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Welcome



This issue's big features share a common thread – the human need for a sense of belonging, of being part of a particular tribe or community. This may be expressed by following particular fashion sub-cultures or genres of music. Or a football team. The dark side of tribalism comes when groups

see other tribes as 'the enemy' and violence erupts – as illustrated in our Back in Time photo on page 11 from one of the infamous pitched battles fought between Mods and Rockers during the 1960s. But this sense of community can also be a catalyst for creativity, and foster friendships across class and cultural divides.

Dean Chalkley has spent a career documenting Britain's niche communities and sub-cultures, often built around shared passions – from Rude Boys and Northern Soul followers to banger racers and bodybuilders. On a much larger scale Notting Hill Carnival, documented by Aneesa Dawoojee, was founded to bring together the small Caribbean immigrant community and to share their joyful, colourful, carnival culture with the often hostile and largely monochromatic indigenous population around them. Sixty years on the carnival is enjoyed annually by over two million people from all races, including me. As Peter Dench puts it so beautifully, both Dean's and Aneesa's work is largely about documenting what happens when people discover where they belong.



Dean Chalkley's portrait of Seye Adelekan, from his acclaimed Return of the Rude Boys series

Nigel Atherton

Nigel Atherton
Group Editor



This issue's contributors...



Peter Dench

Peter talks to Dean Chalkley about his work documenting music and fashion culture, and delves into the world of boudoir photography



Geoff Harris

Deputy Editor Geoff writes our news in every issue but also talked to Aneesa Dawoojee about her project on Notting Hill Carnival



Andy Westlake

AP's Technical Editor puts DxO PureRAW 6 through its paces to see how it has improved on its predecessor. Is it worth the upgrade?



Amy Davies

Our Features Editor curated the book reviews and features, and also tested Nikon's updated 70-200mm f/2.8 premium telezoom



Jessica Miller

Jessica interviewed talented young photojournalist Muhammad Amdad Hossain about his work documenting floods in Bangladesh



Angela Nicholson

Angela tests the excellent new Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 prime lens, plus the latest entry-level drone from DJI

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vanguardworld.co.uk



Our cover photo of actor Rhys Ifans was taken by Dean Chalkley. Read our interview with him on page 30

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Amateur Photographer

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© ADRIAN BEALING

Adrian Bealing from Shoreham by Sea captured this once-in-a-lifetime image of an aircraft passing in front of the recent solar eclipse, using a Dwarf 3 telescope

GROUP EDITOR

Nigel Atherton

EDITORIAL

Deputy Editor Geoff Harris

Technical Editor Andy Westlake

Features Editor Amy Davies

Online Editor Joshua Waller

Deputy Online Editor Jessica Miller

Design atg-media.com (Calum Booth)

Photo-Science Consultant Professor Robert Newman

ADVERTISEMENT SALES & PRODUCTION

Head of Investment: Photography Mike Pyatt

Production Manager Nick Bond

Production Assistant Sophie Lamb

MANAGEMENT

CEO Steve Kendall

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Retail Director Steve Brown

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What's new

New affordable zoom lens from Sony

Sony has released the FE 100-400mm F5.6-8 OSS, a compact, lightweight and affordable telephoto zoom for use with the firm's A7-series full-frame mirrorless cameras. It's designed for subjects such as wildlife, sports, family and pets, travel and landscape photography.

Key to the lens's attraction is its relatively compact size. It measures just 164.5mm in length and 78.2mm in diameter, while weighing in at 654g. That's achieved by the use of a relatively modest maximum aperture, which means this lens will be best suited to shooting in conditions where there's plenty of light.

Another attraction comes with close-up shooting. The lens has a minimum focus distance of just 86cm and provides a maximum magnification of 0.41x. In practice, that means it can fill the frame with subjects as small as 88 x 59mm.

Sony is promising fast, quiet and accurate AF, thanks to the use of dual linear motors. There's also a focus distance limiter switch, which should reduce hunting when you're only shooting distant subjects. What's more, the lens can keep up with continuous shooting at 30 frames per second on the Sony A7 V, and even 120fps on the A9 III.

Optically, Sony has used 15 elements in 10 groups,



including two ED glass and two aspherical elements to maintain cross-frame sharpness and minimise colour fringing. In addition, a nine-bladed circular aperture aims to give attractive background blur. A lens hood is supplied in the box to combat flare and help protect the front glass.

With the Sony FE 1.4x Teleconverter, you get a 140-560mm F8-11 combination if you need extra reach, while with the 2.0x Teleconverter it'll provide 200-800mm F11-F16. These do, however, cost a significant fraction of the price of the lens itself, at around £499 each.

The Sony FE 100-400mm F5.6-8 OSS is due to go on sale in September for £799.

The Sony FE 100-400mm F5.6-8 OSS lens.

Latest camera-shipment data paints mixed picture



Nikon's unlikely to be popping the champagne corks, but there still seems to be less red ink than last year

The Camera and Imaging Products Association (CIPA) in Japan has released its latest data for June, and it reveals that camera shipments across all categories fell to 713,059 units compared to 834,497 for the same period last year. That is also down from the 751,208 camera units shipped this May (though these figures are still much better than June 2024). The normally buoyant compact camera shipments were not immune: 203,056 in June compared to 219,862 the previous month. More positively, when January through June 2026 is combined, compact camera shipments are still up year-on-year. Interchangeable lens cameras, including mirrorless and DSLRs, took a bigger hit, down to 82.4% of what they were a year ago. This trend is reflected in Nikon's latest results, with both revenues and operating profit falling in its camera business. On the positive side, Nikon only lost 0.9 billion yen (around £4.2 million) in the first quarter of this year, compared to losing over £518 million in the whole of the last financial year. Nikon blames lower demand in China and higher memory prices for eroding its profits.

Hip hop historian

Few photographers have captured the hugely influential hip-hop culture of the 80 and 90s better than US photographer Jamel Shabazz, who began shooting New York rappers and B-boys right from the early days. Shabazz also served as correction officer at the notorious Rikers Island prison, and his best work is being exhibited by the Deutsche Borse Photography Foundation at The Cube in Eschborn, Germany, from September 12th to January 17th. Closer to home, the foundation is also exhibiting the winners of its Foundation Prize 2026 at the Photographers' Gallery in London during the same period. This year's finalists are Jane Evelyn Atwood, Weronika Gęsicka, Amak Mahmoodian and the winner Rene Matić.



© JAMEL SHABAZZ

Radio Man, Flatbush, c 1980.

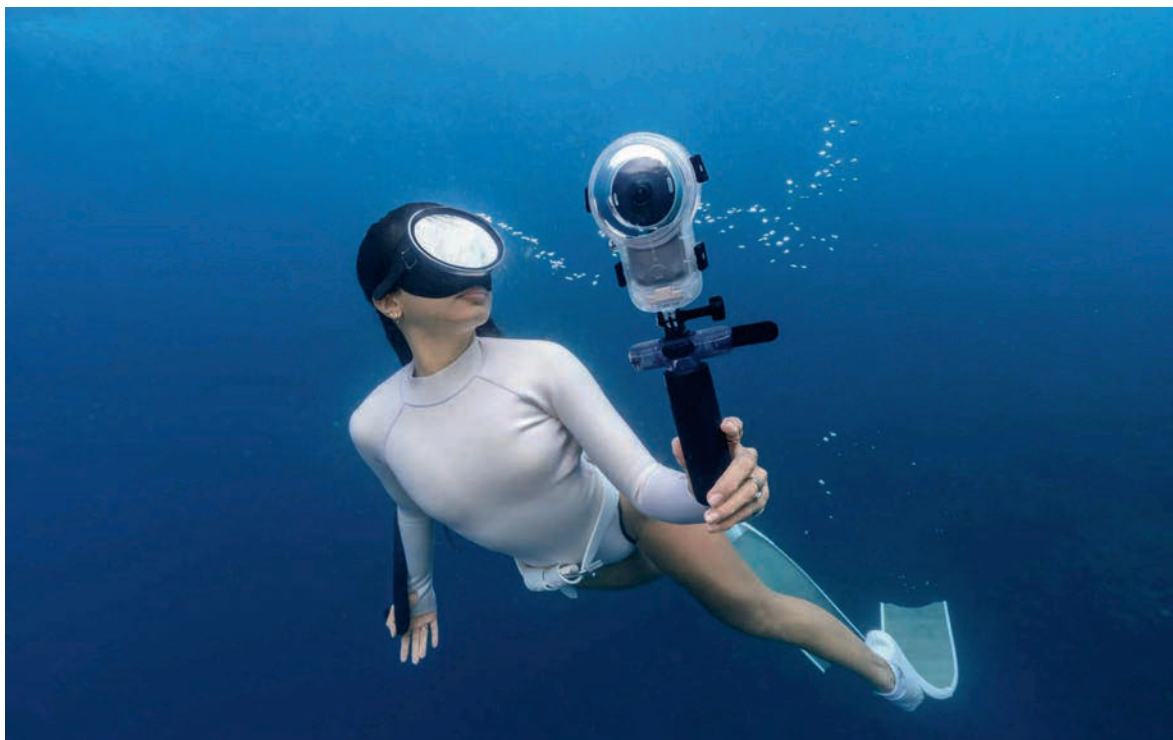
New Google flagship phones

Google's new Pixel 11, Pixel 11 Pro and Pro XL smartphones have arrived, along with the Pixel 11 Pro Fold. All feature larger camera sensors and a new Tensor G6 chip, which should make them better at capturing detail and handling low-light photography. The flagship devices, the Pixel 11 Pro and Pro XL, feature a 50MP, f/1.67 main camera with 2x optical quality zoom; a 48MP, f/1.7 ultra-wide camera; and a 48MP, f/2.8 telephoto camera with 5x optical zoom. In addition, 8K 30p video capture is supported. Interesting new features include Magic Capture, which records video and selects the best still frames, along with Camera Looks – essentially a photo-filter mode that lets you create and save your custom film styles. Meanwhile the new Pixel Fold boasts a 48MP f/1.7 main camera, a 10.5MP f/2.2 ultra-wide camera and a 10.8MP, f/3.1 telephoto with 15x optical zoom. It records 4K video. Prices start from £879 for the Pixel 11 with contract deals available.

The Google Pixel 11 Pro



Take the plunge with the three-in-one Insta360 X6



Insta360 X6 – the power of three

Insta360 has launched the Insta360 X6, designed to be an all-in-one 360 camera, regular action camera, and a gimbal camera. The Insta360 X6 has two new, larger 1/1.1-inch sensors, which should give improved low-light performance and image quality. Other key features include 8K at 50 fps video recording in 360 mode and 5K at 60 fps in Flat Video mode; 14.5 stops of dynamic range, 10-bit I-Log; native Dolby Vision (appearing for the first time in a 360-degree camera) and a 140-minute battery life. The Insta360 X6 is smaller than the Insta360 X5, and available at the Insta360 Official Store, Amazon, and authorised retailers. The Standard Version is priced at £609, or £709 for the Essentials Bundle, which includes a selfie stick and a range of accessories. See store.insta360.com



Honor Robot phone – the most ‘teased’ mobile of the year

Honor reveals more details of ‘robot’ phone

Back in March we reported on the unveiling of the Honor Robot Phone in Barcelona. Honor has now released more details of this unusual and eye-catching device, which is essentially combines a motorised 3-axis mechanical gimbal with a premium smartphone. So the Robot Phone can track subjects, pan and tilt automatically and enable you to capture high-quality video hands free (indeed, Honor teamed up with professional cinema camera maker Arri to develop the Robot Phone). Honor has now confirmed that the Robot Phone will ship with a dual 200MP camera system, featuring a 200MP Agile Gimbal main camera with a 1/1.28-inch sensor and f/1.6 aperture, paired with a 200MP periscope telephoto camera with a 1/1.4-inch sensor and 2.7x optical zoom. ‘The 200MP Agile Gimbal Main Camera supports 10-bit ARRI LogC3 recording in ARRI CINEMA mode, while a 50MP Ultra-Wide Camera with a 122° field of view completes the versatile imaging system,’ said Honor. AI-powered gimbal control and noise reduction features are also promised. It all sounds intriguing, though, pricing and availability still haven’t been announced six months after it was first revealed.

THE BIG QUESTION

What has been your biggest photography challenge so far this year?



Ben Burchell

A mix of struggling to find inspiration and finding the time to get out and use my camera.



@astrichairina

Money, money, money.



@pati.kostecka

Learning to use my camera in manual mode.



@artisticanglesllc

Being worried about posting photos and no one seeing them.



Eric Begbie

Mustering the enthusiasm to go out with the camera - and finding inspiration when do. I blame AI.



@david_porthouse_reick

Mounting prints.



@czechiasucks

Forgetting to charge the battery or put it back in the camera



Jon Parkes

Trying to justify the Leica to my wife.



© PHOTO BY DAILY MIRROR/MIRRORPIX VIA GETTY IMAGES

Did you know?

The most viewed photo of all time is this one called 'Bliss' which, as the default wallpaper for Microsoft Windows XP computers, has been viewed by over a billion people since it debuted in 2002. It was taken in 1996 by retired National Geographic photographer Charles O'Rear, who worked for the magazine from 1971-95. The photo was taken on the edge of the Napa Valley wine region of California using a Mamiya RZ67 loaded with Fujifilm Velvia. His stock library Westlight was subsequently bought by the Bill Gates owned Corbis agency, where Gates saw it and negotiated to buy it outright.

©PHOTO CHARLES O'REAR / MICROSOFT



Back in time 1964

Mods And Rockers clash in Hastings

A family relax on Hastings beach, East Sussex, during August bank holiday weekend as approximately 5000 Mods and Rockers descend upon the beach to fight each other, and the police. This event became known as the 'Second Battle of Hastings' and followed months of violent clashes in Margate, Brighton and other seaside resorts between gangs of youths following the rival Mods and Rockers sub-cultures. These clashes sparked a moral panic in the media about British youth and their mindless hooliganism, and the issue was even debated in Parliament. One judge described those he jailed as 'sawdust Caesars'.



Michelle Richardson

Time to spend doing photography and trying to sell my work.



@david_twomeyphotography

Timing and preparation for sunrise and sunset shots here in Ireland.



Keith Patrak

My biggest challenge has been finding somewhere cool enough to walk during the heatwave. Forests and woods are the best option but only if early in the morning.



Peter Travers

Photographing a Football tournament in torrential sideways rain and gales, for a few hours.



Richard Napthen

Trying to get a decent photo of a Fulmar in flight.



Lu Young

Finishing a photobook. Drafts 1 & 2 are done, though.



Alan Williams

Holding the camera due to a hand op.

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and comments
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See page 6 for how
to contact us





Last year's LCE Photo Show in Exeter was a big success.

More details of LCE Photo Show taking place soon

The London Camera Exchange (LCE) Photo Show takes place at the Haynes Motor Museum near Yeovil, Somerset, on September 12th and the organisers have announced more details of speakers and seminars. Several Amateur Photographer contributors will be speaking, including top astrophotographer Josh Dury, who will explore

how our understanding of the universe continues to evolve through photography, science and technology; meanwhile Nikon ambassador Amy Shore will reveal how she got into automobile photography by accident, and share some tips and practical techniques. Staying with cars, Rod Fountain will also have plenty of anecdotes from his

20-year stint photographing BBC's Top Gear. Other highlights include Gavin Hoey's portrait photography masterclass, Tom Greenham on 'Leica and the Art of Seeing' and Gary Williamson's experiences of being a photographer with a visual impairment. Additional activities on the day include free photo walks and a draw to win an OM System TG-7 Red Adventure Kit worth £449 plus a £100 Sigma event voucher and other prizes. Early-bird tickets are £5 in advance while regular tickets are £10. Both include free parking. See photoshow.lcegroup.co.uk



CEWE buys Kodak photo-printing business

German printing giant CEWE has signed a deal to acquire the Kodak Moments photo-printing business from Kodak Alaris – Kodak Alaris was separated from the main Eastman Kodak business in 2013 as part of a Chapter 11 bankruptcy agreement. With worldwide sales of around £170 million, Kodak Moments has numerous photo-printing stations in retail outlets in 54 countries and also supplies photo books, canvases and various photo gifts. The acquisition is

expected to be finalised in the first half of next year. 'Kodak Moments is far more than just an iconic brand,' said the CEO of CEWE, Thomas Mehis. 'It is highly trusted by consumers and retailer partners. For the CEWE Group, the brand is a clear differentiator for the expansion into new markets, combined with our ability to further develop photo products – technologically, operationally, and in collaboration with strong retail partners.'

Important notice

You may have seen recent news reports regarding the planned closure of some TG Jones stores, formerly WH Smith. At present, it's unclear whether your local store will be affected. To ensure you continue to receive future issues of the magazine, we encourage you to consider one of the following alternative options, should your local store be one of those marked for closure.

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Opinion Tiffany Tangen

There's nothing wrong with us buying 'stuff' for photography, but everything in moderation!

“Photography has a peculiar way of convincing perfectly rational adults that the next great image is waiting inside a

cardboard box. It rarely is.

And when the urge to spend inevitably strikes, is it really worth the money? Here are five purchases you could probably skip – and save yourself from making the same expensive mistakes generations of photographers have made before you.

The drone that never leaves the bag

That drone is going to make your work look cinematic, right? It'll transform the way you create, land you incredible jobs, and finally justify watching 147 drone videos you watched on YouTube. Well... maybe.

For most photographers, it becomes the coolest thing in the camera bag that rarely

sees the light of day. You imagined golden-hour cliffs, endless beaches and those glorious cinematic reveals that make your Instagram followers comment 'wow, nice'.

Then reality turns up. It's too windy. You're in a no-fly zone. Everywhere is a no-fly zone. There are too many people around. You forgot to charge the batteries. Or you simply can't face the pre-flight routine that somehow takes longer than the flight itself for one photograph (OK, maybe two). The drone comes on every trip. It just doesn't come out.

And when it finally does, you then fly your £1,300 investment straight into a tree. Again!

The £400 carbon fibre tripod

A good tripod is an essential piece of kit. A £400 carbon fibre tripod for someone who only shoots handheld at 1/500th? That's optimism with twist locks.

Most expensive tripods spend their lives strapped to the side of a backpack, proudly

announcing, 'I photograph landscapes,' while never actually touching the ground.

The camera bag collection

Every new camera bag promises better organisation, faster access and a more enjoyable day out shooting. Six months later it's in the cupboard beside its predecessor, waiting patiently for the next round of organisational optimism.

There are the bags with leather straps artfully draped across the zip, so you have to solve a small puzzle to get inside. Then there are the beautifully designed bags that become impossible to open once you've filled them. And then there are the bags where the inserts are sold separately. The bag is just a bag. If you'd also like it to carry a camera, that'll be another £70.

The film camera museum

'I shoot film because it slows me down' (Tiffany Tangen, guilty as charged). But did that require 14 cameras? Somehow, I own more film cameras than rolls of film. Every model has 'character', every shutter sound is 'special', and every purchase is justified because it was 'too good a deal to miss.'

Somewhere in the cupboard is a camera that hasn't seen daylight since Boris Johnson got stuck on a zip line. Obviously, I still need it though... right?

The fancy strap (or cowboy clip)

Nothing says serious photographer quite like a handcrafted leather strap with solid brass fittings, or a tactical clip hanging from your belt that lets your camera dangle at cowboy height. Will it make carrying your camera slightly more comfortable? Possibly. Will it improve your composition? Only if the original problem was insufficient leather.

Photography gear is wonderful, and buying nice things is part of the fun. There's nothing wrong with that. But it's worth remembering the biggest upgrade most photographers can make isn't hidden in a catalogue, a Kickstarter campaign or an affiliate link.

It's simply taking the camera they already own out of the bag more often than the accessories they bought for it.

”

Tiffany Tangen is a writer and filmmaker with a fascination for photography, film and conflict journalism. Formerly Head of Content at Wex Photo Video, she has spent her career exploring the cultural role of imagery.



There's nothing inherently wrong with GAS – Gear Acquisition Syndrome – so long as you actually USE the stuff you are splurging on

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ALL IMAGES © JIM MARSHALL

Transcending Beatlemania

Photographer Jim Marshall was at the Fab Four's last-ever US concert, this book makes you feel like you were actually there

The Beatles' final public concert took place at San Francisco's Candlestick Park in 1966. Beyond the historic occasion, Jim Marshall's images reveal a band on the brink of leaving touring behind forever.

History often takes time to reveal what is significant. On August 29th 1966, four young men from Liverpool arrived at Candlestick Park, in San Francisco, USA. They were greeted by adoring fans and curious journalists, they chatted with friends in the dressing room, and scribbled drawings on a tablecloth. Eventually they played a half hour set to thousands of screaming devotees. Then they left. It would later become clear that this was the final public concert by The Beatles.

The Beatles by Jim Marshall: Live at Candlestick Park assembles over 150 photographs and proof sheets from Marshall's access to the band's final tour stop. Many of the images have never previously been published. The book's appeal transcends Beatlemania. For photographers it demonstrates how the medium can elevate moments into invaluable historical documents. Marshall's access to musicians was extraordinary. Annie Leibovitz famously described him simply as "THE rock 'n' roll photographer."

The book's photos aren't obviously great photographs. They are often straightforward documentary observations of the Fab Four waiting around or doing their job. The images intrigue builds: Paul McCartney smokes a cigarette in the locker room. Ringo Starr doodles on his matchbook. John Lennon wearing a security guard's "Moses" name patch. There's general goofing off. Visitors come and go. Time is passed before the world's most famous band

deliver another performance.

Marshall's proximity to the legends add power to his photographs. He was trusted to enter the inner circle. Reportedly requested by The Beatles themselves, their trust allowed him to move between private moments and public spectacle.

This allows the book to function on several levels. It delivers what many fans want, a glimpse backstage of candid portraits and a front-row seat at one of the most significant points in music history. The book also serves as a reminder that documentary photography often derives its value from timing over visual perfection.

Over time, regulation snaps have become visual treasures. The concert photographs have become more compelling than they might have among decades of Beatles imagery. Ultimately, what may be the books greatest strength and keeping it genuinely fresh, are those quieter moments around the edges: the interactions, conversations and pauses that reveal the human beings behind one of the most mythologised bands in history. The inclusion of contact sheets help understand and absorb Marshall's working methods.

Marshall's photographs demystify The Beatles as untouchable cultural icons. They are four young men captured as they navigate another hard day's night. On this occasion, another routine day happened to coincide with the end of one of pop's most extraordinary music stories. 60 years later Marshall's shots have become evidence over observation. History, it turns out, was hiding in the locker room. **Peter Dench**

Top left: The Beatles walk across the field to the stage at Candlestick Park.

Above: The Beatles disembark at San Francisco International Airport.



The Beatles by Jim Marshall: Live at Candlestick Park 1966
£30, Chronicle Books, Hardback, 176 pages, ISBN: 9781797243962



Political spectacle

William Meyers' sweeping 25-year visual record of New York City as a microcosm of America is simply remarkable, says **Peter Dench**

In *Civics*, William Meyers turns away from political spectacle to document the everyday acts of participation, public service and civic engagement that keep democracy functioning.

Throughout history, campaign rallies, violent demonstrations, victory speeches and devastating defeats have consistently provided fodder for the photographer's lens. Democracy however, is much more difficult to photograph than politics. William Meyers (b. 1938) has spent 25 years trying.

Civics is less a chronicle of American politics than an examination of what happens after the press pack leave. More political plumbing than political theatre, the viewer is shown images of council meetings, election volunteers, newspaper editors, charity workers, public hearings and ordinary New Yorkers waiting patiently for their turn to speak.

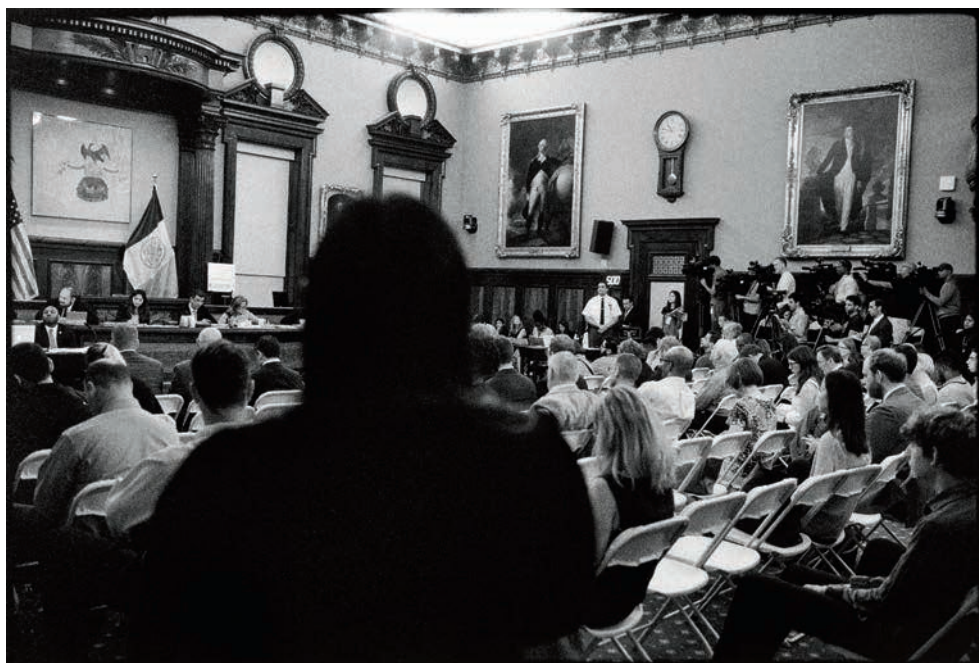
The book's release coincides with the USA's 250th anniversary, a time when public discourse

increasingly feels dominated by social media outrage and ideological trench warfare. The title, *Civics*, may not feel contemporary but that is Meyer's point. His photographs suggest that democracy is sustained by small acts of participation over viral moments. They also echo the book's beautiful accompanying essay by journalist Nicole Gelinas. Whether it's attending a council meeting, volunteering in a shelter, campaigning for local office or simply listening to an orator, civic life depends on people repeatedly showing up.

Photography has historically been at its most memorable when recording moments of confrontation. Instead, Meyers points his camera at what happens before and after history is made; the committee meetings, election volunteers, newspaper offices and patient queues where democracy steadily goes about its business. History remembers the explosions. Meyers captured the wiring.

Conflict and protest naturally produce compelling pictures and Meyers doesn't ignore them. He includes images of Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter demonstrations but they form only one of the seven chapters in the broader ecosystem, along with Elections, Governance, Demonstrations, Press, Talk, Social Capital and Civic Markers.

Meyers embraces what Cartier-Bresson once dismissed as the "non-event." It's a book that requires patience from both photographer and viewer. His strongest images are of rooms filled with anonymous citizens sitting on uncomfortable looking folding chairs waiting to make their point. *Civics* reminds us that democracy is more about participating in the slow often frustrating day-to-day business of public life than winning the argument. That's a difficult idea to photograph. William Meyers has spent a quarter of a century proving that it's possible.



City Council hearing, City Hall, Civic Center, August 8, 2017

Left: Black Lives Matter protest, Broadway and 96th Street, Upper West Side, November 20, 2020



Right: Statue of Liberty souvenirs, tourist shop, Times Square, September 15, 2010

CIVICS



Civics by William Meyers

£60, Apollo Publishers, Hardcover, 240 pages, ISBN: 9781954641570



Union rat, Madison Avenue, Midtown, January 26, 2011

What's On

Some dates for your photographic diary

Now - 30 September EVENT

Stirling Photography Festival at various venues

Now - Until 4 October

EXHIBITION Cecil Beaton: *Staging Icons* at Harewood House, Leeds

Now - 11 September EXHIBITION

RPS International Photography Exhibition 167 at Saatchi Gallery, London

Now - 1 November EXHIBITION

Catherine Opie: To Be Seen at National Galleries Scotland, Edinburgh

28-30 August EVENT

London Street Photography Festival at The Heath Studio, Hackney Wick

5 September WORKSHOP

Wildlife Photography Workshop with Paul Way at WWT Llanelli Wetland Centre

7 - 11 September WORKSHOP

Alternative Photography workshop series at Institute of Photography, Falmouth University

12 September EVENT

LCE Photo Show at Haynes Motor Museum, Somerset

2 - 31 October EVENT

FfotoCymru at various venues, Wales

14 October - 15 November

EVENT *Bristol Photo Festival* at various city venues

16-29 October EVENT

Chester Photo Festival at various city centre venues

17-18 October EVENT

BOP 26 Photobook Festival at Martin Parr Foundation, Bristol

To be included in these listings, please email ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk at least a month in advance



BOTH IMAGES © JEM SOUTHAM



A beautiful mind

An intriguing glimpse inside an artist's studio reveals where ideas become art

Photographers have long been fascinated by the artists' studio, to their eye they are more than a simple workplace – they are physical manifestations of a creative mind. Studios are clues – littered with sketches, raw materials, half-finished or rejected works. These elements reveal as much, if not more, about the artist as the polished pieces that make it into a gallery. There's a rich tradition of collaboration from Hans Namuth's celebrated photographs of Jackson Pollock in action to Alexander Liberman's portraits of painters and sculptors in their studios.

Ray's Sheds is markedly different. In Jem Southam's approach, there is no artist at work or dramatic portrait captured amongst the frames canvases or sculptures. Southam photographs absence instead. The sculptor, Ray Exworth (1939–2015) is gone. His world remains, preserved in seven extraordinary sheds nestled across the Cornish countryside. The result is an absorbing and one of the most affecting photography books of the year.

Southam and the late sculptor shared a long friendship. Once described by writer Bruce Bernard as 'a sculptor of probable genius,' Exworth spent much of his career working in relative isolation, constructing ambitious installations from plaster figures, found objects, timber, wax, textiles and scrap materials. Surprisingly, many of his creations rarely left the sheds in which they were created. After his death in 2015, the spaces became inseparable from the works themselves. The book leads the viewer into that intimate world.

Southam's first visit came from a commission to photograph Exworth's studio in 1983. Southam deployed his 10x8 inch camera, shot a handful of sheets of film,

then packed up and left. The photography largely stopped there. The friendship didn't, lasting over 30 years. Exworth would steer conversations away from suggestions of further photography, committed to protecting both his art and the world in which it existed. Southam could've pushed harder but instead, respectfully waited.

With the support of his widow Susie, Southam returned after Exworth died and began to make around 50 colour and black & white photographs included in this 120-page volume. The long period of restraint gives the book its beauty and emotional resonance. The pages preserve the traces of a life devoted almost entirely to making, rather than simply documenting an artist at work.

Southam's photographs decipher the clutter into readable images revealing interiors unlike conventional studios. Sculptures emerge from the gloom and disappear again into a tangle of timber, ropes, plaster casts, plastic sheets and improvised constructions. Through Southam's eye, the buildings are treated less like workshops and more as physical extensions of Exworth's imagination; immersive environments where artwork and workspace is merge.

Southam's photographs allow audiences to experience the remarkable environments and traces of Exworth's working life. The camera allows us to see inside the sheds and the book brings the sculptures to a wider audience than that experienced during the artist's lifetime. Ray's Sheds is a book of patience, trust and forensic observation where photography doesn't attempt to explain or interpret art. Its achievement is in preserving a world that would have otherwise remained hidden, allowing us the privilege to step briefly inside another artists' imagination. **Peter Dench**

Top left: Studio Interior of Ray Exworth's The Circus 1984- 85

Above: CLOWN AND BUCKETS, the Circus Shed, 2021-25



Ray's Sheds by Jem Southam
£45, Raft, Softback, 120 pages, ISBN: 9781918715019



PHOTO © WAYNE CRITCHLOW



Carnival of Resistance by Wayne Campbell & Wayne Crichtlow
£60, available from acelebrationof demonstration.com

Carnival of Resistance brings together the photos of two award-winning creatives: the colour photography of Wayne Crichtlow, (a former finalist on Sky Arts' Master of Photography) and the b&w images of Wayne Campbell, a former Designer of the Year who also designed the book

Capturing Carnival

A new book documents Notting Hill Carnival in all its many facets

The annual celebration of Caribbean culture that is Notting Hill Carnival is 60 years old this year, and a new book to mark this significant landmark has been published by two distinguished photographers with a long history of documenting it. *Carnival of Resistance* marks the first collaboration between Wayne Campbell, founder of A Celebration of Demonstration, and award-winning visual activist and storyteller Wayne Crichtlow, who between them have spent over 15 years documenting the many aspects of Carnival. The book offers a contemporary visual exploration of the various facets of the event through the lens of lived experience, culture and community.

Led by members of the British Caribbean community, Notting Hill Carnival began life in 1966 as an attempt to foster unity, and bridge community divides in response to racial attacks against West Indian immigrants who had settled in West

London – the most serious of which were the 1958 riots, in which a mob of 300-400 white youths attacked the homes of immigrants in the Notting Hill area. Since then the event has grown in size to become one of the world's largest street festivals, and the biggest in Europe, with an annual turn-out of around two million people each year.

The book brings together the contrasting visual languages of both artists, seamlessly mixing Campbell's black and white imagery with Crichtlow's colour photography, and captures the energy, creativity, joy and community of what has become the most significant event in British Caribbean culture.

Alongside the photos and the authors' own reflections are contributions from a selection of writers from the Caribbean diaspora, whose words, poetry, short stories and perspectives add depth and context to the story. **Nigel Atherton**



PHOTO © WAYNE CAMPBELL

What's new



Your best Photos

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#appicoftheweek



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* PRIZE IS VALID IN THE UK ONLY

On Parade by Danny Lines

Leica M4-P, Voigtlander Color Skopar 35mm, Portra 400

From a series on the Corpus Christi Procession. What drew me to document this was the contrast of it all - a centuries-old ritual making its way through the chaos of London's streets. It created these brilliant, candid moments where two completely different worlds collided on the same pavement.

Instagram: @dannylines.vis





What's new



Golden Fly by Elsie Tedbury

Nikon Zf, NIKKOR Z 24-120mm f/4 S, 1/500sec at f/5.6, ISO 1250

I love a bristly fly with their untidy hairs and spiky legs. I wanted to see if I could capture this one as he swayed on a grass head in the breeze, catching the contrast of all his scruffy texture and the soft, warm sunlit background behind him.

Instagram:
@elsietedburyphotography





Your best Photos

The Weight of Noise by Ramesh Naikar

Samsung Galaxy S25 Ultra, 1/50sec
at f/1.9, ISO 100, 13 mm

Some days, the world feels louder than we can bear. The flock of pigeons becomes a metaphor for thoughts scattering in every direction, while the empty street reminds us that silence often exists beneath the chaos. This photograph explores the fragile balance between inner noise and the quiet we seek.

Instagram: @ramesh_naikar



Pink Blood Mosaic: Unveiling the Secret Life of a Leaf by Himanshu Rajendra Bhagwat

Canon 200D Mark II, Laowa
60mm 2X Ultra macro, Canon
Speedlite 580EX, 1/160sec at
f/11, ISO 200, 2x magnification

This macro photograph reveals the intricate cellular architecture of a leaf, exposing a mesmerizing network of tightly packed epidermal cells. Tiny surface structures and natural textures create an abstract mosaic, highlighting the remarkable complexity hidden within ordinary plant life. The image showcases nature's precision, beauty, and microscopic design often invisible to the naked eye.

Instagram: @macrovision_hb



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

Your best IRYS Photos

We've partnered with Irys to share your best photographs!

Irys is a new photography-first app, made by photographers for photographers. Designed to give images and the people who make them the space they deserve. For a chance to feature on this page: create an account on the Irys app, visit our profile and submit your images to the "Your Best Photos" group. Two images from the group will be selected for publication in every issue and on our social media. You can find Irys in the Apple and Android app stores

Sunbird Acrobatics by Ankit Mitra

Nikon D7500, Nikon AF-S 200-500mm F5.6, 1/320sec at f/5.6, ISO 1000, 500mm

I captured this sunbird in a moment of sheer acrobatics as it hung upside down to reach the nectar. My passion for avian photography drives me to document these fleeting, gravity-defying feeding behaviours. Capturing this delicate balance hand-held required patience, beautifully highlighting the intricate connection between bird and bloom.

Instagram: @the_silvershutter_photographer
Irys: @Ankit2048

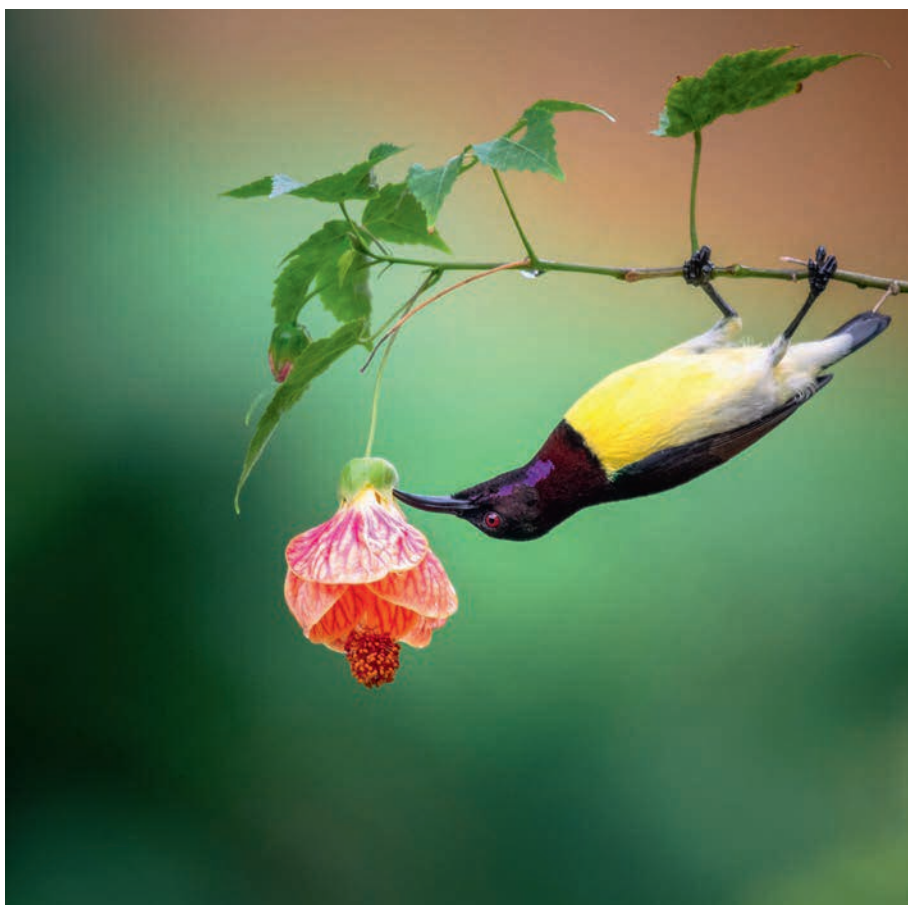


In Passing by Alex Guevara

Leica Q3, 1/125 sec at f/1.7, ISO 400

Captured during rush hour beneath Grand Central Terminal, this image explores the anonymity of city life. By reducing the figures to silhouettes, I wanted to reflect how thousands of people cross paths every day, sharing the same space while remaining strangers.

Instagram and Irys: @agnphoto



Picture Perfect

BEST SHOTS: BOUDOIR

One genre. Three photographers. Three standout images, each revealing how vision, timing and technique come together in a single frame. For this issue, AP invited three boudoir photographers to share one image they consider among their best and to tell us why

Alexandra Vince

Alexandra Vince is a British boudoir photographer and founder of FYEO Portraits, specialising in elegant black-and-white portraiture that celebrates confidence, individuality and beauty. A pioneer of boudoir photography in the UK, she has spent more than 20 years creating flattering, empowering portraits for women. Her work has been featured by the BBC, Reuters and national newspapers, and she has appeared on television alongside celebrities including Alesha Dixon and Gok Wan. **Instagram @fyeoportraits**

Tell us about this image

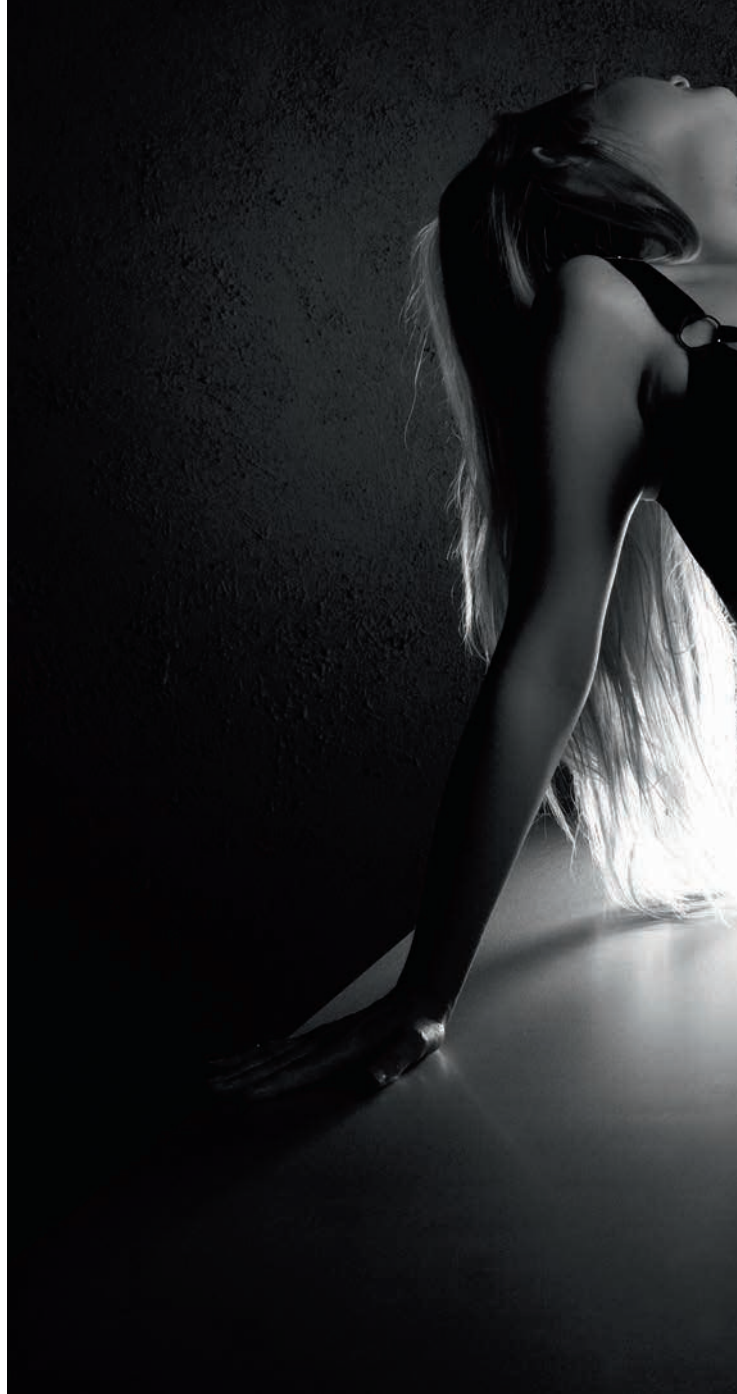
I picked this image because it sums up what I do and what my studio is known for. It's a black-and-white portrait I created for a media campaign, and it really shows my signature style, using the female body to create elegant shapes with dramatic studio lighting.

The model is Kirsty, photographed in a full-length seated pose. The angle, lighting and overall feel all come together to create an image that people instantly recognise as my work. It's become one of the defining photographs in my portfolio.

What were the key creative decisions you made?

Everything was planned. I used my signature posing platform because I never ask clients to pose on the floor – I don't think it's respectful to ask anyone to lay on the floor in a state of undress.

The lighting was designed to sculpt the body, with a soft side light and a beauty dish behind Kirsty creating a subtle glow around her lower back. She wore her favourite black lingerie and heels, and I added handcuffs around one ankle to introduce a hint of bondage. The aim wasn't to be explicit, it was to create something elegant, suggestive and empowering.



Can you share the technical details?

I lit this with my Bowens studio lights, which I've owned for years. A beauty dish behind Kirsty was set to full power for the backlight, while a softbox to one side was around three-quarter power to shape the light across her body. I used a Nikon D810 with a 50mm lens. My settings were 1/125sec at f/11 and ISO 160. Those settings gave me plenty of sharpness while letting the lighting do the work.

What was happening just before and after this frame?

Before we shot it, I demonstrated the pose so Kirsty knew exactly what I was looking for. I set up my posing platform and adjusted the lighting to create a strip of light across her body, with a backlight behind her. As soon as we'd captured it, we moved on to the next pose – one of 30 or so, which is typical for a shoot.

What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?

Every detail was directed, the hands, supporting arm positions, leg position, head angle, lift of the rib cage and tilt of the pelvis to create the curve through the back. That's where experience comes in. My job



is to guide clients clearly while making them feel relaxed and confident throughout the shoot.

What does this photograph mean to you?

This image has become one of my studio's signature photographs, and it represents everything I love about boudoir photography. It's about creating beautiful shapes and helping ordinary women see themselves differently. It's one of my favourite poses, I even had it printed on a T-shirt. I've been refining versions of this image for over 24 years. I originally used a black posing platform before switching to silver because it reflects light back onto the body so much better.

What makes a photograph boudoir?

This is something I write about in my book *The Queen of Boudoir*. For me, boudoir is about confidence, self-expression and celebrating who we are as women. It's a female empowerment movement. I hope people see that boudoir is about artistry, confidence and empowerment, not simply photographing someone in lingerie. Anyone can photograph someone in underwear, but that doesn't automatically make it boudoir.

It's about helping everyday women see themselves in a completely different light. To me, boudoir is simply personal portrait photography created for confidence and self-celebration.

Was it luck or judgement?

Definitely judgement. Every part of this photograph was carefully planned. Nothing was left to chance.

What did this image teach you?

This image taught me about 'body-sculpted poses.' This photograph is the result of years of refining ideas, posing, lighting and learning how to work with people. When all those elements come together, you create photographs that people remember.

What advice would you give others trying boudoir?

You need a controlled studio atmosphere, good lighting and, ideally, a black box studio. The real skill is directing people. If you can communicate clearly, build trust and understand how light shapes the body, you're well on your way to creating photographs like this.



Johanna Elizabeth

Johanna Elizabeth is a Hampshire-based portrait photographer specialising in empowering beauty and boudoir photography for women. Over the past 12 years she has photographed more than 8,000 clients, creating a supportive, confidence-building studio experience designed to help women see themselves in a new light. Working with an all-female team, Johanna guides clients through every stage of the process, with a focus on celebrating individuality, self-esteem and body confidence.

Instagram @johannaelizabethuk @je_loveyouagain

Tell us about this image. What are we looking at, and why did you choose it?

One of my clients, photographed in my private studio. My shoots are full of laughter and encouragement. I direct every element, down to the position of a little finger. I chose it because it does what I want all my images to do, show a woman completely at ease in her own skin. A single light source, closed eyes. Intimate without feeling exposed. It's not trying too hard.

What was happening just before and after this frame?

Every pose is fully directed, a reassurance my clients need.

What were the key creative decisions you made?

This pose celebrates all women regardless of body type. The fur adds extra texture and softness. The outfit was her own choice, discussed beforehand on a Zoom call so nothing on the day was a surprise and she chose it with my guidance. That sense of control shapes how she feels in front of the camera.

Can you share the technical details?

Sony A7R III, 31mm, 1/125sec at f/4, ISO 640. I stick to 30–50mm to avoid distortion, and f/4 gives me the depth of field I love. My clients aren't moving so 1/125s is plenty. Lighting here is continuous through an 80cm gridded Octobox. Temperature is warm (3200k) allowing me to shoot with extra ambient lighting in the set. I shot this with my Photoflex Starlite, used throughout my entire career before it was discontinued. I'll genuinely miss it. My Godox continuous light is a recent switch and I'm loving (and still getting to grips with) having choices in colour temperature.

What was the biggest challenge?

I'm pernickety to the point of obsession, making constant small adjustments, chasing a version of the image until I'm happy and clients love that. What I'm always doing is what I call 'chasing the S'. I think the female form needs to flow across the frame in a sensual shape that carries the eye through the image. Posing, angles and lighting matters enormously, particularly with different body types and much of how I see a frame comes from time in museums and galleries

studying the masters. I discovered later in life that I'm neurodivergent, and it explains a lot. It doesn't mean I'm clinical or detached – I'm actually very empathetic and notice everything, including how someone's feeling.

What does this photograph mean to you?

It means everything to me. How women look and how they think they look are rarely the same thing. A lot of this is in the mind and it's where most of my work happens. I get to show them something true about themselves they couldn't see before.

What makes a photograph boudoir. Is it defined by the photographer's intent, the subject, the viewer, or something else?

This is a harder question to answer than it looks. Boudoir is a spectrum that means something different to every woman who walks through the door.

What I can tell you is what it means to me: empowerment. I believe some photographers often get that wrong, as I've met women mentally damaged by previous shoots, in how they felt about themselves during and afterwards. Some have even arrived at a shoot not realising the photographer was male and went ahead despite being deeply uncomfortable. That's a consent issue the industry doesn't discuss enough.

However, it isn't only about gender, it's about any photographer who doesn't understand the emotional layers, can't pose a woman in a way that makes her feel good, or lets their own lack of confidence show in the room. A client is so vulnerable and a photograph is permanent. The responsibility doesn't end when the shoot does.

Was it luck or judgement?

Before every shoot we build a mood board. She chooses what she loves, so we both know where we're headed. I adapt on the day to suit the individual woman and very little is left to chance.

What did this image teach you?

It didn't teach me anything new, it reassured me. After eighteen years everything comes together and the result is images that can't be resisted in the reveal session. This is my business, this is how I earn my living.

What advice would you give someone trying to make a similar shot?

Understand why the woman is there and what she needs to feel safe. Know your lighting and learn to pose the female form properly. Before booking real clients, take a confident friend and practice, a lot. Your clients will absorb whatever energy you bring into the room, so stay reassuring, chatty, and make it all about her.



Kate Kirkman

Kate Kirkman is a UK photographer and filmmaker with more than 17 years' professional experience whose MUSE project focuses on elegant, fine art-inspired boudoir portraiture. Blending natural emotion with creative storytelling, she creates images that celebrate confidence, individuality and human connection. She has been a Sony Imaging Europe Ambassador for nine years.

Instagram @katehopewellsmith @muse_boudoir_uk

Tell us about this image.

Asking me to pick one image is pretty much impossible – every shoot is different. What I've tried to do instead is choose an image that sums up my style and how I choose to shoot boudoir. This image shows the way I most enjoy using light, and how flattering it is for women. It also shows the use of reflections — shooting into a bevelled mirror so I get more than one version of the client in a single frame. And finally, I think it's very feminine. It's subtle, but strong. It's just the kind of image I like to shoot.

What were the key creative decisions you made?

The most important decisions were exactly where and how to pose her in relation to the light source, which was window light, and the posing itself, which was very specific. I'd have asked her to lift her chin and turn her face until the lip gloss picked up the light. The mirror was on the wall in the bedroom I shot in – it's not something I planned, it's something I noticed while shooting, and I will have moved her into the right place and posed her according to the light.

For exposure, what some would call underexposing is, for me, just exposing for the highlights. If you were shooting in an auto mode, you'd be looking at around minus -1.5 to minus -2 stops of exposure compensation.

Can you share the technical details?

This isn't a technically difficult image. I shot at the maximum aperture of f2.8 - both to drop the background away and because of the low light levels - and then it came down to finding a safe shutter speed without pushing the ISO too far and compromising quality. Just to reiterate, the overall exposure looks moody because I'm exposing for the highlights rather than the midtones, which 'on paper' might read as underexposed.

What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?

As with so much boudoir, the real challenge is posing the woman's body as well as you possibly can while keeping the image looking natural — it needs to look like a woman would stand like this, not like she's doing it for the camera. This is really important to me on every shoot. And making sure the light's hitting and shadows are falling in the most flattering way.

What does this photograph mean to you, and what would you like readers to take from it?

I remember every one of my boudoir clients because it's such an intimate shooting space – I know the story behind each shoot, and that's what makes it special to me. This image also sums up what I'm trying to achieve on every boudoir shoot; it's very much MUSE's signature style. I would want readers to take away that MUSE boudoir is sensual, strong and beautiful — there's nothing cheap or overtly sexual about it.

What makes a photograph boudoir?

Good question. Boudoir can mean many different things to many different people — it's one of the things I've struggled with about the label. But it's now well understood as an intimate shoot for women that generally involves lingerie. For me, it's about producing beautiful images of a woman that shows how gorgeous she is, and that reflects how her partner sees her.

What the final image actually looks like is deeply dependent on the woman: her taste in lingerie, her body, and so on. So it's not one single thing, it's a combination of the photographer's style and intent, and the subject. In terms of the viewer I would say that MUSE definitely shoots boudoir with a woman's eye, not a man's eye. We are not objectifying women at all – we are celebrating them.

What did this image teach you?

To stay open-minded, on many of my boudoir shoots I walk around and look from various angles for reflections or things to shoot through. I don't come at it as a studio photographer – I come at it as a location photographer, where the environment is just as important to me as the woman. In this particular image there isn't much environment to speak of, but in many of my boudoir photographs the environment plays a big role.

What advice would you give someone wanting to try boudoir?

I've always loved using bevelled mirrors or frames, whether I'm shooting boudoir or getting-ready shots at a wedding. It's lovely to get something a bit more abstract, with more than one version of your subject in the frame. I know there's software that can do this afterwards, but I always want to get it in camera.

It can feel slightly strange for the subject, because you're obviously not pointing the camera at them — you're pointing it at the mirror or the frame. I keep talking to the subject throughout. Sometimes it's important to explain what you're doing, and it certainly is in boudoir – whereas at a wedding, I wouldn't explain. It's also worth knowing these shots work much better with a wider focal length lens than the more traditional portrait lengths.

Finding belonging

For over 30 years, Dean Chalkley has been mixing celebrity portraiture with reportage. **Peter Dench** visits his home for a catch-up.

Spend an afternoon with Dean Chalkley and you'll leave with a notebook full of ideas, a head buzzing with stories and the distinct feeling that you've only scratched the surface of the photographer, filmmaker and creative force who never seems to stop.

For over three decades Dean Chalkley has photographed Britain's tribes and many of its most celebrated musicians. Mods and Rudeboys. Northern Soul dancers and clubbers. Music fans and the artists who soundtrack their lives.

At his home in north London another picture emerges. The apartment is stuffed with stuff. Stood in his lounge, in one blink I can see over his shoulder a plastic cockatoo light, smiley face mug, framed photo of Blondie, a picture of Elvis, a plate of sweets, piles of hard drives, vinyl records and magazines, a gnome table, sunglasses, batteries and a tailor's dummy. He's a chatty man and easy to chat to.

Originally trained as a tailor, the thread connecting his photography isn't fashion, music or nostalgia but the simple human desire to belong. 'I just kind of love it all. There's so much grief out there that I don't need to amplify that side myself,' he says with what would become familiar enthusiasm.

British documentary photography is often recognised for portraying decline, conflict or irony. By contrast, Chalkley's archive is a chest bursting with celebration, colour, laughter and shared rituals. They're clever, unsentimental and authentic photographs of communities built around common passions.

This in part is because he was part of those communities long before he pointed his lens at them. Aged seven, Chalkley moved with his family from a farm in Essex (UK) to Southend-on-Sea. After the 11-plus exam decided he wasn't an elite pupil, he instead attended a school where academic success wasn't the priority. The seaside suited him and he threw himself into records, clothes and youth culture. He discovered the mod scene through local markets, fanzines and clubs. The music connected the like-minded. The internet was still science fiction. 'I found this affinity to the music and the style and the attitude of the mod scene,' he recalls.

That experience underpins how he still photographs whether a celebrity portrait or reportage. Chalkley prefers to become part of the environment first rather than arriving as an outsider. Photography then naturally follows. He rarely talks about capturing moments, more about observations, curiosity and friendship. A commission is more likely to begin with a chance conversation or introduction that grows into something larger. His photographs move effortlessly between performers and audiences, recording both the people making culture and those keeping it alive. As Chalkley puts it, he photographs 'the makers and partakers.'

Right: Chris 'Jimmy' Bell with his scooter. Part of a fashion story for *Jocks & Nerds Magazine*, shot near Chris's home in Darlington

Below: Seye Adelekan, Gary Powell and Paul Stanley-McKenzie. From the *Return of the Rudeboy* series by Dean Chalkley and Harris Elliott







expressing himself to rare soul music. Young Souls 2023, the second new element, is a photographic series presenting 23 young people from today's soul generation who are actively part of the scene. Friendships were formed, DJs met for the first time and a new network emerged. The projects had become more than documentation, it had become participation.

I suggest his career has evolved from documenting communities to creating them, which he contests. 'I always have been,' he replies, and on reflection, he has. He's never been content to observe from the sidelines. He DJs at clubs, organises exhibitions and constantly collaborates. It's natural, not forced. 'We should do a north London photo-exhibition together?' he says on cue.

For his New Perspectives collaboration, he assembled six musicians who had never all worked together before, giving them just 48 hours to write and record an original song. The result was more than a vinyl record, a multimedia



His celebrated photographs from Ibiza are a perfect example. Originally commissioned by Mixmag to cover the island's club culture, after the journalist went awol, he just carried on on his own. Mixmag, then the biggest dance-music magazine in the world, ran 30 pages in a 1998 edition. His photographs have become one of the go-to visual records of the era. In 2025 ACC Art Books published Back in Ibiza 1998 – 2003, a deep-dive back through those images.

Like wine, Chalkley suggests, photographs sometimes need time to ferment. He began revisiting thousands of his Ibiza negatives before the pandemic with a view to publication. When lockdown arrived the project stalled. When he eventually returned to the archive, something had changed. 'They are saying something quite dramatic. It's about freedom... about having a good time,' a recurring phrase during our afternoon.

Chalkley doesn't overcomplicate belonging to academic levels. For him it isn't about analysing identity or defining subcultures. It's much simpler. It's about shared experience - be it playing records or dancing together or just standing around a racetrack drinking blisteringly hot

coffee on bitterly cold mornings. The rituals matter because they bring people together.

His long-running fascination with Northern Soul is revealing. He loved the music for years but resisted photographing the scene until he felt he understood how to approach it. One disastrous evening in Lancaster confirmed his instincts. Another photographer slid across the dancefloor on his knees pursuing a single dancer. Chalkley shoved his own camera away. 'I felt embarrassed to be a photographer,' he admits. It's funny but astute. Years later he tried again. His 2011 photographic project Young Souls portrayed a new generation embracing Northern Soul. Later, he expanded those ideas through film, exploring not simply what the scene looked like but what it felt like.

It didn't stop there. In 2023, he was invited by Wigan Council's Culture, Arts & Heritage Department to contribute his Young Souls photographic project to an exhibition titled 50 Years On: The Soul Stays Strong. He agreed and also proposed creating two new, unique elements to be made especially for the show. Good For The Soul, is a dynamic short film focusing on a solo Northern Soul dancer



Far left: Cover of the eponymously titled album 'His Lordship'. Photo taken in North London

Below left: Actor Rhys Ifans

Right: Norman Jay at White Heart Lane, Spurs Football Ground

Far right: House of Hackney (Frieda and Javvy) at home

Below: Alani Adenle photographed for a Merc Clothing campaign



document of collaboration under pressure, with Chalkley's candid photographs and his experimental film capturing the moments where trust, talent and spontaneity collide. 'I photographed the collective in and outside of the studio. There were only a couple of occasions in the studio when I intervened to get a shot of all the musicians together – for the most part I just looked and listened, quietly collecting and preserving these special moments on my camera,' he says.

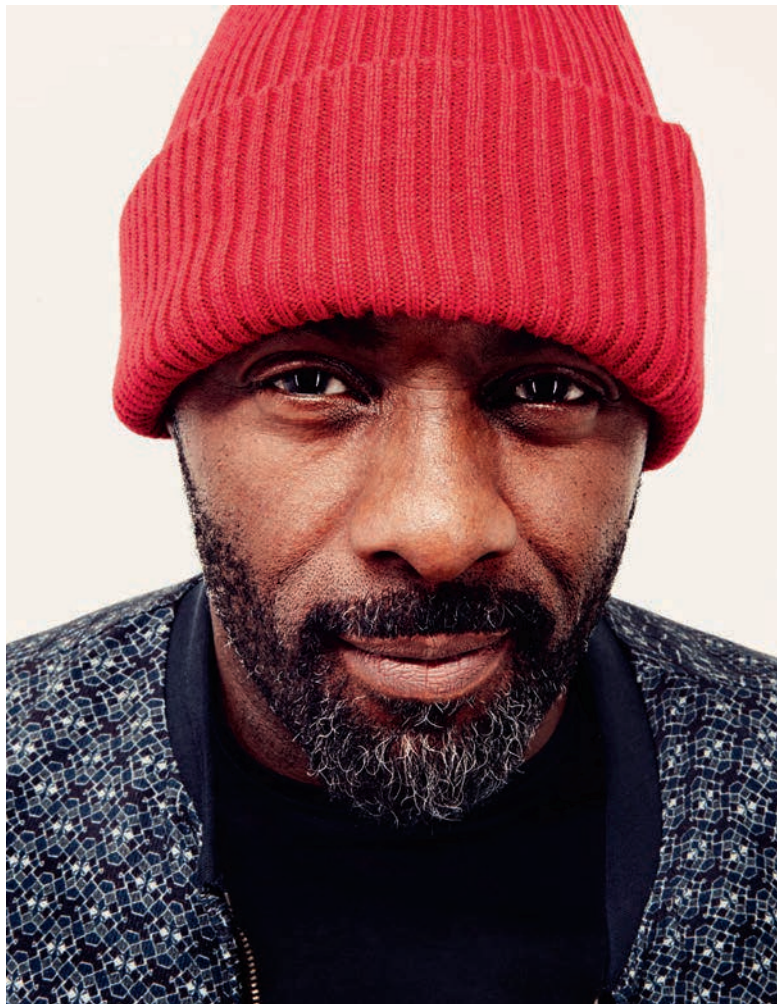
I ask if he recognises historical importance while making photographs. He laughs. 'If it feels right, then I go with it... there's not a spreadsheet and a five-year plan.' There's remarkably little long-term planning behind his projects. He trusts his instinct. Photography becomes the catalyst rather than the destination.

When commercial assignments come along, he doesn't have to compromise his values. Brands such as Levi's, Ray-Ban, Adidas, and Sony Music approach him because they want results that look unmistakably like Dean Chalkley photographs. They keep coming because he photographs what he genuinely cares about.

He admits this can come at a cost and he inevitably turns down the odd assignment that other photographers might money-grab. Spending your life photographing subjects that leave you cold holds little appeal. 'You could do loads of other stuff and feel regretful about it,' he says.

That authenticity extends beyond the pictures themselves. As we step over his poorly cat Claude and stroll into another room stacked full of curiosities, the conversation drifts towards the 'C' word. Content. Chalkley responds almost as if the word is an insult. His argument is robust. 'The word content is something that I kind of object to. It's taken away from the photographer creating photographs... and diminished it into something that's just to fill up some sort of gap.'

He's not rallying against technology and is curious about AI, accepting every generation brings change. What troubles him is the erosion of care and the gradual replacement of thoughtful image-



Left: Idris Alba, NME Awards 2013

Below: Natty Bo from the Return of the Rudeboy series by Dean Chalkley and Harris Elliott

FACING PAGE

Top right: Jason Kattenhorn photographed in Wigan for Young Souls 2023

Centre left and centre right: images from the book 'Back In Ibiza' 1998-2003 by Dean Chalkley

Bottom left: Banger Racing at Arena Essex 2013. Originally shot for a feature for The New British

Bottom right: Imogen, from The New Faces project



making with visual noise. I suggest that his Back in Ibiza photographs would make a brilliant Instagram story and decide it's probably time to leave. Not because I've crossed a line but because if I stay much longer he'll have initiated three more projects before I have reached the front door.

Walking home, I pass the site of the Wellington pub, immortalised in *Quadrophenia* as the place where Jimmy and his mates buy dodgy pills. The pub is long gone, replaced by an Esso petrol station.

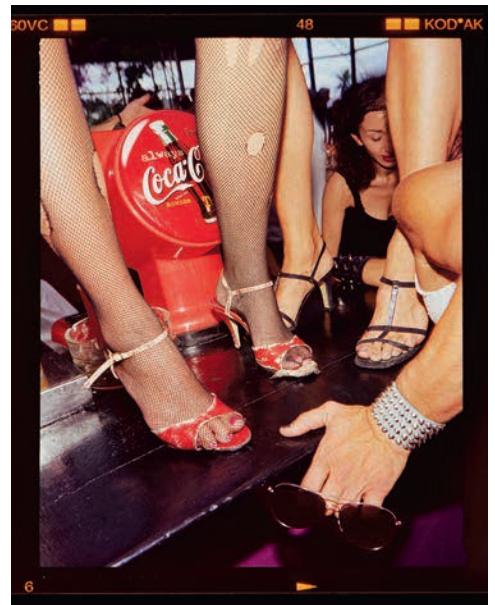
Thinking back through Chalkley's archive, it's tempting to focus on the clothes, the hairstyles, the music. Those details date the photographs in the best possible way but reveal something more enduring. Whether it's a Northern Soul all-nighter, Ibiza in the late 1990s, a banger racing circuit or a cramped basement club in Southend, Chalkley keeps returning to places where strangers become communities and people search for connection.

An almost throwaway comment reverberates long after I've left. Sometimes, he says, he thinks of himself as someone, 'lacing things together,' bringing people, ideas and experiences into the same space. Perhaps that's the secret behind decades of distinctive documentary and portrait photography.

Dean Chalkley hasn't simply photographed Britain's subcultures. He has photographed what happens when people discover where they belong.



Back in Ibiza is available from ACC Art Books £30:
www.accartbooks.com/uk/book/back-in-ibiza/



Alongside new commercial and personal projects, Chalkley recently joined the judging panel for the Abbey Road Music Photography Awards, recognising emerging talent in a community he clearly relishes being part of.

images courtesy of Dean Chalkley, represented by Camera Press

The human cost

One photograph came to define the World Press Photo of the Year 2026, says **Peter Dench**

This image pulls no punches. The viewer immediately finds themselves at the centre of an intensely emotional struggle as a family is violently pulled apart. There's no room to breathe. It's not subtle. The composition doesn't meander you through the frame. It's a frame of anguish. Cropped faces. Bodies collide. There are screams and desperate clinging. Beyond the edge of the photograph, their father, Luis, is being led away by officers from US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The image demands an emotional response before allowing an intellectual one. The World Press Photo jury selected *Separated by ICE* as its photo of the year precisely because of that immediacy.

The photograph was taken on 26 August 2025 inside New York's Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, one of the very few US immigration courthouses where photographers had been granted access. Even then access was limited to a single hallway. Luis, an Ecuadorian migrant with no criminal record according to his family, had attended his immigration hearing as instructed. He didn't return home with Cocha, his wife and their three children. Instead he was arrested by ICE officers shortly after leaving the courtroom. The family were left emotionally and financially devastated.

Veteran American photographer Carol Guzy had not arrived by chance at the scene. Like other photographers in her position, she had spent months returning to the

courthouse to document the escalating number of detentions following changes to US policy. This photograph is part of a wider project shot by Guzy, *ICE Arrests at New York Court*, recognised in the North and Central America Stories category. It's important to recognise this. The most impactful news photographs may feel spontaneous but are rarely accidental. They are the result of understanding when and where important stories are unfolding and captured through persistence and patience.

Separated by ICE breaks many of the rules of composition that Guzy undoubtedly knows. But the chaos serves its purpose. The viewer is denied a comfortable distance from which to observe the scene objectively. There's very little negative space. These apparent flaws collectively strengthen the image. There's a suffocating sense of claustrophobia. No visual escape which echoes the family's unfolding predicament. The viewer is thrust into the situation.

Luis' body becomes almost anonymous through Guzy's framing. As he disappears beneath the grip of officers and out of the frame, the eye shifts to the emotional scene of those left behind. The expressions of his daughters and wife reveal everything we need to know. Guzy photographed the scene using a Nikon Z8, relying entirely on available light. There wasn't the time nor the opportunity for elaborate lighting or multiple viewpoints. The strongest photographs rarely explain everything, they reveal just enough to create an immediate response.



World Press Photo of the Year 2026 : *Separated by ICE* by Carol Guzy, ZUMA Press, iWitness, for Miami Herald

See all this year's winners at the World Press Photo 2026 exhibition, which runs until 30th September at the MPB Gallery, 42-44 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 3UD. Tickets are available from theexhibitionists.co.uk. Get 10% off with the code AP10

The shutter speed was fast: 1/320sec. The ISO was high: 8000. The aperture was low: f/2.8. Modern mirrorless cameras have transformed this kind of reportage where events unfold in seconds, expressions change instantly and body parts move unpredictably. Hesitation can be disastrous, the decisive moment lost. Excellent autofocus, rapid burst rates and exceptional high ISO performance allow photographers to work discreetly in difficult lighting without relying on flash. This is a crucial consideration, particularly inside official buildings where additional lighting can be impractical and intrusive.

Technology alone isn't responsible for this image. Many photographers were present but only Guzy bore witness to this frame. 'The



photograph is not just emotional. It is a record,' is one sentence from the World Press Photo jury's citation which perhaps best explains the photograph beyond the technical details.

Photographs of women and children in distress can risk becoming exploitative. The jury acknowledged that debate rather than ignoring it before concluding that Guzy's photograph transcended those concerns. This frame is journalism not theatre. Nothing has been arranged or directed. It documents a verifiable public event of significant political importance.

Carol Guzy is unique as she remains the only journalist to have won four Pulitzer Prizes. It would have been understandable, after a career spanning four decades, if she had stepped back from frontline

reporting from conflicts, natural disasters and humanitarian crises across the world. Instead she continues to show up, as the best photojournalists always do. The lesson for photographers of every level is important. Commit yourself to a story long enough for meaningful moments to reveal themselves. Don't get caught up chasing or expecting the spectacular.

This sentiment is reflected in the evolving direction within the World Press Photo Contest. In recent years, the competition has increasingly rewarded projects exploring longer-term social issues rather than isolated moments of breaking news. Separated by ICE succeeds because it functions on both levels. Viewed on its own, it is an emotionally devastating photograph. Seen within Guzy's wider body of work, it

becomes evidence of a systematic policy affecting countless families.

Photography's strength is it can transform statistics into people. Immigration policy, court procedures and government legislation aren't exotic lens fodder; they are often abstract and can feel distant. Guzy's frame packs information into one unforgettable human moment that resonates - a child crying for her father.

The WPP jury described independent photojournalism as "essential" to democracy because it creates a visual record of events that might otherwise remain unseen. Whether viewers agree with the politics surrounding immigration is almost beside the point. The photograph demands you look, and once you have, it's very difficult to look away. 

Capturing the heart of carnival

One of the highlights of the summer, Notting Hill Carnival is celebrating its 60th birthday this year. Aneesa Dawoojee tells **Geoff Harris** about her long-term project documenting this world-famous event

Documentary and portrait photographer Aneesa Dawoojee FRPS will be well-known to regular readers, and has come a long way since we featured her breakthrough work on South London martial artists back in 2023.

Aneesa has been working on a variety of projects and academic duties since then, but a long-term undertaking that's particularly close to her heart concerns the Notting Hill carnival, taking place this year on August 29th.

Rather than just shooting the day, Aneesa has spent the last decade working on a project that celebrates the history and traditions of the carnival, and crucially, the unpaid volunteers who've made it happen for the last 60 years. As Aneesa explains, it's a project that is very close to her heart.

I started going to the carnival when I was a little girl, with my mum and dad, it reminded Mum of being back home in Trinidad. I loved to see the

costumes and dancers and wanted the chance to be in the parade too.'

Indeed, the young Aneesa had her photograph taken with some of the dancers at the carnival, so things have come full circle. As well as now documenting the dancers (and much more), Aneesa has been taking part in the carnival herself for the last 10 years or so, appearing in one of the famous 'masquerades.' As the carnival website explains, 'masquerade participants wear elaborate, handcrafted costumes and dance through the streets to the rhythm of steel drums and soca music. It is one of the foundational "five disciplines" of the carnival.'

Unsung heroes

Back to Aneesa. 'As I grew up, I also became fascinated by the carnival's backstory, which dates back to the days of slavery and French colonisation – the carnival's "family tree" if you like. I soon realised that a lot of people involved in the carnival are true artists. When they talk about

Below: Training camp, in the heart of San Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago. His nickname is 'Froggy on stilts' and his mother and father were also stilt walkers



ALL IMAGES © ANEESA DAWOOJEE



About Aneesa Dawoojee

Aneesa is a portrait and social documentary photographer from south London. Her images aim to break stereotypes, celebrate the essence of community and initiate open dialogue and mediation through portraiture. A fellow of the Royal Photographic Society, Aneesa is also an associate lecturer at Northampton University and a regular competition judge. See aneesadawoojee.com
Aneesa received our Power of Photography Award in 2023.



Above: Masqueraders from Island Mas gather to cross the judging stage on Portobello Road – costumes costing in excess of £800 to £1000 are made by a whole community. The crossing of the stage is the band's judging point and a big incentive for the designers and masqueraders determination to display their best work

their designs and costumes, you realise how talented and incredibly committed they are. Every single person involved is a creative, and when they show you their designs and talk about what's in their head, it's like, wow, you couldn't make this stuff up. They're so talented, but you don't see books on these people.'

As mentioned at the beginning, this year marks the carnival's 60th anniversary, and there has been a lot happening across in the UK in the build-up to the big day.

'For example, many of the steel pan players from the carnival were recently at the South Bank Centre to celebrate 75 years of steel pan in the UK,' Aneesa explains. 'I've also spent some time with the 'Moko Jumbies,' stilt-walking spirits, which is incorporated into the carnival's African roots. I am really keen to

capture the strong Trinidadian influence on the carnival, and I've recently returned from a trip over there. You had people in Trinidad and Tobago teaching the traditions to other people who came over to the UK, so it's been passed on from generation to generation. But one day, everyone will forget what today's carnival stems from.'

Carnival creation myths

'Notting Hill Carnival was initiated by activist and journalist Claudia Jones, who died in 1964,' explains Aneesa. 'She founded an indoor Caribbean carnival at Camden Town Hall, in response to the murder of Kelso Cochrane, from Antigua. But the British road carnival was developed by other promoters, such as Leslie Palmer, who came to the UK from Trinidad. It





provided a voice and a way to bring people together, mirroring what was being done in Trinidad and Tobago. These Trinidadian organisers knew how the operations worked. Without all of their experience of organising the costume designers, dancers, masqueraders and all of that, we wouldn't have what we now know as the Notting Hill Carnival on the streets of London today – which is actually very similar to what they have in Trinidad and Tobago. The goal was always inclusivity and to welcome everyone.

'I wanted to photograph the people who've made a big contribution to the Notting Hill carnival, including going behind the scenes.'

Celebrating the elders

As Aneesa notes, many of the original movers and shakers are now well into old age, so she was keen to get portraits of some of the pioneers while she still could. 'The elders, who are like the founding fathers of the carnival, are passing away. So I was glad to be able to photograph Pepe Francis MBE, who's played with the Ebony Steel Band for 60 years.'

Again, I also wanted to show my appreciation for the people who make the carnival happen every year, as the costs for them, in terms of time and money, can be insane. Yes, a lot of money is generated by the carnival every year, but it doesn't go to the masqueraders, which can be a real problem.

Most of the organisers effectively



Top left: Lauren, a PE teacher by day and costume designer by night for 'One Mas'

Top centre: Augustine "Pepe" Francis MBE of Ebony Steel Band, which has been running 60 years. He is a pioneering steelband leader, appearing in both royal celebrations and at Glastonbury

Top right: Girl holding a cutlass, Trinidad and Tobago. The tool represents the workers cutting the cane



Above left: Dancers at the Emancipation parade in Trinidad and Tobago

Left: The new generations of the 'moko' stilt walkers with the Trinidad and Tobago flag, Junior Bisnath (the oldest figure here) teaches youngsters the art form from West African traditions, passed through Trinidad and onto the streets of west London



Aneesa's carnival camera bag

'I use a range of camera brands. My main camera for this project is the Canon EOS R6, with a 24-70mm lens, along with the Sony Alpha 7 V with a 70-200mm and 200-600mm lenses. I also use a Fujifilm X-T5, which I took with me on my recent trip to Trinidad.'



The Canon EOS R6, one of Aneesa's main cameras for this project

end up working two jobs. I interviewed and photographed a band leader called Lauren, who's a PE teacher by day, and does all her carnival designs by night. Also most of the carnival participants pay between £600 to £1000 for a costume, which they can only use once. This is because the carnival has a different theme every year.'

As Aneesa mentioned, the founders of the carnival really wanted it to be a positive, inclusive experience for all visitors, regardless of creed or colour. She is angered by the endless negative portrayals of the event in the media, which seem to have become more strident in recent years. 'It's awful. The media focuses on small gangs who are there to get drunk and cause trouble for others, and they ruin a year's worth of hard graft for the artists. Some of this is a cultural thing, with problems caused by people who don't appreciate the carnival's roots and the strong emphasis on inclusivity.'

Making connections

Despite Aneesa's proud Trinidadian roots and long-standing relationship to the Notting Hill carnival, it took her a while to build the connections necessary to get her photographic project off the ground.

'With all my projects, I like the contacts and connections to come about organically. I don't like running around, desperately trying to find people to photograph based on some deadline. The carnival community is

Above: Tobago Emancipation Parade. The 'Flambo' was the tool enslaved people held while they harvested sugar cane at night

Below: Alan Vaughan of Moko Sōmōkōw and Shynel Brizan (Queen Moko). Alan divides his time between Newcastle, UK and Trinidad, making carnival costumes

based on trust and support with one another and I am very grateful to the pioneers, promoters and creators who have become part of this educational piece that I am working on. Sometimes you find that some photographers and videographers parachute into their world, take what they want from them, and disappear. I do my best to keep everyone up to date with what is happening in both Trinidad and the UK. Obviously, it helps that I take part in the carnival, too. The last month or so before the carnival can be really manic, but I've got a media pass this year, with 'Hype Mas' and 'One Mas', which

definitely helps with the access I need to continue this work.'

The event brings huge numbers of visitors flocking to the UK every year to see one of the biggest carnivals in the world. 'I do believe it's a powerful way to bring people together during these times where there seems to be so much division,' concludes Aneesa. 'These images are just a small part of a much bigger story that involves so many artists and creators.'

AP

Notting Hill Carnival 2026 runs over the bank holiday weekend from 29-31 August. Visit nhcarnival.org/ for further details and route map



APOY 2026

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Amateur Photographer of the Year

Here are the top ten images uploaded to Photocrowd from Round Three, Animal Kingdom, with comments by the AP team and our guest judge.

Round Three Animal Kingdom

Animals consistently capture the photographers' imagination. Their majesty, mischievousness, elusive nature and outright comedy behaviour are a constant lens lure. From a lion surveying its kingdom to a kingfisher diving for its lunch or a puppy lolloping through a muddy puddle, animals undoubtedly serve up some magical moments. The Animal Kingdom is always one of the most popular rounds and this year is no exception. Some photographers set off for the far corners of the globe for wildlife encounters. Others spotted opportunities closer to home - the curled tail of a cat, a fox amongst the bins or pigeons stalking a sandwich. Long lenses and exotic locations don't necessarily guarantee successful photographs. Patience, anticipation and an understanding of the environment and how the animal behaves all play a crucial part. The Animal Kingdom top 10 reflects the diversity of subjects and rewards the photographers who know exactly what to look out for and when to press the shutter.

1



1 Lourdes Venard
Tulip Time 100pts

Canon EOS R10, 150-600mm at 500mm, 1/1000sec, f/6.3, ISO 320



Guest judge Tesni Ward says:

Sometimes an image needs to be seen on the big screen in order for you to fully appreciate and understand its appeal... It's fair to say this is not one of those images. The sheer vibrance and punch of the colour palette, paired with striking and defined layers works to create an image that's incredibly visually striking, topped off with a subject that at face value may lack that same colour, and yet it's that very thing that brings the image together. The contrast against a sea of colour draws you in immediately and keeps you fixated. The shallow depth of field works well with just a sliver of detail where it matters, meaning the smooth bokeh layers in the foreground and background only enhance the image rather than distracting us away with too much detail. An exceptional image all round that's well deserving of acknowledgment and appreciation.



2 Paul Fine Malachite 90pts

Canon EOS-1D X Mark II, 100-400mm at 400mm, 1/2000sec, f/13, ISO 12800

Paul's beautifully observed study of a malachite butterfly proves that sometimes less really is more. Rather than relying on a busy frame packed with flowers and foliage, Paul has stripped the composition back to its essentials. The sweeping curve of the leaf creates a wonderfully elegant leading line, drawing the eye effortlessly towards the butterfly, whose delicately patterned wings provide just the right amount of detail and contrast. The clean, vibrant green background is equally important, allowing the subject to breathe while giving the image a fresh, contemporary feel. Technically, it's difficult to fault. The butterfly is pin-sharp exactly where it needs to be, while the shallow depth of field renders everything else into a pleasing wash of colour. The photograph demonstrates an excellent understanding of composition. Every element feels deliberate, from the placement of the insect to the generous use of negative space. It's a calm, understated image that doesn't shout for attention, yet rewards anyone who pauses to appreciate its simplicity, balance and natural elegance.



3 Cam Parfitt Hungry Hoopoe 80pts

SONY ILCE-1M2, 600mm, 1/4000sec, f/6.3, ISO 5000

The whimsically titled Hungry Hoopoe captures one of those fleeting moments that wildlife photographers dream about. Hoopoes are undeniably photogenic birds, but photographing behaviour rather than simply appearance almost always results in a stronger image. Here, Cam has timed the shot to perfection as the adult arrives with food, while the eager chick stretches from the nest cavity, wings spread and beak open in anticipation. It's a scene full of energy, yet the composition never feels chaotic. The textured tree trunk provides a natural frame, while the soft background ensures all attention remains on the interaction of the birds. Cam's account of returning to the nest repeatedly on the final day of his Hungarian trip underlines that point. Rather than settling for a portrait, he waited for the moment that told the story. A delightful glimpse into family life that combines behaviour, timing and excellent fieldcraft in a single frame.

4 Dave Olsen Onaqui Silhouette 70pts

Canon EOS 80D, 70-200mm at 191mm, 1/400sec, f/4.5 ISO 100

Onaqui Silhouette is proof that sometimes what you leave out is just as important as what you include. By embracing the dust, haze and strong backlighting, Dave has transformed what could have been a straightforward action photograph into something more atmospheric and evocative. The two rearing horses are reduced to striking silhouettes, their mirrored poses creating an almost balletic symmetry that immediately caught the judges eye. Rather than freezing every strand of mane in razor-sharp detail, the image relies on shape, movement and mood to tell the story. The glowing dust adds depth and drama, while the uncluttered background prevents anything from competing with the main event. Action photographs often succeed through split-second timing, but this one also demonstrates an excellent appreciation of light. It's a photograph that feels both powerful and surprisingly elegant, reminding us that nature's most dramatic moments can also be its most beautiful.



6 H       B     

Seagull Landscape 60pts

Not supplied

Seagull Landscape demonstrates that great wildlife photography isn't always about getting close. Sometimes it's about stepping back and seeing the bigger picture. At first glance, the image resembles a night sky scattered with stars or even an abstract painting. It takes a while to realise each tiny white speck is, in fact, a gull resting on Prague's Vltava River. It's a wonderfully deceptive photograph that rewards curiosity and invites the viewer to inspect closely. H       has recognised the creative potential in an everyday scene and, rather than isolating a single bird, embraced repetition, pattern and negative space to create something more original. The photograph succeeds because it sparks the imagination. Every viewer is likely to see something slightly different before the penny drops. That's no small achievement in an age when we're used to consuming photographs in seconds. Often it's simply a matter of looking at a familiar scene from a fresh perspective and trusting that others will enjoy making the same visual discovery you did.

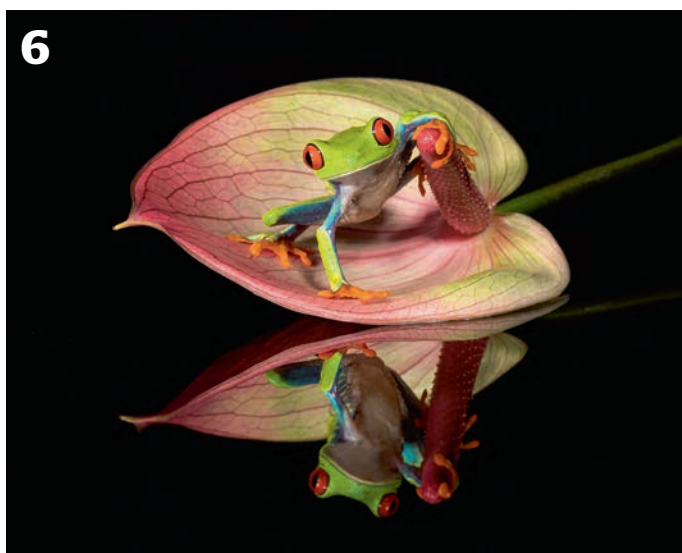


6 Pete Baker

Making an Entrance 50pts

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, 90mm, 1/200sec, f/16, ISO 100

This is one of those photographs guaranteed to raise a smile. The frog appears to be grinning for the camera, while its near-perfect reflection doubles the impact and gives the image a pleasing symmetry. We know (or think we know) that frogs don't pose for portraits, yet it's human nature to project personalities onto animals, and Pete has captured a moment that plays beautifully on that instinct. Look beyond the apparent charm and there's a lesson here too. The clean composition, low viewpoint and uncluttered background ensure there's nothing to distract from the subject, while the precise focus on the frog's eyes creates an immediate connection with the viewer. It's a simple idea, expertly executed, proving that sometimes, character can be the star.



7 Graeme Youngson

Asleep 45pts

Canon EOS M, EF-M22mm, 1/200sec, f/7.1, ISO 200

Asleep is a reminder that memorable animal photographs can happen in the home. Graeme has captured a beautifully observed family moment, with two sleeping grandchildren and Molly the border collie sharing the same cosy space. The real magic comes from Molly's eyes being open, adding just enough life and curiosity to a scene that might otherwise have passed unnoticed. Converting the image to black & white was an inspired choice. Stripped of distracting colours, our attention falls on the expressions, textures and the safe bond between children and dog. It's also a photograph that demonstrates the importance of thinking beyond wildlife when this round comes around.





settling for a conventional portrait during the rut, Wes has captured an unusual behavioural moment, complete with the perfectly timed tongue-out expression that adds an unexpected touch of humour. It's the sort of detail that transforms a strong wildlife image into one you'll remember. The warm backlighting is equally important, illuminating the drifting dust and outlining the stag's antlers to create a striking sense of atmosphere. Despite the busy action, the composition remains clean, with the subject framed centrally against a beautifully uncluttered background.

8 Wes Chambers Stag Do 40pts

NIKON Z 8, 180-600mm at 470mm, 1/500sec, f/6, ISO 280

A wonderful example of why patience so often pays dividends in wildlife photography. Rather than

9 Božidar Grgošić First Light 35pts

RICOH IMAGING COMPANY, LTD. PENTAX K-1, 380mm, 1/800sec, f/8, ISO 500

Božidar has delivered a masterclass in restraint. In a world where wildlife photography often celebrates drama and split-second action, this image succeeds by doing precisely the opposite. A solitary heron stands almost motionless, dwarfed by the vast landscape as the first rays of sunlight filter through the morning mist. The tiny silhouette encourages the viewer to explore the frame. The warm dawn light and



carefully balanced composition create a wonderful sense of calm. A reminder that wildlife

photography isn't always about filling the frame with your subject.



10 Wendy Eve Porcelain Crab in an Anemone 30pts

NIKON D800, 60mm, 1/125sec, f/14, ISO 100

A fascinating glimpse into a world that many photographers never get to experience. Underwater photography presents a unique set of challenges, from limited light and colour loss to keeping both photographer and subject perfectly still. Wendy has produced a beautifully detailed study, with the porcelain crab emerging from the soft folds of its host anemone almost like a hidden treasure waiting to be discovered. The repeating patterns and subtle blue tones create an eye-catching backdrop, while the crab's pale shell provides just enough contrast to draw the eye.

Winning kit from PARK Cameras

What gear did our top ten photographers use?



For their winning image, Lourdes Venard used the compact Canon EOS R10 Mirrorless Camera Body - a perfect all-rounder with a 24.2 megapixel APS-C sensor, oversampled 4K/30p video, subject detection AF and up to 30fps RAW burst mode with AF tracking. Available used from Park Cameras for around £679.



The Nikon Z 180-600mm f/5.6-6.3 VR lens allowed Wes Chambers to get close in on the action for his 8th placed image. The lens is a handheld-able super telephoto zoom lens with incredible reach, with 5.5 stops of VR, offers TC compatibility and captures stunning image quality when shooting distant subjects. Available from Park Cameras for £1,799



In 10th place, Wendy Eve used a Nikon D800, a highly detailed, 36.3-megapixel full-frame DSLR released in 2012. Renowned for its exceptional dynamic range, it remains a popular and affordable option for landscape, studio, and wildlife photographers. Available from Park Cameras from as little as £254.

To see the full range, visit
www.parkcameras.com

BEST OF THE CLUBS

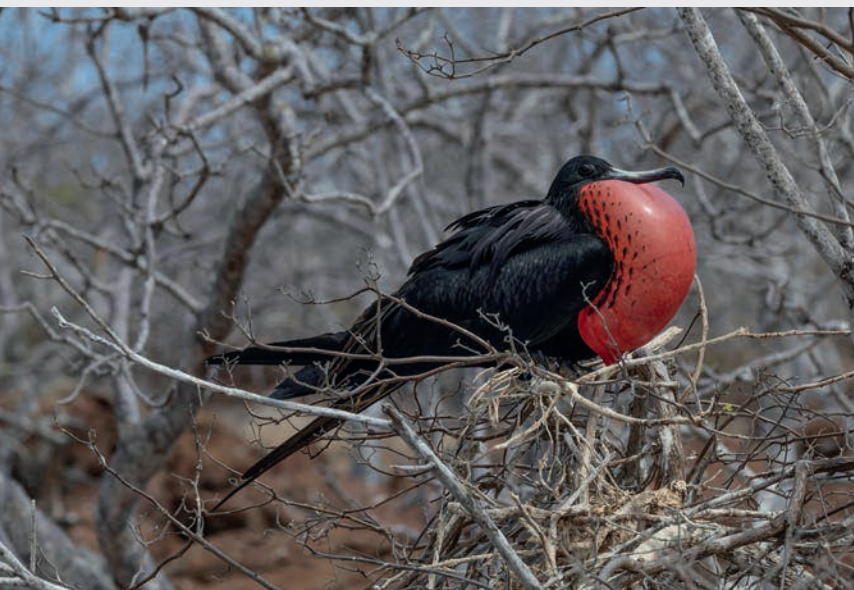
Each round, we shine a spotlight on a selection of standout entries from the many camera clubs taking part in APOY



Carolyn Sara Moore, Mid-Somerset Camera Club
The Bear in the Woods

Canon EOS R5m2, 500mm (converted to 700mm), 1/640sec, f/8, ISO 2000

Pin-sharp detail, a narrow depth of field, beautiful composition and rich texture, together with the catchlights in the eyes, make this an impactful study of shape, colour and bear.



Barrie Ockwell, Launceston Camera Club
Male Frigatebird

Canon EOS R5m2, 100-500mm at 200mm, 1/320sec, f/8, ISO 160

The frigatebird has an undeniable majesty, with its sleek black plumage, imposing silhouette and extraordinary scarlet throat pouch commanding attention amid the tangled branches.



David Muir, Milngavie and Beardsen Camera Club
Chimp Family

NIKON Z 6II, 28-400mm at 400mm, 1/400sec, f/8, ISO 2500

Taken in a zoo rather than the wild, this nevertheless has genuine observational merit, capturing a family of chimps.



Rob Carter, Steyning Camera Club
In flight Meal

Canon EOS R6m2, 100-500mm at 500mm, 1/4000sec, f/7.1, ISO 2000

A beautifully controlled image that makes us wonder where the line lies between wildlife photography and theatre.



Paul Nash, Truro Camera Club
Burrowing Owl Appearing out of the Dark

Not supplied

A striking portrait that uses darkness and selective light beautifully, creating an almost surreal intensity.

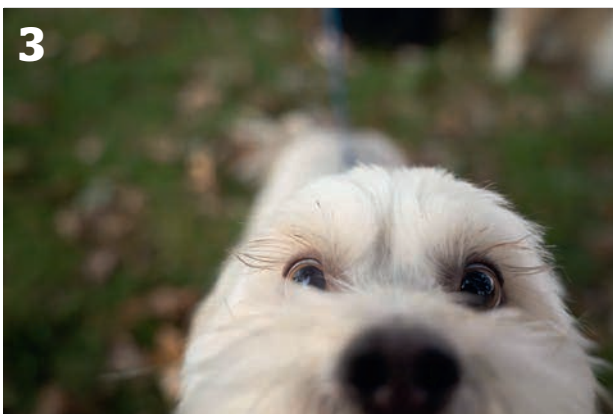
YOUNG APOY WINNERS



1 River Keats Kedzier-Hurst
You There? 100pts

NIKON Z 50, 50-250mm at 75mm, 1/200sec, f/14, ISO 640

Wildlife photography often requires patience, but occasionally curiosity does the hard work for you. This young common tree snake seems to have forgotten the photographer altogether, becoming completely absorbed by the unfamiliar camera lens. The low viewpoint places us at eye level with the snake, while the shallow depth of field isolates its striking yellow markings against a soft background. It's an engaging portrait that transforms a creature many fear into an inquisitive, charismatic character.



3 Mary Louise Kasper
Snoot 80pts

SONY ILCE-7M3, 24-70mm at 32mm, 1/500sec, f/3.2, ISO 8000

Sometimes the simplest ideas produce the most memorable photographs. Taken from the dog's own perspective, this playful close-up uses wide angle to exaggerate its oversized nose while keeping its bright, expressive eyes in focus. The shallow depth of field softens the surroundings, ensuring our attention stays firmly on that wonderfully inquisitive face. Full of warmth, humour and personality, it's an image that's difficult not to smile at.



4 Matteo Botta
A Mother and Her Sleepy Foal 70pts

SONY ILCE-7M4, 4-105mm at 31mm, 1/640sec, f/20, ISO 1250

This peaceful scene succeeds through restraint. Rather than chasing action, Matteo recognised the bond between mare and foal, allowing the relationship to become the focus of the frame. The low viewpoint places us within the landscape, while the sweeping hills of Kyrgyzstan provide a sense of scale without overwhelming the subjects. The mare's calm, watchful stance beside her sleeping foal creates a touching portrait of protection and trust. Sometimes the most powerful wildlife moments can be the gentlest.

2

2 Thomas Durrant
Lovers in the Mist 90pts

Not supplied

A successful wildlife photograph often depends on preparation as much as luck, this image is a lovely example of both. Years spent observing great crested grebes allowed the photographer to anticipate this fleeting courtship

display, while careful positioning transformed the rising sun and morning mist into an atmospheric stage. The birds appear almost

silhouetted against the glowing light, emphasising their graceful interaction rather than fine detail. A beautifully

understated image that captures the romance and tranquillity of dawn in the natural world.

BEST OF THE REST

APOY judges choose their favourite images that didn't make the top ten of our Animal Kingdom category

Nigel Atherton, editor, chooses **Brown-throated sunbird by Richard Coulstock, Leyburn**

Sony A7R V, FE 200-600mm F5.6-6.3 G OSS, 1/640sec at f/8

Nigel says: Richard describes himself on Photocrowd as a 'short, fat, bald, Scottish man' who 'likes to click buttons on his camera'. It's something that he does well judging by the quality and breadth of the work on his platforms, which spans a variety of genres. Here we have a sample of his bird photography. This brown-throated sunbird was spotted feeding on a plant at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Brown is just one of many hues on display on this beautiful, multi-coloured bird. Its bright red eye matches perfectly with the red of the plant that it is tucking into. It feels like we're just inches from it but Richard was shooting at the long end of his 200-600mm lens, hence the gorgeously blurred background that makes the subject really pop. The technical quality of this photo is astonishing good.



Geoff Harris, deputy editor, chooses **Tweet Fight Club by Sara Jazbar, Trieste**

NIKON Z 8, 180-600mm at 420mm, 1/3200sec, f/6, ISO, 1600

Geoff says: As a keen bird photographer, I know how much determination and patience is needed to get successful shots of our feathered friends. This image of greenfinches falling out over something, or just showing off, is very well executed. The action is frozen perfectly at 1/3200th sec using a 180-600mm lens, but the image is very dynamic too. The defocused green background is also very sympathetic, and there are no background distractions to take the viewer's eye away from the action. Meanwhile both birds are nicely placed in the frame.



Peter Dench, APOY project manager, chooses **Fly Bubble by Roger Mepsted, Carlisle**

SONY ILCE-1, 90mm, 1/160sec, f/5, ISO 500

Peter says: I've never mastered macro or close-up photography. I've never really tried it, terrified of what I might see. This fly confirms my suspicions. It is both fascinating and utterly horrifying. I can't look away. The detail is extraordinary - hairy body, enormous compound eyes, the delicate legs. Most disturbingly for me is that perfectly spherical bubble ballooning from its mouth. I'm sure there's a perfectly innocent biological explanation for it, but my brain insists on something altogether more sinister. I blame David Cronenberg's 1986 body-horror classic *The Fly*, in which Jeff Goldblum's scientist gradually merges with a housefly. Roger's image captures the extraordinary detail that macro photography can reveal, while making me profoundly grateful that I don't normally look at insects this closely. I'm off for a scratch.





Jessica Miller, deputy online editor, chooses *Gecko on Leaf* by Neil, Truro

SONY ILCE-7M3, 24-70mm at 70mm, 1/125, f/2.8, ISO 2000

Jessica says: When judging APOY, particularly this Animal Kingdom round, I am looking for something a bit different. That is outside of the box and isn't necessarily obvious. This photo stood out to me for that exact reason. Rather than photograph the gecko directly, the photographer has created something more artistic. The lighting reveals the animal's shape against the leaf, which is immediately

recognisable as a reptile of sorts, and has created the most striking part of this image: the silhouette. Perfectly framed within the green leaf, the contrasting dark background isolates the subject even more. Not only that, but the shape of the leaf echoes the shape of the gecko's toes. Which is incredibly satisfying to see and exudes the photographer's ability to read and understand form. What could have been a mundane image of a lizard or gecko has transformed into something visually impactful and memorable. It's a brilliant example of composition, light and contrast.



Amy Davies, features editor, chooses *Blending In* by Jakub Soulak, Carterton

Canon EOS 6D, 500mm (converted to 700mm), 1/500, f/5.6, ISO 1250

Amy says: This year's animal round was an incredibly strong one, so there was a lot to choose from. Once again I find myself drawn to something out of the ordinary. I'm choosing this photograph of a hare's ears poking out from behind the grass. I've seen hundreds of photos of hares over the years – they're a common theme in wildlife and nature competitions. That's fair enough, they're very photogenic, elusive and intriguing creatures. But, I don't think I've ever seen anything like this before – you can tell what it is, even though 90% of the animal is hidden. The impressionistic colours and lines also make it stand out for me too. Beautiful work.

The 2026 leaderboards

With three rounds now complete, the APOY 2026 leaderboards is beginning to take shape.

APOY

1=	Azim Khan Ronnie	120
1=	Susan Hall	120
3	Peter Baker	105
4=	David Travis	100
4=	Lourdes Venard	100
6=	David Davies	90
6=	Paul Fine	90
6=	Richard Coulstock	90
9=	Cam Parfitt	80
9=	Erika Howard	80
9=	Karen Morris	80

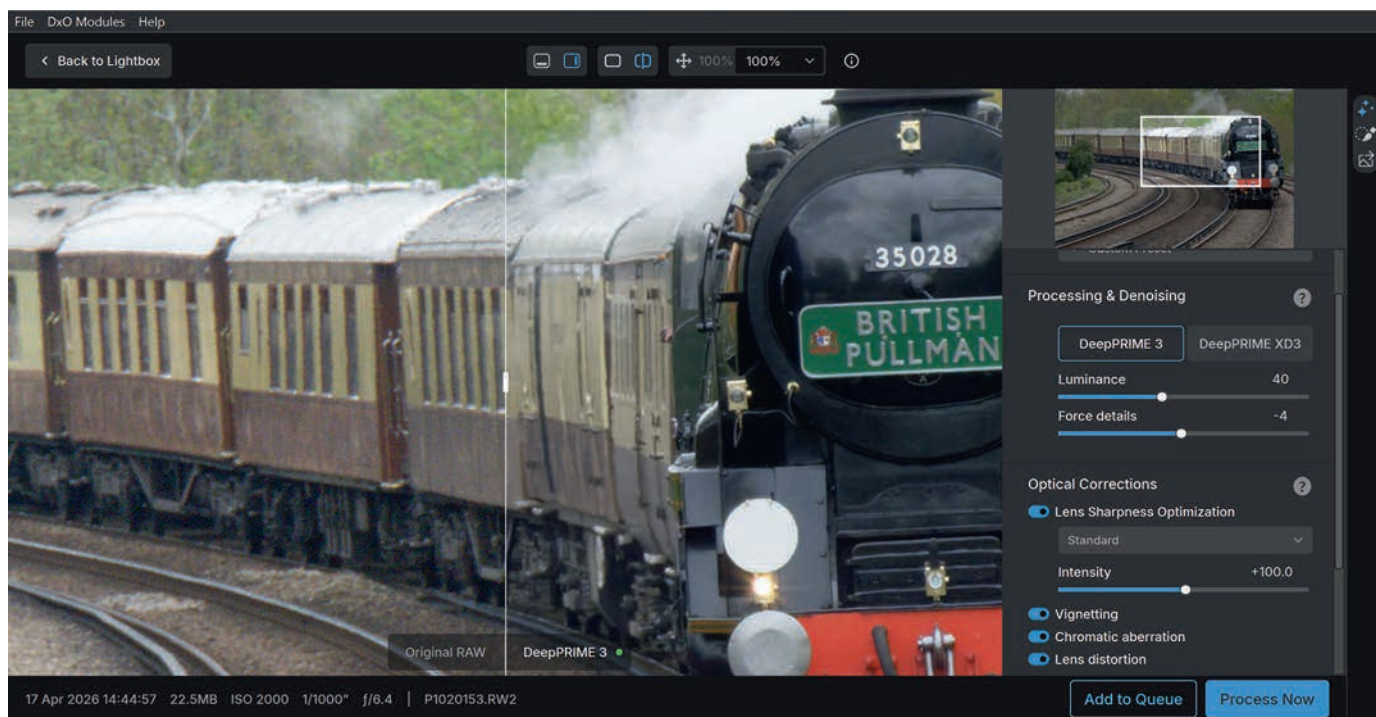
YOUNG APOY

1	Matteo Botta	160
2=	Grace Learoyd-Hill	100
2=	Henry Salter	100
2=	River Keats Kedzier-hurst	100
5=	Neel Anil	90
5=	Sam Morris	90
5=	Thomas Durrant	90
8=	Ankit Ghosh	80
8=	Cavon Hajimiri	80
8=	Mary Louise Kasper	80
8=	Zakaria Yahia	80

CAMERA CLUBS

1	Mid-Somerset Camera Club	175
2	Launceston Camera Club	150
3	Plymouth Camera Club	130
4	Leek Photographic Club	110
5=	Royston PS	105
5=	Visions Photography Club	105
7	Truro Camera Club	85
8=	City of London & Cripplegate	80
8=	London: Hampstead PS	80
8=	Maghull Photography Club	80

To see more images from APOY Round Three and Young APOY, visit amateurphotographer.com/APOY



DxO PureRAW 6

Andy Westlake explores the latest version of DxO's unique software, which pre-processes your raw files for better image quality

PureRAW 6 is the latest version of DxO's unique 'pre-processing' software, which takes camera raw files and converts them into DNGs using the firm's proprietary demosaicing, denoising and lens correction algorithms. These DNG files can then be further processed using any imaging software, just like normal camera raw files. The program is aimed at photographers who use imaging software from other brands, most obviously Adobe, and who'd like to make use of DxO's processing without having to radically change their existing workflows.

DxO describes PureRAW as

covering the 'objective' part of raw conversion. This means that it's aiming to reproduce the scene that was in front of the camera as accurately as possible, by suppressing noise and correcting optical aberrations. The idea is that this should provide the best possible start-point for the photographer's further artistic interpretation of their images.

So what are the benefits of doing this? With previous versions, I've shown that PureRAW can give much better results than Adobe's own software with files that were shot at high ISOs, using relatively inexpensive lenses, with smaller

sensors, or simply old camera models. On the other hand, with raw files that are already technically excellent – shot using a modern sensor at low ISO, with top notch lenses and perfectly controlled lighting – it offers less of an advantage.

One significant change since I last reviewed PureRAW, though, is that Adobe users now have access to very competent AI noise reduction of their own, via Denoise. That narrows the gap considerably in terms of output quality. So does PureRAW 6 still offer any significant advantages, and is it worth spending your hard-earned cash on?

Pricing

PureRAW is available for Windows and Mac computers, with a one-off cost of £119.99, or £74.99 to upgrade from Version 4 or 5. You also get a year of free

At a glance

£119.99

£74.99 upgrade from v4 or v5

- Converts raw files to linear DNGs with lens corrections and AI noise reduction
- Integrates with Adobe software
- For Windows and Mac
- 14-day free trial
- dxo.com

updates, including support for new cameras and lenses. There's no subscription option, so if you want another version in future, you have to pay for the update.

Features

When it first appeared, PureRAW was a pretty simple piece of software. You'd load up a set of raw files, For Free Mags Check sastatus.com and it would identify and download DxO's optical correction profiles for the camera/lens combinations they were shot with. Then, you'd batch-convert the raw files to DNGs using one of three noise reduction algorithms, with the choice trading off processing time against effectiveness. And that was pretty much it.

'The idea is to provide the best possible start-point for the photographer's further artistic interpretation of their images'

DxO PureRAW 6 can still work in essentially the same way, but now it has a lot more features up its sleeve. There's a choice between two AI noise reduction algorithms, DeepPRIME 3 and DeepPRIME XD3, with the latter teasing out visibly more detail, particularly at high ISOs, but taking rather longer to process. You also get luminance and detail sliders to further tune the strength of the noise reduction.

It's even possible to process different areas of the same image with different NR algorithms, using masking. The idea here is that if you only need to use the slower XD3 process over a small part of the image, you can speed things up by using standard DeepPRIME across the rest of it. In principle, that could be especially valuable when shooting such things as distant wildlife.

There's a lot more control over lens corrections, and you can enable or disable vignetting,

chromatic aberration, and distortion compensation individually. So, for example, you're not forced to give up the attractive framing effect that light fall-off can provide with fast prime lenses. There's a choice of how to crop the image after distortion correction, too, either retaining the original aspect ratio, or gaining a slightly wider view.

You can also adjust the strength of the Lens Sharpness Optimisation. This applies progressive sharpening across the frame, to improve the apparent cross-frame sharpness from lenses that give soft detail in the corners, but without over-sharpening the centre. Here, you might choose to apply a much stronger effect for landscapes than for portraits, for example.

One significant new feature that could potentially save a lot of time is Dust Removal, which automatically detects and removes sensor dust spots.

Adobe Camera Raw has a similar option, but you have to enable it individually for each image. In PureRAW, in principle a single click will fix all your photos.

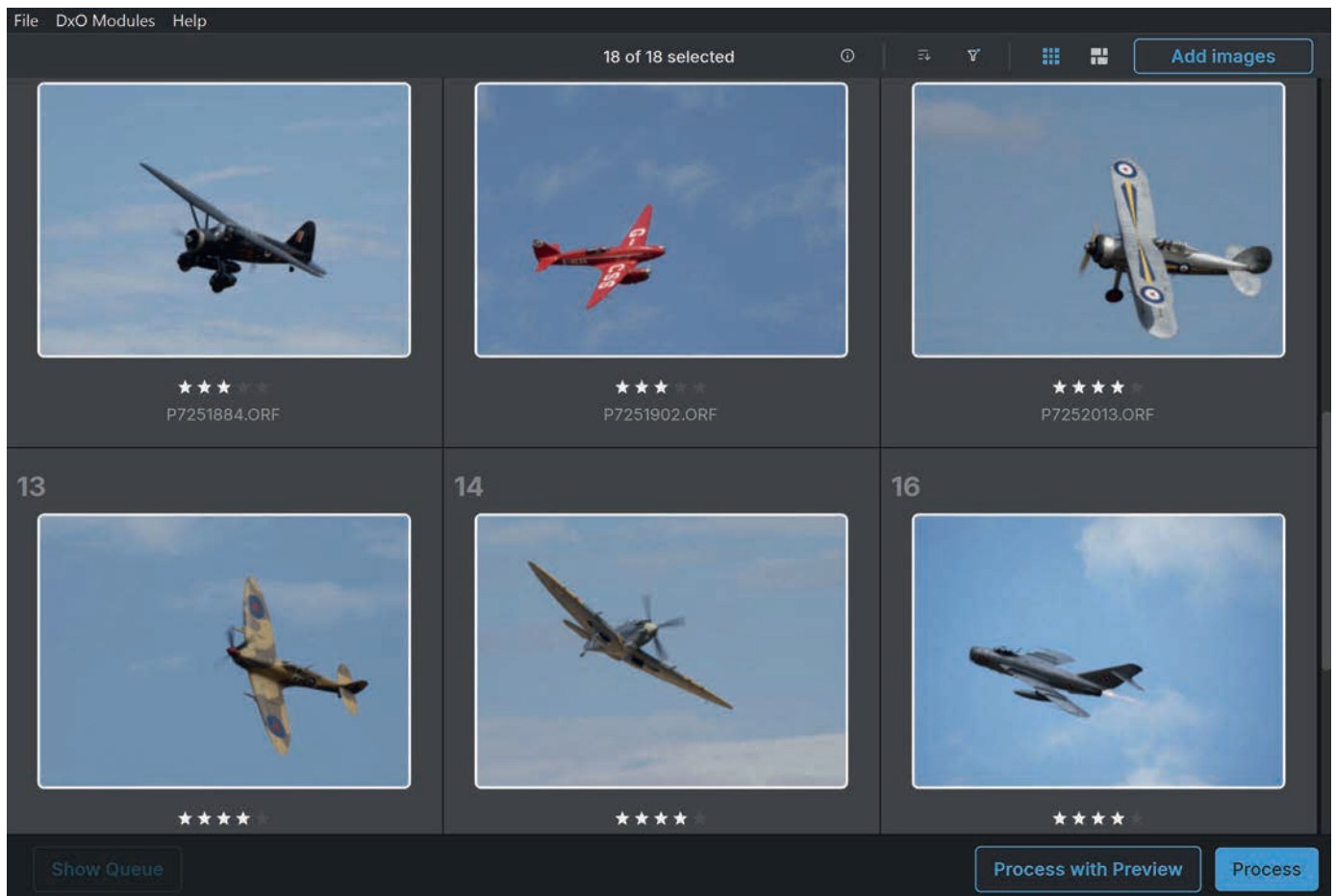
You can save combinations of processing settings as presets, and give them names for easy recall. That might be helpful for specific kinds of subjects – for example for portraits, you might prefer not to use lens sharpness optimisation or vignetting correction. Or you might choose to use DeepPRIME XD processing only for high-ISO files.

As well as exporting your raw files as linear DNGs, you can also tell the software to output JPEG and TIFF files, with DxO's Smart Lighting to balance out tonality and a choice of colour profiles. That might be handy for outputting rough proof JPEGs. Usefully, the software will automatically assign filenames to the DNGs it produces that identify which NR algorithm was used. If you want to reprocess the same

file with different settings, the software gives you a choice of either over-writing your previous DNG, or saving a new one with a unique filename.

Because converting a folder full of raw files to linear DNGs can take up a whole lot of valuable disk space, DxO has added an option to record compressed DNGs instead. This 'high fidelity compression' promises to deliver files that are up to four times smaller than uncompressed DNGs, with essentially no impact on either quality or processing time. In my tests they turned out dramatically smaller; for example with a set of 60MP files from the Sony A7R V, uncompressed files ranged from 180-240 MB, but the compressed versions took up just 20-63 MB. I'd use compressed DNGs all the time.

Once your files have been converted, PureRAW gives the option to open them directly in your preferred software. You can choose between Adobe



In PureRAW's Lightbox window, you can load up raw files, filter them by various parameters, and then queue them up for conversion to DNGs



DxO PureRAW can work wonders at extracting detail from high ISO files, especially from small sensors. Here I'm showing highly magnified crops of the squirrel's fur, processed using various noise reduction algorithms, with DeepPRIME XD best. Panasonic Lumix TZ300, 277mm equiv, 1/200sec at f/6.3, ISO 2500

➤ Lightroom, Lightroom Classic and Photoshop (where they'll open in Camera Raw), or set another program of your own choice. For Lightroom users, it's also possible to invoke PureRAW processing directly from within the program itself.

Using DxOPureRAW

When you first open PureRAW, you'll see a blank 'Lightbox' window. The initial step is to populate this with raw files, either by drag-and-drop, or using the 'Add photos to Lightbox' options. You can sort files by name, ISO or date, and filter them by such things as star-rating, ISO and aperture. That could be particularly useful when combined with presets.

For example, you might choose to process images up to a certain ISO using DeepPRIME, and the rest with XD3. Annoyingly, though, you can't assign star-ratings in the Lightbox itself; instead, it only reads those that have already been set, either in-camera or with other software.

Select a number of files, configure their processing settings and click the 'Process' button, and PureRAW will queue them up and process them in the background. You can then keep on adding more files to the queue however you like, and let the computer get on with it. If you come across a shot you really like, clicking 'Process Now' will push it to the front of the queue.

If you're not sure of which

settings to use, you can click the 'Process with Preview' button. Then you can see the effect of your selected settings in a preview window, that shows the processed image alongside the minimally processed raw in a split view. You can zoom right in well beyond 100% view to see what effect each setting has on the pixel-level image quality, and then select your final processing options accordingly.

Here you can also use masking to apply different noise reduction and lens sharpness optimisation to different areas of the photo. This makes most sense if you have a well-defined subject against a background that doesn't need ultra-fine processing. The only masking option is a relatively simple brush – unlike Photoshop, there's no AI subject detection here. But it turns out this doesn't really matter, as you only need to select the areas where you require more

detail, which doesn't need to be particularly precise.

Personally, I had real problems with the masking function, with the processing often failing and requiring a restart of the program. But that could well be down to the age of my computer. If it's a feature you think you might use, I'd urge testing before you buy. I can live without it working, given the program's other benefits.

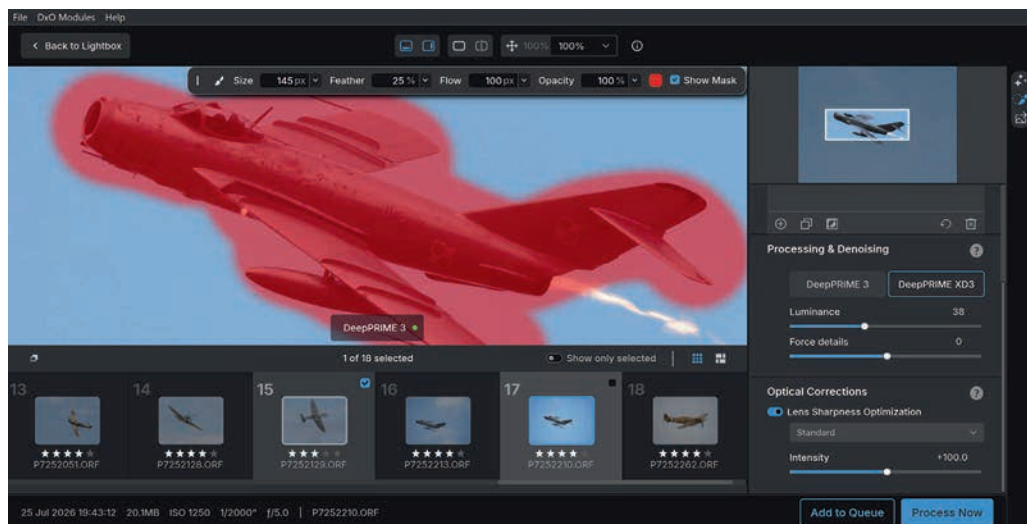
Speed and output quality

I've tested DxO PureRAW 6 by processing raw files from a range of cameras with different sensor sizes and resolutions. It's clear to me that DxO's raw processing still has a clear edge over Adobe's, especially at medium to high ISOs. DeepPrime 3 gives visibly cleaner, more detailed results than Denoise, and XD3 does even better still. All are dramatically better than using Adobe's default processing (with conventional noise reduction).

'It's not just the output quality where I've found DxO shines, either, but also the processing speed.'



At low ISO, DeepPRIME XD3 brings no advantage. But Lens Sharpness Optimisation can give crisper-looking detail, as shown in this crop from the right edge of the frame. Fujifilm X-T5, 16-80mm F4 at 16mm, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 125



In the Process with Preview window, you can (in principle) use masking to process different regions of the image using different denoising and Lens Sharpness Optimisation settings

You may need to zoom right in to see the differences clearly, but there's no doubt they're real.

To my eye, DxO's processing is also often superior to Adobe's with Fujifilm's X-system cameras, which use proprietary X-Trans colour filter arrays over their sensors. To be fair, Adobe is a lot better at dealing with these files than it used to be, but DxO's more sophisticated sharpening does a much better job of rendering detail. As a Fujifilm user myself, I can see a real

benefit to the idea of batch-converting my raw files using PureRAW before pulling them into Adobe Bridge for further work. Then I'd mark selected files for reprocessing using DeepPRIME XD3 when beneficial.

It's not just the output quality where I've found DxO shines, either, but also the processing speed. On my Windows 11 laptop, for example, the same 20MP image from the OM System OM-3 took about 20 seconds to process using

DeepPRIME 3 and 1 minute using XD3. In comparison, Adobe Denoise required over 5 minutes.

It's important to note here, though, that such performance differences will vary dramatically for each user, depending on the camera and computer they use. Modern Macs, for example, are dramatically quicker at running Denoise thanks to their super-fast GPUs. So if you own one of them, the time saving of using PureRAW won't be so significant.

Verdict

Amateur
Photographer
GOLD
★★★★★

If you already pay a subscription for Adobe Lightroom or

Photoshop, it may well be difficult to see a value proposition for DxO PureRAW 6. Nobody can pretend that Adobe software is anything other than highly sophisticated, and capable of delivering extremely good output quality. However, if you want to step up from extremely good to state-of-the-art, there's a real case for giving DxO PureRAW a serious look.

The benefits that you'll get, however, do depend a lot upon the technical quality of your raw files, and therefore upon the equipment you own and how you shoot. If you use a modern camera and super-sharp lenses, and you mostly shoot at low ISOs, then there won't be much scope for improvement. In this case, it's probably not worth buying PureRAW.

However, if you use older kit, or more affordable lenses, and you shoot a lot in situations where image noise becomes visible, then the chances are it will give noticeably better results. In effect, it's like upgrading your camera and all your lenses all at once. Put like that, the asking price looks like a bargain. I'd recommend using the 14-day free trial to run your own files through PureRAW on your own computer, so you can judge its advantages for yourself.

For and against

- ✚ Class-leading raw processing
- ✚ Faster and more effective than Adobe Denoise for high ISO
- ✚ Compressed DNGs take up much less disk space than before
- ✚ Auto dust removal should save a lot of time and work
- ✖ I couldn't get masking to work consistently



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With superb sharpness and lovely bokeh, this lens is a great choice for portraits
Nikon Z8, 75mm, 1/1250sec at f/2.8, ISO 200



Nikon Z 70-200mm f/2.8 VR S II



Stunningly sharp and with reduced size and weight – this updated large-aperture telephoto zoom is superbly versatile, says Amy Davies, but at a price

Nikon's latest Z-mount 70-200mm f/2.8 follows on from the original which was released back in 2020. It includes some notable improvements to speed and performance, as well as a reduction in size and weight.

This kind of large-aperture telezoom is a favoured choice for

a wide range of genres and subjects. They are popular for weddings, events and portraits, but also have use for things like sports and wildlife, particularly if you can get reasonably close to the action. They make for an excellent pairing with a 24-70mm standard zoom lens.

This is a lens aimed squarely at professional photographers, and

it has a price tag to match (£2999). But for anyone who craves high performance, it's well worth looking at.

Features

There's an all-new optical formula for this lens. It uses 18 elements in 16 groups, including 1 ED glass, 1 Super ED glass, 2 aspherical, 1 aspherical ED

glass, 1 fluorite and 1 SR glass lens elements. This combination is designed to be lightweight while also producing excellent results, including effectively correcting chromatic aberration.

An 11-bladed aperture is also upgraded. It promises to deliver softer-looking bokeh and attractive out of focus areas.

There's now a shorter minimum focus distance of 0.38m at 70mm, up to 0.8m at 200mm, helping you to get closer to the subject for frame-filling shots. It's not a macro lens, but the maximum magnification





**Autofocus is fast,
quiet and accurate**
Nikon Z8, 200mm, 1/1000sec at f/2.8, ISO 200

➤ is 0.3x at 70mm and 0.25x at 200mm, so you can still get some nice close-ups.

Several coatings are employed to reduce ghosting and flare, including a Meso Amorphos Coat and ARNEO and SI coatings. The barrel is also sealed against dust and moisture, with a fluorine coating on the front element to help keep it clean.

The lens is compatible with Nikon's Z teleconverters, giving you the opportunity to reach up to 280mm with the TC-1.4x, or 400mm with the TC-2.0. This could make it an even more

flexible choice for those shooting events and action.

Build and Handling

At 998g, the Nikkor Z 70-200mm f/2.8 S II is 26% lighter than its predecessor. It's also 12mm shorter, being 90mm x 208mm. Don't get me wrong, this is not a lightweight lens, and it's probably not something that you'll want to pop in your bag 'just in case'. But it is more weight and size efficient than before. I've been happy to walk around with the Z8 and the 70-200mm attached to it using a cross-body strap, which

I'd previously have likely found too burdensome.

The outer design is fairly straightforward and simple. One thing which is missing from the previous incarnation is the LCD screen that displays the lens settings. I used the previous version and can honestly say I barely looked at that screen, so not having it here doesn't feel like any kind of omission to me.

There are three rings, increasing in size as you get further towards the front of the lens. The first is a control ring which can be set to a wide variety of functions from within the camera's menu. You might want to set it to control aperture, for example. You can set the control ring to either click or not – more traditional photographers might prefer the former, while video shooters might prefer the silence.

The second ring is used for manual focusing. It has no hard stops at either end, but it moves with just the right amount of give to make manual focusing easy enough. Finally, the last and largest ring controls the zoom. The zoom is internal so the lens stays the same size regardless of

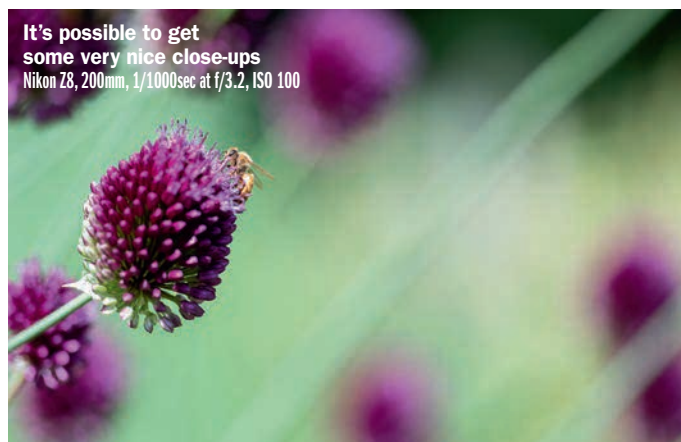
which focal length you're using.

There are two pairs of custom buttons which can be set to control dozens of different functions. In each pair, one button is perfectly placed for horizontal shooting, while the other is for vertical.

Two switches are found towards the base. One enables moving between autofocus and manual focus, while the other is the focus limiter, allowing you to choose between FULL and infinity-5m. This can be useful if you're trying to avoid the lens focusing on foreground subjects when photographing fast moving subjects, such as sport.

Included in the box is a tripod foot, which you can use to attach the lens to a tripod for better stability, compared to attaching the camera to the tripod instead. The foot is detachable, so if you're primarily using the lens hand-held, you can remove it and replace it with a 'decorative ring' that's supplied in the box.

Also included in the box is a HB-119 lens hood, which can be reversed when not in use to make the overall size more manageable. It includes a filter



**It's possible to get
some very nice close-ups**
Nikon Z8, 200mm, 1/1000sec at f/3.2, ISO 100

The lens works well with eye detection for shooting wildlife
Nikon Z8, 200mm, 1/2000sec at f/2.8, ISO 200



window, meaning you don't need to remove the hood if you're working with rotating filters, such as polarisers or variable NDs.

Autofocus

For autofocus, the lens now uses Silky Swift Voice Coil Motors (SSVCM) which promise to deliver 3.5x faster and 50% quieter autofocus. It's also claimed to have a 45% reduction in scan time at the telephoto end, as well as 40% more accurate focus tracking when zooming. This should make it better suited to tracking moving subjects.

In practice, the promised improvements seem to be borne out in real-world shooting. I'm pretty confident that if you were to compare the old and new lens models on to a Nikon body with up-to-date autofocus, like the Z8 I've been using, you'd see a difference in lock-on speeds and tracking. That might make the difference between getting the shot and not.

In many situations, I tend to leave the Z8 on wide-area AF and keep eye detection enabled. That works really well for many of the subjects I've been photographing, including portraits and wildlife. However, I did occasionally switch to single point AF if the detection wasn't

quite working as I wanted it to.

Either way, focus acquisition was very quick and impressively quiet. It's almost impossible to hear even in a quiet room, so in normal shooting scenarios it's not going to be intrusive at all. With AFC and tracking focus switched on, I found it kept up with wildlife fairly well, though admittedly I mostly shot fairly placid bird subjects in this test. However, I also photographed my daughter who is anything but, and it also managed to keep up well with her, too.

Image Quality

When a lens has such a high asking price, of course I have very high hopes that it can really deliver the goods. Happily, the Nikon Z 70-200mm f/2.8 VR S II really can perform exceptionally well, with beautifully sharp and crisp results. It's incredibly versatile too; I've been using it to shoot portraits, wildlife, flowers, still life and even landscape subjects, and it's done a great job all round.

The level of fine detail it can resolve is particularly evident if you zoom in closely, where you can see things like feathers in beautiful detail. Edge-to-edge sharpness is also maintained very well, both across the different focal lengths and

through the aperture range.

Turning off profiled lens corrections in Adobe Camera Raw reveals that there is a small amount of vignetting observable in the corners when shooting wide open at f/2.8 in some scenarios. It's not particularly obtrusive or unappealing to look at though, and is easily removed in ACR. There's also a very small amount of barrel distortion at the wider end of the lens, and some pincushion distortion at the telephoto end, if you turn off those corrections too.

Bokeh is beautifully rendered, with the 11-bladed aperture producing very attractive results. If you have out-of-focus catchlights then you get nicely rounded bokeh shapes, while otherwise the blur is smooth and creamy. The older lens only had a 9-bladed aperture, so again this is a marked improvement that should be noticeable to most photographers.

The advanced coatings on the lens do an excellent job of delivering the results they promise. Ghosting and flare are extremely well controlled, even when shooting in the direction of strong light sources. I've not been able to find any examples of colour fringing due to chromatic aberration in my sample images, either.



Verdict

At just shy of £3000, this needs to be a lens that performs exceptionally well, something that you can rely on to produce great shots time and time again, and one which is also incredibly versatile to give you better value for money. I'm happy to report that the lens delivers on all three fronts. Sharpness is exquisite, and the focusing speed helps you to get those shots that cheaper options would struggle to achieve – that's especially true if you want to photograph moving subjects.

I also surprised myself by just how many different subjects you can photograph with this lens. I used it for a lot of portraits, which is a classic choice for these focal lengths. But it was also great for wildlife, flowers, still life and picking out areas of a landscape. I'd never thought to take out a 70-200mm as my only lens before, but that's exactly what I did and it was more versatile than I imagined.

If you've already got Nikon's original Z 70-200mm, there are some real improvements here. The speedier autofocus, nicer bokeh and the reduction in weight might just tip you over into being ready for an upgrade.

Overall, this is a superb lens and while it might be expensive, you get what you pay for. Try to consider the value of being able to cover off a number of different subjects. It's not a niche lens and you may find you use it often enough to justify the outlay.

Data file

Price £2999	Length 208mm
Filter Diameter 77mm	Diameter 90mm
Lens Elements 18	Weight 998g
Groups 16	(without tripod collar ring)
Diaphragm blades 11	Lens Mount Nikon Z
Aperture f/2.8-f/22	Included accessories Caps, hood, case
Min focus 0.38m	



Safer flying

Omnidirectional sensing and forward-facing LiDAR help the drone detect obstacles

Large images

The 48MP sensor produces 8064 x 6048 pixel JPEG and DNG files

Smooth tracking

ActiveTrack can follow a moving subject at up to 12m/s

DJI Lito X1

DJI's Lito X1 promises to make aerial photography accessible to first-time flyers, but does it offer the quality photographers demand? **Angela Nicholson** investigates.

At a glance

£369 standard kit

- 1/1.3-inch 48MP CMOS sensor
- 24mm equivalent f/1.7 lens
- 4K video at up to 100fps
- Omnidirectional sensing with forward-facing LiDAR
- Up to 36-minute flight time
- 42GB internal storage
- dji.com

The DJI Lito X1 is the more advanced of the two models in DJI's new beginner-focused Lito range, sitting above the less expensive Lito 1. However, although it is aimed at first-time drone users, its specification is far from basic. It boasts a 1/1.3-inch 48MP sensor,

omnidirectional obstacle sensing, and forward-facing LiDAR as well as ActiveTrack subject tracking, while its standard take-off weight is approximately 249g.

The Lito X1 is compact and easy to transport. Its four arms fold against the body, so it slips easily into a bag without taking up much space.

The standard kit comes with DJI's RC-N3 controller, which uses a connected smartphone to display the camera feed and give access to the settings.

Meanwhile, the £599 Fly More Combo comes with the RC 2 controller, which has its own screen, making life a bit easier, but adding cost.

obstacles around it, while the forward-facing LiDAR improves its ability to assess what lies ahead. It's reassuring when flying towards trees, walls or other potential hazards, but it doesn't reliably avoid objects immediately above the drone, so you need to take particular care around overhanging branches. As ever, the obstacle-sensing system shouldn't be regarded as a replacement for careful flying.

The drone's small size means it is very easy to lose against a bright or overcast sky at around the maximum permitted flying height of 400ft. Consequently, you need to pay close attention to maintain unaided visual contact.

ActiveTrack is useful when you want the drone to follow a person or vehicle, while QuickShots and MasterShots perform a selection

Easy to fly

DJI is very good at making its drones easy to fly, and the Lito X1 is no exception. The controls are responsive without feeling too sensitive, and despite its low weight, the Lito X1 also copes remarkably well with a breeze. You may see the aircraft being buffeted around, but the gimbal does a good job of compensating, and the footage is smooth.

The omnidirectional vision system helps the drone detect



The Fly More Combo comes with the RC 2 controller, three batteries, a charging hub and a carrying case

Useful storage

There's 42GB of internal memory as well as a microSD card slot

Automated flying

There's a collection of automatic flying options to make it easy to get great footage

of automated camera movements. They're fun to use and make it easy to produce polished-looking clips, although the resulting footage can seem rather brief. Panorama and Hyperlapse modes are also available for creating more ambitious results without requiring advanced flying skills.

Image quality

The Lito X1's camera has a 1/1.3-inch CMOS sensor with 48 million effective pixels and a 24mm equivalent f/1.7 lens. It can capture 12MP or 48MP still images in JPEG and DNG raw format, while video can be recorded at up to 4K/100fps. There's also 10-bit D-Log M for anyone who wants greater flexibility for colour grading.



The drone folds away neatly for transport



The 48MP sensor gives good results
DJI Lito X1, 1/3000sec at f/1.7, ISO 100

I found the 4K footage excellent, with plenty of detail, attractive colour and no major issues to report. Movement looks smooth and the gimbal keeps the horizon steady, even when the drone is being pushed around by the wind.

However, the lens aperture is fixed at f/1.7, so ND filters are essential if you want to use suitably slow shutter speeds when shooting video on a bright day. DJI sells a set separately, but it would be good to see at least one included with the standard kit.

The 48MP still images look good at sensible viewing and printing sizes, although some fine details appear a bit soft when raw files are inspected at 100% on screen. The JPEGs are crisp and vibrant, but can look

over-processed close-up. Conversely, the simultaneously captured raw files are flatter, but respond well to a little gentle sharpening and tonal adjustment.

Flight time and storage

DJI quotes a maximum flight time of 36 minutes with the standard Intelligent Flight Battery, although I found round 25 minutes a more realistic typical figure. I was able to fly for around 28 minutes by ignoring the low-battery warnings for a short while before landing.

The 42GB of internal storage is a very welcome feature. It means you can record a significant number of images and plenty of video without a microSD card. Files can also be transferred over Wi-Fi 6 or by connecting the drone directly to a computer via USB-C.

AP

DJI Lito 1

At £299, the DJI Lito 1 is the more affordable model in the Lito range. It has the same folding design, approximate 249g take-off weight, omnidirectional obstacle sensing and claimed 36-minute maximum flight time as the X1.

However, its 48MP sensor is a smaller 1/2-inch type, while its 26.2mm equivalent f/1.8 lens gives a slightly narrower field of view. It also lacks the X1's forward-facing LiDAR, D-Log M recording and 42GB internal storage. The £429 Fly More Combo adds two extra batteries and a three-battery charging hub, both of which are useful.



Verdict

Amateur Photographer
GOLD
★★★★★

The DJI Lito X1 is an excellent first drone,

but it has enough features and imaging capability to keep users happy once they have mastered the basics. It's easy to fly and stable in a breeze, while ActiveTrack, the automated shooting modes and the reassuring safety features are likely to be of enormous value to its target audience of first-time flyers. The 4K video is excellent and the 48MP raw files respond well to processing, although fine detail can look slightly soft straight from the camera.

Overall, it's a capable and enjoyable compact drone at an attractive price.



For and against

- + Excellent 4K video quality
- + Effective obstacle sensing and subject tracking
- + Useful 42GB internal storage
- Fine detail is slightly soft in 48MP raw images
- JPEGs can look over-processed
- ND filters cost extra



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With its ultra-large aperture, this lens is ideal for low light
Sony A7R VI, 1/400sec at f/2, ISO 1600

Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE

With its f/1.2 maximum aperture at a relatively affordable price, this lens has plenty of creative appeal. **Angela Nicholson** checks out its performance.



Viltrox offers two versions of the AF 35mm F1.2 LAB, the AF 35mm F1.2 LAB FE and the newer AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE, with both retailing for £869. They share the same optical design, but the original model has a small OLED screen that displays the focus distance, aperture and an approximate

depth-of-field scale. It also has an unmarked customisable control ring, rather than a dedicated aperture ring.

The newer Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE that I tested drops the screen and replaces the customisable ring with a traditional aperture ring that's marked from f/1.2 to f/16. This makes the aperture setting

easier to check and adjust directly on the lens.

Both versions are full-frame lenses available for Sony E and Nikon Z mount cameras.

Features

The Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE is constructed from 15 elements arranged in 10 groups. These include three high

refractive index elements, five extra-low dispersion elements and two ultra-precision aspherical elements. Such exotic optics are designed to maintain sharpness across the frame while controlling chromatic aberration and other optical defects.

Crucially, the f/1.2 maximum aperture allows plenty of light to reach the sensor,





The lens gives impressive sharpness even wide open
Sony A7R VI, 1/6400sec at f/1.2, ISO 100

➤ which is useful for low-light photography. It also enables very shallow depth-of-field, especially when the lens is focused close to its minimum distance of 34cm, where the maximum magnification is 0.17x.

An 11-blade diaphragm forms the aperture and is intended to produce rounded highlights and smooth out of focus areas. There's also a dual floating internal focusing system, so the lens doesn't change length as

the focus distance changes. Four HyperVCM (Voice Coil Motor) motors drive the focusing group and are designed to provide fast, quiet and precise focusing. The lens also supports the camera's face and eye detection systems.

While the original version of the 35mm F1.2 LAB has an unmarked customisable control ring, the N has a dedicated aperture ring. The older lens's ring can be assigned to adjust the aperture or another setting,

depending upon the camera, but it doesn't have a marked aperture scale. The N model's ring is marked at f/1.2, f/1.4 and then in whole stops to f/16, with clicks at one-third stop intervals. There is also an A setting that hands aperture control to the camera. A switch allows the ring to be de-clicked for smooth exposure adjustments during video recording.

Build and Handling

With a diameter of 89.2mm, a length of 121.8mm and a weight of 910g, the Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE is large and heavy for a 35mm prime lens. However, that's not surprising given its f/1.2 maximum aperture and complex optical construction.

The lens feels well-made and, as a flagship LAB series model, it has an aerospace grade metal barrel and a plated brass mount. There are seals to resist dust and moisture, while the front element has a coating that repels water, dirt and fingerprints.

The broad manual focus ring is ridged and easy to locate while looking through the viewfinder. Its movement is just on the right

side of free-moving. It can be rotated with one finger, but it is not so loose that it is likely to shift accidentally.

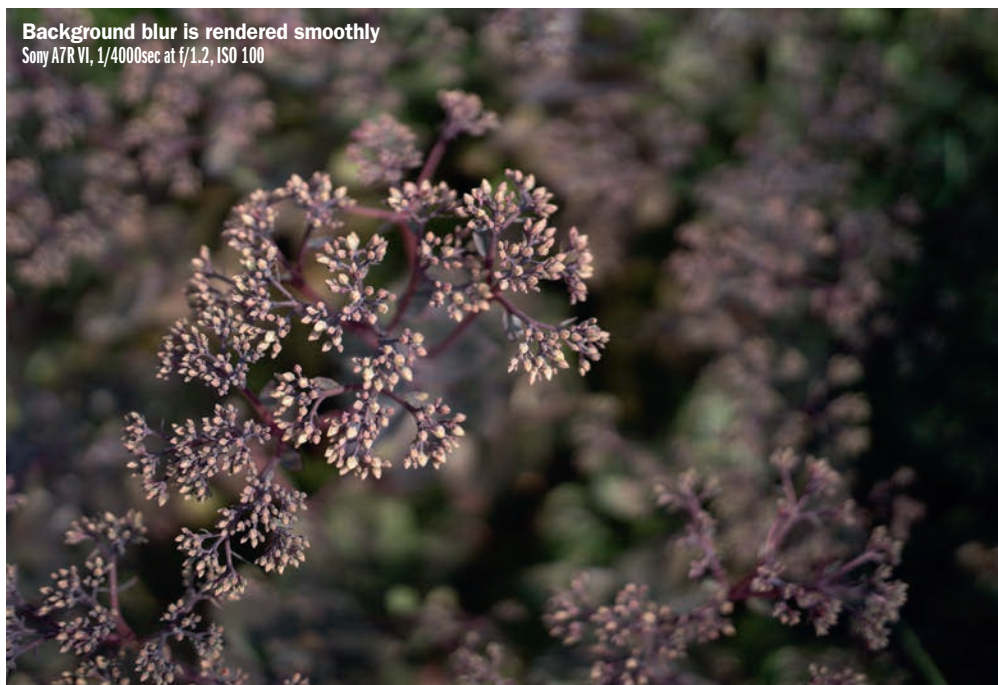
Meanwhile, the aperture ring sits closer to the camera. There's no lock, but the clicks give clear feedback as it moves through the settings. They also make it easy to tell when the ring has moved beyond the marked apertures to the A position. A switch on the side of the barrel allows the clicks to be disengaged for smooth and quiet adjustments while recording video.

There's also an AF/MF switch and two customisable function buttons, positioned one above the other on the left side of the barrel. Unfortunately, the Sony A7R VI that I used for this review only recognises the first button, labelled Fn1. I set it to toggle subject recognition on and off, which is useful in a busy location when I don't want the focus to jump to a stranger's eye. By default, the second button shifts the focus between the nearest and furthest distances when the lens is set to manual focus.

Some photographers may have preferred the two buttons to be



Autofocus works well with eye detection
Sony A7R VI, 1/400sec at f/1.2, ISO 2500



positioned 90 degrees apart and to perform the same function. That would ensure that one is within easy reach when the camera is held in either landscape or portrait orientation.

Speaking of customisation, unlike Nikon cameras, Sony cameras don't have an option to customise a lens ring. So the N model is probably the more logical choice for Sony shooters.

Autofocus

I used the Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE on the Sony A7R VI and found the autofocus fast, accurate and decisive. It also works well with Sony's subject and eye-detection systems.

This was particularly useful at a local music gig where I photographed the band through members of the audience. Shooting from within the crowd helped capture the atmosphere while the eye detection kept the attention on the performers.

The f/1.2 aperture meant that I didn't have to push the sensitivity especially high in the gloomy conditions. With the camera taking care of the subject's eye, I could concentrate on the composition and wait for the foreground elements to come together.

The Viltrox lens's focusing system is also quiet and its

'The lens is capable of resolving plenty of detail and pairs well with high-resolution cameras like the Sony A7R VI'

transitions are smooth, which makes it suitable for video as well as stills. However, there is noticeable focus breathing, where the lens appears to zoom in as the focus point moves closer to the camera.

Image quality

The Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE is capable of resolving plenty of fine detail and pairs well with high-resolution cameras such as the Sony A7R VI. Its central sharpness is very good wide open at f/1.2 and it remains at a high level through the rest of the aperture range.

Corner sharpness is also impressive. It doesn't quite match the centre at the widest settings, but the difference is very modest. Consequently, there is no need to avoid using f/1.2 when the subject extends beyond the centre of the frame.

There is some vignetting at f/1.2, however, the shading has a gradual transition, so it's not usually objectionable. It's also effectively gone by f/2.8.

Distortion is controlled very well, too. I detected a very slight

hint of pincushion distortion, but I wouldn't hesitate to use the lens for architecture or interior photography. Chromatic aberration and flare are also both kept nicely in check.

At f/1.2, the transition from sharp to blurred areas is rapid and the out of focus areas are rendered smoothly. This makes it easy to separate a subject from its surroundings while retaining some sense of the wider environment.

Out-of-focus highlights are also handled nicely, without any obvious internal aberrations or distracting outlines. Highlights towards the edges of the frame can become slightly cat's eye shaped at the widest aperture, but this is quite common, and overall the bokeh is attractive.

Naturally, the depth-of-field becomes extremely shallow when the lens is focused at close range at f/1.2. Care is therefore required to place the point of focus exactly where it is needed, as otherwise images will appear soft. But a capable autofocus system makes that much easier.

Verdict

The Viltrox AF 35mm F1.2 LAB N FE is large and heavy, but it provides the creative potential and light gathering ability that some photographers dream about. Its 35mm focal length is also versatile, making it suitable for environmental portraits, documentary photography, street scenes, events, landscapes and low light work.

Crucially, the optical performance is very impressive. The lens produces sharp results at all apertures, including towards the corners, while distortion, chromatic aberration and flare are controlled very well. There is some vignetting at the widest apertures, but it is gradual and disappears by f/2.8. Importantly for such a fast lens, the bokeh is also attractive.

Its metal construction, weather resistant design, de-clickable aperture ring and customisable buttons reinforce the LAB flagship status. However, Sony users may be disappointed that the two function buttons can't be configured independently.

Both versions of the lens cost £869. If the f/1.2 aperture is the main attraction, Sony users also have the option of the Sigma 35mm F1.2 DG II for £1,299, while Nikon users could consider the Z 35mm f/1.2 S for £2,899. Incidentally, the Sony FE 35mm f/1.4 GM costs £1,429. With those price comparisons, it's hard to find fault with this superb lens.

Data file

Price: £869	Length: 121.8mm
Filter Diameter: 77mm	Diameter: 89.2mm
Lens Elements: 15	Weight: 910g
Groups: 10	Lens Mounts: Sony E, Nikon Z
Diaphragm blades: 11	Included accessories: Caps, hood and storage bag
Aperture: f/1.2 - f/16	
Min focus: 0.34m	



Amateur Photographer
GOLD
★★★★★



Left: The OM System photo walk was led by Jimmy Cheng (crouching centre). OM System's Luke Curtis (behind Jimmy) supplied OM-3 cameras and answered technical questions, while Geoff, Jessica and Andy from the magazine team also helped out.

Below: Jimmy gives hands-on advice for getting more from the OM-3

Middle: Jimmy's route took in some amazing sights

Bottom: The South Bank area was also great for a wide variety of street shots

On a roll with OM

OM System and Amateur Photographer recently held a photo walk in central London. As you'll see, everyone got on really well with the OM-3 camera and a range of lenses

On July 24th, *Amateur Photographer* teamed up with OM System to organise a photo walk in central London. The walk was led by OM System ambassador Jimmy Cheng, an experienced street, portrait and travel photographer who's got a lot of experience taking groups of photographers around London – still one of the most photogenic cities in the world. Everyone also got the chance to try the OM System OM-3, with a range of sharp, compact lenses.

The OM-3 is ideal for street photography as it packs a lot of high-end features – such as 5 axis image stabilisation, a sophisticated AF system and computational photography extras including Live ND filters – into a compact, retro-styled body.

The Bank job

Joining Jimmy was a diverse group of participants, who signed up for the walk via the magazine and Jimmy's social media channels, or via SheClicks – well known to our readers as a friendly, supportive online community for women photographers of all levels. The walk started near the London Eye before moving along the South Bank and finishing at the iconic Tate Modern. While this may not seem that far, it was a hot day – and there was a lot to photograph along this scenic route by the Thames. After breaking for lunch, Jimmy then reviewed some shots from the day, sharing some invaluable tips for getting the most from the OM-3. You can watch video highlights of the walk at shorturl.at/xoWCJ and keep checking our social media for news of more photo walks in the future!



A gallery from the day

See below for a selection of great shots taken by participants on the OM System photo walk



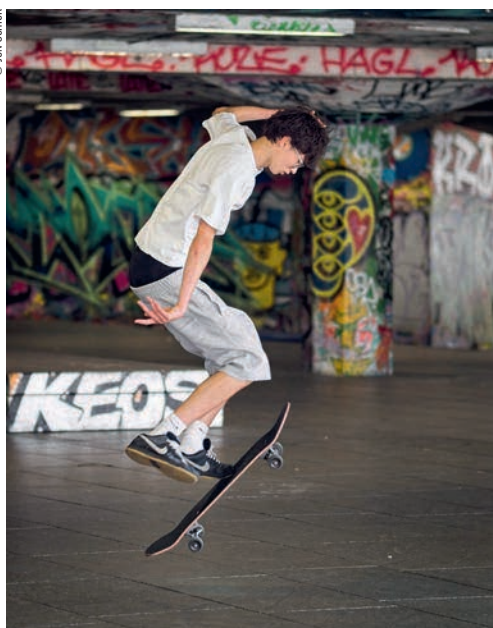
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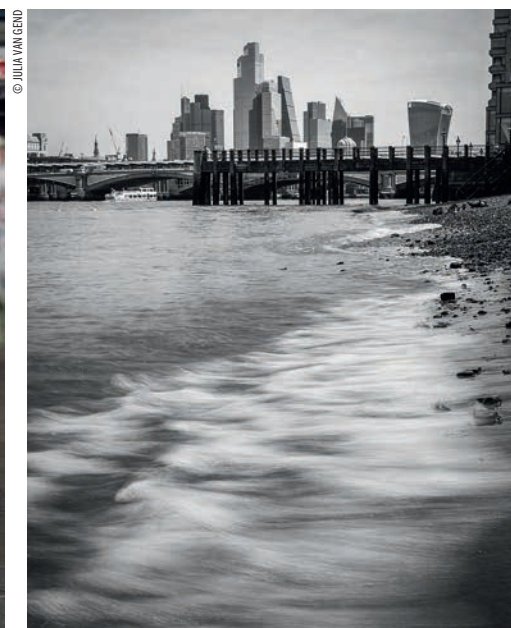
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OM System OM-3

- 20MP Four Thirds stacked BSI Live MOS sensor
- ISO 200-25,600 (standard)
- Up to 120fps shooting (at full-resolution)
- 2.36m-dot, 0.68x OLED EVF
- 3in, 1.62m-dot fully articulated screen
- 4K 60fps video, Full HD up to 240fps



JIMMY CHENG'S QUICK TIPS FOR BETTER STREET SHOTS

1 Once you have found an interesting spot, think about your composition, and then wait for something to happen – I found a lovely yellow staircase for example and then waited until somebody wearing yellow appeared!

2 Stop down your lens on a bright sunny day, depending on your lens – f/6.3 or f/8 means the camera doesn't need to 'think' so much and you can get shots quickly.

3 Bump up the ISO if necessary so you can get faster shutter speeds for capturing action on the street. 1/350th or 1/500th of a second is the minimum if you want to freeze anything.

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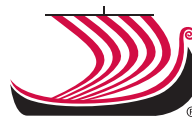
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VIKING



The 'Chuzelblad'

John Wade finds a miniature, digital Hasselblad copy too irresistible to ignore

● £35.99 (on Amazon, prices vary elsewhere)

The Chinese Chuzhao (pronounced 'choose-how') company has so far introduced two delightful little digital cameras, each a miniature copy of a classic camera of the past. First there was a Rolleiflex that I reviewed here last year; this time it's a Hasselblad. Chuzhao calls it a Retro Digital Camera, but Chuzelblad suits it better. It's available in black, red, green and grey, all with slightly garish gold fittings.

At 10.5x10x6cm, the camera is about two-thirds the size of the real thing, in contrast to the more easily pocketable 'Rollei' which was about half the size of the original. On the plus side, the larger body and its cubic shape makes it easier to handle. It also means a bigger 2.4in screen under a hood that flips up at the touch of a button. There's even a standard tripod bush on the base.

Surrounding the lens, four buttons control numerous functions with short or long press options. A long press on the bottom left button turns the camera on, then short presses toggle between filters for colour, mono, sepia and high-contrast black and white. A short press on the opposite button shoots the picture, accompanied by an electronic 'click-whir' shutter noise. A longer press activates the delayed action, with a 6-second countdown on the screen. The rotating handle on the side of the body operates a 16x digital zoom which also works in the video mode. A supplied cable connects the USB-C socket on the base to a USB connection on your computer to transfer images and charge the battery.

Despite grand claims of 64MP resolution, the camera appears to use an 8MP sensor, while recording 12MP image files. In real terms, it can deliver crisp prints up to about A4 size, which is pretty impressive for the price. With evenly-lit subjects, exposure is fine, although a preponderance of light or dark areas in a subject can confuse the metering into over- or under-exposure. And the screen is a bit naff in bright sunlight. But hey, this is a camera that can be in your pocket for less than £40. For that, it's worth every penny for the fun factor alone.



Controls

Four buttons on the front and a handle on the side control the camera's functions.

Automation

Fully auto programmed exposure, autofocus down to 3cm with viewfinder confirmation.

The Chuzhao Retro Digital Camera, aka the Chuzelblad

Battery

Lithium polymer battery, built-in and non-removable.

In the box

Camera, USB-C-USB cable, wrist strap, micro SD card, instructions, cloth bag.

The compete kit with its very attractive box



An evenly-lit subject provides a well-exposed and pleasingly sharp image



At a glance

- 8MP 1/3.2in sensor
- 12MP output resolution
- 2.7K and Full HD video
- Focus down to 3cm
- Micro-SD storage
- JPG and AVI file formats
- 2.4in LCD screen



The four filters available at the touch of a button

Verdict

You won't buy a Chuzelblad as your only camera. But it's a great novelty, enjoyable to use and the picture quality is demonstrably better than that of last year's 'Rollei'. I just wish Chuzhao had used chrome-coloured fittings to look more like a real Hasselblad rather than gold, which makes it a bit too bling.

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3 Legged Thing Ultra Clamp

The 3 Legged Thing Ultra Clamp promises speed, security and Arca-Swiss compatibility. **Angela Nicholson** puts it to the test

● £49.99 ● 3leggedthing.com

The 3 Legged Thing Ultra Clamp is an Arca-Swiss compatible quick-release clamp with a neat party trick: it gives your tripod or monopod head both a twist knob and a lever release. You can use the knob to set the tension, then enjoy the speed of the lever when mounting or removing your camera.

The system works well. Although quite skinny, the knurled knob is easy to grip making fine adjustments fairly straightforward, while the lever closes with a reassuringly positive action. There's also a security catch that must be released before the lever can open fully, reducing the chance of an accident.

The lever can be configured for left or right-handed operation, which also helps when another control on the head might otherwise get in the way. There are also recesses in the clamp to engage with safety pins on compatible plates (although the supplied plate doesn't have any such pins).

At 7.5cm wide and 98g, the Ultra Clamp is small and light. It works well with the supplied square quick-release plate or one of 3 Legged Thing's L-brackets, enabling quick switches between landscape and portrait orientation. While it's most likely to be used to hold a camera, it can support accessories such as a monitor or light, turning it into a small quick-release hub.

The magnesium-alloy construction feels solid and well finished, and it holds securely, with no sign of creep. Overall the Ultra Plate's combination of quick operation, adjustable tension and QD port makes it an attractive alternative to a more basic clamp.

3 Legged Thing also offers the Ultra Clamp Naked for £34.99. It has exactly the same magnesium-alloy construction and dual twist-and-lever control, but comes without a quick release plate. Both versions are available in Lava, with orange and black detailing, or the all-black Darkness finish.

Verdict

The Ultra Clamp is a cleverly designed and nicely made upgrade for an Arca-Swiss compatible tripod head. Its dual lever-and-twist mechanism combines speed with precise tension control, while the square base, reversible lever and the quick release plate's QD port add versatility. The well-integrated safety catch doesn't slow the use of the clamp.



Dual controls

The twist knob sets the tension, while the lever enables quick mounting and release

Safety catch

A secondary catch helps prevent the lever from opening accidentally

Amateur Photographer
GOLD
★★★★★

Reversible lever

The lever can be configured for left- or right-handed operation

Accessory support

The 3/8in-16 bolt can hold a camera, monitor or light etc.

At a glance

- Dual lever-and-twist control
- Weight 98g
- Magnesium-alloy construction
- 3/8in-16 camera/accessory thread

QDCOMPATIBILITY

The Ultra Clamp's quick-release plate features a QD mount, enabling it to connect directly to 3 Legged Thing's Axis camera straps. This makes it easy to switch between carrying the camera on a strap and mounting it on a tripod, because you don't have to remove or replace the plate.



Glunz Ingo

John Wade discovers a camera you might not have seen before, from a company you've probably never heard of

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The German Glunz company, despite its anonymity today, was prolific in Hanover during the 1930s, mostly for producing folding plate cameras. The strangely-named Ingo was something of a departure for the company. Its design is what's known as 16-on-127. Here's why.

In 1922, the English Ensign company produced a camera called the Cupid. It took 120 size roll film, but instead of producing eight pictures 6x9cm, as was the norm, it used a simple device for doubling up to 16 pictures 6x4cm. It did this by using two red windows for film wind. Instead of winding the film so that 1, 2, 3, 4... etc appeared sequentially in a single red window, the Cupid wound no.1 to the first window, and then after exposure, no.1 was wound to the second window. Thereafter, 2 was wound to the first window, then to the second window, followed by three to the first window... etc.

In 1930, when Ensign's patent expired, Zeiss Ikon leapt on the idea but converted it for use with 127 size film. At a time when



The Glunz Ingo, an usual folding camera from Germany

Leica was popularising small format images with 35mm, roll film manufacturers countered with 16-on-127, and the craze took off.

Folded, the Ingo measures 11x7x3cm. Pressing a stud on the top of the body causes two barn doors to spring open as the lens snaps forward on bellows to its taking position. It's a Rodenstock 5cm f/4.5 that focuses down to 0.75m. Shutter speeds, adjustable with a tiny dial above the lens, run 1/25-1/100sec. The viewfinder folds up from the top of the body, the shutter is fired by a lever

beside the lens, or by a cable release that screws in beside it, and a lever opposite offers delayed action.

Rodenstock made its own version of the camera called the Rodinett, with an f/3.5 lens and rim-set Compur shutter. Today, it's rarer than the Ingo.

What's good With 127 film available from specialist dealers, the Ingo is very usable.

What's bad Barn doors mechanism is delicate, bellows might leak light.



Folded, the Ingo is easily pocketable



On the back, the twin red windows that facilitate the 16-on-127 format

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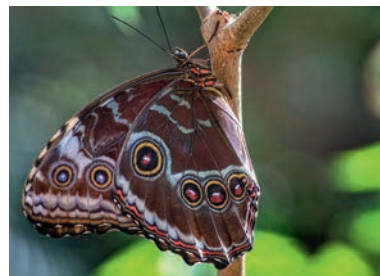
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Meet the GuruShots

AP showcases the best macro and street images by GuruShots members

MAGNIFICENT
MACRO



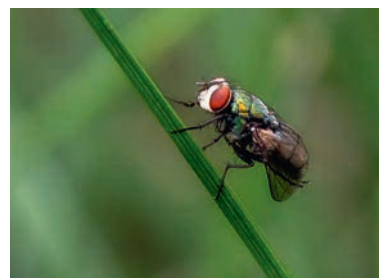
RP, Netherlands



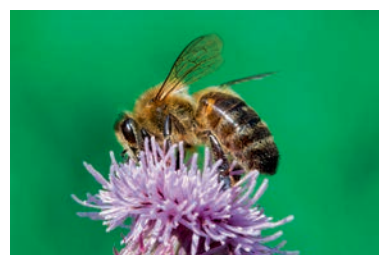
Michael Schmidt, Israel



Arman Sarda, India



Suave, United States



Roy Egloff, Switzerland

winners

GuruShots, the organisers of the world's greatest photography games and communities, recently gave its users two challenges – to send in their best images on the theme of Magnificent Macro (see left page) and on the theme of Street Photography (see below). Amateur Photographer is now pleased to publish the eight highest-ranked pictures in both themes. See the Top 500 images at amateurphotographer.com. Visit gurushots.com

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY



Joana Barroso, Portugal



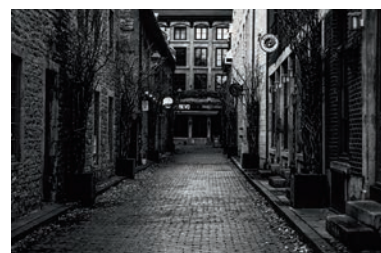
Pamela Hodder, Canada



Nikolay Tatarchuk, Israel



Kenneth Falkenberg, Denmark



Deborah SquierBernst, Canada



Josefco Cobo, Spain



Luca Sharabidze, United States



Michael Gordon, Israel

Emerging Talent

Muhammad

Amdad Hossain

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Muhammad's long-term photojournalism projects explore climate change, environmental crisis, and human resilience. He shares about his ongoing body of work Flood Crisis and how he started in photography with **Jessica Miller...**

When and why did you start taking photographs?

I started taking photographs in 2017, when I first bought a camera and began by capturing simple moments of my family and everyday life. Over time, I connected with a photography community on Facebook, which deeply inspired me. Through that interaction, I realised photography could be more than just personal memories—it could also be a powerful way to document real stories.

Which genre do you tend to work mostly in?

I mainly work in travel and photojournalism. My approach combines documenting real-life events with a deeper exploration of place, people, and culture. I try to present stories with honesty, context, and emotional depth.

What draws you towards your favoured genre?

Travel allows me to reach different places and communities, while photojournalism gives me the purpose to document their realities with honesty.

Tell us a little bit more about your photographic training?

I studied Political Science at the National University of Bangladesh, which helped me understand social

structures and human realities. My photography practice itself is largely self-taught, developed through continuous fieldwork, observation, and long-term engagement with communities.

Alongside this, I received professional training at Counter Foto – A Center for Visual Arts in Bangladesh, later had mentorship

support from Agence France-Presse (AFP) and was selected for the Foundry Photojournalism Workshop 2026, organized by The VII Foundation and PhotoWings.

Tell us a bit more about your recent work?

My work mainly focuses on long-term documentary

Below: A woman washes household items in floodwater in front of her home in Jhenaigati upazila, Sherpur district, Bangladesh, on October 6, 2024.





projects around climate change, environmental crisis, and human resilience, particularly in Bangladesh. One of my ongoing bodies of work, Flood Crisis, documents the recurring floods that displace millions of people every year. Through this project, I explore themes of survival, loss, and the quiet strength of communities living with water as a constant reality.

What kind of reaction has it received?

The work has received strong international recognition through exhibitions, awards, and publications across different countries. More importantly, it has created emotional connections with audiences. Many people respond to the human stories behind the

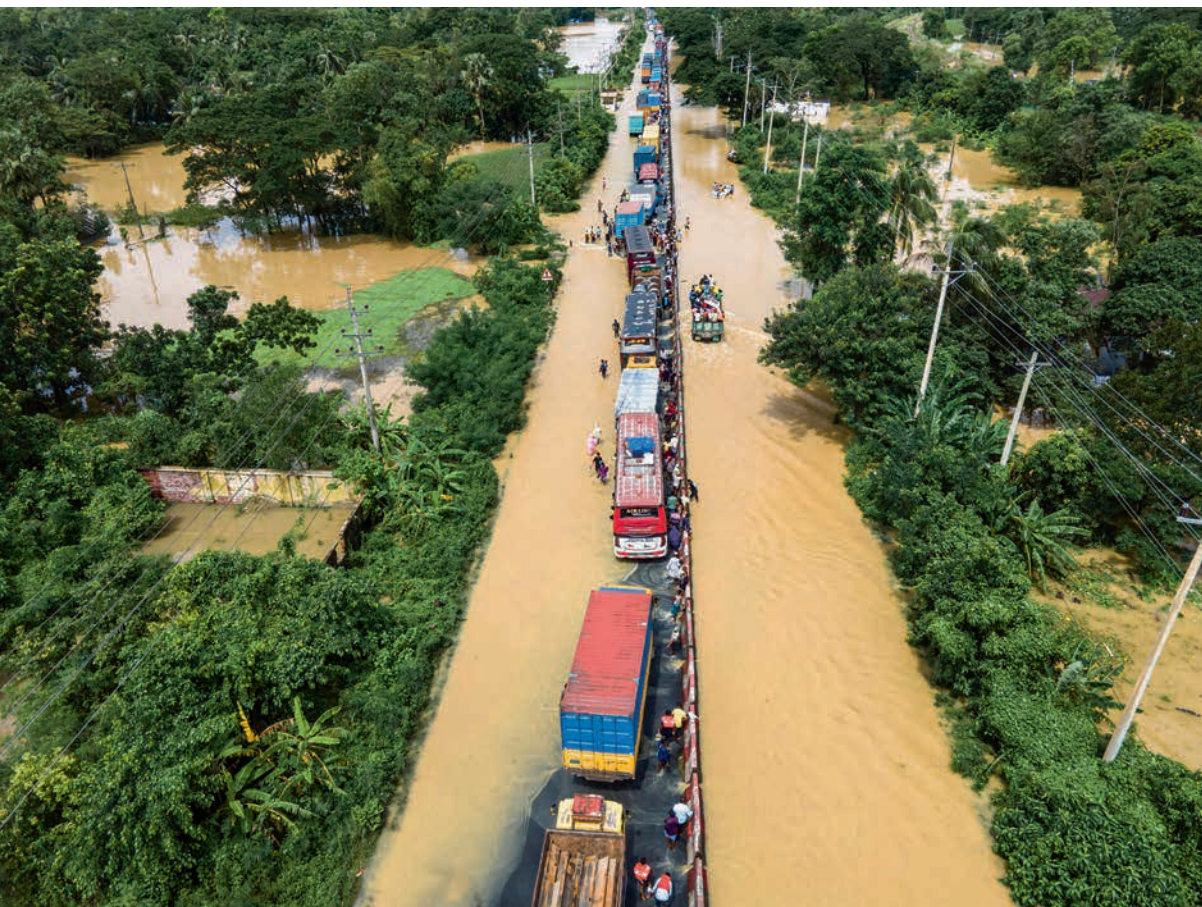
Above: An elderly couple stands in front of their home surrounded by knee-deep floodwater in Jhenaigati Upazila, Sherpur district, Bangladesh, on October 6, 2024.

Right: An elderly man walks through floodwater carrying a water container after a nearby tube well stopped functioning during floods in Satkania, Chattogram district, Bangladesh, on August 9, 2023.





Above: Farmers harvest paddy from partially flooded fields after floodwaters damaged large areas of cropland in Sunamganj, Bangladesh, on May 16, 2022. Using a small wooden boat to collect the cut rice, they continue harvesting what remains of the crop after weeks of flooding submerged farmland and disrupted rural livelihoods.



Left: An aerial view shows traffic moving slowly along the flooded Dhaka–Chattogram highway in Feni district, Bangladesh, on August 22, 2024, after flash floods disrupted transportation.

Right: A fruit vendor waits for customers while sitting on stacked plastic crates to avoid floodwater in Chattogram city, Bangladesh, on August 5, 2023.

▶ images, especially the resilience of communities facing constant environmental challenges. It has also helped bring more attention to the realities of climate vulnerability in Bangladesh on a global level.

What has been your biggest photographic obstacle to date?

One of my biggest challenges has been working in disaster-affected and remote areas, especially during floods. Access is often difficult, and conditions can be physically and mentally demanding. At the same time, I try to maintain an ethical approach. Building trust with people and telling their stories with respect and honesty. Balancing these realities while continuing long-term projects has been one of the most challenging parts of my photography journey.

Who are your biggest influences?

The people I photograph. Their resilience and everyday realities inspire my work the most.

What equipment do you use?

I use a Nikon Z6 III and a Canon EOS 5D Mark II, mainly with



24–120mm, 24–105mm and 35mm lenses. I also work with a DJI Mavic drone for aerial documentation.

What would be your dream equipment to work with?

I believe storytelling matters more than equipment, but I'd love to explore medium format cameras in the future for their detail and depth, especially for long-term documentary work.

Above: A sick woman sits inside a partially submerged house during severe flooding in Jatrapur Union, Kurigram district, Bangladesh, on June 21, 2022.

What has been the highlight of your photography career so far?

One of the biggest highlights for me was being invited to London, UK for a fully funded trip to attend the Gallery Season 5 exhibition ceremony. It was a significant moment to see my work presented internationally and to connect with the global photography community.

What are your hopes for your photography career in the future?

I hope to continue long-term documentary work on climate change and human resilience, with the goal of creating a solo exhibition and publishing a book from my projects, while reaching a wider global audience.

Do you have a dream assignment?

A long-term documentary assignment covering climate-affected communities across South Asia, focusing on how people adapt and survive in changing environments.

What piece of advice would you give to other aspiring photographers?

Stay honest to your story and be patient. Focus on real experiences, build connections with people, and keep working consistently. Strong storytelling takes time.

AP

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STAR LETTER

From hunter to fisher

AP's recent engaging interview with street photographers Sean Tucker and Joshua K Jackson (5th May issue) left me reflecting on my own approach to street photography. I initially identified far more with the hunter street photography method of Jackson. As one who is naturally restless, I strongly related to the excitement he feels reacting to those "unscripted moments", and how he describes constantly moving around in search of the right subject.

However, on further reading, it occurred to me that perhaps I had actually been having more success with Tucker's fisher approach. A look at my Lightroom catalogue confirmed this. Of all my street photographs, the vast majority of the keepers had been shot when, tired of pacing the streets, I'd actually paused a while, composed the scene, assessed exposure, and

waited patiently for the right individual to complete the image.

Logically it makes sense, as a good photograph is essentially composed of three elements: composition, good light, and a strong subject. The hunter approach often involves a compromise on the first two for those of us who lack the reactions and experience of Jackson. True, as a fisher convert I may have to compromise a little on subject matter, potentially missing out on that spontaneous act or quirky individual, but personally I am now finding this method is reaping greater rewards - and saving some shoe leather! Thanks again for the inspiration, AP. **Barry Moore**

It would be interesting to know whether our street-shooting readers identify as hunters or fishers. Do write in and let us know.



Jacques Raymond has ordered a Fujifilm GFX100RF

years, mostly in privately owned, public access buildings. Debating with security won't get you anywhere, it's management policy. I've also occasionally been confronted on the street by people who think I took a photo of them when I did not.

I started using a Ricoh GR-3 with some success. It is small enough not to attract attention while offering a surprisingly good IQ. But it does not offer the controls of a full-frame ILC or DSLR that I am used to. Last weekend I ordered a Fujifilm GFX100RF. An acquaintance is using one under the radar. His images are just superb and best of all, many non-photographers think it is a film camera.

Jacques Raymond

the photographic calendar produced at The Bell Inn, Purleigh. Recently the owner (Kirsten Webb) expressed a desire to replicate the Beaton portrait of Vivian Leigh emerging through a cut in a sheet of white paper. So together with Martin we set up the large sheet of paper and lighting and shot several images of Kirsten leaning through the cut in the paper. I shot in monochrome using my Leica Q2M, and the results were pleasing. Your Black and White edition was so good it has triggered me to attach one of the shots I took. **Brian Oliver**

This is a great example of how classic old photos can provide inspiration for our own photography. While not a direct copy of Beaton's famous portrait you have adapted the cut background device and made it your own.

Recreating a classic

You may recall the excellent article you did on

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Top lady

While there were predictably no surprises among the top choices in the listing of 'Favourite Photographers', AP 30 June, the one standout for me was the fifth placed and top lady, Vivian Maier. If ever there were a case of true undercover talent among many greatly publicised names, she clearly takes top prize.

Her whole approach, her style and her sheer ability

to capture decisive moments, mark her as one of the people who will inspire other generations to strive for such impactful photography. The simplicity of her methods, her use of her beloved Rolleiflex camera, and her natural powers of observation, gave her a very strong working basis. How well that worked is plainly obvious in her results. The sadness rests in the knowledge of the masses

of hidden negatives never printed and the countless rolls of still unprocessed film which are her valuable legacy. They must hide many gems, with few chances of being seen.

Simon Foxley

Street camera

Greetings from Calgary, Alberta! "Big cameras mean you're professional" is something I've run into several times in recent





Andrew Knight's Pre-Raphaelite inspired nude study. Should nudes be banned from APOY?

Nudity policy

I have been a long-time user of Photocrowd and at my peak I was 25th in competition contributors. But I have cancelled my subscription because of the new censorship of nudes, referenced in the recent letter by John Duder (28 July issue).

I appreciate that nudes are not for all ages and cultural backgrounds, but feel this is a lazy response to the issue. They could easily set age limits or preferences to images to prevent certain groups from seeing them. I strive to produce thoughtful, non-smutty images in the Pre-Raphaelite style, such as my interpretation of the Three Fates (shown above). The removal of this genre of art stinks, and I fear for free expression.

As I have already prepaid additional photos for APOY I am still on Photocrowd, but as soon as it's over I'm gone. **Andrew Knight**

I would be interested to hear other readers' views on publishing fine art nude photography. Does it offend you? Would you like to see more of it? Do write in and tell us.

Print vs digital

Gavin Stoker's article mentioned the tactile pleasures of film photography and vinyl record playing. But there is a third such delight which went without mention – the turning of a page, which cannot be matched by mouse-clicks, scrolls or swipes. The ability to flip from item to item, reading some now and some later, and some over and over again, all without batteries, is a joy. Gavin gave some

fascinating statistics about analogue camera and vinyl use, and it made me wonder what percentage of readers enjoy AP on paper versus a screen?

Andrew Thompson

Print readers were once the vast majority, Andrew, but in recent years it has become more evenly split as magazines have become harder to find in shops and iPads become more ubiquitous. Among UK subscribers print is still more popular, but our international audience is almost entirely digital, for obvious reasons. For those readers who don't yet subscribe to either print or digital versions check out our offers on page 80.

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NEXT ISSUE...



Nice Zeiss, baby!

A celebration of the centenary of the Ikon-ic German camera and lens maker

Tamron 16-30mm F/2.8

This fast, wide-angle zoom is a versatile, affordable option. How does it perform?



Natural beauty

Courtney Victoria's engaging nature photography has won her over 82k YouTube subscribers

The original workshop

Paul Hill created the first residential photography workshop 50 years ago. He remembers the names who came

When the night comes

Brian Lloyd Duckett presents a guide to photographing after the sun sets



On sale Tuesday 8 Sept.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Dear reader,

Welcome to

the new and improved **Amateur Photographer**! As you can see, we have a brand-new look (with 100 pages in every single issue), new content and more of the features that you love. From the world's best photographers to the newest kit, plus valuable insights and stories from the masters of the craft, we have everything photography related covered in a new and improved fortnightly package.

Best wishes,

Nigel Atherton

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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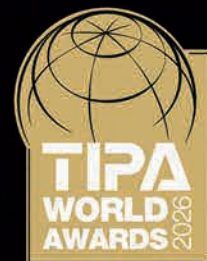
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A round-up of the AP testing team's favourite and most highly rated kit, including both cameras and all kinds of accessories, across a wide range of price points

OM System Tough TG-7

● £449 ● explore.omsystem.com

This latest model in a long line of class-leading rugged cameras is waterproof to 15m, shockproof against a 2.1m drop, crushproof and freezeproof. The 25-100mm equivalent lens is paired with a 12MP sensor, with in-body stabilisation to combat shake. Viewing is via a 3in LCD. The TG-7 is also one of the few cameras of its type that can record raw files.

★★★★★ Reviewed 2 Apr 2024



Ricoh GR IV

● £1,199 ● ricoh.gr.eu

A favourite of street photographers, the GR IV combines a 26MP APS-C sensor and a sharp 28mm equivalent f/2.8 lens in a slim, pocketable body. It offers sensitivities up to ISO 204,800 and 4fps shooting, with in-body image stabilisation helping to keep images sharp. Viewing is via a fixed 3in rear LCD, while battery life and controls are improved compared to its predecessor.

★★★★★

Reviewed
23 Sep
2025



Canon PowerShot G7X Mark III

● £819 ● canon.co.uk

This lovely little pocket camera provides a good range of features for both photography and video. You get a 20MP 1in sensor, 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 zoom lens, 4K 30p video recording, and a tilting rear screen. It's ideal for those who'd like more advanced controls than on a smartphone.

★★★★★ Reviewed 28 Sep 2019



Sony RX10 V

● £2,199 ● sony.co.uk

With a huge 24-600mm equivalent zoom lens in front of its 20MP 1in sensor, this high-end bridge camera can tackle almost any kind of subject. Its autofocus is excellent, recognising people, animals and vehicles, and it can shoot as fast as 30fps. It handles really well, too. It's expensive, but there's nothing else quite like it.

★★★★★

Reviewed
11 Aug 2026



Fujifilm X100VI

● £1,599 ● fujifilm-x.com

The sixth version of Fujifilm's charismatic rangefinder-styled compact boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor in front of its fixed 23mm f/2 lens. It also gains in-body stabilisation while barely increasing in size. Traditional analogue control dials are joined by a unique hybrid optical/electronic viewfinder and a tilting touchscreen on the back. It's a truly fabulous camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed
9 Apr 2024



Fujifilm GFX100RF

● £4,499 ● fujifilm-x.com

It's anything but cheap, but the world's first medium-format compact camera offers an unparalleled combination of image quality and portability. It combines a 100MP sensor with a 28mm equivalent f/4 lens, while viewing is via an electronic viewfinder or a tilting touchscreen. A unique aspect ratio dial encourages a creative approach to composition.

★★★★★

Reviewed
13 May
2025



Canon EOS R50

● £859 with 18-45mm lens ● [canon.co.uk](https://www.canon.co.uk)

With the EOS R50, Canon has fitted some impressive technology into a compact and lightweight body. It boasts highly capable subject recognition autofocus coupled with rapid continuous shooting. Image quality is very pleasing too, with attractive files direct from the camera. It also works well with EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★★

Reviewed
6 Jun 2023



Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark IV

● £749 with 14-42mm ● [explore.omsystem.com](https://www.explore.omsystem.com)

With a charismatic retro design, fine handling, highly effective in-body stabilisation and attractive JPEG output, Olympus has made a camera that's more pleasant to use than its entry-level competitors. Its 20MP sensor delivers good results up to ISO 3200 at least, and its tilting screen can be set to face forwards beneath the camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed
26 Sep 2020



Fujifilm X-T5

● £1,599 body only ● [fujifilm-x.com](https://www.fujifilm-x.com)

Fujifilm's latest X-T model is a great choice for serious enthusiast photographers. It boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor housed in a retro-styled body covered with traditional analogue control dials. Subject-detection autofocus, in-body stabilisation and Fujifilm's lovely colour modes round off an extremely desirable package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
3 Jan 2023



Nikon Z50II

● £999 with 16-50mm lens ● [nikon.co.uk](https://www.nikon.co.uk)

Nikon's Z50II is a very capable camera that offers the most advanced feature set in its class. It handles really well too, while giving excellent output in both JPEG and raw. Some users might be put off by its 20MP resolution, but in reality this counts as little practical difference to 24MP or 26MP cameras. With Nikon now offering a decent range of DX lenses, it's a great option as a first serious camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed
25 Feb 2025



Fujifilm X-T30 III

● £999 with 13-33mm lens ● [fujifilm-x.com](https://www.fujifilm-x.com)

This lovely little camera provides excellent performance, while preserving the charm of the X-series. It's a great all-rounder, and handles exceptionally well thanks to an intuitive interface based around traditional analogue dials. Image quality is superb in both raw and JPEG, with Fujifilm's peerless Film Simulation colour modes accessed via their own dial.

★★★★★

Reviewed
10 Feb 2026



Panasonic Lumix GH7

● £1,699 body only ● [panasonic.com/uk](https://www.panasonic.com/uk)

Panasonic's flagship Micro Four Thirds camera is aimed at videographers, but holds its own when capturing stills as well. Its 25MP sensor delivers plenty of detail, while enabling 5.7K recording at 60fps, or 4K at 120fps. Autofocus is much improved over the firm's older models, too. Pro-spec video functionality and effective in-body stabilisation round off a fine package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
5 Nov 2024



Fujifilm X-S20

● £1,149 body only ● [fujifilm-x.com](https://www.fujifilm-x.com)

Styled like a mini DSLR, the X-S20 uses electronic dials for changing exposure settings, as opposed to the X-T series' analogue controls. But you still get Fujifilm's signature fine image quality, along with in-body image stabilisation. It also boasts an array of advanced video features, making it a great choice for vloggers and photographers alike.

★★★★★

Reviewed
25 Jul 2023



Panasonic Lumix G9 II

● £1,699 body only ● [panasonic.com/uk](https://www.panasonic.com/uk)

Panasonic's high-end Micro Four Thirds camera provides an impressive set of features. It can shoot 25MP still images at up to 75fps, and 5.7K video at 60fps. You get an excellent control layout, incredibly effective in-body stabilisation, and very capable subject recognition autofocus. A good range of small, excellent Leica-branded lenses is available to match.

★★★★★

Reviewed
31 Oct 2023



OM System OM-1 Mark II

● £2,049 body only ● [explore.omsystem.com](https://www.explore.omsystem.com)

Updated version of this high-speed powerhouse gains some handy new features. It's capable of shooting at 120fps with focus fixed, or 50fps with AF, but now with double the buffer for extended bursts. AI subject detection recognises vehicles, animals and birds. It also boasts IP53-rated weather-sealing and includes class-leading stabilisation.

★★★★★

Review
12 Mar 2024



Nikon Z5II

● £1,379 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](https://www.nikon.co.uk)

Nikon's entry-level full-frame model redefines what we can expect from a camera at this price point. It's packed full of features, including subject-detection autofocus, in-body image stabilisation and a fully articulating screen, while its 24MP sensor delivers excellent image quality. It's an excellent all-rounder at a tempting price.

★★★★★

Reviewed
17 Jun 2025



Nikon Z6III

● £1,959 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](https://www.nikon.co.uk)

This mid-range model is one of the finest all-round cameras for enthusiast users on the market. It marries excellent autofocus and super-fast continuous shooting with solid build quality and a refined control layout. The viewfinder is particularly bright, and joined by a fully articulated touchscreen. It's at least a match for any other camera in its class.

★★★★★

Reviewed
8 Oct 2024



Sony Alpha 7 V

● £2,799 body only ● [sony.co.uk](https://www.sony.co.uk)

Sony's enthusiast-focused full-frame model employs a new 33MP partially-stacked sensor. Not only does it deliver excellent image quality, but it can also shoot at 30fps. Its subject-detection AF can recognise birds, humans, animals and vehicles. A large, clear viewfinder and fully articulated touchscreen round off the package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
3 Mar 2026



Nikon Z9

● £5,299 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](https://www.nikon.co.uk)

Without doubt Nikon's finest camera yet, the Z9 combines high resolution, breathtaking speed, subject-recognition autofocus and pro-level build. It's capable of shooting 45.7MP raw files at 20fps for 1,000 frames, and 11MP JPEGs at 120fps. It can also record 8K video. With its superb viewfinder and tilting rear screen, it's probably the most capable camera around.

★★★★★

Reviewed
22 Mar 2022



Nikon D780

● £1,999 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](https://www.nikon.co.uk)

This highly accomplished 24MP full-frame model shows that there's life in the DSLR yet. It's superbly built with extensive weather-sealing, handles brilliantly, and gives excellent results in any conditions. It'll provide top-level service to photographers who want to keep using their F-mount lenses and still prefer an optical viewfinder.

★★★★★

Reviewed
4 Apr 2020



Canon EOS R6 Mark III

● £2,799 body only ● [canon.co.uk](https://www.canon.co.uk)

Based around a 32.5MP full-frame sensor, this brilliant all-rounder will do almost anything you might ask it to. It combines reliable subject-detection AF, rapid continuous shooting, and effective image stabilisation in a body that handles well and gives great results. It also works well with adapted EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★★

Reviewed
27 Jan 2026



Sony Alpha 7R VI

● £4,399 body only ● [sony.co.uk](https://www.sony.co.uk)

If you want the very best image quality available from a full-frame camera, this is it. Its 66.8MP partially stacked sensor combines superb resolution, low noise and immense dynamic range, while supporting shooting at up to 30fps and 8K video recording. It also boasts a huge, blackout-free viewfinder and a new long-lasting battery housed in its large, comfortable handgrip.

★★★★★

Reviewed
30 Jun 2026



Leica M11 Monochrom

● £8,300 body only ● [uk.leica-camera.com](https://www.uk.leica-camera.com)

Within its own specialist niche, this monochrome-only manual-focus rangefinder is almost perfect. Its build quality is stunning, and the pared-back design allows you to immerse yourself completely in the process of taking pictures. Most importantly, the 60.1MP sensor produces fantastic results, reaching a new pinnacle in black & white image quality.

★★★★★

Reviewed
16 May 2023



Fujifilm GFX100 II

● £6,999 body only ● [fujifilm-x.com](https://www.fujifilm-x.com)

Fujifilm's super-high resolution medium-format camera places an updated 102MP sensor in a pro-spec modular body. Subject-detection autofocus is on board for animals, birds and vehicles, while in-body image stabilisation helps keep handheld shots sharp. It's the ideal camera for serious photographers who demand the ultimate in image quality.

★★★★★

Reviewed
21 Nov 2023



Tenba DNA 9 Slim Messenger

● £110 ● uk.tenba.com

If you'd like a small shoulder bag to carry a camera and a couple of lenses, this is among the best you'll find. Measuring 28cm wide by 20cm tall, it's well suited to holding a mirrorless camera or a compact DSLR. The quality of materials and construction is excellent, and there are plenty of handy pockets for organising accessories.

★★★★★ Reviewed 26 Apr 2022



Vanguard Veo Metro B25L

● £185 ● vanguardworld.co.uk

This good-looking backpack will hold a camera and up to 4 lenses, with separate sections for a 16in laptop and personal items. It offers a good level of protection for your kit, while being packed full of useful pockets and clever design details. It's also comfortable to carry when full.

★★★★★

Reviewed
12 Aug 2025



Wandrd Prvke 21 V4

● £281 (photography bundle) ● eu.wandrd.com

Wandrd's compact backpack offers sleek style for everyday use. Durable and comfortable to carry, it provides access from the top, side and back. Different-sized camera cubes can be used for smaller or larger kits, or the bag can be used on its own. Dedicated sleeves hold a tablet and laptop.

★★★★★

Reviewed
23 Sep 2025



NiSi NM-180s Macro Rail

● £105 ● nisioptics.co.uk

One of the best macro focusing rails available right now, the NM-180s combines excellent quality build with super-smooth operation. It's easily capable of supporting a full-frame SLR while offering up to 130mm of travel, with a large knob facilitating fine adjustment. It also boasts extensive compatibility with the Arca Swiss quick release system, with a dovetail profile along its base and a rotating clamp on top.

★★★★★

Reviewed
24 Oct 2020



Cullmann Rondo 460M RB8.5

● £80 ● transcontinenta.co.uk

If you want a fully featured tripod kit on a budget, this is a great choice. Four-section aluminium legs provide a max height of 160cm, while packing down to 43.5cm. It's rated to support a 4kg load, weighs 1.46kg, and one leg can be combined with the centre column to form a monopod.

★★★★★

Reviewed
21 Mar 2020



Heipi W28S Travel Tripod

● £330 ● heipivision.com

This compact tripod employs a space-saving design, with a unique detachable 'three pillar' centre column that can also be used as a standalone table-top tripod. The ball head is impressively large and strong, too. It boasts lots of other neat features, while being well made and unusually stable. It's probably the best example of this kind of travel tripod.

★★★★★

Reviewed 2 Sep 2025



Benro Rhino 24C tripod with VX25 head

● £250 ● uk.benroeu.com

Benro has got pretty much everything right with this sturdy, well-designed tripod and head that'll support a substantial load. This four-section carbon fibre model offers a maximum height of almost 1.7m, while folding down to 49cm and weighing 1.74kg. It's easily capable of supporting a full-frame DSLR with a telephoto zoom. Quite simply, it's a fantastic kit for the money.

★★★★★

Reviewed
28 Nov 2020



NiSi True Color ND-Vario 1-5 stops

● £89-£179 ● nisioptics.co.uk

This high-quality variable neutral density filter is ideal for regulating the amount of light entering your lens, without introducing any colour cast. It's optically excellent, boasts an oil and water-repellent coating, and includes a handy and accurate density scale. It's available in sizes from 40.5mm to 95mm.

★★★★★

Reviewed
24 May 2022



Benro SupaDupa Pro MSDPL46C

● £189 ● uk.benroeu.com

It may have a ridiculous name, but this five-section carbon fibre model might just be the best monopod we've ever tested. One clip leg lock provides easy length adjustment, while the lower twist locks are waterproof. On the top there's a clever bowl head with an Arca-compatible clamp. It's a great choice for those who regularly shoot with large telephotos.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 Apr 2021



Godox iFlash iT30Pro

● £67 ● godox.com

This tiny flash unit from Godox is both portable and affordable, while offering a comprehensive feature set. There's a choice of TTL auto or manual power setting, and the built-in Li-ion battery conveniently charges via USB. It can even work as a 2.4GHz wireless trigger for the firm's larger flash units.

An optional riser/bounce adapter adds further appeal.

★★★★★

Reviewed
11 Nov 2025



Hollyland Lark M2S

● £149 ● hollyland.com

This excellent wireless mic stands out due to the clever design of the transmitter units. Only the tiny microphone section is visible, with the rest of the electronics hidden away behind the subject's clothing. The kit comes with one transmitter that plugs into the USB-C port of a smartphone or computer, and another that's designed to be used on your camera. Sound quality is really very good.

★★★★★

Reviewed
1 July 2025



Hahnel ProCube 3

● £80 ● hahnel.ie

This USB-C-powered dual battery charger employs interchangeable plates that each accept a pair of batteries. An LCD display shows progress, while a 2A USB-A output allows phones or tablets to be charged once the camera batteries are full.

Versions are available for all the main camera brands.

★★★★★

Reviewed
4 Mar 2025



Datacolor SpyderPro

● £249 ● datacolor.com

If you like to post-process your images, you need to be sure that your monitor is showing colours accurately. Datacolor has designed the Spyder to calibrate your display faster than ever before, with the process taking about two minutes. For most photographers, the Pro version makes most sense.

★★★★★

Reviewed 25 Jul 2023



Rotolight NEO 3 Pro

● £389 ● rotolight.com

LED lighting technology has advanced in leaps and bounds over recent years. Rotolight's compact on-camera NEO 3 Pro offers a unique feature set thanks to its full colour RGBWW LEDs, with the ability to provide either continuous light or flash in 16.7 million colours. This firm has also programmed in the characteristics of 2,500 colour filters, and it works brilliantly. Power is provided by an NP-F type Li-ion battery.

★★★★★

Reviewed
15 Nov 2022



Peak Design Form Rope strap

● £45 ● peakdesign.com

This minimalist rope strap is, like all Peak Design's products, expensive compared to similar-looking alternatives. But it's extremely well made from high-quality materials, and it works brilliantly. It comes in a choice of three lengths and three colours, and is perfect for carrying small mirrorless or compact cameras.

★★★★★

Reviewed
13 Jan 2026



Kase Wolverine K9 100mm Entry-Level Kit

● £399 ● kasefilters.com

With this top-quality filter system, Kase has carefully rethought every component. The slimline, low-profile holder benefits from extensive light-sealing, while the 82mm polariser clips into place magnetically; it's also easy to adjust from behind the camera. All of the filters use top-quality glass, and everything fits together into a single case. The result is a top-quality set-up that's easy to use and delivers superb results.

★★★★★

Reviewed
5 Dec 2020



Intrepid Compact Enlarger

● £300 ● intrepidcamera.co.uk

For film photography enthusiasts wishing to make prints at home, this compact and affordable unit includes lots of handy features. Based around full-colour LED technology, it supports both mono and colour printing. It's perfect for those who don't have space for a permanent darkroom.

★★★★★

Reviewed
17 Jul 2021



Fujifilm Instax Link WIDE

● £140 ● instax.co.uk

This brilliant portable printer produces great-looking 6x10cm prints on Fujifilm's Instax Wide film. It connects to your smartphone via Bluetooth and is controlled using an attractively designed and intuitive app. Powered by a built-in rechargeable battery and available in white or grey, it'll slip easily into a bag.

★★★★★

Reviewed
25 Jan 2022



"The exact product I was searching for, in stock, good price and very carefully packaged up with super fast delivery. Excellent service!"



"Very informative the guys really know their stuff. Nothing was too much trouble."



"Great service as always. My go-to store for all my camera needs."



"This is how internet shopping should be!"



"Highly recommend popping in if you need anything camera related, old or new."



"Never seen a camera shop with so many varieties of camera from film to digital, clearly shows a lot of passion and hard work!"



"Quick delivery and great products!"



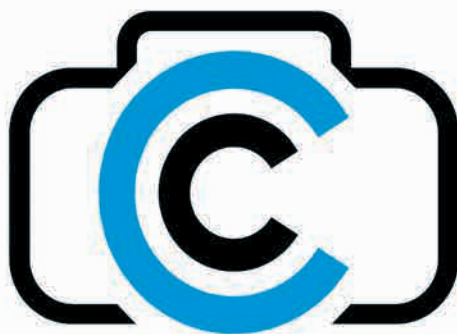
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911979	Sigma 35mm f1.4 DG HSM Art Lens (Sony FE)	£329
910684	Sigma 50mm f1.4 DG HSM Art Lens (Sony FE)	£450
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911385	Manfrotto 128LP Video Head	£49
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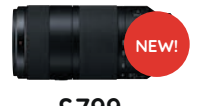
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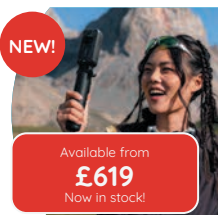


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Final Analysis

Peter Dench considers...

HONEYBALL 2026 by Barley Nimmo

Nostalgia can be tricky. It can tether you to a past that is no longer relevant or propel you back to a place that has become rose-tinted over time. As I've lurched into my mid-fifties, while I'm adamant that a photograph should still be an accurate representation of a truth, I've become more interested in whether it captures how the past felt. This photograph from the book *HONEYBALL* by Barley Nimmo, arguably does precisely that.

Nothing much appears to be happening yet everything is happening in my head. The Club House font, mesh bag full of footies, low sun and black and white leather boots are all nostalgic triggers.

Nimmo's book delivers a fictional story of a women's football team founded after the Football Association lifted its ban on women's football in 1971. The fiction feels familiar despite depicting a history that never quite existed. Nimmo is creating an emotional truth over a strictly documentary one.

This photograph occupies that sweet spot in the brain where nostalgia and fantasy overlap. The colour, styling and location tangle memory and

imagination resulting in an image that could've been made yesterday, or half a century ago.

That is perhaps why it resonates so deeply with me. As a teenager in the early 1980s, football went beyond the 22 players on the pitch. It came with its own uniform, codes and hierarchies.

My sartorial aspirations didn't come from the pages of glossy magazines or the Kays catalogue but directly from the football terraces. Fila, Sergio Tacchini and Ellesse were the attire of Gods. Adidas footwear was non-negotiable. Sadly I couldn't afford most of it which only made it worse. I'd have to make do with Puma, Pierre Cardin or Kappa (or Krappa as the sartorial elite preferred to call it). I'd hunt through the charity shops for that illusive and illustious, lemon or lime Lacoste.

Eventually, the clothes you wore became as important as the football itself. That little crocodile or 'semi-palla' motif was both armour and passport. It declared who you were and more importantly, that you belonged.

Nimmo understands the rituals that build identity long before kick off. He recognises that football culture largely happens away from the



pitch. It exists in the cafes, telephone conversations, friendships and flirting on bus and train journeys. The match is only part of the story. He acknowledges that football operates in the same way for women.

A good photograph can be historically

relevant. A great photograph can make you nostalgic for a time you never lived through. Somehow this image manages both. It is emotionally authentic and invites us into a footballing past that is partly imagined.

For anyone who has pulled on and zipped up

a velour Fila tracksuit top or cracked the dried mud of a pair of football boots before tenderly dabbing on the Dubbin, this image feels strangely close to reality.

AP

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Peter Dench is a photographer, writer, curator and presenter based in London. He is one of the co-curators of Photo North and has been exhibited dozens of times. He has published a number of books including *The Dench Dozen: Great Britons of Photography Vol 1*; *Dench Does Dallas*; *The British Abroad*; *A&E: Alcohol & England* and *England Uncensored*. Visit peterdench.com

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