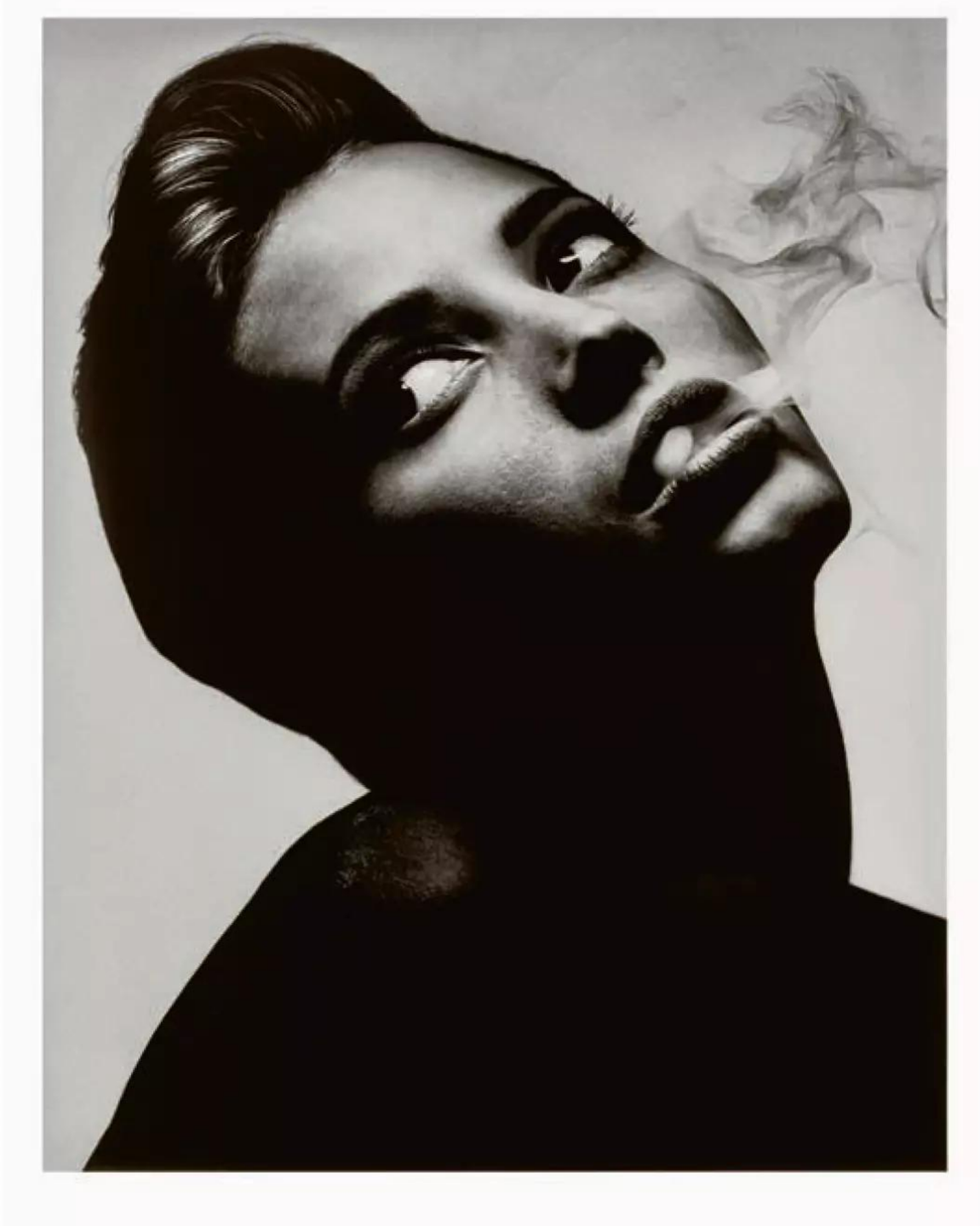
Watson thinks of photographs beyond being reproduced on a printed page. He is always aware of scale. 'When I photographed Elvis's possessions at Graceland, I wanted them shot very straight, almost like passport photographs but of such high quality that they could be printed incredibly large,' he explains.

That mindset has been constant – whether photographing Tutankhamun's golden glove in Cairo or landscapes on the Isle of Skye, Watson often has the final presentation already in mind. 'Shooting for 8ft prints is a different discipline. You're thinking about detail, texture, how the eye moves across the surface.' This concern with scale isn't about spectacle for its own sake. It's about presence. 'Some pictures can take it. Others fall apart. You find out very quickly which ones were really resolved.'

For Watson, books, exhibitions and commissions are not separate worlds but interconnected ones. Images that survive the jump from magazine page to gallery wall earn their longevity. He explains, 'You can't only think about where the picture appears tomorrow. You have to think about whether it

Cindy Sherman, Polaroid, New York City, 1994

Boy George, Polaroid, New York City, 1996



Christy Turlington, New York City, 1990

Jude Law, Polaroid, London, 1996

will still hold your attention in ten years.'

Regret, luck and missed pictures

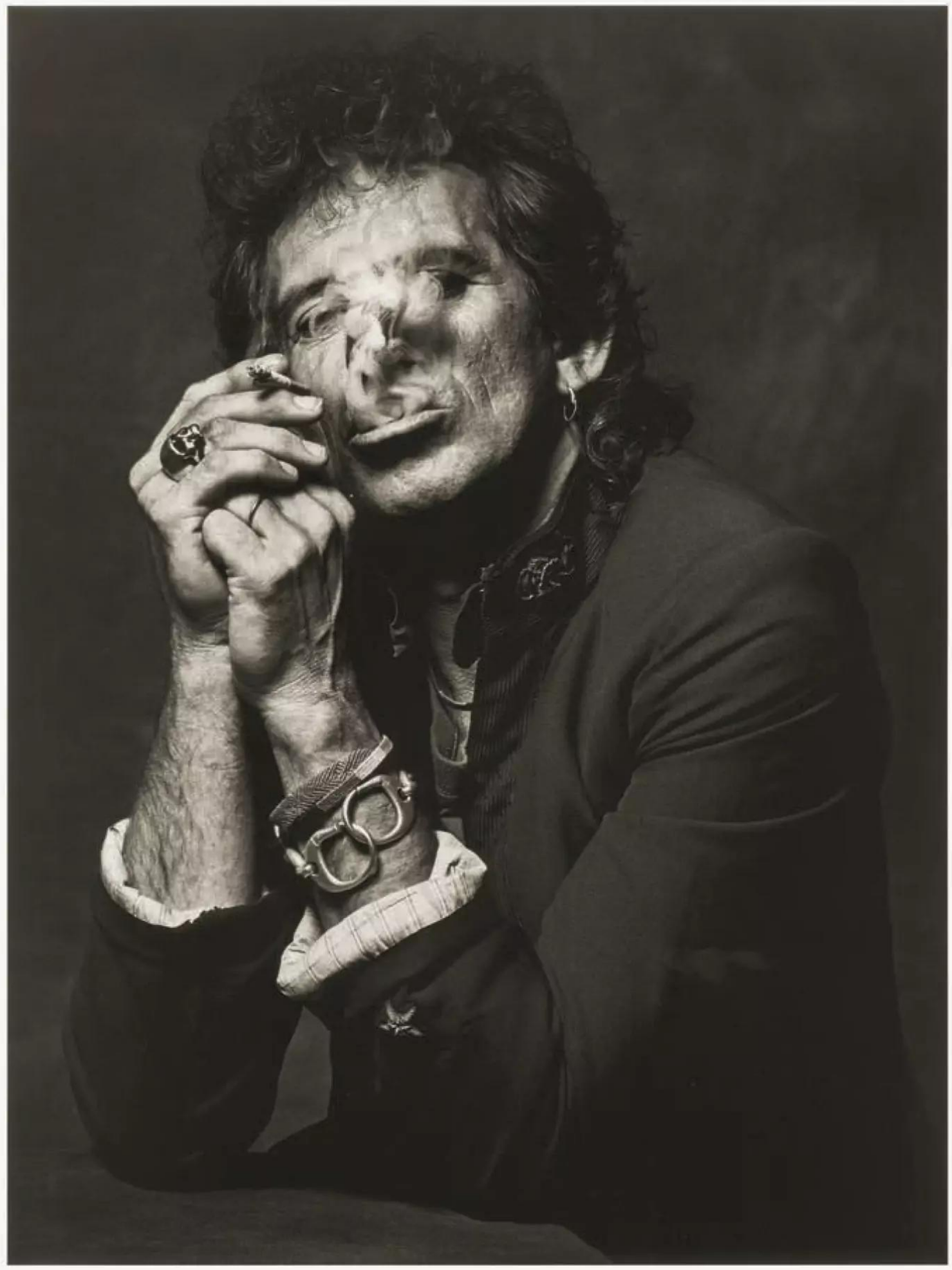
Watson may have a reputation for control but is candid about chance and about occasional missed opportunities. One image in *KAOS* still surprises him. It shows a young couple kissing in a car, caught almost accidentally as Watson was photographing nearby. 'I just swung the camera sideways and took the picture. When I look at it now, I wish I'd expanded that. I don't do that kind of picture enough,' he says with a sigh, adding, 'You have to work that muscle. Seeing quickly, pushing in that direction, it takes time. Even now.' Unsurprisingly, after decades of experience, Watson says he sees possibilities faster than ever. That doesn't mean they're easy to realise. 'People think you go out for three days and make ten great pictures. No chance. It takes much longer than that.'

Tools

Watson has witnessed major technological shifts in photography, from darkrooms to digital workflows to the current debates around artificial intelligence. His position is pragmatic rather than doctrinaire. 'The computer is the best thing that's happened to photographers since photography,' he says with conviction. Having spent decades printing his own work, he embraced digital post-production early, bringing everything in-house, opening up many doors. Film still matters to him, aesthetically and emotionally, but he rejects nostalgia. 'Young photographers sometimes think film will automatically make the picture better. It won't.'

Watson is cautious but curious about AI. He's uninterested in images generated wholesale by machines, but intrigued by accidents, by unexpected visual errors that can be repurposed by an artist's eye. 'It's how you use it. That's always been the job. To recognise something interesting and decide what to do with it,' he says.

With the scale of Watson's archive, it would be easy to slip into sentimentality but he remains cutthroat, insisting editing is where photographers reveal their seriousness. 'You have to be brutal. Just because something was difficult to make doesn't mean it deserves to live.' That philosophy translates into *KAOS* – the book resists chronology in favour of instinct. 'I don't want people to feel comfortable flipping through. I want them to stop, then reset, then look again,' is Watson's goal.

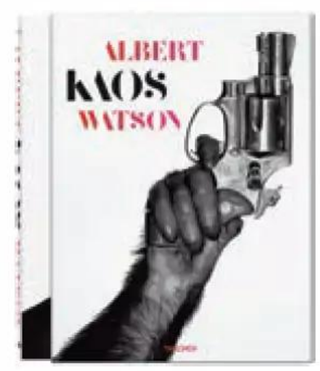


Keith Richards, New York City, 1988

Thinking in pictures

Now in his eighties, does Watson plan to slow things down? No chance. Preparation, he says, still consumes most of his time. New projects are always forming: abstractions that aren't abstract, large-scale prints, possible museum commissions in Italy. He says simply, 'I am a worker.' That's probably the Scottish Presbyterian background.

His father once described fashion photography as 'funny work for a man' but the work ethic stuck and he laughs at the memory. 'I've been thinking photographs every day for over half a century,' he says. Asked what keeps him going, Watson doesn't mention legacy or reputation. He returns instead to discipline – like going to the gym: 'You don't stop because you've been before.' That's the real lesson behind the images in *KAOS* we think we know so well. The memorability, the authority, the apparent ease, all of it rests on the same foundation. Being prepared.



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No woman's land

Their many years of experience living in Afghanistan made Kiana Hayeri and Melissa Cornet indisputable recipients of the 14th Carmignac Photojournalism Award. They talk to **Ailsa McWhinnie** about the women whose voices won't be silenced

A little bit of mind-reading can go a long way, particularly when you are two women – a researcher and a photographer – who have a history of working in the realm of human rights in one of the most complex countries in the world.

Mélissa Cornet, a French researcher, and Kiana Hayeri, an Iranian-Canadian photojournalist, had been friends and fans of each other's work for several years when the Fondation Carmignac put out a call for submissions to its annual photojournalism award on the theme of women in Afghanistan. Separately, the two had written lists and discussed with others the possibilities for the work. Mélissa planned to call Kiana to suggest they pair up, and Kiana – after writing a long list of pros and cons that included only one con – realised that Mélissa was the obvious person to work with. Their telepathy resulted in a successful bid and the body of work No Woman's Land, which has been published as a book and shown as an exhibition.

Common vision

Between them, they had lived in Afghanistan for 15 years, so it made sense for them to pool their experiences. 'It's a pretty tough environment to work in,' says Cornet, with some understatement. 'It would have been a very hard project to do on one's own, where it would have been just you working under the Taliban. You have to find ways to do the interviews safely – you can't really go there as a journalist. In terms of security, safety, and mental health, it made it obvious from the beginning that we wanted to apply as a team.'

For Hayeri, mental health was the only con that had appeared on her list. Because of an incident that had happened on a previous trip to the country, she had felt unable to go back. Teaming up with Cornet was the obvious solution. Fundamentally, what worked was that the two had a common vision of how to portray the women they spoke to and photographed in this highly collaborative project. 'We knew we didn't want to do a project that shows women in the way that a lot of media traditionally portray them,' explains Cornet, 'which is either the poor victim and/or the quote-unquote "liberated woman" who takes off her hijab. The reality was much more complex and nuanced.'

Crucially, it wasn't to be a case of Cornet interviewing the women and Hayeri photographing them later. Often, Hayeri would join in with her questions, while Cornet might help with the light and chat to the subject while they were being photographed. 'This joint understanding and vision was what made our collaboration so successful,' says Cornet.

Risk factors

Despite having spent so many years in Afghanistan, for security reasons Cornet and Hayeri used their NGO contacts in the country to set up the meetings. There were 'eyes and ears everywhere', as Cornet puts it, so their trusted contacts would assess any risk in advance. That risk was not only to the women involved – repercussions might include punishment of the woman and her family, and even her community, as well as accusations of collaboration – but also to Cornet and Hayeri.

With the aim of going beyond portraying the women usually seen in western media, the two travelled across seven provinces and met more than 100 women and girls across a broad cross-section of social, political and geographic positions in the country: some were young and educated, while others were from rural or economically strained backgrounds. Some, not surprisingly, wished to remain anonymous, and in these situations Hayeri would play with light, silhouettes and fabric to construct an image in which they couldn't be identified. Others would insist on their faces being shown – sometimes even those who had been expressly told not to by the man of the household. This would by necessity lead to discussions with the women about the implications and ethics of that 1/500sec capture.

'Does the woman understand the internet and social media, for example?' Cornet explains. 'Is she at risk if her photos end up online and the men of her family see it? If she's recognisable, would her family be in danger from the Taliban? And maybe her story is fine today, but in six months or a year or two things might change in a way that would make it dangerous for her. It was very important for us to respect their agency, because they live in a country where all agency is taken from them.'

Clockwise from left: Kabul, Afghanistan, April 22, 2024. Shahla, 21, is a radio host. 'Even laughter was banned. But we fight back, girls call us to say we give them hope'

Kabul, Afghanistan. February 6, 2024. Mannequins covered in plastic reflect the ban on showing any representation of women in public

Enjil District, Herat, Afghanistan, April 23, 2024. A girl walks through rubble months after an earthquake devastated her village in Herat province

Working separately within the same space would sometimes also facilitate the process. At times, Cornet would have to sit down with the head of the family – the male, of course – to discuss the process and while she was doing so, Hayeri might wander off and start to chat with the children or, at times, the women – quite an achievement, given the restricted domestic environment. These limitations directly shaped the body of work, because so many of the images were taken indoors, with a lot of the portraits having to be set up by windows.

Photographic approach

Hayeri came into the project with a clear idea of how she wanted to approach it. As a photojournalist who works primarily with the *New York Times*, she is accustomed to photographing in the classic

documentary style. For this project, however, she wanted to take a different tack. 'I wanted to do things that I couldn't do for a newspaper or magazine,' she explains. 'So first of all, I shot square format, because it's timeless and much slower. It even slows me down, which was great.'

And it was thanks to her partner – an Australian filmmaker who also lived in Afghanistan – that Hayeri hit on a particular motif for her work. 'A lot of his films had neon lights in them – bright purple, bright blue – and I became obsessed with it. I realised Afghans love neon! Ice-cream shops, restaurants, pizza shops, nighttime entertainment – it's all lit with neon lights. So Mélissa and I, we figured, okay we can't meet women outside of their homes, so instead we're going to bring neon lights into their homes and light the project that way.'

Despite the square-format camera slowing her down, Hayeri's photojournalistic mind meant she could be responsive to how the light is falling, what is happening in the background – all the things that help bring an image together. 'Two things Afghanistan has taught me – one is I've become very quick, very fast, because often things happen. It's also made me very patient. So I've learned the art of waiting an entire day to get an hour of shooting and you make the most out of that hour.'

After returning from Afghanistan, the pair spent an intense three days shaping the book of *No Woman's Land*. They laid out hundreds of prints, moving and regrouping them until themes began to emerge. With the help of photo editor Santiago Lyon, the chapters began to form.

'The last chapter is so simple – it's so poetic and yet so violent,' Hayeri says. 'I get goosebumps every time I look at it.'

Women of the Taliban

There is one particularly surprising aspect to the body of work. 'We wanted to access women that are not traditionally interviewed by the media,' Cornet explains, 'so we interviewed one woman who was the mother to many Taliban fighters.' This woman was particularly proud of the huge posters, printed on tarpaulin, that were given to her sons when they graduated from the madrassas – the religious schools where they trained to become fighters. She would have a recurring dream that foreign soldiers were going to enter her home and steal the posters, so she would sleep with them under her pillow. The photograph that followed grew organically from that moment. And therein lies the powerful nuance of their work, and what makes it so important and so different from many of the portrayals of women from Afghanistan.

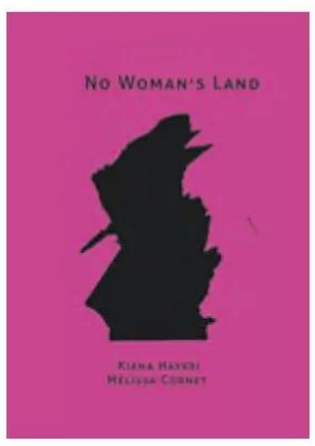
Above: Wardak, February 22, 2024: Saira, 50, sits beneath madrassa banners and Taliban flags. 'Now I can sleep in peace,' she says. 'That's enough fighting'

The project began on 1 February 2024 and the two had left the country by the end of May that year. 'Within that period,' says Hayeri, 'things changed so much that if we had started this project a month or two later, we would never have been able to do what we have produced. Our access would have been much less and things started to close very quickly in front of our eyes.'

Now, although the book is finished, the story isn't, by any stretch of the imagination. How does that feel for Hayeri?

'It's a tough question because it's very emotional for Melissa and me. I mean, Afghanistan has shaped us, and we knew, once we'd done this story, that we may not be able to go back there for a while. But it was worth it, because there will be a time in the future when these pictures will be very valuable, not only internationally, but also for the new generations of Afghans who will see what existed before.' For Cornet and Hayeri, and for the women of Afghanistan, the fight goes on. AP

Left: Badakhshan, Afghanistan, May 08, 2024. Masooma, 8, and Zeeba, 9, play five stones while herding sheep



The Carmignac Photojournalism Award was launched in 2009 to fund projects on subjects as broad as the climate crisis, human rights violations, social issues and war. A grant of €50,000 is awarded to the successful applicant, to carry out a six-month project that culminated in a travelling exhibition and the publication of a monograph. **No Woman's Land** is co-published by Raya Editorial, Kiana Hayeri and Melissa Cornet, hardcover, 268pp, price €50, ISBN 978-1-7380935-1-9. It can be purchased from **shop.nowomansland.com**

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Round Nine: The Best of the Rest

The APOY judges choose their favourite images that didn't make the top ten of our Urban Life category

Ailsa McWhinnie, APOY project manager, chooses **City in the Rain by Graeme Youngson, Aberdeen**

Fujifilm X-T5, 33mm, 1/500sec at f/2.8, ISO 125

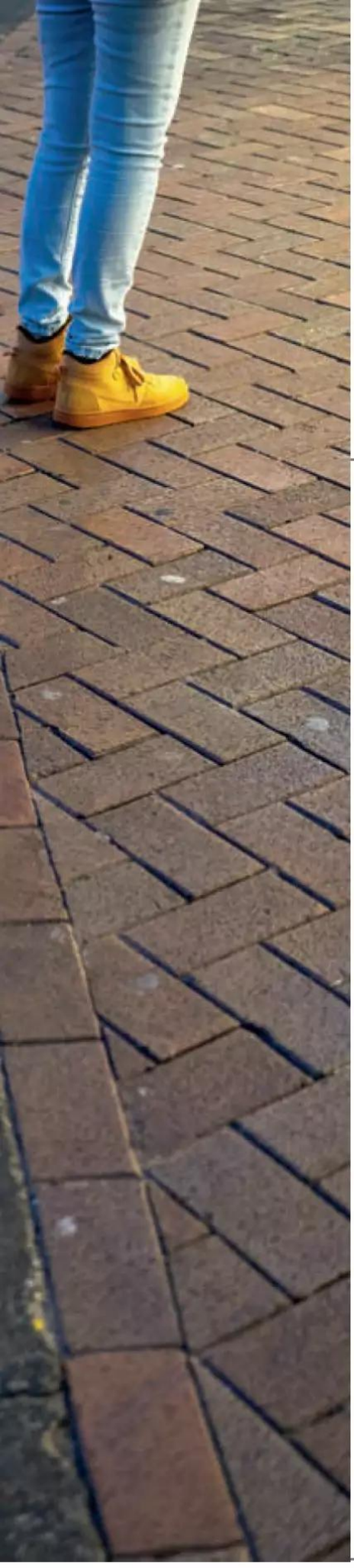
Ailsa says: 'I'm an absolute sucker for photographs taken through rain-spattered glass; if you see such a shot shortlisted in APOY, it's probably me who's done it. I'm also a bit of a weirdo who likes bad weather, so maybe that's part of the explanation. There's just something uniquely atmospheric about such an image, and it instantly conveys something we can all relate to – going about our day in a typically soggy British environment. (I'm writing this when it feels as if it's been raining for about a year.)

Despite the relentless grey of the scene, Graeme has managed to squeeze just enough contrast out of it, with a good separation between the two figures. I also like their anonymity: by cropping their heads out, Graeme has emphasised the idea that these people really could be any of us. The blurred outline of the city skyline gives context to the scene, and including the black line at the bottom of the frame helps anchor the composition and keep it tight. The kind of image that makes me want to stay under a duvet until the clocks change.'

Nigel Atherton, editor, chooses **He Walked Away by Linda Wride, Oxford**

Nikon Z7II, 24-120mm at 73mm, 1/320sec at f/5, ISO 1000

Nigel says: 'This is a great exercise in colour and symmetry. It's the kind of photo that the great Jay Maisel could have taken. The diagonal lines of the yellow tunnel walls draw the eye inexorably down the tunnel towards that blue rectangle at the bottom centre where a single, silhouetted figure lurks. Who is he? A mugger? The photographer's other half, waiting for her at the bottom and wishing she'd hurry up and just take the bloody photo already? Does he have any idea how important he is to this perfectly symmetrical composition? And is he aware that blue is the complementary colour of yellow and that a rectangle of perfect colour harmony is being created just yards away from him? We'll never know.'



Amy Davies, features editor, chooses
Double Yellow by Liam Cooper-Savage, York

Sony A7R Mark III, 40mm, 1/100sec at f/2.5, ISO 2500

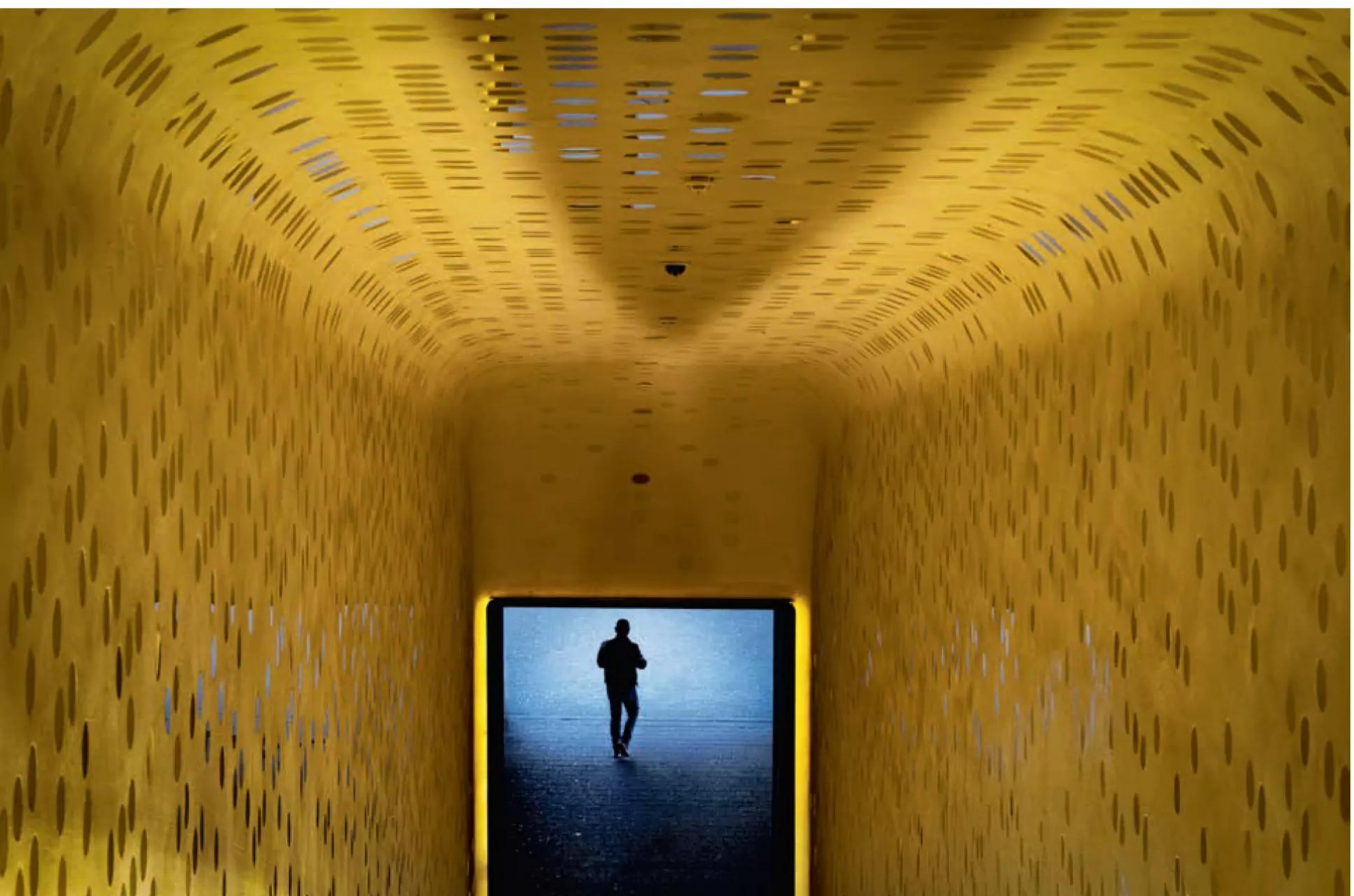
Amy says: 'I like this picture because it looks like something you might see while out doing something incidental – popping to the shops or picking up the kids from school – when something about the scene in front of you catches your eye. It works because the unidentifiable person's shoes match the colour of the lines on the street, with the added pop of yellow at the bottom bringing everything together – I even quite like the jaunty angles of the discarded cigarette butts.

'I like to imagine that this photo could only have been taken in a split second. Of course, it could all be posed and carefully arranged – but that doesn't really matter when the effect remains the same.'

Jessica Miller, deputy online editor, chooses
Duomo by Andrew Robertson, London

Canon EOS R5, 24-70mm at 24mm, 1/250sec at f/2.8, ISO 1000

Jessica says: 'When we think of urban life and landscapes, we are quick to look at tall modern buildings, bright lights, heavy traffic and large groups of people. But nothing beats going out into a city before it comes to life in the morning before it is overrun with tourists and people in a rush on their way to work. This photo of Duomo di Milano (Milan Cathedral) reminded me of my time in Venice when I saw St Mark's Square in the early morning with no one else around. The feeling and atmosphere are totally different to when the streets come to life. The morning fog here is used as a tool to bring atmosphere into the image and it complements the suggestion to solitude and quiet. There is also an immense sense of scale in architecture as it dominates the frame against the smaller sole pigeon and person. The fog softens the light and tones, and this combined with converting to b&w, for me, emphasises the building dense in history.'



FILM STARS

The many faces of Mamiya

John Wade examines one of Japan's most versatile and prolific camera makers

Mamiya Koki Seisakusho, later to become the Mamiya Camera Company, was launched in 1940 by businessman Tsunejiro Sugawara and engineer Seichi Mamiya. The company's first camera, launched the same year, was the Mamiya Six. In 1995 the Mamiya 7 was introduced. In between, over the course of 55 years, the company produced cameras that ranged from single lens reflexes (SLRs) to twin lens reflexes (TLRs), subminiature to medium format, as well as unique designs and cameras made for other well-known manufacturers. In short, Mamiya was one of the most prolific and innovative camera companies to emerge from Japan. Although the company ventured into the digital world in later years, it's the earlier film cameras that hold a fascination for collectors and users alike. Here are some of the company's more notable offerings.

Mamiya Six, the company's first camera, unfolded and ready to shoot

Mamiya Six folded for storage or easy transport

1940: The first camera

The Mamiya Six was a folding camera in which a bed dropped down from the body with a self-erecting lens that jumped forward on struts ready for action. It shot twelve 6x6cm pictures on 120 roll film. So far, so conventional. But designer Seichi Mamiya had a trick up his sleeve. Instead of the lens moving backwards and forwards for focusing, he patented a new design in which the lens remained static while the film plane moved backwards and forwards by means of a knurled wheel on the back of the body while coupled to a rangefinder in the viewfinder.

It was not, however, the best time for launching a new company because Japan was soon embroiled in World War II, placing a lot of restrictions on manufacturers like Mamiya. After the war, in an effort to get the country back on its feet, many camera companies were forced to work together. Which is why the Mamiya Six shown here is fitted with an Olympus Zuiko lens. It also explains why there were about a dozen different models right up to 1957, each looking very much alike but with slightly different specifications, including waist-level alongside eye-level viewfinders on early models and some with an option for 6x4.5mm images.

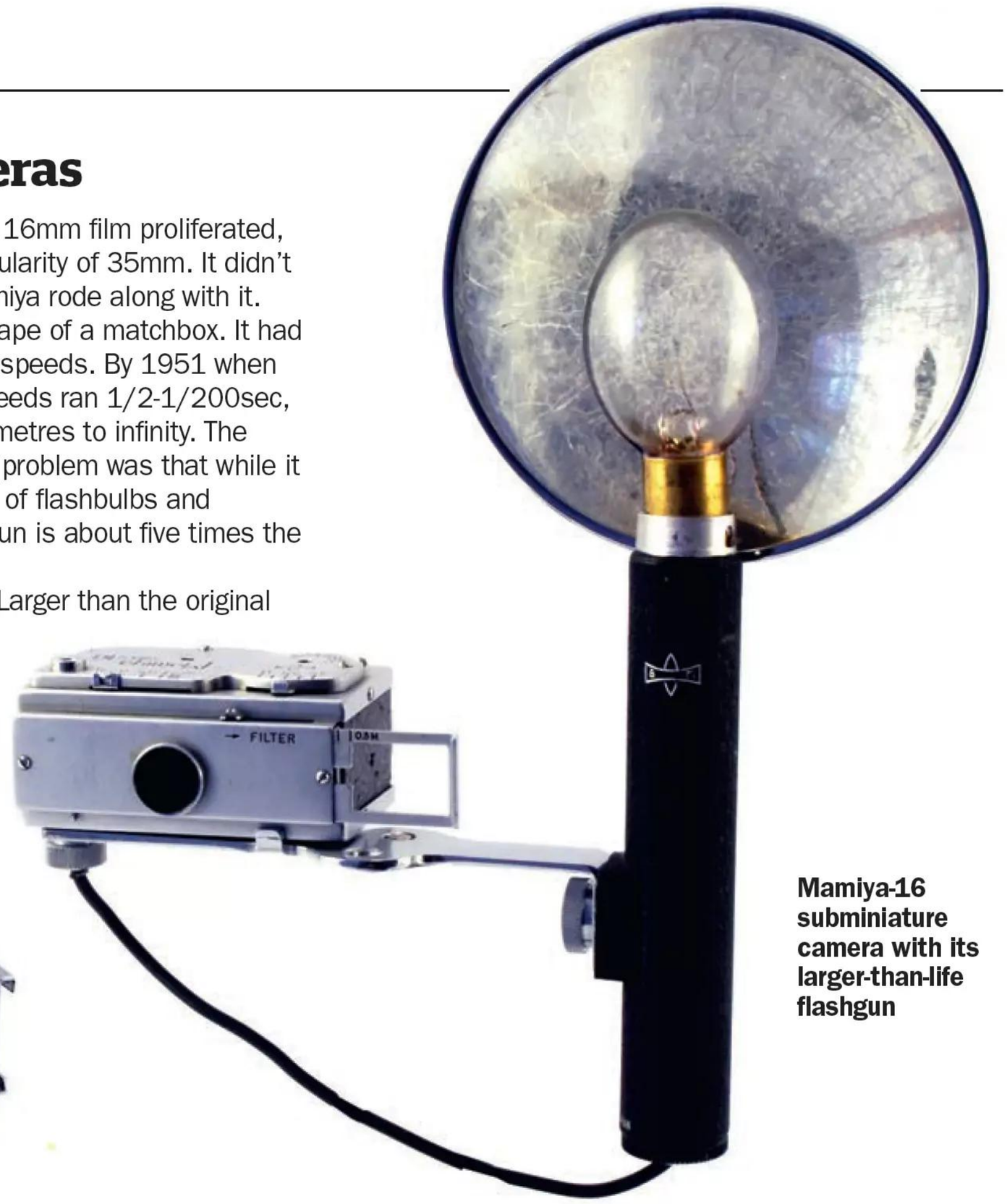
1949-1962: Subminiature cameras

In the 1950s and into the early 1960s, cameras that took 16mm film proliferated, and it seemed for a while that 16mm would usurp the popularity of 35mm. It didn't happen of course, but while the craze was riding high, Mamiya rode along with it.

The original 1947 Mamiya-16 was about the size and shape of a matchbox. It had a fixed focus 25mm f/3.5 lens and small range of shutter speeds. By 1951 when the Super 16 model shown here was launched, shutter speeds ran 1/2-1/200sec, apertures gave f/3.5-f/11 and the lens focused from 0.3 metres to infinity. The camera could also be equipped with its own flashgun. The problem was that while it was possible to miniaturise a camera and its film, the size of flashbulbs and batteries remained constant. Hence the Mamiya 16 flashgun is about five times the size of the camera.

Also illustrated is the Mamiya-16 Automatic from 1959. Larger than the original camera, it featured a built-in selenium meter, bright-frame viewfinder that hinged up from the back of the body, a 25mm f/2.8 lens and a shutter speeded 1/2-1/200sec.

The better-specified Mamiya-16 Automatic



Mamiya-16 subminiature camera with its larger-than-life flashgun

The Mamiya Mammy was one of the more sophisticated Bolta film cameras

1953: One Bolta camera

Bolta film was the same width as 35mm film, but without sprocket holes and wound onto spools with backing paper like miniature 120 roll films. It began in Germany in 1921, but found more fame when taken up by Japanese manufacturers. Mamiya's only venture into a camera for Bolta film was a step above its rivals. While many of those were little more than snapshot cameras, the Mamiya Mammy was well specified, with a 45mm f/3.5 lens that focused down to 1 metre, apertures that stopped down to f/22 and shutter speeds of 1/25-1/100sec. The centrally-placed red window allowed Bolta film to be wound to its first frame, after which the wind knob was turned until it stopped, then firing the shutter released it to be wound again. In this way, the Mammy produced ten 24x28mm images.

1954: Police camera

The demand for this unusual Pistol Camera originated at the Osaka police headquarters in Tokyo where a need was identified for catching criminal behaviour in the act, especially during mass demonstrations. The use of a conventional camera meant that the operative, distracted by the necessity of keeping an eye to the viewfinder, risked being attacked. What was required was a camera which could be aimed like a pistol without the need for a viewfinder.

The rare and unusual Mamiya Pistol Camera made for Japanese police

The Mamiya solution, shaped like a pistol and supplied with its own leather holster, used standard 35mm film, loaded through one side. A lever running along the opposite side of the body advanced the film and tensioned the shutter which was fired by a trigger like a real pistol. The fixed focus 50mm f/5.6 lens gave a slightly telephoto effect on half-frame 18x24mm negatives. Exposures were set by a series of numbers from 1-6 on a ring around the lens barrel which set combinations of three shutter speeds of 1/50-1/150sec and four apertures of f/5.6-16.

The Pistol Camera was produced in a limited number of about 300. Today it is very rare.

Left: The Magazine 35, which used interchangeable film magazines

Above and left: The Magazine 35 camera separated from its film magazine

1957: Interchangeable magazine camera

At first glance, the Magazine 35 looks very ordinary, almost boring. It's a slightly larger-than-normal 35mm camera, with a bright viewfinder incorporating a coincident image rangefinder coupled to a 5cm f/2.8 lens, and shutter speeds of 1-1/500sec. The shutter and aperture rings can be tethered so the two turn together, maintaining the same overall exposure regardless of how those settings are changed.

What sets the camera apart is a control on the base which, when turned, releases not just the back but an entire film magazine. Turning the knob also slides a dark slide up in front of the film. In this way, the photographer could keep various films – mono, colour negative, transparency – pre-loaded into different magazines and change them at will, mid-roll.

Unfortunately the camera was launched at a time when SLRs with interchangeable lenses and reflex viewing were becoming popular and it couldn't compete. It didn't sell well and today, it's a rare camera.

1957-1983: Mamiya twin lens reflexes

Mamiya's first TLRs were similar in style to their German Rolleiflex rivals. But when the company introduced the C-series, things took a different turn. Like most TLRs, the Mamiya C-series cameras took 120 roll film. Unlike many of their rivals some models also accepted 220 roll film and even cut sheet film in special backs. But the big difference between the Mamiya cameras and most others was the ability to accept interchangeable lenses and viewfinders. The lenses were sold in pairs, ready to be dropped into a panel on the front of the camera with a sprung wire clip to secure them. Shutters were built into the lower lenses, and both were moved backwards and forwards for focusing on bellows by a knob on the side of the body.

The first C-series camera was simply called the Mamiyaflex C. Then followed a series of similarly-styled TLRs, each with a slightly different specification. They included the C2, C3 (shown here), C22, C23, C220, C220f, C330, C330f and C330S. Lens pairs included focal lengths of 65mm wideangle, 80mm standard, 105mm portrait, 135mm and 180mm telephotos. The cameras were usually seen with their waist-level viewfinders, but also available were eye-level prism, porroflex and magnifying types.

Because twin lens reflexes are prone to parallax problems especially at close distances, the Mamiyaflex cameras could be used with their paramender. This was a device to fit between the camera and a tripod, with a knob on the side to wind the camera up and down the exact distance required to correct the parallax between the viewing and the taking lenses.

Mamiya C3 with traditional waist-level viewfinder

Pairs of interchangeable lenses for the Mamiya C-series TLRs

Four viewfinders for Mamiyaflex cameras: waist-level, prism, porroflex and magnifying types

Fixed-lens Mamiya Auto-Lux 35 (left) and interchangeable lens Prismat NP

1960-1980: Mamiya 35mm SLRs

As late as the 1980s, Mamiya was making the Z-series of electronic 35mm SLRs. Although successful, they took a back seat to their more popular rivals of the day. But back in the 1960s, when the craze for 35mm SLRs was just beginning, Mamiya commanded a better slice of the market with both fixed lens and interchangeable lens SLRs.

The 1963 Mamiya Auto-Lux 35 is an interesting example of the first type. The fixed lens is a Mamiya-Sekor 48mm f/2.8, incorporating a leaf shutter speeded 1/15-1/500sec and an instant return mirror, which wasn't common with SLRs using this type of shutter. A selenium cell above the lens offered match-needle metering in the viewfinder or, with the aperture ring turned to its 'A' setting, the camera provided shutter priority – something that wouldn't be commonly available in SLRs for another decade.

The 1961 Mamiya Prismat NP was a notable example of the company's range of interchangeable lens 35mm SLRs. It was usually found with a Mamiya-Sekor 58mm f/1.7 standard lens, interchangeable with others that included 35mm and 48mm f/2.8 plus 135mm f/2.8 lenses. The camera had a shutter release in the conventional place on the top plate which activated a small bolt that emerged from the body to operate an aperture stop-down lever on the lens as the exposure was made. The iris was opened manually to full aperture for viewing with a sprung lever on the side.

There was no metering, but an accessory meter clipped onto the pentaprism and mated with the shutter speed dial to offer 1-1/1,000sec. The Prismat NP wasn't a particularly remarkable camera in itself, but it proved to have an interesting legacy...

Variations on one camera: Rear, Mamiya Prismat NP and Nikkorex F; centre, Argus 35; front, Ricoh Singlex and Reflexa

1961-1964: Rebadged variations

First, Mamiya produced a Prismat variation which was sold with a Canon 50mm f/1.9 lens, strangely mounted to the camera in an Exakta-style mount. To confuse things even more, when the camera was exported, it was renamed the Reflexa.

Then, in 1962, Mamiya remade the Prismat with a unique bayonet lens mount for Argus, who badged it as the Argus 35. After that, Sears, the famous American department store, rebadged versions of the Prismat NP as the Sears 32A and 32B, as well as the Tower 32B. But there was more...

Launched by Nikon but made by Mamiya, the Nikkorex F also arrived in 1962. At its heart the camera was a Mamiya Prismat NP, beefed up with a few improvements that included a vertically-running metal focal plane shutter, automatic aperture stop-down and re-opening after exposure and a Nikon F lens mount, thus making the camera accessible to the wide range of Nikkor lenses. Then, when Nikon made the Nikkormat, the Nikkorex F became redundant. So Mamiya sold the design to Ricoh. The result was the first Singlex, produced in 1964. The standard lens was a Rikenon 55mm f/1.4 and the mount was very similar to, though not quite the same as, the Nikon F. This gave the advantage of being able to mount Nikkor lenses on the Singlex, although Rikenon lenses were less likely to happily mount with a Nikon. The Singlex then went on to be rebadged by the Sears department store and sold as the Sears SLII.

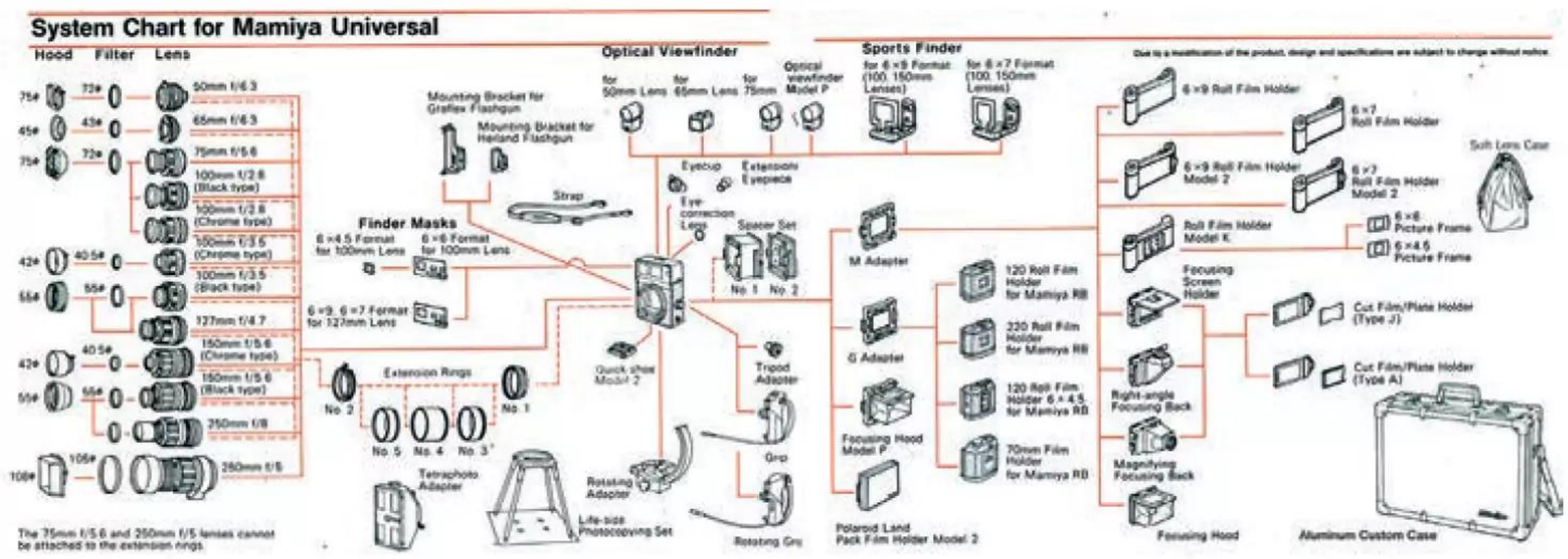
1960-1969: Roll film rangefinder cameras

Now we come to one of the more unusual offerings from Mamiya. It's a series of medium format cameras for 120 roll film with interchangeable lenses, interchangeable film backs and coupled rangefinders. The series began with the Mamiya Press in 1960 and, five models later, culminated in the Mamiya Press Universal, shown here.

The shutter is in the lens and fired by a cable attached to a trigger in the handgrip, which also incorporates an accessory shoe, principally for the use of a flashgun. According to the film back and the model of camera that accepted it, formats available include 6x9cm, 6x7cm, 6x6cm, 6x4.5cm, plus cut film/plate holders and a Polaroid instant peel-apart film holder. Lenses are attached to the body via a breach lock. They eventually included a 50mm f/6.3, 65mm f/6.3, 75mm f/5.6, 100mm f/2.8, 100mm f/3.5, 127mm f/4.7, 150mm f/5.6, 250mm f/8 and 250mm f/5. Accessories included viewfinder masks for the different focal lengths, rear-mounted bellows, rear spacers, a range of viewfinders and more.

In 1978, the Mamiya Press was rebadged as the Polaroid 600 and then the 600SE, the first with a fixed 127mm lens, the second with a range of 75mm, 127mm and 150mm interchangeable lenses. Both used Polaroid film backs to produce instant peel-apart mono and colour prints.

Mamiya Press Universal, last of a series of versatile medium format rangefinder cameras



From the instruction book: the amazing system of lenses and other accessories made for the Mamiya Press Universal

The instant picture Polaroid 600SE with its interchangeable lenses

What to pay

Mamiya Six: £180-220

Mamya 16: £70-90

Mamiya-16 Automatic: £30-60

Mamiya Mammy: £100-150

Mamiya Pistol Camera: £10,000-12,000

Mamiya Magazine 35: £80-120

Mamiya C3: £80-120

Mamiya Auto-Lux 35: £10-15

Mamiya Prismat NP: £15-25

Reflexa: £80-120

Nikkorex F: £30-60

Ricoh Singlex: £50-80

Argus 35: £50-80

Mamiya Press Universal: £150-250

Mamiya RB67 Pro S: £350-500

Mamiya RZ67 Professional: £600-800

Mamiya 645 1000S: £300-400

Mamiya 6: £1,000-1,500

Mamiya 7: £2,000-2,500

Two ways to use the M645: with waist-level viewfinder (left) and eye-level AE prism viewfinder

Mamiya RZ67 Professional broken down: body, standard lens, 120 and 220 roll film backs, waist-level and prism viewfinders and power winder that screws to the base

1970-2004: Roll film reflexes

By the 1970s, professional medium format photographers were abandoning the old 6x9cm format and turning to 6x7cm. With ten pictures to a roll of 120 film, it was more economical and its shape scaled up to the traditional 10x8in print format without any wastage or cropping. The Mamiya RB67, launched in 1970, fitted nicely into this new world.

With a modular design, the camera comprises a body with a reflex mirror inside, a focusing screen on top, a fitting for a film holder at the back and a knob on the side connected to a rack and pinion drive to move the lens panel in and out on bellows at the front. Lenses, each with their own in-built shutters, ranged in focal length from 37mm f/4.5 fish-eye to 500mm f/8 telephoto. Film is loaded into a cradle that slips into a holder that can be rotated for horizontal or vertical pictures. Apart from the standard 120 film back for 6x7cm images, other interchangeable backs include a 220 back for 6x7cm, another 120 back for 6x4.5cm pictures, a 70mm film holder, a Polaroid back and plate or cut film holders. Accessories include six focusing screens, viewfinders, extension tubes, hand grips, rubber and bellows-type lens hoods, the latter of which doubles as a square filter holder. There are four cameras in the RB range, all totally mechanical and manual.

In 1982, the RB67 was replaced by the RZ67. The spec was much the same, but now the shutter, which was still in the lens, was electronically controlled by a knob on the side of the body. When that knob is set to a kind of bullseye symbol and an AE Prism Finder is fitted, the RZ67 turns into an aperture priority camera. There were three models in the range.

Between these two heavyweights, in 1975, Mamiya launched the first of the M645 cameras. At about two-thirds the size of their bigger brothers, M645 cameras took the same 120 size film, but produced 15 (not 16 as might be expected) 6x4.5cm images to a roll. Unlike the larger cameras, the M645 models used instant return mirrors and focal plane shutters. The range of cameras was larger than the others too: seven in all, the latter models featuring newly-styled plastic bodies over metal frameworks which were less attractive visually, but technically offered interchangeable film holders among some other improvements.

Mamiya RB67 with waist-level viewfinder and standard lens

COURTESY OF FLINTS AUCTIONS

Mamiya 6, one of the last roll film coupled rangefinder cameras

The Mamiya 7II, the company's last great film camera

COURTESY OF FLINTS AUCTIONS

1989-1999: The last film cameras

Having gone about as far as they could go with roll film reflexes, Mamiya unexpectedly returned to the world of rangefinder cameras for the last of the film models. The Mamiya 6, introduced in 1989 and not to be confused with the 1940 Mamiya Six, is a medium format camera for use with 120 or 220 roll film on which it produces 6x6cm images. The 75mm collapsible standard lens is interchangeable with 50mm wideangle and 150mm medium telephoto. All have their fields of view indicated in the viewfinder.

In 1995, the Mamiya 7 was introduced for 6x7cm images on 120 or 220 film, or for panoramic images of 24x65mm using a 35mm adapter. A new range of lenses cover 43mm, 50mm, 65mm, 80mm, 150mm and 210mm focal lengths. Unlike its predecessor the lenses are not collapsible, and the two wideangle lenses require accessory viewfinders. In 1999 a new model, the Mamiya 7II, was introduced with a multiple exposure facility.

There are those who consider the Mamiya 6 and 7 the best cameras Mamiya ever made – and it has been said that the Mamiya 7 is still the world's best film camera. Whether either opinion is or isn't correct, what's true is that they made a fitting finale to the Mamiya film camera story.

From the makers of Amateur Photographer magazine

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FILM PHOTOGRAPHY

The film photography revival goes from strength to strength, so we celebrate the joys of analogue shooting in this packed, 132 page special. If you're new to film photography, we help you get started quickly, and there are also lots of tips for more experienced film shooters. From choosing the right film to getting your negatives scanned or printed, here is all you need to know. Top film shooters also reveal how to add mood and atmosphere and there's a detailed guide to getting the film look digitally, using popular photo-editing software. The future for film photography has never looked brighter!

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- Add mood and atmosphere
- Secrets of top film shooters
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Despite its low price, this lens delivers really sharp results
Sony A7RV, 1/80sec at f/8, ISO 100

Viltrox AF 14mm f/4 Air

This small, lightweight and affordable ultra-wideangle prime represents incredible value, says **Andy Westlake**

The Viltrox AF 14mm f/4 Air is an ultra-wideangle lens for full-frame cameras that's available in Nikon Z and Sony E mounts. It's surely the smallest, lightest and cheapest full-frame 14mm autofocus prime ever made, costing just £190. This makes it a really interesting option for photographers who like the idea of stretching their field of view that bit further, but who don't want to spend a lot of money or carry a big, bulky lens.

To understand just how much of a bargain this lens is, we just have to look at the alternatives. Manual-focus 14mm f/2.8 lenses are available from TTArtisan and 7 Artisans, but they cost £219 and £285 respectively. Meanwhile, Laowa makes a high-quality manual-focus 14mm F4 Zero-D for £519. But if we want autofocus, our options are the Samyang AF 14mm F2.8 FE for £579, the Sony FE 14mm F1.8 G for £1,199, or the exotic Sigma 14mm F1.4 DG DN, which costs £1,399. Clearly, the Viltrox is very much one of a kind.

Like its companions in the Air range, the 14mm achieves its compact size by offering a small aperture and a simple, no-frills physical design. That could be a concern for those who'd like to dabble in astrophotography, but it's less of a problem if your interests centre on interiors, architecture or landscapes. But do the small size and low price impose too many compromises?

Features

Looking first at the optics, Viltrox has built the 14mm f/4 using 12 elements in 9 groups. This includes 4 extra-low dispersion (ED), 2 high refractive-index (HRI), and 2 aspherical

This lens could be ideal for landscape photographers who only want to use an ultra-wide lens occasionally
Sony A7R V, 1/25sec at f/11, ISO 100

elements to maintain corner sharpness and suppress chromatic aberrations. That's pretty impressive given the price.

Autofocus is driven by a stepper motor, promising silent operation. The minimum focus distance is just 13cm, with a working distance of less than 6cm from the lens to the subject. This corresponds to a maximum magnification of 0.23x.

While Viltrox says the lens boasts a 'sealed body' for outdoor shooting, there's no rubber gasket around the lens mount. But a water- and dust-resistant coating helps keep the front glass clean.

Impressively for such a wide lens, not only is there a filter thread, but it's also relatively small at 58mm. A bayonet fitting, petal-shaped lens hood is included to combat flare and provide some protection to the front element.

One notable feature is a USB-C port embedded into the mount. This allows the firmware to be updated, simply by wiring the lens to a computer and then running Viltrox's update program. Despite this lens only being a few months old, this feature has already proven its worth. I've installed an update that adds full compatibility with Sony's latest A7 V camera.

Sharpness holds up well at close focus distances
Sony A7V, 1/50sec at f/11, ISO 12,800

Build and handling

Design-wise, the Viltrox AF 14mm F4 Air is very simple indeed. At 65mm in diameter and 56.4mm in length, it's the same size as the other Air lenses, and it weighs just 170g. This means you can easily carry it in your bag all day without noticing, which is good news given that you might only use a lens this wide very occasionally. I tested it mainly on the SLR-style Sony A7R V, and it's so light that I barely even noticed it was there.

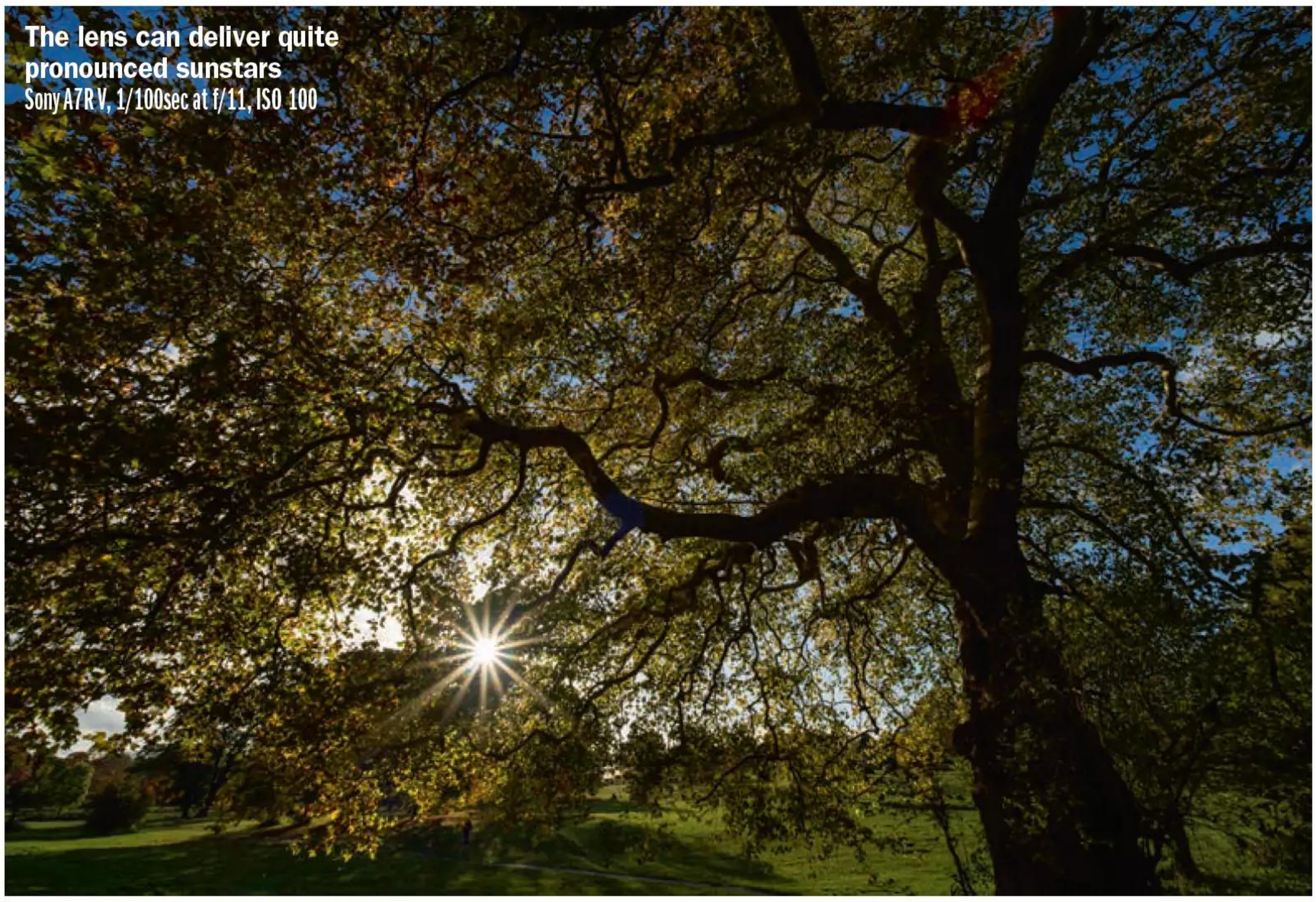
Physically, the 14mm looks almost exactly the same as its siblings. The design is distinctly minimalist, with the sole control being the wide manual focus ring. As usual this works electronically, with no hard stops to demarcate the extremes of the focus range.

Despite its light weight, though, the lens still feels pretty well built. Of course it's made of plastic, but the quality feels just fine, and unlikely to break in normal use. This impression is reinforced by the lens's metal mount; at this price point, some other makers use plastic mounts instead.

Autofocus

With a lens this wide, the focus group doesn't have to travel very far to cover its full distance range. As a result, the 14mm f/4 is usually impressively quick to autofocus, and pretty much silent too. However, that relatively small aperture does mean that it can struggle in low light. Videographers will be pleased to hear that there's no perceptible focus breathing.

It's worth noting, though, that when the lens is used on first or second-generation A7, A7R or A7S bodies, it's limited to contrast detection autofocus only. This means it'll be very much slower than on newer models, so that's something you should keep in mind if you plan to use it on any of these cameras. I tried it on



The lens can deliver quite pronounced sunstars
Sony A7R V, 1/100sec at f/11, ISO 100

the Sony A7 II from 2014, and the autofocus works accurately but is painfully slow.

If at any point you need to use manual focus, the lens is well behaved. The focus ring is pretty smooth and well-damped, and rotating it can bring up a magnified view for critical focusing, just like a native Sony lens. This means that It's easy to achieve precise focus.

Performance

When it comes to optical quality, the Viltrox 14mm f/4 punches well above its weight and price point. I tested it on the 60MP Sony Alpha 7R V, which is a stern test for any lens, let alone one costing less than £200. And I was amazed by how well it performed.

Thanks, presumably, to its modest maximum aperture, the lens resolves impressive levels of fine detail right across the frame. If I'm nit-picking, then some radial smearing is evident in the extreme corners at f/4, but it's really not a problem. Sharpest results overall are obtained at f/5.6, beyond which diffraction gradually softens pixel-level detail. But even f/16 is entirely usable. Overall, there's no real reason to pick any aperture over another, purely in terms of sharpness.

I also saw only the merest hint of colour fringing towards the corners of the frame due to lateral chromatic aberration. That's pretty remarkable for such a wide lens.

If, however, you disable in-camera vignetting correction via the Lens Compensation menu, you'll see significant darkening towards the corners of the image. What's more, this doesn't clear up on stopping down to smaller apertures. Thankfully, Sony cameras can correct for this, in both JPEG and raw files, if you set Shading Comp to Auto. I would recommend doing this as a matter of course, although it can result in increased noise at those corners.

The lens also exhibits some complex distortion, and this is trickier to deal with. It's mostly of the barrel type, but with pincushion re-correction towards the corners. As a result, lines that should be straight along the edge of the frame end up looking wavy. This can be problematic for subjects such as architecture, or landscapes/seascapes with flat horizons. Setting Distortion Comp to Auto in your camera's menu reduces the effect, but it doesn't fix it entirely. At the time of writing, no correction profile was available in Adobe Camera Raw either, although presumably one will appear in due course.

On the whole, the lens is pretty well-behaved when shooting into the light. Multi-coloured flare patterns can sometimes appear when the sun is within the frame, but there's no great overall loss in contrast. You can also induce well-defined 14-way sunstars at apertures as large as f/8, which some landscape and night-cityscape photographers value.

Despite the lens's impressive minimum focus distance, though, one thing I'd generally steer clear of is close-ups. Sharpness is still absolutely fine, but the ultra-wide angle of view inevitably results in messy, distorted backgrounds. Aesthetically, it tends to end up being a bit of a disaster.

One aspect of this lens that I enjoyed is the ability to shoot with screw-in neutral density (ND) filters. I used it for some long exposures with a 58mm Hoya ProND 1000, with generally good results. However, I did see a little vignetting in the extreme corners of the images from the filter, which has a conventional 5mm-thick frame, particularly when using small apertures (f/11 to f/16). But this can usually be fixed by cropping or cloning when necessary. AP

Verdict

Amateur Photographer Testbench Recommended ★★★★½

I'VE been really impressed by the Viltrox AF 14mm f/4 Air. It's incredibly small and lightweight for a full-frame 14mm prime, and remarkably affordable, too. And yet, it's sharp enough to give good results on the highest resolution full-frame sensor around. I'm really not sure how Viltrox manages it.

There are a few caveats, of course. Vignetting and distortion are both quite strong, and while the former can be compensated in-camera, it's more of a struggle to get straight lines looking right. But that problem will be solved once matched correction profiles become available from the likes of Adobe.

The lens's relatively small aperture also limits its usefulness for certain applications, most obviously astrophotography. Instead, it's much better suited to such things as landscapes and architecture. But if that's where your main interests lie, the Viltrox 14mm f/4 Air is easy to recommend.

Data file

Price £190
Filter Diameter 58
Lens Elements 12
Groups 9
Diaphragm blades 7
Aperture f/4 – f/16
Minimum focus 13cm
Length 56.4mm
Diameter 65mm
Weight 170g
Lens Mount Sony E
Included accessories Caps, hood, pouch

SmallRig Leather Case Kit for Fujifilm X-E5

Angela Nicholson tests a leather half-case that combines vintage styling with practical protection

● £34.90 ● smallrig.com

Fujifilm's X-E5 is a compact and stylish camera, so it makes sense to protect it with something equally smart. The SmallRig Leather Case Kit adds a touch of retro charm while offering useful improvements in comfort and functionality. Available in brown for a more traditional look or in black for minimalists, the case hugs the camera body neatly and looks like an integrated part of the design.

The half-case is made from genuine leather with a soft microfiber suede lining, providing a snug fit and a layer of protection. The front of the case features a contoured grip that, while smoother than the X-E5's own coating, is deeper and provides a more comfortable and secure hold during use.

Attaching the case is a simple process using a bolt that screws into the camera's tripod thread. The bolt is fitted with a flip-out D-ring for tool-free tightening, but there's also a slot for a coin or flathead screwdriver if preferred. It takes a bit of pressure to align the screw at first, but once engaged, it tightens smoothly and feels secure.

Importantly, the case doesn't hinder access to the camera's controls or ports. There are two flaps in the base that press into place neatly and allow access to the battery, memory card, Bluetooth button and speaker. The flaps are well designed, though you'll need to hold one open to hear the full volume from the speaker.

SmallRig also includes a slim braided strap with leather ends. While I typically prefer wider options like a Peak Design Slide Lite or 3 Legged Thing Axis, this design suits the X-E5's lightweight build and traditional style. It attaches using the supplied metal split rings, which should be fitted through the included leather tabs to avoid marking the camera body. I find the strap is long enough to wear cross-body, although photographers with broader builds or thick winter coats may find it more comfortable as a shoulder or neck strap.

Retro styling
The case is available in either black or brown, for a discreet or classic look.

Comfort grip
An integrated foam grip improves comfort and handling.

Easy access
Flaps provide quick access to the battery, memory card, speaker and Bluetooth button.

Secure fit
The tool-free thumbscrew attachment includes a D-ring for tightening and a 1/4-20 tripod thread.

Strap included
A braided shoulder strap with leather detailing is included.

Verdict

The SmallRig Leather Case Kit for the Fujifilm X-E5 is an affordable way to combine classic style with practical protection. It enhances the camera's handling without obstructing access to essential controls. If you're after vintage looks with modern usability, this comes highly recommended. But also check out SmallRig's L-shaped Bracket with Silicone Grip reviewed in our 9 December 2025 issue.

ALL PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE STREET PRICES

At a glance

- Bespoke to Fujifilm X-E5
- Genuine leather half-case
- Built-in grip
- Access to battery and SD card
- Tripod-compatible

WANT EXTRA PURCHASE?

The Fujifilm X-E5 has a fairly modest thumb grip, but SmallRig has a solution. For £15.90, the SmallRig Thumb Grip for Fujifilm X-E5 slides into the hot shoe to provide a more substantial rest for your thumb. It's available in silver or black and comes with a smart red screw-in shutter button.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

Olympus E-1

John Wade reviews an important DSLR landmark of the past

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The Olympus E-1 with Four Thirds mount Zuiko 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 lens

Olympus never produced an interchangeable-lens 35mm autofocus single lens reflex (SLR). So, with the dawn of digital, the company was free to design a whole new kind of digital SLR (DSLR) from the ground up. Working in association with Kodak, the result was the Four Thirds system, and the first camera to adopt it was the Olympus E-1.

While Olympus engineered the lens mount, Kodak supplied a CCD type 5MP sensor sized 18x13.5mm, with an imaging area of 17.3x13mm. The viewfinder is optical rather than electronic and image storage is by use of CompactFlash cards. The image aspect ratio is 4:3, from which it is often assumed the Four Thirds name was taken. It wasn't, but that's another story.

The E-1 is a pleasantly chunky little camera, built with a sturdy magnesium alloy body. It offers multi-pattern metering, shutter speeds of 1/4,000-60sec, three frames per second shooting and the traditional four exposure modes comprising shutter and aperture priority, program and manual. The rear LCD screen measures 1.8in. The camera also introduced a patented wave filter dust reduction system that shakes dust from the sensor on start-up or on demand. The sensor and LCD screen sizes might seem positively prehistoric these days, but in its day the E-1 was a groundbreaker, and even today it is unexpectedly enjoyable to use.

The Four Thirds system was originally offered as a universal mount for other companies to use. Fuji, Kodak, Leica, Panasonic, Sanyo and Sigma showed interest, but only Olympus went big on it with fifteen cameras, compared with Panasonic's two and Leica's one.

In 2008 Olympus, in association with Panasonic, refined the system by removing the reflex mirror, swapping optical for electronic viewfinders, making bodies smaller and lenses more compact. Which is how today's Micro Four Thirds system was born.

What's good Wide range of Four Thirds Olympus Zuiko and Leica lenses still available.

What's bad Low-res images, limited storage, CCD sensor burns batteries fast.

View from the top, showing a simple layout of controls and a sloping LCD screen

The LCD screen on the back is small by today's standards, but still adequate

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Do I really have to give this medium format camera back?

AP's Deputy Editor, a relative newcomer to the Fujifilm GFX range, reflects on quality time spent with the GFX100RF compact

Eager to find out why the GFX range has been so successful, I recently borrowed a Fujfiilm GFX100RF, which manages to pack an astonishing amount of high-end imaging and optical features into a light and compact body.

Before revealing why I enjoyed using the GFX100RF so much, despite the grim UK winter weather, let's quickly recap the camera's main features.

- 102MP CMOS sensor, 44 x 33mm
- Fixed 35mm f/4 lens
- ISO 80-12,800 (standard)
- Up to 6fps shooting
- 0.84x, 5.76m-dot electronic viewfinder
- 3.15in, 2.1m-dot tilting touchscreen

Yes, you read that right, the sensor offers 102MP resolution, while measuring a highly portable 133.5 x 90.4 x 76.5mm and weighing a mere 735g. The GFX100RF never felt like a burden while out shooting, and the fixed 35mm f/4 lens is remarkably unobtrusive too.

The analogue-style dials are pleasingly tactile

I mentioned the grim weather and despite this, it's clear the GFX100RF is built to last, being constructed from a single block of aluminium and offering dust and splash-resistance. If you need further protection, you can screw a 49mm adapter and protector filter onto the lens for full weather-sealing.

Getting to grips with the GFX100RF

If, like me, you've not spent much time with Fujifilm's GFX range of cameras, don't worry – it's very easy to use. Anyone coming to the camera after the Fujifilm X100VI or X-T5 will find it very familiar. Pleasingly chunky and tactile dials enable you to adjust shutter-speed/ISO or adjust exposure compensation, while the aperture ring around the lens soon becomes second nature. I also found that adjusting aperture in this way makes you a bit more considered and mindful about your settings before taking the picture.

There is also a large and detailed electronic viewfinder, with 5.76m-dot resolution and 0.84x magnification, plus a 3.15in, 2.1m-dot touchscreen with a super-slim tilting design.

A great camera for portraits

The GFX100RF is ideal for portrait photographers. You never feel like you are pushing a big, obtrusive camera into someone's face, which helps your subject to relax – and your pictures are better as a result. Furthermore, the leaf shutter in the lens makes the camera very quiet.

I mainly used single-shot autofocus mode, which has a decent range of focus point sizes, and makes it very easy to move the AF point around so you can focus on the eyes.

It's very accurate. Face detection makes portraits even easier, and there are also subject detection options for trains, planes, motorbikes, cars, birds and animals.

The 35mm lens (28mm equivalent focal length) gives a very natural and flattering perspective for people shots, too.

A lot of detail is retained when you crop

Cropping flexibility and dynamic range

As you'd expect from the GFX100RF's high-resolution, 102MP sensor, there is plenty of scope for cropping. While I try to get my images as 'right' as possible in camera, there will always be times when you want to crop out unavoidable distractions, particularly if you do a lot of street and travel work.

Shooting raw gives you lots of latitude when editing, though just make sure you have a big-capacity memory card as the RAF files can be quite large. (There is the option of shooting compressed raw files at 72MB if storage space gets tight, but with capacious memory cards so cheap at the moment this is unlikely to be a big problem for most.)

Sharpness is excellent throughout the lens range, and I was happily shooting 'open' at f/4 without softness creeping in.

Left: The GFX100RF is an excellent camera for portrait photographers

Right: For black & white shooting, I loved the Acros simulation, which delivers lots of contrast while preserving detail

Innovative aspect ratio dial

The GFX100RF has some new tricks up its sleeve too, notably a novel aspect ratio dial. The dial definitely encourages a more creative approach to your everyday photography. If, like me, you are a big fan of the 1:1 'square' format, it's a godsend, saving significant time at the editing stage.

I also really enjoyed experimenting with the 65:24 panorama mode, which evokes the appeal of Hasselblad XPan. Yes, you can get the same effect on Oppo smartphones, but the images are way lower resolution – and the GFX100RF's lens is far superior to anything you'll get on the back of a phone.

The aspect ratio dial is great for 1:1 format fans

Creative film simulations

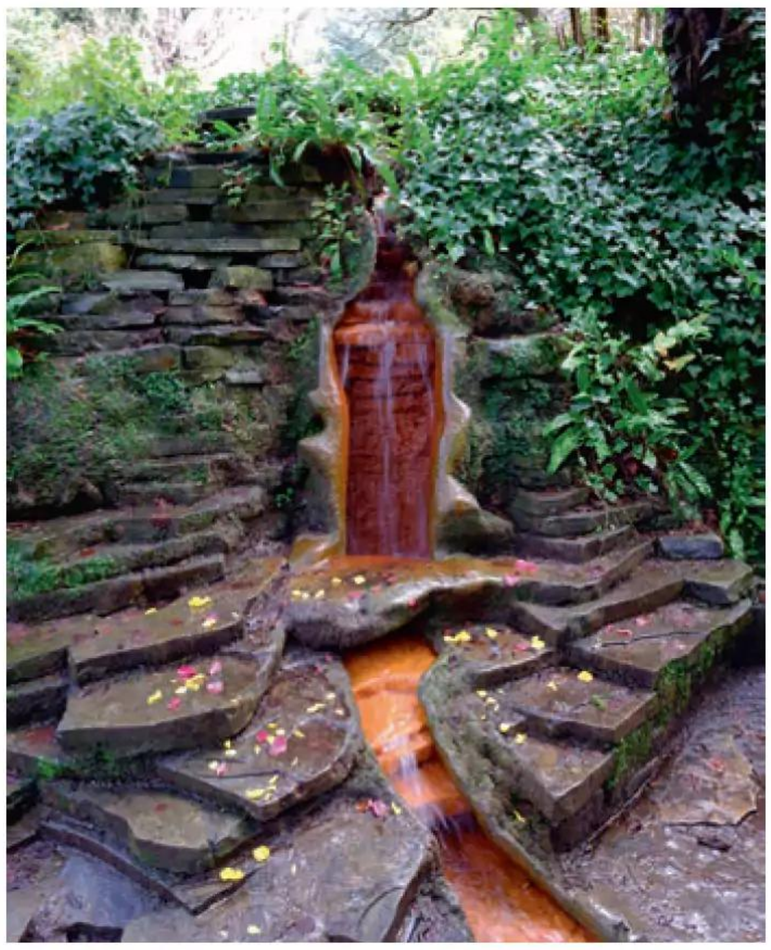
I always thoroughly enjoyed using Fujifilm's class-leading range of film simulations on its X series (APS-C) cameras, and these are all present and correct on the GFX100RF. They really expand your creative arsenal. It's hard to pick a favourite but if you want to add punch to colours without them looking garish or oversaturated, Velvia is ideal for an overcast day. For black & white, I also got very atmospheric results with the Acros simulation, which delivers plenty of contrast while preserving detail.

Low-light performance and slower shutter speeds

Although the GFX100RF lacks image stabilisation – adding this would have made the camera heavier and bulkier – I was pleasantly surprised by how slow I could take the shutter speeds handheld, while still getting decent results and interesting creative effects.

Yes, you need to hold the camera quite firmly, and focus carefully, but this is quite easy with the handgrip, low-vibration leaf shutter and intuitive body design.

The Fujifilm GFX100F also has a generous ISO range, from 80 to 12,800 (standard), which makes it a great low-light performer. Noise simply isn't an issue if you keep the ISO settings within typical, everyday limits; you would have to really push the ISO in the extended range before it starts to become a problem. It's another strong benefit of the camera's high-resolution sensor.



Images are still decent at 1/15sec handheld

Other cool features

Hopefully you can see why I loved using the Fujifilm GFX100RF so much, and was sad to send it back. The quality of the images from that high-resolution sensor is hugely impressive, but the camera is also light, portable and very easy to use.

As well as the points covered above, the GFX100RF's lens has a built-in switchable 4-stop neutral density filter, activated by pulling the lever on the front to the right, along with a handy lever to activate digital zoom. If you want to record video too, the GFX100RF shoots high-quality footage at 4K/30p, and supports F-Log2 for 13+ stops of dynamic range.

For any serious photographer who wants to try medium format shooting but has been deterred by the perceived cost and complexity, the Fujifilm GFX100RF is an outstanding, innovative choice – particularly for landscape, street, portrait and travel photographers.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Bluebells

Clifford's photograph

© CLIFFORD BROWN

What a magnificent Review of the Year (AP 16 December 2025). The top ten photographers' choices are interesting. I have admired so many of the chosen photographers in my 87 years of AP readership (I started when I was aged 11), but one of my favourites, Jane Bown, is missing.

I was amused by Keith Barber's contribution to *Inbox* and your appropriate reply.

It reminded me of a few Aprils ago, when I'd set up my tripod in a local bluebell wood to take the attached picture, and a passing couple stopped to see what I was doing. The man, who had an SLR around his neck, looked carefully at my camera and said, 'Ah, I see you've not fitted a lens yet.' I replied, 'I have, the lens is fitted to the body cap, it's a pinhole.' Without comment, the man frowned, shook his head, grabbed his wife's arm and walked on. Probably thinking he was leaving a nutcase. I agree, it really is not important what is used to take the photo as long as the resulting image pleases you.
Clifford Brown

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OM System 40-150mm F4

Perfect kit for an old bloke

I read Geoff Harris's article praising his Olympus 300mm lens (AP 16 December) with some anguish, because I sold mine recently. Yes, it is compact and light for what it does, but as I'm 81 it does feel rather heavy after a while. So, I traded it in for an OM System 40-150mm F4 Pro, which works well with my OM-5 II and Olympus 12-45mm F4 Pro. It may not have the reach of the 300mm but produces excellent images with the OM-5 that respond well to cropping.

This all fits neatly in a lightweight canvas bag (Bagsmart, £29) together with a Manfrotto LED light, polarising filter, battery and LensPen. It all weighs just 2,100g, compared to 1,270g for the 300mm lens alone. It suits me very well and my anguish has subsided somewhat as I use it.
Dr Richard Neale

Decisive moments

Thank you to Robert Mann for his letter regarding the 1990s series called *Decisive Moments*, broadcast on BBC2. I am fortunate enough to have recorded the series at the time and now have a copy on DVD. It is indeed an excellent educational resource, though as we all know, much has changed in the photography world since then and that in itself is entertaining in its own right.

I can also highly recommend the BBC series *The Genius of Photography* from around 1996. I believe this is still available on DVD and during my photography teaching years I used the content as part of my syllabus. It focuses mainly on the American viewpoint but nonetheless it is a good watch for a winter night's viewing.

For those who are interested in the interconnection between art and photography, a further recommendation is *A Bigger Picture* by David Hockney (also on DVD). Hockney's use of multiple cameras to record proofs for his well-known large Yorkshire woodland paintings is inspirational; as is his research work on the camera lucida for his book *Secret Knowledge*. I have always been a firm believer that a knowledge of art history inspires creative photography.

Keep up the good work for 2026.
Steve Sullivan

Ill-judged

I appreciate we live in an age of ill-considered hyperbole and over-excitement. However, to compare the reaction to the sad death of Martin Parr (of course a much-loved photographer, not least by me) with that of the late Queen Elizabeth II was crass, out of all proportion and very ill-judged. **Peter Hall**

THIS WEEK WE ASKED...

What is the greatest inspiration for your photography?

You said...

John Cole
Frank Beken, Roger Hicks, J. Alllan Cash, and a few other great masters of film.

Derek Smith
I wanted to draw great pictures, but, due to a problem I had as a kid, I lacked sufficient muscle control. An uncle gave me a Box Brownie and the ability to create art. The gift was inspirational, opening a new world.

@gabestvx
Sebastião Salgado (the Brazilian documentary photographer).

Rose Atkinson
My father… who made me a toy camera for my 3rd birthday because I wanted to be just like him…

Kathryn Willett
Animals. Can't photograph anything my heart doesn't feel.

@sallybrakephotography
Travel and nature.

Enspire Photography, LLC
Seeing other photographers' work inspires me to get better at my work.

@lukewilsonphoto
Nature and landscapes.

@cath_taylor_23
Life!

Charlie Jobson
The world around me, in its infinite variety.

Foggy Lens
The weather!

George Cordero Photography
The preservation of memories.

Share your photos and comments with us on social!
See page 3 for how to contact us

Steven Collis
The achievement of getting my picture in your magazine and the spur to get more in new issues.

Graham Parry
People – their expressions.

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16-80mm F4 R OIS WR XF	E+	£249
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MCEX-11 Macro Tube 11mm -	E++	£45
Nikon 16-50mm F3.5-6.3 VR DX Z	Mint-	£109
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100-400mm F4-6.3 Power OIS	E+	£549
16-35mm F2.8 G Master FE	E++	£1,049
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28-70mm F3.5-5.6 FE OSS	E++	£129
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70-200mm F2.8 GM II OSS	E++	£1,889
70-200mm F4 G OSS FE	E++	£629
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10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC HSM	E+	£59
15mm F2.8 EX DG Fisheye	E++	£159
17-35mm F2.8-4 EX D - Nikon AF	E+	£59
17-70mm F2.8-4 DC OS Macro	E+	£129
18-50mm F2.8 EX DC - Nikon AF	E+	£79
24-70mm F2.8 EX DG	E+	£299
24mm F2.8 Super Wide II	E+	£59
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Catching the Light
by Helen Cherry

Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II, Olympus 40-150mm Pro, 1/5000sec at f/3.5, ISO 1600, 142mm

'Taken at Lynford Arboretum in Norfolk. It was a cold November morning and there had been a very heavy mist. Water droplets produced lovely bokeh in the sunlight and I noticed one of the big bokeh circles looking as though it was being cradled by the dew-covered webs.'

Instagram: @helenjcherry

It's good to share

High & Dry
by Chris Thomson

Nikon Z5, Nikon 20mm f/1.8, 1/80sec at f/5.6, ISO 250

'This image was taken at North Shields Fish Quay which is an old fishing village that dates back to 1225. The old boat named *Boy James* sits outside the old low light building which was erected in the 16th century.'

Instagram @c_t.photography
Facebook @c.t.photography

We also liked...

Nuthatch Portrait In The Autumn Sunrise
by Tom Hunt

Canon EOS R6 Mark II, Canon RF 200-800mm F6.3-9 IS USM, 1/160sec at f/9, ISO 2000, at 800mm

'I've enjoyed watching these nuthatches at my local National Trust site. Learning their behaviour during 2025 has helped me to understand them more and capture moments like this.'

Instagram @tom.h.photography

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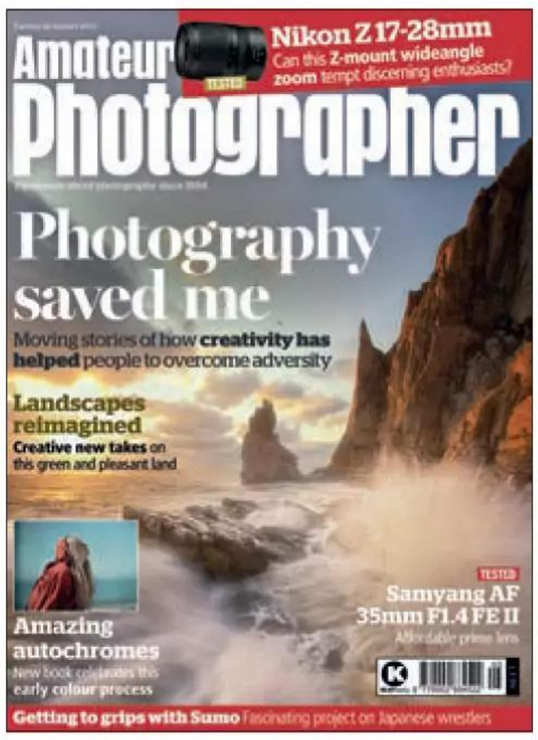

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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them

1

Louise Rayner

About Louise
Louise is a member of She Clicks Community. See more of her photos at www.louiseraynerphotography.com, Instagram @louiseraynerphotography and Foto @louiserayner

How did you get into photography?
I was 16 when my dad gave me his old Pentax – I fell in love with photography then. I'd always felt creative but never connected with drawing or painting, so discovering I could use a camera to express myself felt like the perfect fit.

What do you love about photography?
It encourages me to slow down, notice the beauty in the everyday, and find meaning in what might otherwise seem ordinary. For me, it's not just about capturing a moment, but about being fully present for it. Photography connects me to places, to people, and to myself. It's curiosity, creativity, and storytelling all within a single frame. I love the way an image can transport you, stir memories, evoke emotion, and even offer comfort in times of grief. It allows me to remember, reflect, and reconnect.

Favourite subjects
Over the years I've explored many different genres of photography, and my favourite subjects have evolved with me. When my children were younger, I loved capturing their childhood – the joy and wonder of the world seen through their eyes. Travel has always been a passion, and throughout my life I've documented cultures and traditions across the world. More recently, I've been drawn to mindful photography, especially nature and macro work, which helps me stay grounded and appreciate the beauty in each day.

Where do you find inspiration?
I find inspiration everywhere – in people and the stories they share, in the changing seasons, even in something as simple as a rainy day. I'm currently working on a 365 project, which keeps me searching for beauty and meaning daily. Travel has also shaped my photography,

Sunrise in Staithes (Staithes, North Yorkshire)

1 I knew there was a famous viewing point in Staithes and I had set out to capture the sunrise, but I had no idea such a spectacular scene would unfold before me.
iPhone 13 Pro Max, 13mm, 1/60sec at f/1.8, ISO 320

NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

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Submit your images

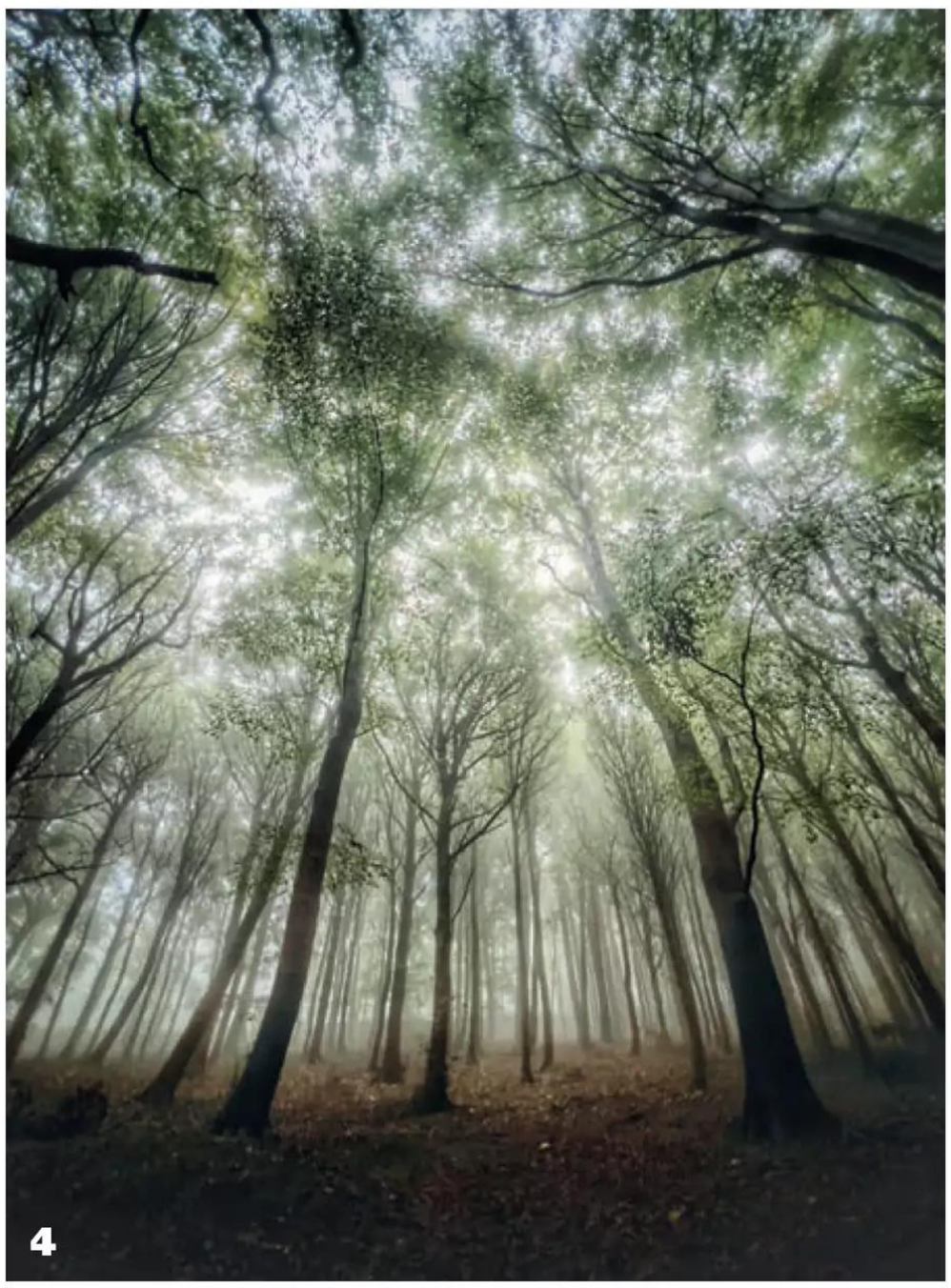
See page 3 for details of how to submit. You could see your photos here in a future issue! Please note: the prize is subject to change.

Dive Bomb (Calla Millor, Majorca)
2 This shot was taken on holiday in Majorca. I decided to trust the waterproofing of my phone and stood in the middle of the pool just as my son did a dive bomb off the side. I managed to catch the impact and spray of the water – and thankfully, the phone survived!
iPhone 13 Pro Max, 26mm, 1/8000sec at f/1.5, ISO 50

3

Goggle Boy (Bradford, UK)

3 My son was in the kitchen in his hoodie with his new goggles on. The afternoon light was perfect, so I grabbed a few shots. I cropped in and converted it to b&w, and it placed 2nd in the Portrait category of the 2025 International iPhone Photography Awards.
iPhone 13 Pro Max, 26mm, 1/30sec at f/1.5, ISO 640



4

Misty Morning (Esholt Woods, Bradford)

4 Taken in my local woods. I've always loved the atmosphere mist creates among the trees, so I went out to capture it. I turned my camera upside down and got low to the ground to emphasise the height and scale of the trees.
iPhone 13 Pro Max, 14mm, 1/60sec at f/1.8, ISO 640

5

Dinner Time (Morocco)

5 In the fish market in the harbour at Essaouira, fishermen do a daily battle with the ever-present seagulls. The action, the colours, and the frustration on the man's face all came together in a single frame. It was a finalist in the 2025 World Food Photography Awards.
iPhone 16 Pro Max, 24mm, 1/250sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

opening my eyes to different cultures and traditions. But most of all, I'm inspired by slowing down and noticing the world around me – using photography as a way to practise gratitude and mindfulness.

What was your first camera?
My very first camera was a little disk camera when I was about ten, but my first serious one was the one my dad gave me when I was 16, a Pentax ME Super. It taught me everything – from exposure to developing in the darkroom – and travelled extensively with me. It was my main camera for years, until I eventually upgraded to a Nikon D200.

Current kit
I shoot with a Nikon D850 and a range of Sigma lenses (35mm, 50mm, 135mm, 14-24mm and 70-200mm). But this year I've challenged myself to set the big kit aside and work only with my iPhone – first the 13 and now the 16 – for my everyday and personal photography. It's been liberating, pushing me to think differently, react more quickly, and embrace the idea that powerful images come from vision and storytelling rather than the size of your gear.

Favourite lens
I would say the lens I most use is my Sigma 50mm. It's my trusty workhorse and works so well for everything.

Favourite accessory
I don't use any accessories really.

Dream purchase
A Nikon Z8 and 28-70mm lens is my next wish and for my iPhone, some Reeflex lenses.

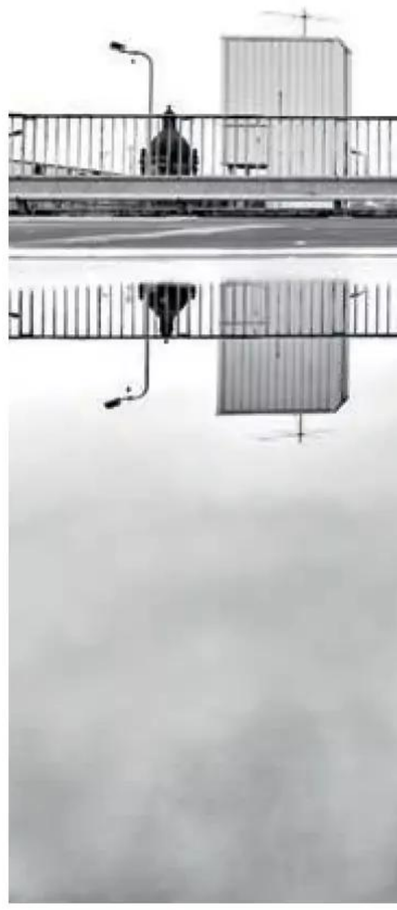
What software do you use for editing?
Lightroom for my camera and Snapseed for my iPhone.

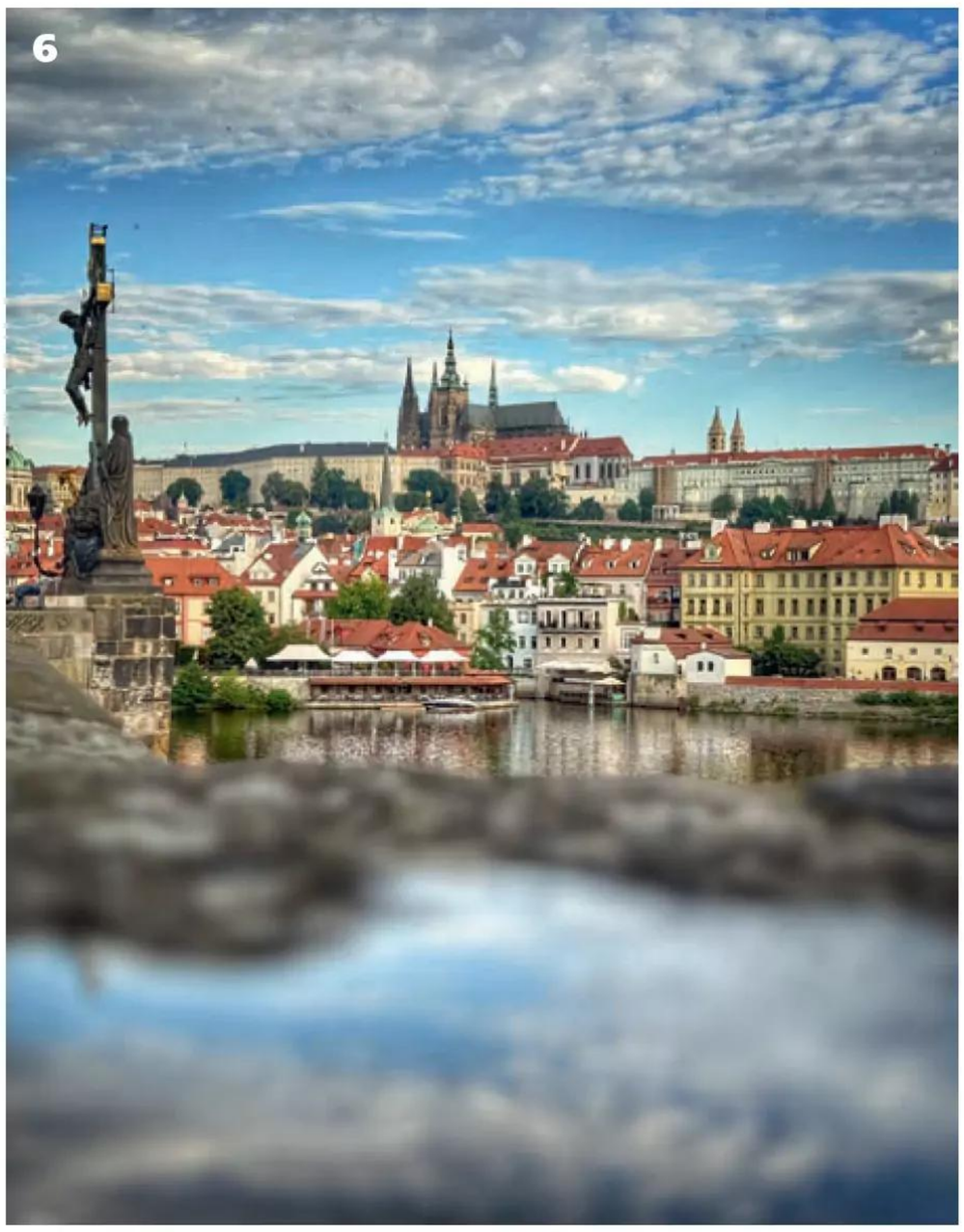
Favourite photographers
I'm inspired by so many mobile photographers at the moment. In particular, Elaine Taylor, Jaz Oldham, and Marguerite O'Molloy, who all capture images from the world as they see it.

Favourite photography books
I love *Wonderland* by Kirsty Mitchell, such an enchanting book. And *The Atlas of Beauty* by Mihaela Noroc.

Favourite tips
My biggest tip is practise, practise, practise. Pay attention to the light – it's everything in photography. Don't fall into the trap of comparing yourself to strangers on social media; your journey and the way you see the world are unique. Focus on shooting what fills your heart with joy, and remember that mastering your craft takes time: I've been enjoying photography for over 30 years and I'm still learning and developing. The journey will include mistakes and blunders, but that's where the best learning – and often the most exciting discoveries happen.

About your pictures
The story behind these images is about showing what's possible with the camera we all carry in our pockets. In the past year I've used only my iPhone to capture a variety of moments and I wanted to share how it can produce beautiful, lasting photographs. It's also about proving that creativity isn't limited to big equipment; it can be found in the simplest tools, even our phones. AP



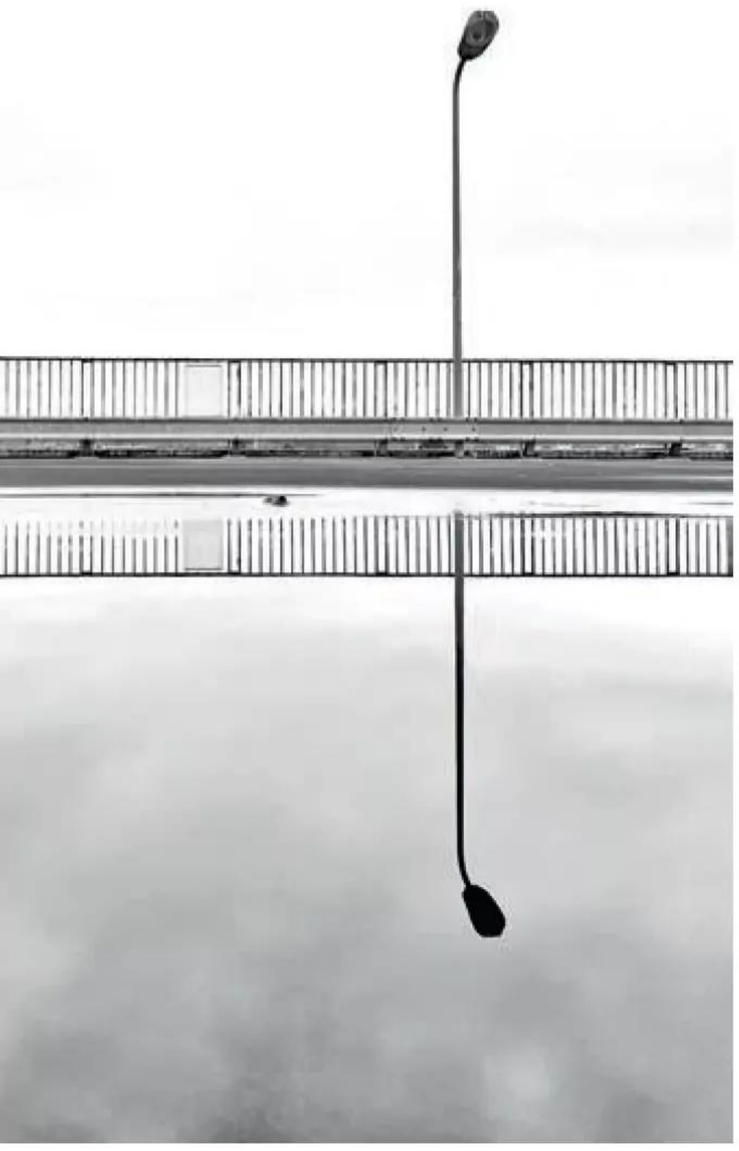


View from the Bridge (Charles Bridge, Prague)
6 On a recent trip to Prague, I set out early, before crowds arrived. The stillness of the city at dawn gave me the perfect space to take in the views and capture its beauty in a quieter, more timeless way. iPhone 16 Pro Max, 48mm, 1/200sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

I See You! (Bradford, UK)
7 I love finding ways to present the world differently. This is my son with a magnifying glass, with me and our house reflected in it. I love how much detail is seen in the reflection. Like all my images, I edited it in Snapseed. iPhone 16 Pro Max, 48mm, 1/250sec, f/1.8, ISO 100

Perfect Reflection (Bradford, UK)

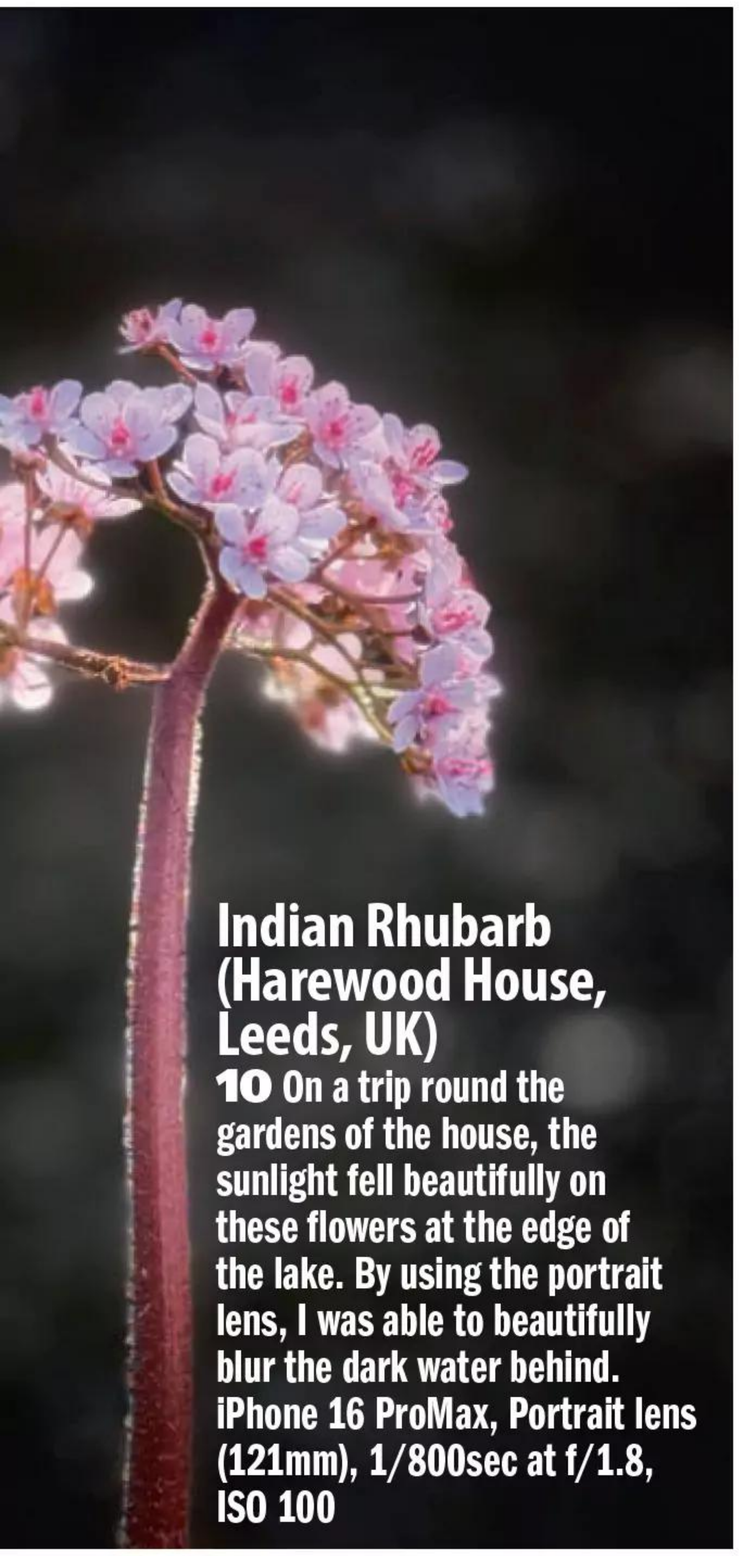
8 I was photographing some skateboarders in a disused car park after the rain. This puddle created the perfect high-key reflection.
iPhone 13 Pro Max, 13mm, 1/250sec at f/1.8, ISO 250



Edinburgh Street (Edinburgh, Scotland)

9 On a busy street heading away from the castle, I took the shot with all the people. Since I'd taken it on the live setting, I was able to use the long exposure in post production to blur the movement of the people.
iPhone 13 Pro Max, 13mm, 1/250sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

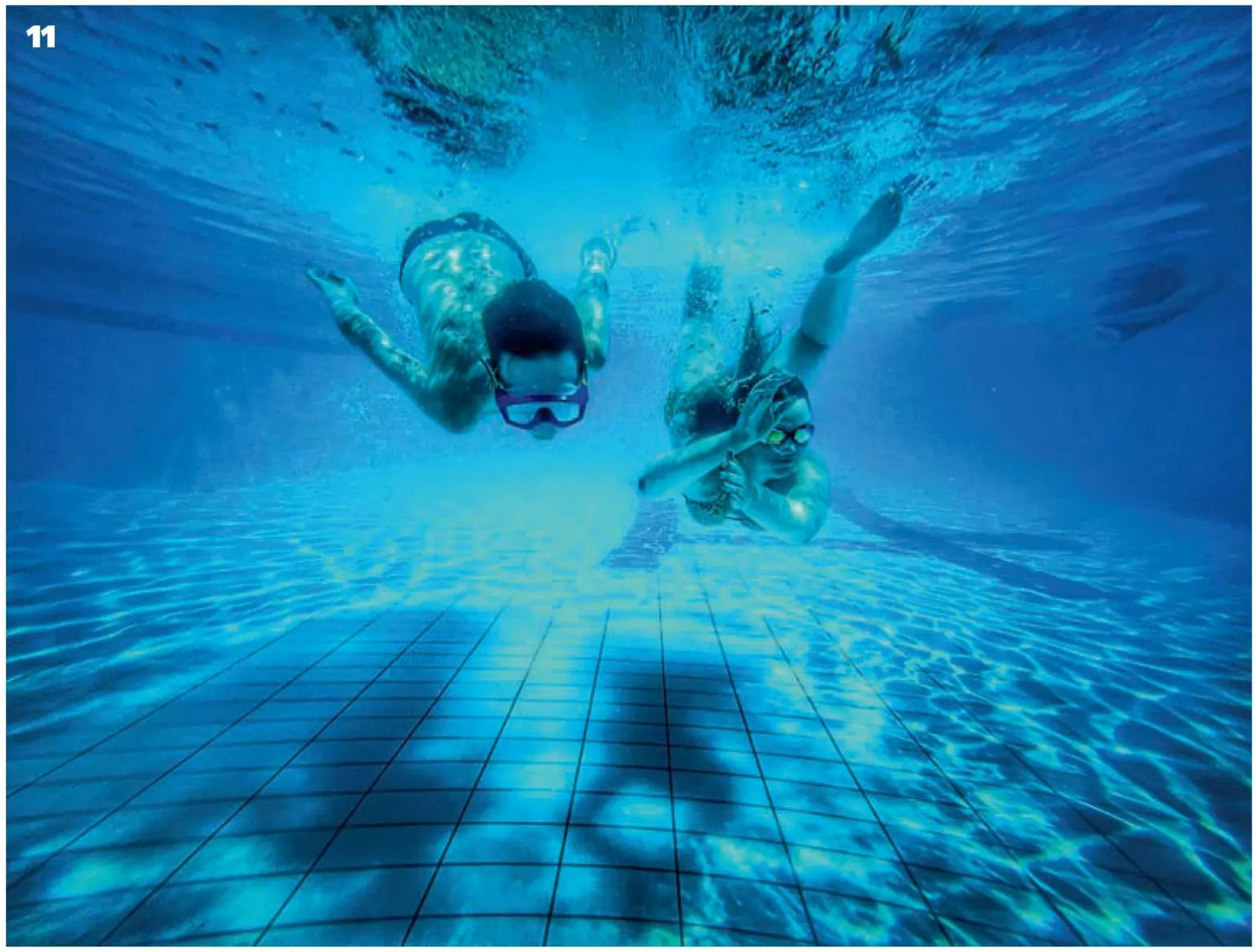
9



Indian Rhubarb (Harewood House, Leeds, UK)

10 On a trip round the gardens of the house, the sunlight fell beautifully on these flowers at the edge of the lake. By using the portrait lens, I was able to beautifully blur the dark water behind.
iPhone 16 ProMax, Portrait lens (121mm), 1/800sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

11



Underwater Action (Kos, Greece)

11 To capture this action I did use a cheap waterproof pouch for my camera. It was tricky as it steamed up often and it's hard to press the shutter under the water, but with a bit of patience and the self timer, I was able to capture a couple of worthy shots.
iPhone 16 Pro Max, 14mm, 1/500sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

From the makers of Amateur Photographer magazine

THE NEW MUST-BUY FOR ANY PHOTOGRAPHER

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Everyone is a portrait photographer these days, thanks to selfies and smartphones, but to do it properly is an entirely different matter. In this packed, 132-page guide, we cover all the essential skills involved in taking great people shots.

We reveal the best lenses to use, how to get your subject to relax and be themselves, and how to expand your creative repertoire with easy but effective studio lighting. Lots of pro portrait shooters share their tips and insights, and if you are interested in making money from your images, you'll find masterclasses on wedding, maternity and boudoir photography. To ensure your portraits look their best, editing skills are also covered in-depth, along with more creative and experimental approaches.

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SCAN ME

Buying Guide

106 cameras listed & rated

Our comprehensive listing of key camera specifications

Cameras

Cameras come in three types: DSLRs with optical viewfinders, mirrorless models with electronic viewing, and compact cameras with non-interchangeable lenses

Controls

Entry-level cameras tend to have simple, easy-to-understand controls, while more expensive models add lots of buttons and dials to give quick access to settings.

Viewfinder

The biggest difference between DSLRs and mirrorless cameras is that the latter use electronic, rather than optical viewfinders. Some advanced compact cameras also have built-in electronic viewfinders to complement their rear LCD screens.

Compact cameras

These range from small, pocketable models to large bridge-type cameras with long zoom lenses and SLR-style designs. In this guide, we're only including those with relatively large sensors for high image quality, raw format recording and manual controls.

Handgrip

DSLRs traditionally have relatively large handgrips, while many mirrorless models have much smaller grips to keep the size down. However, some can accept accessory grips to improve handling with larger lenses.

Lens mount

Each camera brand uses its own lens mount, and mirrorless cameras use different lenses to DSLRs even from the same brand. However, mirrorless models can often use DSLR lenses via a mount adapter.

ALMOST all serious photographers prefer to use cameras with interchangeable lenses, as this gives the greatest degree of creative flexibility. At one time, this meant digital single-lens-reflex (DSLR) cameras, but these have now been joined by mirrorless cameras that use electronic viewfinders. The latest models are true alternatives to DSLRs, offering the same image quality and creative options. Camera manufacturers offer a range of options, from simple, relatively inexpensive beginner-friendly designs, to sophisticated professional models. In the middle of the range you'll find enthusiast cameras with more-advanced control layouts. Meanwhile the term 'compact' refers to cameras with built-in lenses, regardless of their size. Many offer excellent image quality and full manual control.

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Mirrorless cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN WI-FI	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
										SHOOTING					SCREEN				DIMENSIONS			
Canon EOS R1	£6999	4.5★	High-speed sports and action camera built for professional photographers	FF	24.1	Canon RF	409,600	6000	·	1053	40	·	·		3.2	·	·	1330	157.6	149.5	87.3	1115
Canon EOS RP	£1400	4★	Compact and affordable but over-simplified full-frame camera	FF	26.2	Canon RF	102,400	3840	·	4779	5	·	·		3	·	·	250	132.5	85	70	485
Canon EOS R3	£5880	5★	High-speed, pro-spec flagship model that's packed full of clever technology	FF	24.1	Canon RF	204,800	6000	·	4779	30	·	·		3.2	·	·	860	150	142.6	87.2	1015
Canon EOS R5	£4200	4.5★	Remarkable 45MP powerhouse capable of internal 8K video recording	FF	45	Canon RF	102,400	8192	·	5940	12	·	·		3.2	·	·	320	135.8	97.5	88	738
Canon EOS R5 Mark II	£4499	5★	Pro-spec all-rounder offers 45MP shooting at 30fps and 8K 60p video	FF	43	Canon RF	102,400	8192	·	1053	30	·	·		3.2	·	·	630	138.5	101.2	93.5	746
Canon EOS R6 Mark II	£2780	5★	Enthusiast-focused model with 24MP sensor and AI subject-recognition AF	FF	24.2	Canon RF	204,800	3840	·	4897	12	·	·		3	·	·	450	138.4	98.4	88.4	670
Canon EOS R6 Mark III	£2800	5★	Third-generation model gains 32.5MP full-frame sensor and 7K raw video	FF	32.5	Canon RF	102,400	6960	·	6097	12	·	·		3	·	·	620	138.4	98.4	88.4	699
Canon EOS R7	£1350	4.5★	Fast APS-C RF-mount model with sophisticated autofocus from the EOS R3	APS-C	32.5	Canon RF	51,200	3840	·	651	15	·	·		3	·	·	770	132	90.4	91.7	530
Canon EOS R8	£1700	4.5★	Lightweight full-frame camera that offers great image quality and autofocus	FF	24.2	Canon RF	204,800	3840	·	4897	6	·	·		3	·	·	220	132.5	86.1	70	461
Canon EOS R10	£900	4★	Compact, lightweight yet highly specified RF-mount APS-C mirrorless model	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	51,200	3840	·	651	15	·	·	·	3	·	·	430	122.5	87.8	83.4	429
Canon EOS R50	£790	4★	Small entry-level APS-C model with subject detection autofocus	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	51,200	3840	·	651	12	·	·	·	3	·	·	310	116.3	85.5	68.8	375
Canon EOS R50 V	£729		Compact video-focused model based on the R50, but with no viewfinder	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	51,200	3840	·	651	12		·	·	3	·	·	480	119.3	73.7	45.2	370
Canon EOS R100	£670	3★	Entry-level APS-C model that's designed to be a simple family camera	APS-C	24.2	Canon RF	25,600	3840	·	143	6.5	·	·	·	3			340	116.3	85.5	68.8	356
Fujifilm X-E5	£1299	5★	Attractive flat-bodied rangefinder-style model designed for enthusiasts	APS-C	40.2	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	·	425	8	·	·		3	·	·	400	124.9	72.9	39.1	445
Fujifilm X-H2	£1899	5★	High-resolution pro flagship model with same design as X-H2S	APS-C	40.2	Fujifilm X	51,200	7680	·	425	15	·	·		3	·	·	540	136.3	92.9	84.6	660
Fujifilm X-H2S	£2499	5★	Extremely impressive pro-spec high-speed flagship model	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	·	425	40	·	·		3	·	·	580	136.3	92.9	84.6	660
Fujifilm X-M5	£799	4.5★	Compact, affordable hybrid model with no viewfinder or in-body stabilisation	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	·	425	20		·		3	·	·	330	111.9	66.6	38	355
Fujifilm X-S20	£1249	5★	Excellent 26MP still/video hybrid camera that includes 6.2K video recording	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	·	425	20	·	·	·	3	·	·	750	127.7	85.1	65.4	491
Fujifilm X-T30 III	£829	5★	Compact DSLR-style model with subject detection autofocus and film dial	APS-C	26.1	Fujifilm X	51,200	6340	·	425	20	·	·	·	3	·	·	425	118.4	82.8	46.8	378
Fujifilm X-T50	£1299	5★	Small 40MP model with in-body stabilisation and film simulation dial	APS-C	40.2	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	·	425	9	·	·	·	3	·	·	390	123.8	84	48.8	438
Fujifilm X-T5	£1699	5★	Retro-styled enthusiast model with 40MP sensor and subject-detection AF	APS-C	40.2	Fujifilm X	51,200	6240	·	425	15	·	·		3	·	·	580	129.5	91	63.8	557
Leica SL3	£5920	4.5★	High-end full-frame model gains phase detection AF and tilting screen	FF	60.1	L-mount	100,000	8192	·	315	15	·	·		3.2	·	·	260	141.2	108	84.6	854
Leica SL3-S	£4500	4★	More videocentric version of SL3 with 24MP sensor and 6K recording	FF	24.6	L-mount	200,000	5952	·	779	30	·	·		3.2	·	·	315	141.2	108	82.7	852
Nikon Z5	£1719	4★	Simplified version of the Z6, comes with compact 24-50mm f/4-6.3 zoom	FF	24.3	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	·	273	4.5	·	·		3.2	·	·	470	134	100.5	69.5	675
Nikon Z5II	£1599	5★	Impressively highly specified entry-level model at a very attractive price	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	273	14	·	·		3.2	·	·	380	134	100.5	72	700
Nikon Z6II	£1999	4.5★	Capable full-frame all-rounder but looking dated in 2025	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	273	14	·	·		3.2	·	·	410	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z6III	£2699	5★	Mid-range full-frame model boasts partially-stacked sensor for high speed	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	5376	·	273	20	·	·		3.2	·	·	380	138.5	101.5	74	760
Nikon Z7II	£2999	4.5★	Gains dual card slots, faster shooting, 4K 60p video and vertical grip option	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	·	493	10	·	·		3.2	·	·	420	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z8	£3999	5★	Sensational all-rounder with all the Z 9's features in a smaller body	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	7680	·	493	20	·	·		3.2	·	·	340	144	118.5	83	910
Nikon Z9	£5299	5★	Stunning high-speed, high-resolution flagship with pro build and connectivity	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	7680	·	493	20	·	·		3.2	·	·	700	149	149.5	90.5	1340
Nikon Zf	£2299	4.5★	Lovely retro-styled full-frame mirrorless with all the latest technology	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	273	14	·	·		3.2	·	·	380	144	103	49	710
Nikon ZR	£2199	4.5★	Video-first hybrid model based on Z6III, and co-developed with RED	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	6048	·	253	20		·		4	·	·	380	134	80.5	49	630

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

Mirrorless cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN WI-FI	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
										SHOOTING					SCREEN				DIMENSIONS			
Nikon Z30	£699	4★	Designed for vloggers, with articulated screen but no viewfinder	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	209	11		·		3	·	·	330	128	73.5	59.5	405
Nikon Z50	£849	5★	Well-specified APS-C mirrorless model boasts excellent handling	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	209	11	·	·	·	3.2	·	·	320	126.5	93.5	60	450
Nikon Z50II	£849	4.5★	Updated APS-C model gains improved autofocus and brighter viewfinder	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	209	15	·	·	·	3.2	·	·	250	127	96.8	66.5	550
Nikon Zfc	£899	4★	Lovely-looking retro-styled model with fully articulated touchscreen	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	·	209	11	·	·		3	·	·	300	134.5	93.5	43.5	445
Olympus OM-D E-M10 IV	£699	4.5★	Compact, lightweight, enjoyable to use and takes great-looking pictures	4/3	20.2	Mic4/3	25,600	3840		121	15	·	·	·	3	·	·	360	121.7	84.4	49	383
OM System OM-1 Mark II	£2200	5★	Updated with larger buffer, improved AF, and extra computational features	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	102,400	4096	·	1053	120	·	·		3	·	·	520	134.8	91.6	72.7	599
OM System OM-3	£1700	5★	Combines gorgeous retro design with most of the OM-1 Mark II's features	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	102,400	4096	·	1053	120	·	·		3	·	·	590	139.3	89.9	45.8	496
OM System OM-5	£1199	5★	Small, lightweight and weather-sealed camera gives great output	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	25,600	4096	·	121	10	·	·		3	·	·	310	125.3	85.2	49.7	414
OM System OM-5 Mark II	£1099	4.5★	Updated OM-5 gains USB-C charging port and some minor refinements	4/3	20.4	Mic4/3	25,600	4096	·	121	10	·	·		3	·	·	310	125.3	85.2	52.0	418
Panasonic Lumix G9II	£1699	5★	High-end Micro Four Thirds model with phase-detection autofocus	4/3	25.2	Mic4/3	25,600	5760	·	779	14	·	·		3	·	·	390	134.3	102.3	90.1	658
Panasonic Lumix G97	£699	4★	Well-priced Micro Four Thirds camera is a minor update to the G90 from 2019	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840	·	49	9	·	·	·	3	·	·	300	130.4	93.5	77.4	530
Panasonic Lumix G100	£590	4★	Small SLR-shaped camera specifically designed for vloggers	4/3	20.3	Mic4/3	25,600	3840	·	49	10	·	·	·	3	·	·	270	115.6	82.5	54.2	345
Panasonic Lumix GH5 II	£1499	4.5★	Video-focused high-end model with in-body stabilisation and 4K video	4/3	20.2	Mic4/3	25,600	4096	·	225	12	·	·		3	·	·	410	138.5	98.1	87.4	727
Panasonic Lumix GH6	£1999	5★	Impressive high-end video model with new 25MP sensor and 5.7K recording	4/3	25.2	Mic4/3	25,600	5728	·		14	·	·		3	·	·	330	138.4	100.3	99.6	823
Panasonic Lumix GH7	£1999	5★	Video-centric camera with phase-detect autofocus and internal ProRes RAW	4/3	25.2	Mic4/3	25,600	5760	·		15	·	·		3	·	·	330	138.4	100.3	99.6	805
Panasonic Lumix S1II	£2899		Pro model with 24MP stacked-CMOS sensor for high-speed stills and video	FF	24.1	L-mount	204,800	5952	·		70	·	·		3	·	·	360	134.3	102.3	91.8	800
Panasonic Lumix S1IIE	£2299	4.5★	'Essentials' version of the S1II with a conventional sensor but slower speeds	FF	24.2	L-mount	204,800	5952	·		30	·	·		3	·	·	380	134.3	102.3	91.8	795
Panasonic Lumix S1R II	£2999	5★	High-end stills-video hybrid camera, with phase-detect AF and 8K recording	FF	44.3	L-mount	102,400	8128	·		40	·	·		3	·	·	350	134.3	102.3	91.8	795
Panasonic Lumix S5D	£1000		Affordable compact-bodied, enthusiast-focused hybrid camera	FF	24.2	L-mount	204,800	4096	·	225	7	·	·		3	·	·	450	132.6	97.1	81.9	714
Panasonic Lumix S5II	£2000	4.5★	Compact model with phase detect autofocus and unlimited video recording	FF	24.2	L-mount	204,800	5952	·	779	9	·	·		3	·	·	370	134.3	102.3	90.1	740
Panasonic Lumix S5IIX	£2300	5★	Video-specialist version of the S5II boasts higher-quality recording options	FF	24.2	L-mount	204,800	5952	·	779	9	·	·		3	·	·	370	134.3	102.3	90.1	740
Panasonic Lumix S9	£1499		Small, rangefinder-styled full-frame camera designed for vlogging	FF	24.2	L-mount	204,800	5952	·	779	30		·		3	·	·	470	126	70.8	46.7	486
Sigma BF	£1969	4★	Stunningly designed, relatively compact model for photographers	FF	24.6	L-mount	102,400	6016			8				3.2		·	260	130.1	72.8	36.8	446
Sigma fp	£1999	4★	Smallest full-frame mirrorless, but compromised features and handling	FF	24.6	L-mount	102,400	3840	·	49	18				3.2		·	280	112.6	69.9	45.3	422
Sigma fp L	£1999	4★	High-resolution version of the fp with 61MP full-frame sensor	FF	61.0	L-mount	102,400	3840	·	49	10				3.2		·	240	112.6	69.9	45.3	427
Sony Alpha 6100	£830		Entry-level APS-C model with Sony's latest AF technology and 4K video	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	51,200	3840	·	425	11	·	·	·	3	·	·	380	120	66.9	59.4	396
Sony Alpha 6400	£1000	4★	Extraordinary new autofocus system, but in an outdated body design	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	102,400	3840	·	425	11	·	·	·	3	·	·	360	120	66.9	49.9	403
Sony Alpha 6600	£1450	4★	In-body stabilistion and impressive autofocus, but frustrating body design	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	102,400	3840	·	425	11	·	·		3	·	·	720	120	66.9	59	503
Sony Alpha 6700	£1450	4.5★	Boasts a 26MP sensor in a much-improved body compared to the A6600	APS-C	26	Sony E	102,400	3840	·	759	11	·	·		3	·	·	570	122	69	75.1	493
Sony Alpha 1	£6500	5★	High-end model with a remarkable combination of resolution and speed	FF	50.1	Sony E	102,400	7680	·	759	30	·	·		3	·	·	530	128.9	96.9	80.8	737
Sony Alpha 1 II	£6300	5★	High resolution, high-speed professional flagship model	FF	50.1	Sony E	102,400	7680	·	759	30	·	·		3.2	·	·	520	136.1	96.9	82.9	743
Sony Alpha 7 III	£1999	5★	Fine camera with 10fps shooting and 4K video recording	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	693	10	·	·		3	·	·	610	126.9	95.6	73.7	650

Mirrorless cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN WI-FI	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
										SHOOTING					SCREEN				DIMENSIONS			
Sony Alpha 7 IV	£2400	5★	Excellent all-rounder with 33MP sensor and fully articulated screen	FF	33.0	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	759	10	·	·		3	·	·	610	131	96.4	79.8	658
Sony Alpha A7 V	£2800	5★	Impressive 33MP enthusiast model with subject recognition and rapid shooting	FF	33.0	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	759	30	·	·		3.2	·	·	750	130.3	96.4	82.4	695
Sony Alpha 7C	£1900	3.5★	Compact full-frame design let down by poor handling and tiny EVF	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	693	10	·	·		3	·	·	680	124	71.1	59.7	509
Sony Alpha 7C II	£2100	4★	Much-improved compact model, but still compromised in certain respects	FF	33.0	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	759	10	·	·		3	·	·	530	124	71.1	63.4	525
Sony Alpha 7CR	£3200	4★	High-resolution twin of the A7C II, with a 60MP sensor	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	3840	·	693	8	·	·		3	·	·	490	124	71.1	63.4	525
Sony Alpha 7R IV	£3500	5★	Superb high-resolution, full-frame mirrorless with 61MP sensor	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	3840	·	567	10	·	·		3	·	·	670	128.9	96.4	77.5	665
Sony Alpha 7R V	£4000	5★	61MP model gains subject detection, 8K video and 4-way articulated screen	FF	61.0	Sony E	102,400	7680	·	693	10	·	·		3.2	·	·	530	131.3	96.9	82.4	723
Sony Alpha 7S III	£3800	4.5★	Huge update gains fully articulated screen and new touch interface	FF	12.1	Sony E	409,600	3840	·	759	10	·	·		3	·	·	600	128.9	96.9	80.8	600
Sony Alpha A9 II	£4800		A9 gains professional connectivity options and an improved body design	FF	24.2	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	693	20	·	·		3	·	·	500	128.9	96.4	77.5	678
Sony Alpha A9 III	£6100	4.5★	World's first global shutter brings breathtaking speed – but at a price	FF	24.6	Sony E	51,200	3840	·	759	120	·	·		3.2	·	·	400	136.1	96.9	82.9	702
Sony ZV-E1	£2350	4★	Small full-frame vlogging camera, with articulated screen but no viewfinder	FF	12.1	Sony E	204,800	3840	·	759	10		·		3	·	·	570	121	71.9	54.3	483
Sony ZV-E10	£680	4★	Designed for vlogging, with high-end microphone and fully articulated screen	APS-C	24.2	Sony E	51,200	3840	·	425	11		·		3	·	·	440	113	64.2	44.7	343
Sony ZV-E10 II	£925	4★	Second-generation vlog camera with 26MP sensor and 4K 60p video recording	APS-C	26.0	Sony E	102,400	3840	·	759			·		3	·	·	610	114.5	67.5	54.2	377

DSLR cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VF COVERAGE (%)	BUILT-IN WI-FI	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (IN)	ARTICULATED LCD	TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (MM)	HEIGHT (MM)	DEPTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
										SHOOTING					SCREEN				DIMENSIONS			
Canon EOS 2000D	£469	3★	Minor update to EOS 1300D gains 24.1MP sensor	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	12,800	1080		9	3	95	·	·	3			500	129	101.3	77.6	475
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV	£3599	4.5★	Hugely accomplished workhorse model, but pricey	FF	30.4	Canon EF	102,400	3840	·	61	7 7	100	·		3.2		·	900	151	116	76	890
Nikon D780	£2199	5★	Superb all-rounder blends the best of DSLR and mirrorless technology	FX	24.5	Nikon F	204,800	3840	·	51	7	100	·		3.2	·	·	2,060	143.5	115.5	76	840
Nikon D850	£3499	5★	High speed and superb image quality make this the best DSLR yet	FX	45.7	Nikon F	102,400	3840	·	153	7	100	·		3.2	·	·	1,840	146	124	78.5	1005
Nikon D6	£6299		Latest pro-level high-speed sports camera boasts high-tech AF system	FX	20.8	Nikon F	3,280,000	3840	·	105	14	100	·		3.2		·	3,580	160	163	92	1450
Pentax KF	£849		Solid spec including fully articulated screen and in-body stabilisation	APS-C	24.2	Pentax K	102,400	1080		11	6	100	·	·	3	·		460	125.5	93	74	684
Pentax K-1 II	£1799	4.5★	Well-featured full-frame DSLR that's excellent value for money	FF	36	Pentax K	819,200	1080	·	33	4.4	100	·		3.2	·		670	136.5	110	85.5	1010

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

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

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Compact cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS RANGE (MM EQUIV)	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	SHOOTING: BURST MODE (FPS)	SHOOTING: VIEWFINDER	SHOOTING: BUILT-IN WI-FI	SHOOTING: FLASH	SCREEN: SCREEN SIZE (IN)	SCREEN: ARTICULATED LCD	SCREEN: TOUCHSCREEN	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	DIMENSIONS: WIDTH (MM)	DIMENSIONS: HEIGHT (MM)	DIMENSIONS: DEPTH (MM)	DIMENSIONS: WEIGHT (G)
Canon G7 X Mark III	£699	4★	Lovely pocket camera that includes 4K video and YouTube live streaming	1in	20.1	24-100	25,600	3840	·	30		·	·	3in	·	·	265	105.5	60.9	41.4	304
Canon V1	£959	4★	Video-focused with ultra-wide zoom, but also interesting for photographers	1.4in	22.3	16-50	51,200	3840	·	15		·		3in	·	·	400	118.3	68.0	52.5	426
Canon V10	£429	3.5★	Unusual camera designed for vlogging, but has some significant limitations	1in	15.2	19	12,800	3840	·	na		·		2in	·	·	290	63.8	90.0	34.3	211
Fujifilm GFX100RF	£4699	4.5★	Surprisingly portable 102MP medium-format compact with 28mm equiv lens	MF	102	28	102,400	4096	·	6	·	·		3.2in	·	·	820	133.5	90.4	76.5	735
Fujifilm X half	£699	4★	Small JPEG-only camera that recreates experience of shooting half-frame film	1in	17.7	32	12,800	2160		na	·	·	·	2.4in		·	880	105.8	64.3	45.8	240
Fujifilm X100VI	£1599	5★	Superb classically styled camera gains 40MP sensor and image stabilisation	APS-C	40.2	35	51,200	6240	·	20	·	·	·	3in	·	·	450	128	74.8	55.3	521
Leica D-Lux 8	£1450	4.5★	Attractive design with Four Thirds sensor and 24-75mm equiv f/1.7-2.8 zoom	4/3	17	24-70	25,00	3840		11	·	·	·	3in		·	TBC	130	69	34	397
Leica Q3	£5300	5★	Lovely top-end compact with 60MP full-frame sensor and 28mm f/1.7 lens	FF	60.3	28	100,000	8192		15	·	·		3in	·	·	350	130	80.3	92.6	743
Leica Q3 Monochrom	£5800		Variant of the Q3 with a modified sensor that only shoots in black & white	FF	60.3	28	200,000	8192		15	·	·		3in		·	302	130	80.3	92.6	746
Leica Q3 43	£5900	5★	Premium model with 60MP full-frame sensor and super-sharp 43mm f/2 lens	FF	60.3	43	100,000	8192		15	·	·		3in	·	·	350	130	80.3	97.6	772
Ricoh GR IIIx	£899	4★	Variant of the GR III with new 40mm-equivalent f/2.8 lens	APS-C	24.2	40	102,400	1920		4		·		3in		·	200	109.4	61.9	35.2	262
Ricoh GR IIIx HDF	£1099	4★	Variant of the GR IIIx with switchable Highlight Diffusion Filter	APS-C	24.2	40	102,400	1920		4		·		3in		·	200	109.4	61.9	35.2	262
Ricoh GR IV	£1199	4.5★	Pocket-sized advanced compact with updated lens and control layout	APS-C	25.7	28	204800	1920		4		·		3in		·	250	109.4	61.1	32.7	262
NEW Ricoh GR IV HDF	£1299		Variant of the GR IV with switchable Highlight Diffusion Filter	APS-C	25.7	28	204800	1920		4		·		3in		·	250	109.4	61.1	32.7	262
NEW Ricoh GR IV Monochrome	£1599		Variant of the GR IV that only shoots black & white images	APS-C	25.7	28	409600	1920		4		·		3in		·	250	109.4	61.1	32.7	262
Sony RX1R III	£4199	4★	Small-bodied full-frame camera with 35mm f/2 lens	FF	61	35	102,400	3840	·	5	·	·		3in		·	300	113.3	67.9	87.5	498
Sony RX100 VII	£1200	4.5★	Gains Sony's latest AI-based autofocus tech, including real-time eye AF	1in	20.1	24-200	12,800	3840	·	20	·	·	·	3in	·	·	260	101.6	58.1	42.8	302
Sony ZV-1	£700	4★	Designed for vloggers, with high-spec mic and fully articulated screen	1in	20.1	25-70	12,800	3840	·	24		·		3in	·	·	260	105.5	60	43.5	294
Sony ZV-1 Mark II	£870	4.5★	Updated vlog camera gains ultra-wideangle zoom and touchscreen interface	1in	20.1	18-50	12,800	3840	·	24		·		3in	·	·	290	105.5	60	46.7	292
Sony ZV-1F	£550		Simplified version of the ZV-1 with fixed 20mm equivalent prime lens	1in	20.1	20	12,800	3840	·	16		·		3in	·	·	360	105.5	60	46.4	256

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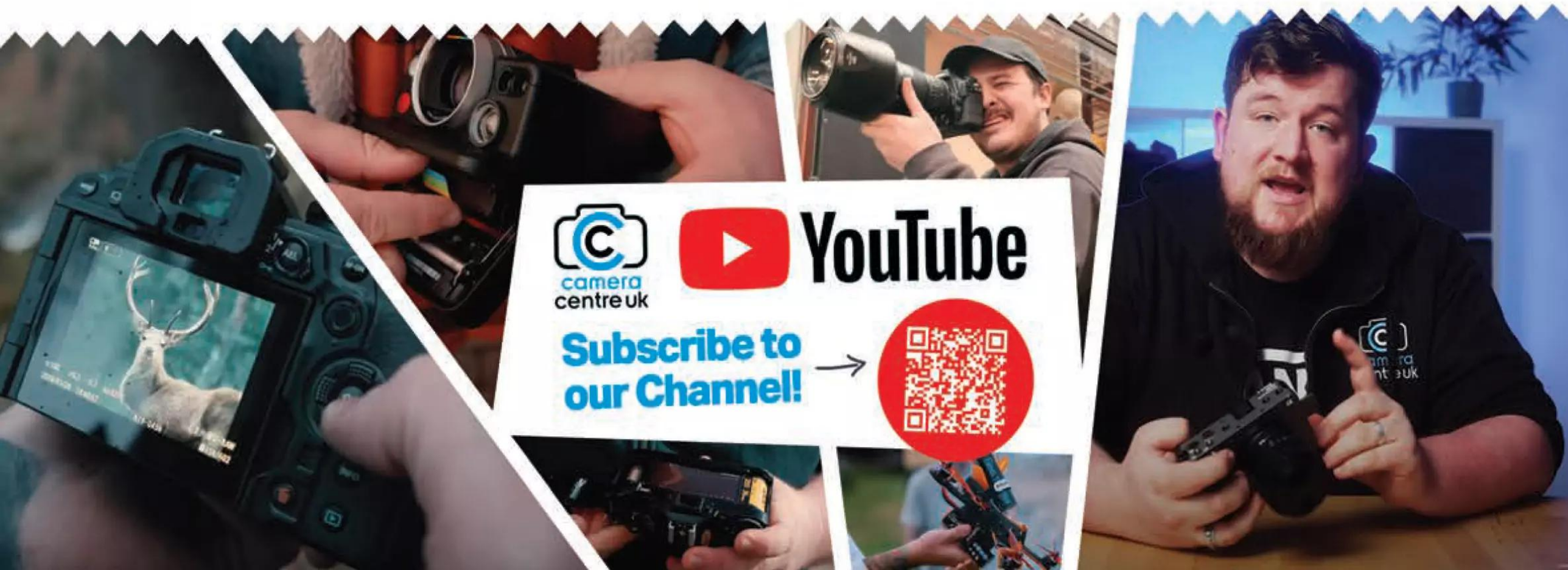

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50 F1.8 AFD £69
55-200 F4.5/5.6 AFS VR DX box £99
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70-200 F2.8 E FL AFS box £1199
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70-300 F4.5/5.6 AFS VR £299
85 F1.8 AFS box £299
105 F2 DC £699
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902609	Sigma 14mm f1.8 DG HSM ART (Sony FE)	£749
907407	Sigma 17-50mm f2.8 EX DC HSM (Nikon DX)	£179
909565	Sigma 24-70mm f2.8 DG DN ART (Sony FE)	£599
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909020	Sigma 30mm f1.4 DC DN Contemporary (Canon EF-M)	£229
909553	Sigma 35mm f2 DG DN Contemporary (Panasonic L)	£429
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909505	Sony 85mm f1.8 FE	£299
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909472	Sony A7 III Mirrorless Body (2,000 Shutter Count)	£849
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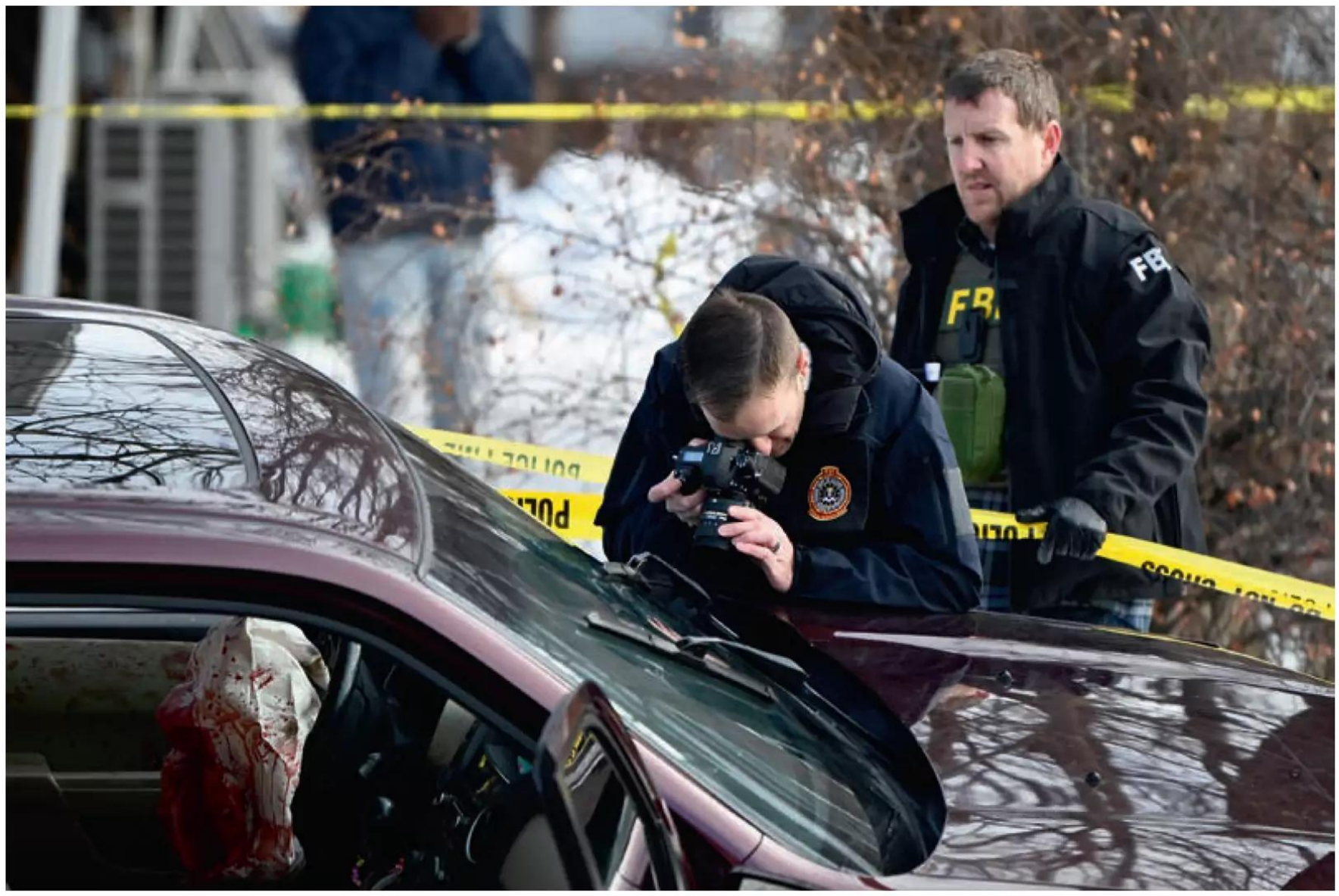
Final Analysis

Damien Demolder considers...

Federal Agents Descend On Minneapolis For Immigration Enforcement Operations, by Stephen Maturen/Getty Images

There may be room for discussion on just how many words a picture is worth, but I think we can all agree it is widely considered that images are more efficient carriers of messages than written text on its own. Before the invention of the camera as we know it, Leonardo da Vinci wrote that a poet would pass out from lack of sleep or starvation before being able to describe with words what a painter is able to depict in an instant. It's perhaps not a great example, as it took da Vinci three years to paint 'The Last Supper' and probably the best part of 16 to paint 'Mona Lisa'. For all his faults Napoleon's 'A good sketch is better than a long speech' is probably a bit nearer something we can stand by. A thousand words or not, we accept that a well-taken picture can tell in a very short space of time a story that would take a good deal longer to write.



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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA - JANUARY 07: Members of law enforcement photograph a vehicle suspected to be involved in a shooting by an ICE agent during federal law enforcement operations on January 07, 2026 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. According to federal officials, the agent, 'fearing for his life' killed a woman during a confrontation in south Minneapolis

The clarity of words

We take this as some form of global ruling that photography is an exceptional means of telling a story, but events across the pond in recent weeks demonstrate a dramatic shortcoming in the process. It might be that we can use a picture instead of pages of text to tell a story, but pictures inherently lack the degree of certainty in their messaging that words enjoy.

Words can be subject to diverse interpretations, of course, but the written or spoken message is carried with a clarity that pictures can't always match. Pictures rely on interpretation and how the viewer responds to them – and we have precious little control over that. In some instances very few of the 1,000 words we had in mind when we took the picture feature in the viewer's reading of it. And some who look at our images may come away with an account entirely at odds with that which we thought we were telling.

What the viewer takes from our pictures will be coloured by their own references, their own history, their own way of seeing the world and, often, what they want to see.

The images that came out of Minneapolis at the time of the shooting by an ICE agent of Renee Nicole Good are filled with factual information and have been presented equally to the world; but the only thing universally clear is that what the world sees in them is a product of the individual viewer. Photographic evidence is no evidence at all, it seems, when one person can see something totally different in those pictures to the person standing next to them. You only have to look at the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) in football – the decision is never right by both teams, and hours are given to futile discussion that will never change the mind of the opposing side. People see what they want to see and what will serve their own ends – honesty and fair play are not automatic requirements.

In the short term whoever shouts loudest and longest will have their version heard most, but history has a habit of finding a balanced perspective and a clearer reading of what any of these photos present.

I wonder what conclusions will be drawn from the evidential pictures this FBI agent is taking with his Nikon D780. I suppose that too will depend on who is asked to decide what they mean. AP

Photographer and journalist Damien Demolder has worked in the photographic publishing industry since 1997 and is the former editor of *Amateur Photographer*. He writes regularly about photography for a number of leading publications and has also been a judge on a number of prestigious international photo competitions. See his website at **www.damiendemolder.com**.

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