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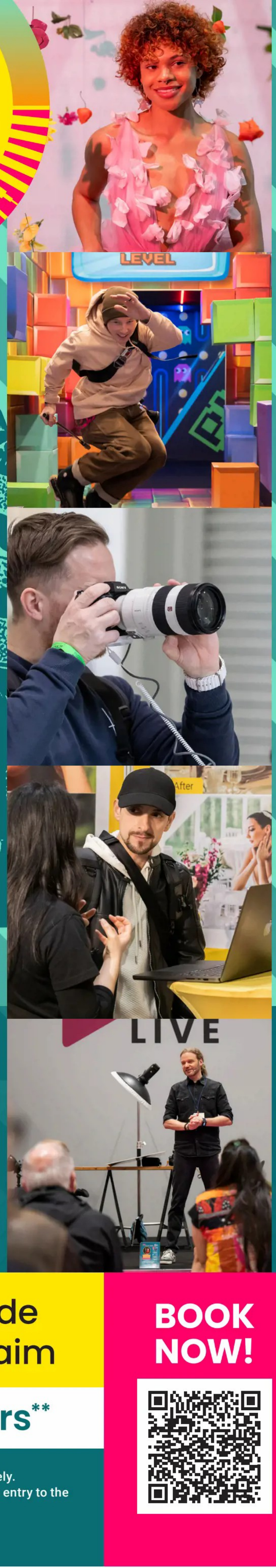
CAMERACRAFT

Photograph by Shirley Kilpatrick

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**Professional photographers, videographers, content creators and image-making industry representatives can apply for FREE entry to the show. All applications must be made before midnight on 13 March 2026 and will be verified against specific criteria.

It's a long time since I put one of Shirley's photographs on a magazine cover – when I did, it was more often than not for Photoworld, the quarterly which come after the end of Minolta Image, which she co-edited over the thirty years we published the Minolta Club of Great Britain's title. There was normally a reason, with new cameras and lenses to cover. This time there's a reason too. I was looking for a vertical landscape shot which would be a natural fit for the ReflectionFrame reviewed on page 39 in terms of colours and gradation and this view of St Mary's Loch, taken twenty years ago in February, came up in my search.

I catalogue all our images and other documents using an excellent independently developed application called Neofinder. It will use filenames, metadata, dates, and keywords but can't search by image qualities such as blue sky or sunny. With AI search utilities gaining that kind of power, I guess it will come. In its present form it's highly economical with memory and disk space and brings up selections from the 30,000 or so photographs on the SSD where my local orginals of pictures filed with Alamy reside.

Having selected the shot to test in the e-paper frame, I noted that is was taken on the consumer version of the first generation Minolta DSLRs, the Dynax 5D. That's a 6 megapixel CCD sensor with the expected anti-aliasing filter, and when it was first filed with Alamy, it was necessary to upscale to at least 17 megapixels. While the image had been good enough for an A2 print, it looked upscaled to me. So for the cover I ran it through the latest *Adobe Camera Raw* 'Super Resolution' option under the Detail tab, while turning the sharpening down a touch. It is amazing how details hard to see in the original become clear with this process.

Those old shots on Alamy still sell. They are just as likely to get decent three-figure fees as the latest 60 megapixel (or larger!) captures, which in turn are just as liable to be licensed for three or four dollars. I just wish that all our raw shots from 2004 onwards could have their image files replaced on Alamy's servers by Super Resolution versions made from the raw files. Everything can be enhanced – better colours, better contrast curve, much better retouching if needed, the best noise reduction we've ever had, and upscaling with transformative rather than destructive results. I've checked 2003 Canon EOS 300D raws taken to 25MP via ACR and even these work really well.

But Alamy has no mechanism to allow this and retain all the keywords, captions, property and model release details and so on short of asking for a download of metadata and then attempting to link this to a new image file. It's something which the discontinued *MediaPro* software can actually do in theory as it can export annotations from a folder of work, then import them to identically named new files.

As my (our) earliest useful digitally captured pictures will soon be 25 years old, and those with accessible raw files over 20, it's a wonder to me that so many still have currency for editorial and general stock use. I started shooting travel, landscape and general human interest stock properly in 1975 and I know for sure that almost NO pictures of this type taken in 1950 would ever have been of value in a picture library. Fine art, historic processes, hard news, showbiz and music history, personalities and some lifestyle and fashion always survive the years if only because they become period pieces.

Everyday work back then just *dated*. Old processes, old lenses, old look. It's not like that with images of the same relative vintage now. Or am I just seeing seeing everything with old eyes?

– David Kilpatrick *Email: editor@iconpublications.com*

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David Tymm, Nigel Thomas, Colin McPherson, Tom Hill, Gary Friedman, David Kilpatrick, Richard Kilpatrick.

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Cameracraft was published in print six times a year from March/April 2018 after dropping the *ƒ*2 from its title, added after merging the original *Cameracraft* (2012-2015) with *ƒ*2. Since May/June 2025 it has been published as a high resolution PDF edition for subscribers and magazine platforms, with a low resolution page-turn version available free. A small run of print copies is made, and subscribers are authorised to order digital printed copies (see page 17). Through previous titles *Freelance Photographer*, *Photon* and *PHOTOpro* it is the latest in a line of photographic magazines published from Kelso by David Kilpatrick since 1989.

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BACK ISSUES: because Maxwell Place is up for sale, most back issues have now been disposed of as they occupied a room. In future, though it takes more time than can be found now, a downloadable archive will be put on the website and print-on-demand copies enabled. .

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NEWS

Sigma 35mm ƒ1.4 DG II ART and 15mm ƒ1.4 DC Contemporary on the way





CLAIMING to be not only smaller and lighter but also even better in performance, the E or L mount new 35mm ƒ1.4 design is completely redesigned with 15-element, 12-group construction. By using new glass materials previously difficult to process, together with four high-precision aspherical elements and two SLD glass elements, the lens notably reduces axial chromatic aberration.

This suppresses colour fringing not only in the in-focus plane but also in out-of-focus areas, giving natural bokeh without green and magenta tints to background and foreground blur. The lens features an 11-blade rounded diaphragm, which maintains a round shape even when stopping down.

Newly developed AAC (Advanced Amorphous Coating) with a low-refractive-index amorphous layer reduces reflections responsible for ghosting and flare, delivering exceptionally clear, high-contrast image quality.

A floating focus system improves optical performance and enables the lens to be approximately 14% shorter and 20% lighter than Mk I. Sigma's dual HLA (High-response Linear Actuator) system drives its large and heavy focus group with high power and speed. The lens is equipped with an AFL button in two locations, which can be assigned to a range of functions, an aperture ring with a declick option and lock switch. It is designed to minimise focus breathing and has a dust- and splash-resistant structure and water- and oil-repellent coating. It comes with a dedicated petal-type hood.

For APS-C users, the 16mm ƒ1.4 CD DN is updated to a new 15mm ƒ1.4 DC Contemporary with many improvements similar to the new 35mm. It's also the smallest in this range, weighing only 220g – 50% lighter than the 16mm.

This is expected to be available on March 12th while the 35mm is due to arrive April 16th.

See: www.sigmauk.com

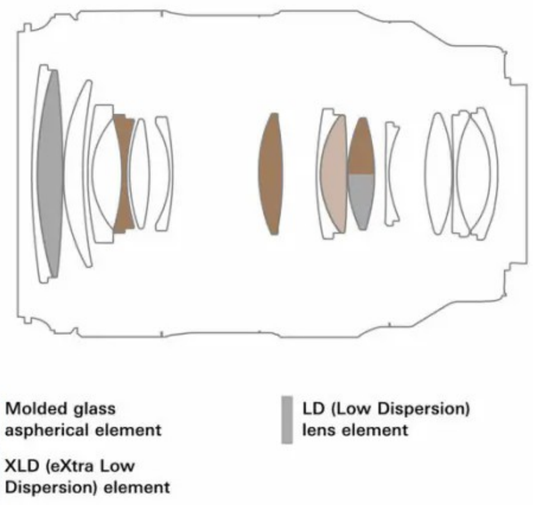
Tamron 35-100mm ƒ2.8 Di III FE and Z mount, and new Lens Utility functions



TAMRON's latest launch is the 35-100mm ƒ2.8 Di III VXD (Model A078), in full-frame Sony E and Nikon Z mount. At just 119.2mm long and 565g, is uses15 elements in 13 groups including XLD, LD and GM elements that suppress chromatic aberration and maintain high resolving power. The BBAR-G2 coating cuts ghosting and flare in backlit scenes. It has a moisture-resistant design with leak-resistant seals throughout the barrel. The front element is fluorine-coated to repel water and oil. The 67 mm filter thread is identical to most Tamron mirrorless zoom lenses. The VXD linear motor provides fast and precise AF to a minimum focus distance of 22 cm at the wide end.

Tamron now offers a range of 22 Sony fit lenses and 10 in Nikon Z. All use advanced features of the systems, such as Eye AF, Hybrid AF, and in-camera corrections for shading, distortion, and chromatic aberration.

The lens is compatible with Tamron Lens Utility 5.0 software and app, with Tamron Link for wireless lens control for iOS, Android, and PC/Mac operating systems. Tamron-LINK™



(Model TL-01) is a compact Bluetooth accessory that enables fully wireless remote control of compatible Tamron lenses from an iOS or Android smartphone. New features in Lens Utility 5.0 include the ability to set focus/iris markers and a focus ring stop point, adjust the focus and aperture rotation angle. Other new features include time-lapse with focus shift, astro focus lock with fine-tuning, and a dedicated black/red night mode for the entire app.

Available from March 26th the RRP, including VAT, is £799.99. The Tamron-LINK is £59.95.

See: www.tamron.co.uk

Westcott UK move

LUMESCA Group, owners of The Flash Centre and many other brands in colour management and studio support, has become the official exclusive distributor for Westcott, the leading US professional lighting brand known for light shapers and flash, within the UK and Germany with support for expansion in France.

See: www.lumesca.com

New Z 70-200 ƒ2.8

THE NIKKOR Z 70-200mm ƒ2.8 VR S II has redesigned S-Line optics, stronger IS, and best AF yet. Only 998g (362g lighter) and 12 mm shorter than Mk I, the balanced internal zoom keeps the centre of gravity consistent. Up to 6 stops of Synchro VR maximises stability with compatible Z cameras. The price is £2,999, available in March.

See: www.nikon.co.uk

New MFT partner

SHENZEN Sonida Digital Technology Co. Ltd is developing Micro Four Thirds–compliant products under the SONGDIAN brand through participation in the Micro Four Thirds Alliance, headed by OM-Systems and Panasonic. The Chinese company aims to accelerate product development and contribute to the expansion of the Micro Four Thirds ecosystem.

See: www.sonida.com/

Noctilux-M 35/1.2

LEICA has developed new precision aspherical glass moulding technology which has enabled a very compact new M-mount 35mm ƒ1.2 ASPH to be introduced. 415 g, 50mm long, the Noctilux-M uses 10 lenses in 5 groups, with 3 aspherical and a patented focusing mechanism to ensures high performance right down to the close range at 50cm. Cost? £7,999.

See: www.leica-camera.com

The Photography Show, NEC, March 14-17

THE PHOTOGRAPHY and Video Show 2026 is at Hall 5, National Exhibition Centre, B40 1NT, from **March 14th to 17th**. Standard entry is £18.95 per day. Free entry is offered for industry/ professionals, and students on 16th and 17th.

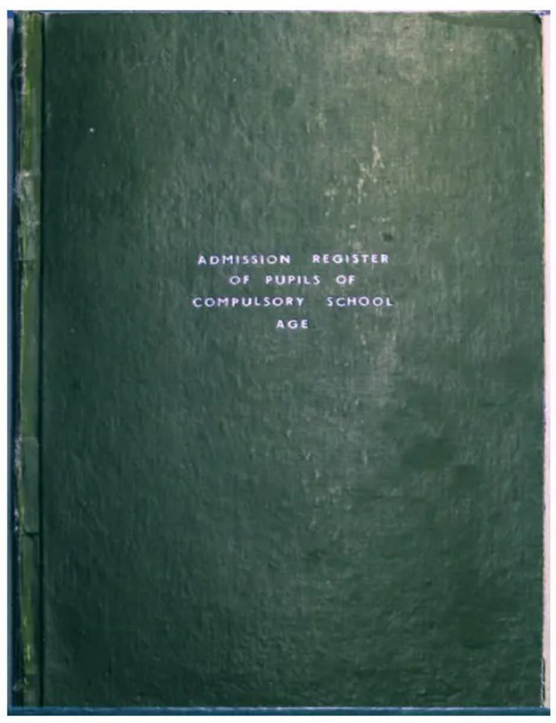


See: www.photographyshow.com/welcome/tickets



TOM HILL

Digging up the dirt to uncover past memories – a degree of photographic therapy?



Where to find your old classmates – a school register kept by the archives of the local education authority. How to find old memories – return to the site of trauma… a bench for bullies, below.



Tom Hill ARPS is a semi-retired photographer/copywriter living in the Scottish borders

Rock supergroup Dire Straits, fronted by genius guitarist and singer/songwriter Mark Knopfler, released their seminal album *Love Over Gold* in September 1982.

One of the excellent tracks on that album was called 'Private Investigations' – a Tom Waites-esque dark exploration of a gumshoe's alcoholism and his journey into the heart of darkness that is many peoples' private lives; usually those with something sordid or illegal to hide from the rest of the world.

I found that song fascinating from the first time I ever heard it. The words transported me:

"I go checking out the reports, digging up the dirt.

You get to meet all sorts in this line of work…"

I would imagine myself at a tatty old desk, its varnish flaking with age, as I sat torching Camel cigarettes from a soft-pack while wearing a Humprey Bogart style trilby, drinking neat Bourbon from a broken vending-machine's plastic cup.

I'd be sleeping on an air mattress in my office overnight of course, rooting out villains and abusers of the downtrodden and dispossessed; working for next to nothing, occasionally bailed out financially by a tall, mysterious, beautiful dark-haired woman with an East German accent – who would sometimes offer me solace in her arms….

Anyway, enough fantasy already, the short story here is that I've always found the idea of digging into the unknown to be fascinating. If that process turns out to be slightly dangerous and likely to get me into a little trouble, so much the better.

Mastering my craft

I had enrolled on a Photography MA under Prof Paul Hill at Leicester De Montfort University back in 1998. One of the first things we were asked to do as part of the course was to get out of our comfort zones and explore new genres of photography via a major practical project, followed by a dissertation based upon the experience. I had been a cruise ship smudger, holiday camp photographer, university technician and Kodak mini-lab manager before



Would you let this man photograph your house just because he used to live there as a kid?

that. The sudden obligation to push the envelope of my photographic experience was welcome and exciting.

Coincidentally, the week we were tasked with finding our new project, I happened to drive past my infants' school that I first attended in my hometown of Derby in 1968, at the age of five. I hit on the idea of returning to the schools I attended to photograph the interiors and see if everything still seemed as scary as it did 30 years previously. So it was that I managed to combine my desire to run every red light on memory lane (thanks Mark K) with my love of taking pictures.

To add context here, I suffered an extremely difficult early childhood. Bullied at each of my schools, neglected by one parent and badly psychologically abused by another, I was farmed out to live for indeterminate periods with my paternal grandparents, whose idea of culture was watching Coronation Street and Crossroads every night. I grew up in an intellectual vacuum. My emotional difficulties at that time were exacerbated by severe asthmatic hay fever, which hospitalised me on one occasion and meant that from May to July I could barely leave whichever house I was resident within.

My parents made little attempt to hide what a pain in the ass I represented to them. I felt, from my earliest memory, until I left home unannounced at 17 years old, that I was nothing other than an inconvenience to my mother's career as a senior social worker(!) and my father's penchant for messy affairs with any female he might encounter.

Magic wand of academia

The great thing about pursuing a formal higher degree in photography is that it opens doors you wouldn't normally expect to knock upon in the first place. One aspect of this deeply personal project was also to go back and photograph all the houses I'd lived in from birth to age 17. Imagine writing this note and putting it through someone's letterbox:

"Hi, I used to live in this house 35 years ago. My bedroom was at the back overlooking the garden. Any chance I could come and take pictures around the place sometime soon?"

You'd be lucky if the recipient of the letter didn't call the police on you. But send the same letter explaining that it's for a personal photographic project as part of a Master's degree, and you'd be amazed how people suddenly fall over themselves to help.

The same happened with the management of the schools I approached. Accordingly, having researched and gained the appropriate permissions, I arranged to visit three of my previous schools, always accompanied by caretakers

or staff members, either at weekends or half-term breaks, when there were no kids around. I quite like children, but I couldn't eat a whole one.

So I set up photo sessions at my infants' school, then junior school and secondary school; institutions which I'd attended respectively from 1968-1971, 1971-1974, then 1975 onwards.

Leading on from the process of photographing the school buildings and contents, I then continued the project by tracing the 16 classmates who started the infants' school on the same day as me in 1968. The mechanism of the investigation to find the people, when the internet was in its infancy, was more enjoyable than the photography itself. I used local radio, word of mouth, hundreds of postal leaflets and adverts in the local paper.

Method in my madness

In terms of methodology, I wanted to photographically represent the discomfort and sometimes fear that I felt on re-entering those buildings, playgrounds, and sports fields. The gym and running tracks were particular sources of shudder-inducing bad memories: Being thrashed across the back of the legs with a switch of a birch tree by a games master because I couldn't keep up on cross country runs. Humiliated on the football pitch as I had two left feet and as much desire to play soccer as attending the school dentist. The list of unpleasant memories was pretty much unending.

As a result, when taking the pictures, I deliberately placed my camera on a solid Manfrotto tripod at the same height my eye level would have been at the age of attending each different school. I used a Hasselblad 500c, nearly always with a standard 80mm lens, the magazines loaded with Fuji 400 negative film. I used an *f*4 50mm Zeiss Distagon for wider context in some of the people portraits.

To achieve the 'coldness' and discomfort I felt at the images I produced (16 x 20" EP2 prints), I deliberately printed many of the pictures for the MA exhibition and accompanying hand-made book with a slight blue-cyan cast, lending a sombre feel to the work. If I could help it, I wouldn't photograph outdoors if there was full sunlight - I tried to wait for overcast weather to darken the mood.







I was particularly pleased with many of the 100 or so final images I produced over that year. The strongest were a mixture of portraits of some of the people I'd traced, and interior/exterior scenes of the gyms, the cold empty staircases and corridors.

There was a lengthy 'artists statement' at the beginning of the work, based loosely on (and including much more of) the information I've provided here above. I presented about 25 examples of those prints in a handmade upscaled exact copy of a book I found in Derbyshire County Council's records office. That book was called 'Admission Register of Pupils of Compulsory School Age', wherein I found the page of children listed, all who started at the infants' school in my class on Wednesday January 3rd 1968.

I wasn't allowed to photograph the list of 16 people, but I was allowed to write their names down on an A4 pad. Of those 16 people, two turned out to be dead, one was in prison and refused to be interviewed or photographed, and about four people simply couldn't be found.

Interestingly, of the surviving nine people I did manage to photograph in person, seven of them still lived within three miles of that same school, including me at that time. Here I am shown in in the first photo in a denim shirt, looking like the sort of person you'd probably avoid at all costs. But if you look carefully you'll see the sleeping cat in the background. I'm a Big Softy really.

In terms of photographing the people involved, I visited them at their homes. I always asked them where they'd prefer to be photographed; most opted to be photographed outside if the weather was suitable. One bloke (who has since remained a *Facebook* friend despite moving to America some years ago) opted to be photographed at his rowing club in all his sporting kit. Lots of people wanted to involve their children and or dogs/cats – but I always asked for kids to be relegated to the background where possible.

I really love the photo of the lady in the front garden of her council house, not 200 yards from the school where we first met. Her child is balancing on a green plastic table; her dog is whizzing around her legs at such speed that even 1/125 of a

second didn't stop the little cutie from motion-blurring.

The strongest portrait I think I produced in this project was either the rower, or the pregnant lady photographed on the pavement outside her home in Derby, with her existing two kids playing in the background. That shot gained a full page as a flagship image in the *British Journal of Photography* (BJP) magazine when the De Montfort MA show at The Oxo gallery in London was featured within its pages.

Horror Stories

As I mentioned, the process of tracing the people for the project became much more interesting than the photography itself, even more fascinating in many cases than meeting my alumni again for the first time in three decades. If people couldn't be found, I simply photographed a place or item that symbolised where the trail went cold or ended.

A couple of notable 'shudder inducing' moments occurred when two people turned out to be deceased. Both them met untimely ends in their twenties or thirties.

For example, the picture you see of a Victorian era police cell door at Nottingham Police Station has a faded red metal plate welded above the rectangular hatch in its centre. The reason for the addition of that plate was because the person I traced committed suicide by sticking their head through the (previously larger) gap, getting their neck stuck, then simply lifting their feet off the ground to self-strangulate. The individual concerned had apparently been arrested for only a minor offence, but had mental health issues and decided that night, enough was enough.

You can also see one of the images portrays the front entrance of a crematorium, the gate marked 'Funeral Cortege Only'. That image was meant to symbolise the last destination of one of the ex pupils. He had a motorcycle accident in the late 1980s, which didn't kill him, but he lost his spleen as a result of the crash. Unfortunately, the lack of a spleen can make humans extremely susceptible to even minor infections. The guy concerned had a terrible rotten flu, and on New Years Eve in the early 1990s was rushed by his GP, in the GP's own car, to Derby Royal Infirmary's A&E department. Because it was New Years Eve, the staff had gotten so hacked off







with drunken walk-ins that they locked the front entrance to A&E, but didn't put a sign up advising people how to get in. By the time the lad's GP eventually gained access to the doctors inside, the boy had died in the doctor's passenger seat.

There are other images I find hauntingly disturbing. The chalk graffiti textually bullying a girl called Emma being hounded as "Fat, Heavy and Spotty". Similar bile was chalked on the back of my school blazer when I was 12 years old. Then there's the solitary bench outside the secondary school playground where my dinner money was stolen off me *(first page bottom left)*, together with the sunglasses I needed due to my disabling hay fever. On more than one occasion, those sunglasses needed to be retrieved by me from the nearest urinals, after being pissed over by one or other of the leading terrorists ganged up against me.

Push the boundaries

So, on that cheerful note, I could write a whole book about these memories and this project (in fact I already have but it's sadly now sold out). The process eventually turned out to be positive and somewhat cathartic.

But the simple point is this: ANY photographic project that forces the photographer to move in a new direction can only be a positive thing.

The process obligates the image-maker to work in a new way; whether it be a new genre of photography, completely different types of hardware and kit, taking an educational course or attending exhibitions, perhaps just even reading photographic books.

The spring is coming, the light will soon be changing, so we should be more able to get out and about. Why not push yourself in a new direction photographically? You never know until you try…

You can read more of Tom's slightly sweary (he does live in Galashiels, but is not the subject of any award-winning movie, as yet) blog at: https://ciderfreezone.wordpress.com/

Travelling Light

David Tymm spent early 2024 exploring US cities, small towns and highways on his motorbike. Fetching up at motels and diners most often as the light fell, his iPhone proving an ideal lightweight low light companion



The American Road Trip maintains an enduring fascination to the point of it becoming a cliché, comparable to a middle-aged man fulfilling an ambition held since his schooldays and riding his BMW motorcycle around 41 states. Nevertheless, Derbyshire, in the winter of 1980, was the genesis of my particular take on it.

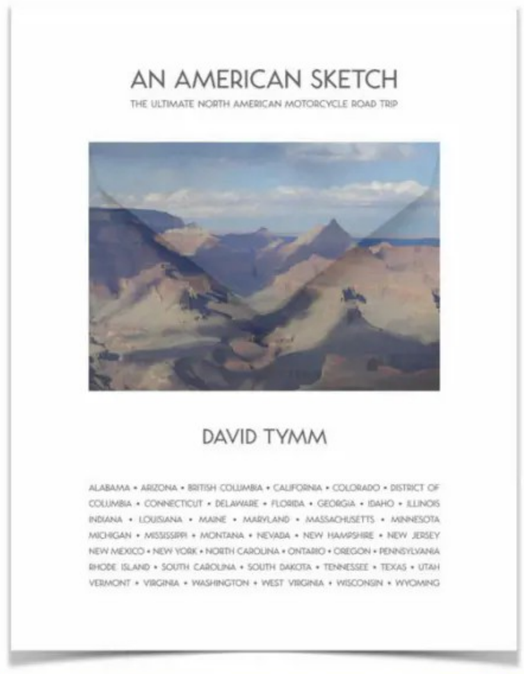
Starting with motorbikes, I first clambered off the back of a Norton Commando 850, owned by the dad of my school pal, on a freezing afternoon in March 1979. Chilled to the bone after barely six miles, I was hooked from that point. Hopelessly addicted…

My gateway drug was a moped, purchased for the princely sum of £5 from someone at school known as Dobbo. I lavished hours of time and attention on it and swear I could still rebuild its tiny engine blindfold. JAY495N was then, at least partly, responsible for the paltry five 'O' levels I managed to scrape the first time around.

But my new obsession managed, circuitously, to exert a positive effect on my squandered education via a birthday present of a subscription to *SuperBike* magazine. Blending an understanding of the principal subject matter with a liberal tone and anti-authoritarian elan, *SuperBike* carved out a niche as the enfant terrible in a crowded market and did so with some crackling prose.

Lyrical and anarchic by turns, the magazine was a heady brew of freedom, hedonism, and all-round smart-arsery, irresistible to a 16-year-old perennial underachiever. The February 1980 issue, titled *'…At the Speed of Life'*, absolutely nailed biking's appeal, with the late John Cutts describing his journey through California and Nevada. Widescreen, Panavision evocations of San Francisco, the Pacific Coast Highway, the Mojave Desert, Death Valley, and more were a stark contrast to the Sixth Form common room and a dank East Midlands winter. Cutts ended the piece with this high-octane potpourri of non-sequiturs and mixed metaphors that lodged itself in my memory and remained there as a touchstone for a distant ambition:

"Meanwhile, 200 miles behind me, there's a mile-long Strip of



David has created a book, available in flexcover or hardback printed editions or as an e-Pub on Kindle and Amazon Books. This 76,000 word travelogue is packed with anecdotes and observations on his epic three-month road trip. It's illustrated by photographs he took with minimal equipment, safely stowed in the lockable and weatherproof panniers of his BMW… which was flown from the UK and back.

See: **davidtymm.uk**



Above, motel truckstop parking lot at Fort Stockton, Pecos County, Texas. Below, Far West Motel on Route 101, Forks, Washington State.

death-palaces. Abattoirs for the insanely rich and richly insane. A riotous, fun-loving laughing academy for dinosaurs, pimps, and for those who still believe in the nightmare orgy of the American Dream. The Dream – if it exists at all – lies on the road getting there… and maybe the real wilderness is Las Vegas itself. A city for the lost and the mad who have crawled in from the desert to place a bet on reality."

Fast forward to late February 2022. I had recently sold my business and taken two weeks off. First, to pedal a rented bicycle gently around Miami Beach for a couple of days, before getting the bright yellow Brightline train up the

Above: McEwens diner and Monroe Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee. Below: the French Quarter, New Orleans, Louisiana with the Royal Pharmacy (closed, for sale at $1.25m in December 2025). Top right: Red Barn Lodge, Spring Green, Wisconsin. Bottom right: Bali-Hai Motel, Yakima, Washington State.



Atlantic coast to where my friend and his wife have escaped from New York.

During the second week, I was woken one morning by a 'Balance Alert' text message from NatWest: the final payment from the sale of the business had cleared. It was exactly the figure expected, but still a shock to learn of it through a medium once the preserve of gormless teenagers exchanging banalities.

So that text message put the finishing touch to a grand ten days. That evening, after celebratory giant steaks and giant wine, we were sipping giant Old Fashioneds as post-dinner cocktails by the pool while my pal waved around a giant cigar.





And in that reflective mood of the well-fed, half-cut tourist, I wondered aloud what an epic, once-in-a-lifetime motorcycle trip around the USA might look like.

There are so many 'must-sees', the itinerary virtually writes itself: Florida Keys, Grand Canyon, the Rockies, Yellowstone, Mount Rushmore, giant redwoods, Cape Cod, Blue Ridge Mountains, and so on. If you plug all of these and more into Google Maps, it will work out a pretty decent route, albeit that individual destinations are each about 1,000 miles apart. But after filling in the blanks with a few locations representing obscure and personal obsessions, an irregular figure-of-eight started to emerge. By the time



I boarded the plane home, I had my plan. For the next two years, though, it was back to work as that was part of my deal with the new owners of the business.

An American Sketch is the 76,000-word travelogue and the result of my four-month, 16,500-mile journey between March and June 2024. The work is divided into 60 chapters, first describing the inspiration and the planning, and then my route and destinations in broadly chronological order, and featuring my photography.

Full disclosure: I'm neither a formally trained, professional photographer nor make my living as a journalist or author. In fact, I'm an almost-retired 'Fintech' company founder, humbled and encouraged that friends in the media industry have been complimentary about my contributions to both disciplines over the last 40 years or so.

An American Sketch started life as a series of online posts written for friends and family who asked for regular updates and photographs. Consequently, some of the text reads like the daily journal that it was. Having written about many more modest tours over the last fifteen years, photography and writing act –for me – like a lightning rod to a particular moment in time and the means of clinging to precious memories as they flicker from view.

Above: Jackson. Top right: San Francisco. Bottom right: Yakima Inn, Yakima, Washington State. Overleaf: top left, Wrigleyville South 'Dogs & Beer', Wrigleyville, Chicago. Bottom left: San Antonio, Texas. Top right: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Bottom right: Beale Street, Memphis, Tennessee.

While motorcycling, roads, and landscape are the common denominators, the individual articles that resulted are broader in scope, including observations on art, architecture, literature, cinema, television, music, history, and the socio-political climate, past and present. Travelling mainly solo meant I met a varied cast of characters. The majority were mainstream Americans, but 'adult' film performers, retired cannabis growers, cult members, and political obsessives also popped up.

When I was planning the book, it became clear the page count would exceed 1,000 if I included all the images I wanted to, but the economics of 'on demand' printing costs and shipping fees meant that was a non-starter. The compromise was to use a single photograph to accompany each chapter and then provide a web address and QR code at the end of each, where the full selection resides.

Of course, I'd be delighted if you buy *An American Sketch*, but *Cameracraft* readers can go to **davidtymm.uk/aasp/iv** and then use the navigation controls adjacent to see each image to see them all and at the bottom of the page to move between destinations.

All photos were taken with either an Apple iPhone 15 Pro or a Fujifilm X20, both far removed from my first camera, an Olympus OM10 with the credibility-boosting plug-in 'manual adapter'. It's another cliché that the best camera is the one you have with you, and these two, modern devices, prove this truism. It's also fair to say that neither one is better than the other; they're just different tools that each have their uses.

The X20 is about 12 years old now, and I bought it for its portability and, frankly, because I love the retro look and exemplary build quality. The images it produces can be sublime, bringing an analogue warmth and shadow detail that is the polar opposite of the iPhone and a persuasive case for why 'proper' cameras still have the edge when it comes to capturing what the eye sees.

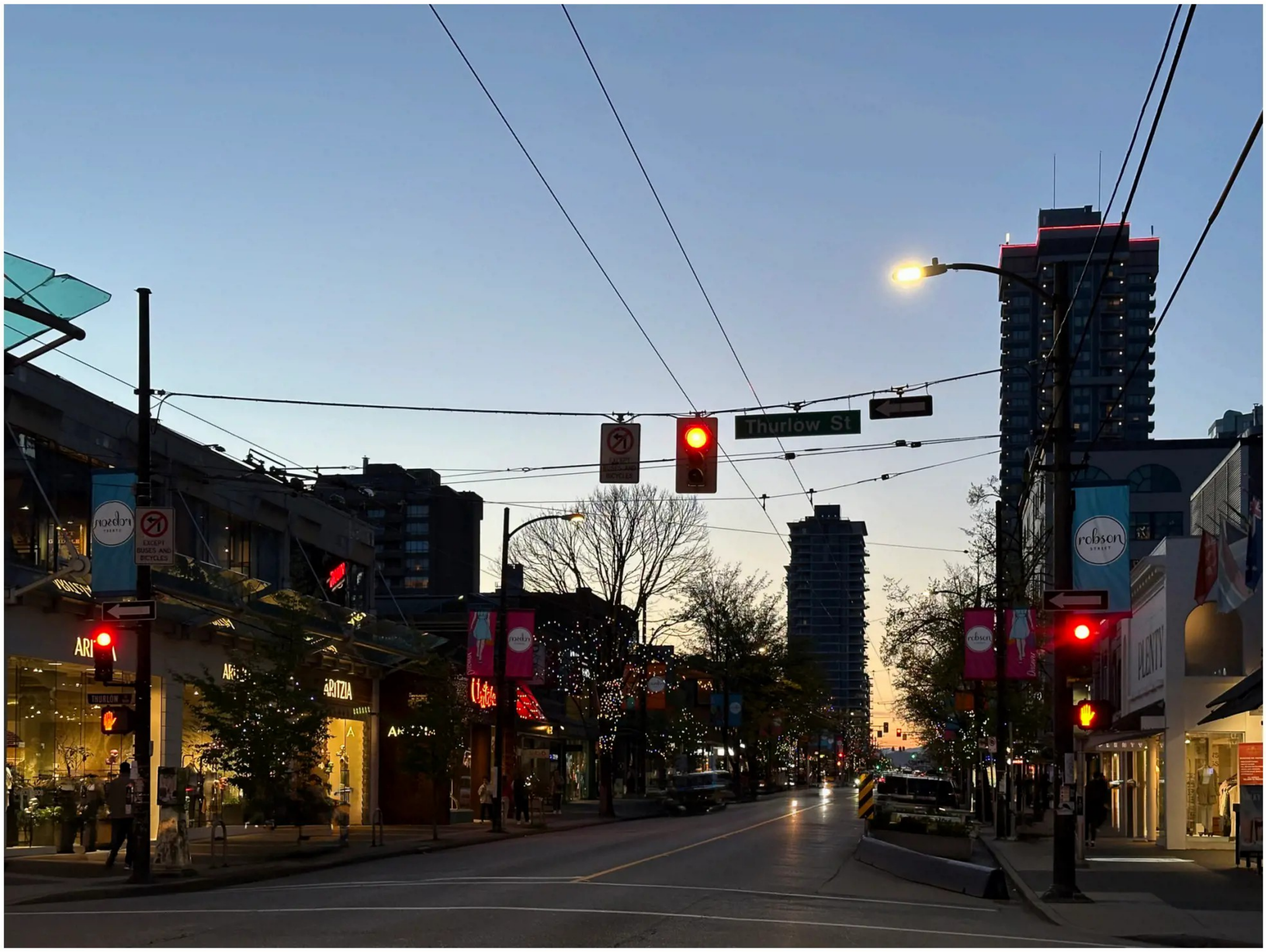
Inevitably, we are influenced by images we have seen before, and if painters J. M. W. Turner and Paul Nash, or photographers Joel Meyerowitz and Denis Waugh, are pricking at my subconscious, then the image created with the little Fuji invariably is the one I'll go with. Oh yes, it has a leather case that hinges down, which you can open with motorcycle gloves on, just as you can operate the mechanical controls without taking them off. And it's light enough to have it slung round your neck when riding. And on a motorbike, you always need to travel light…

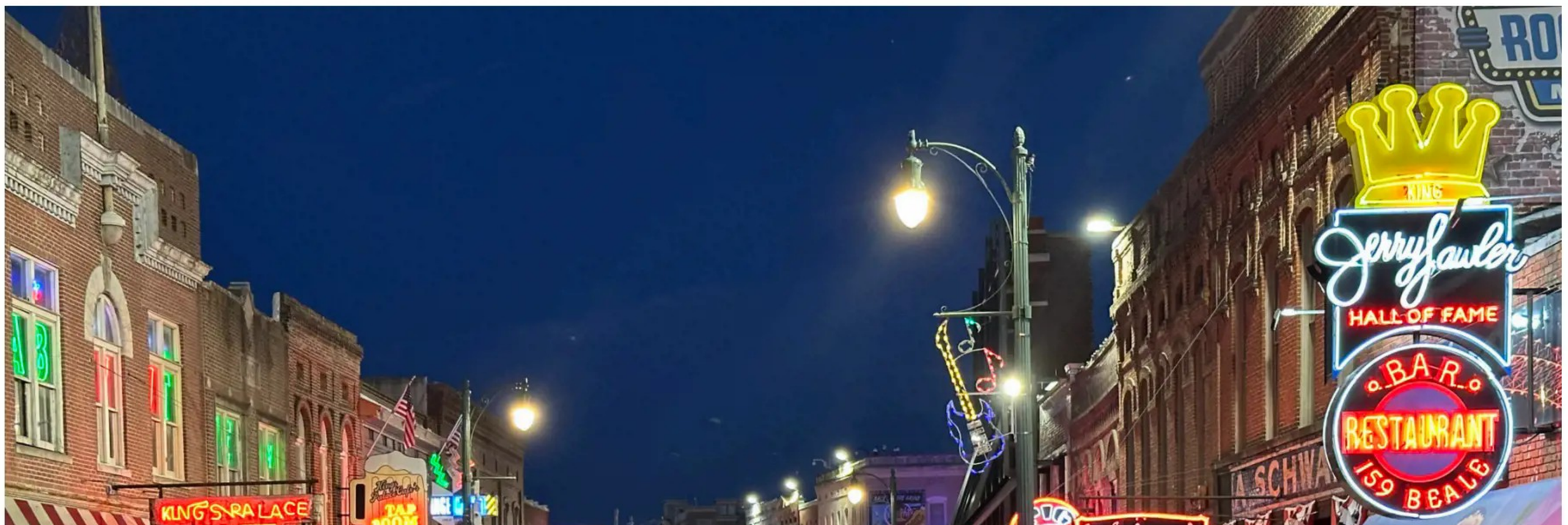

NO PARKING
6 AM - 8
TUES - THURS
STREET CLEANING
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Yakima
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WRIGLEYVILLE
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ALAN CUMMING
IS NOT ACTING
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KING'S PALACE CAFE
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While the early phone cameras were lamentable, the capability of recent versions of the iPhone is extraordinary, bringing an astonishing level of detail and contrast to a scene that sometimes borders on the surreal, particularly in low light. If you are willing to surrender to Apple's algorithmic interpretation of colour and tone, the results can be dramatic, if occasionally unpredictable.

So if the sun has set and either Edward Hopper or O. Winston Link is whispering in your ear, I don't think you can beat iPhone cameras. Practically, it's the camera you can always have with you, and as mobile phones have become so vital to everyday life, the chances of leaving it hanging on the back of a chair in a bar or restaurant are much diminished (the X20 is on its fifth or sixth life in this regard), so an important consideration for the absent-minded.



Top: Pike Place Fish Market, Seattle, Washington State. Above: London Bridge, Lake Havasu, Arizona.

Time for one last cliché: the journey that inspired An American Sketch was a trip of a lifetime. I won't try to repeat it in entirety but will in parts, and will be aiming further upmarket in terms of accommodation, comfort, and quality.

But there will always be a motel on some desert road somewhere where it's always seven a.m. After a night on a sadistically uncomfortable bed, the sun will be slanting through the blinds into the breakfast room. The 'fresh' orange juice will be radioactive, and I'll be attempting to cut one of those spicy sausage patties with a useless wooden knife, chasing rubber scrambled eggs around a paper plate while the coffee tastes like kerosene.

And for that moment, suspended in time, spinning still — there's no place I'd rather be.

How to order a printed copy of this magazine: Visit www.mixam.co.uk – from £10 plus postage

If you download your PDF file from a link provided to you by Icon Publications Ltd, the file will have sufficient resolution to print a top quality copy of *Cameracraft* should you want to have this.

It's very important to pick exactly the right specification.

For example, just changing the paper weight in the UK – whether to lighter or heavier paper – bumps the cost up well above a basic (which has increased to £10). However at one point 170gsm paper was costing exactly the same as 130gsm. Selecting the wrong size or binding, or number of pages, or requiring rapid delivery can increase the cost or introduce problems.

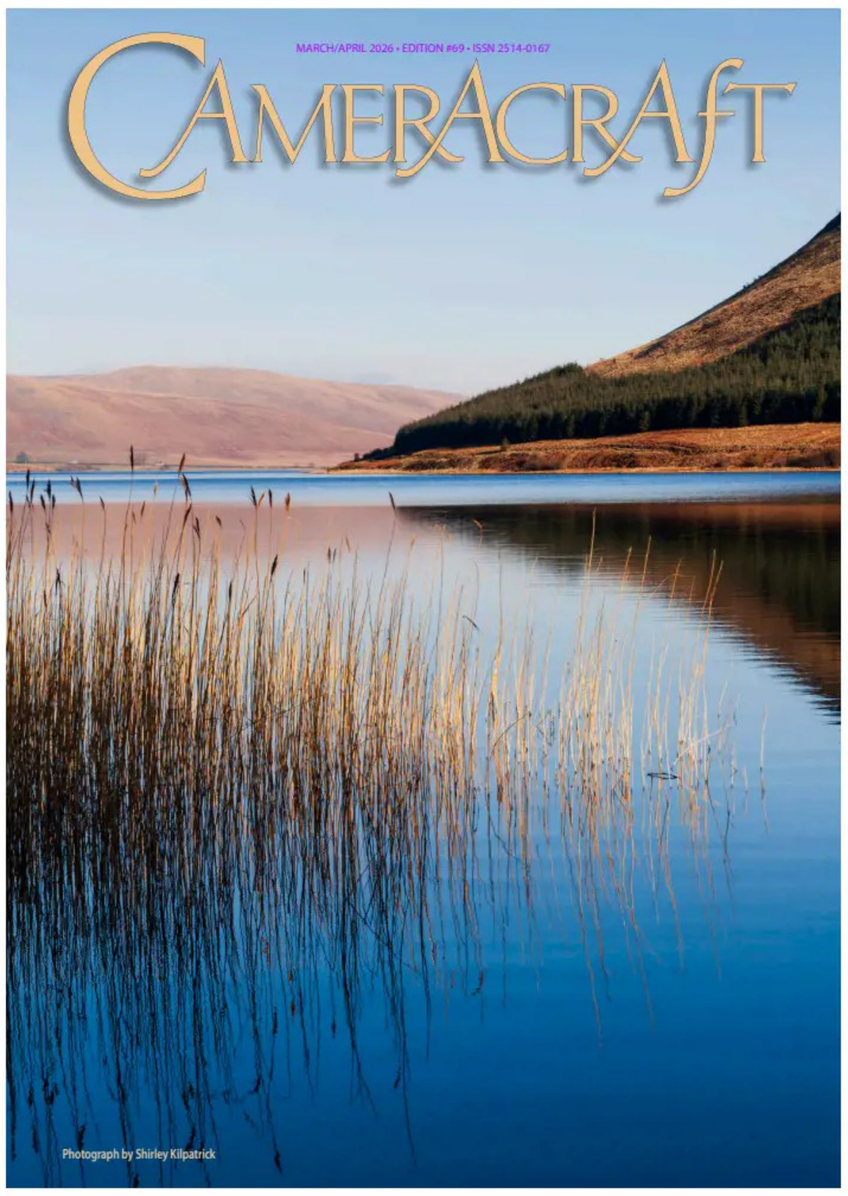
For *Cameracraft*, the correct choices are Magazine printing, Colour, Portrait orientation, A4 size, 130gsm Silk paper, stapled, 48 pages, no additional cover. The screen shot *(right)* shows this set up. It was made on April 29th and would, if a copy had been ordered then, have had a May 7th delivery date. The quality of print is identical to earlier printed editions.

Simply go to the UK or USA Mixam website, upload your high res digital PDF download and get a printed copy at any time.

If you use the links on this page there's a small margin on the basic cost, which also applies to the annuals below, and helps fund the magazine.

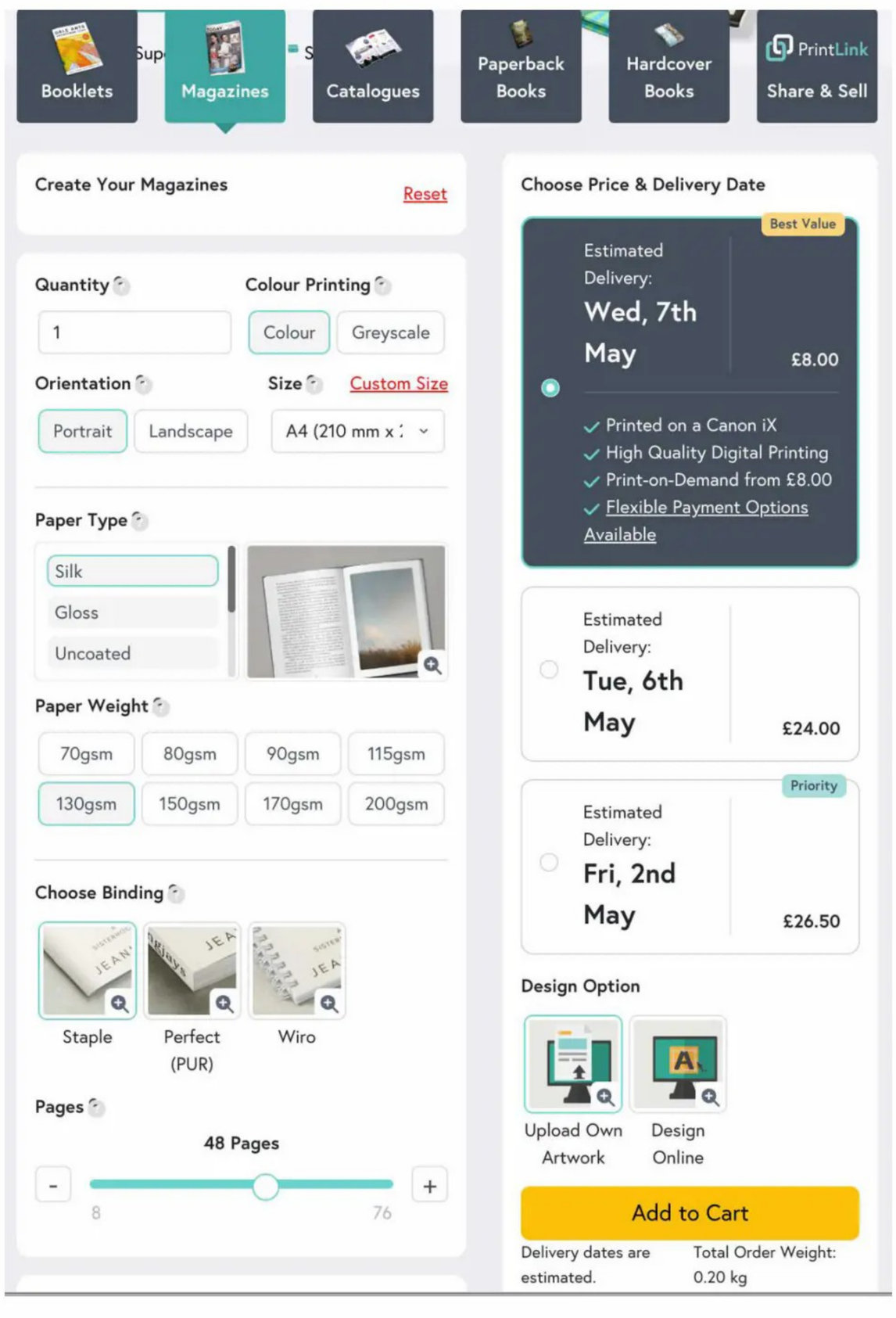
Go buy the book!

By far the best way to have printed copies of *Cameracraft* is to take all six issues from a year and make them into a book. We've done this for **2025**, **2024** and **2023**. Each has 288 pages on the 130gsm paper used for single editions, a high gloss laminated heavier cover, and the title and year on the spine.





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You can order copies using our **PrintLink** directly from Mixam UK., for around £35 plus post.

This is a perfect-bound gloss laminated paperback (cover above). We first had one of these made – at much greater expense in the early days of digital print on demand – for the *Cameracraft* first series issues, 2012-2015. It takes up a fraction of the bookshelf space used for binders and for our archives all the past editions will be reprinted in this form.

Gold & Blue

Golden Hour and Blue Hour: Light, Feeling, and the Space Between

by Nigel Thomas, Welsh landscape photographer and PermaJet lecturer

There are two time slots of the day that shape my relationship with the landscape more than any others. Golden hour and blue hour. They are often spoken about together, sometimes even confused as variations of the same thing, yet for me they carry very different emotional weights. One feels like an offering of warmth and affirmation, the other, a quiet invitation to slow, listen, and simply be.

While golden hour may be the most celebrated light in photography, it is blue hour that holds my heart. Not because it is more dramatic or visually striking, but because of how it makes me feel, how it asks me to show up, to embrace the moment and what it gives back in return.



Ceibwr Bay – a self-portrait I title 'Embracing Nature's Gift'.

Golden Hour

Golden hour is familiar, welcoming, and generous. It arrives when the sun is low in the sky, casting long shadows and wrapping the landscape in warmth. Colours deepen, textures come alive, and shapes reveal themselves clearly. It is a time of clarity and affirmation, when the land feels open and expressive. I have always felt that golden hour speaks of hope.

After periods of waiting, that first touch of warm light feels reassuring. It reminds us that cycles continue, that light returns, that there is renewal even after the quiet uncertainty of night. In the landscape, this warmth can feel particularly precious. When it breaks through cloud and weather, it can transform familiar places into something special giving not just a beautiful glow on the landscape but an internal glow too.

Golden hour is generous. It gives definition to form, separation between elements, and a richness of colour that draws the eye naturally. Grass glows, rock catches fire, and water reflects warmth back into the sky. There is a reason this light resonates so strongly, it feels instinctively comforting, something we recognise and respond to emotionally.

Yet over time, I have learned not to chase it relentlessly or treat it as a guarantee for an image. Some of the most meaningful golden hour moments I have experienced were not the most dramatic, but the quiet ones – where the light briefly touched the land before retreating again, leaving behind a sense of gratitude rather than spectacle.

Golden hour has taught me appreciation. It has reminded me not to take moments for granted, not to assume that beauty will always arrive on cue, because it doesn't.

Sometimes, the greatest gift of golden hour is simply being there to witness it, images captured are of course an added bonus.

Blue Hour

If golden hour is warmth and reassurance, blue hour is stillness and depth.

Blue hour arrives when the sun sits just below the horizon, either before sunrise or after sunset. The light is indirect, soft, and even. Colours drain away, replaced by subtle tonal relationships and quiet transitions. For me, this is not just a time of day – it is a state of mind.

During blue hour, the world seems to step back from itself. The noise fades. The edges soften. The landscape no longer demands attention, it invites contemplation. It is the hour where I feel most connected – not only to the land, but to myself.

There is something wonderfully humbling about standing in this light. Without the drama of direct sunlight, nothing competes. The light feels moody, unified, calm, and honest.

Blue hour strips things back to their essence. Contrast is reduced, highlights are gentle, and shadows retain detail. Long exposures are natural rather than chosen, allowing movement to become an added element of the image. Water smooths, clouds drift softly, and the land reveals itself slowly.

But what draws me here again and again is not the technical quality of the light – it is the feeling of being present.

The emotional pull of Blue

Blue hour carries a quiet emotional weight that I find difficult to describe but easy to feel. It is reflective, and deeply grounding. Whether it arrives before the day begins or after it ends, it creates space – space to breathe, to think, and often, to let go.

Before sunrise, blue hour feels full of potential. The day has not yet made its demands. There is no expectation, no urgency. Just the slow approach of light and the sense that anything is possible.

After sunset, it carries a different tone. More reflective. The day is coming to an end. Whatever it held successes, challenges, joys, disappointments – is done. Blue hour offers a place to process quietly, without judgement.



Above, start of the day at Tenby. Below, sunrise at Burry Port.



Above, light show before sunrise. Below, early sun breaking through to pick out rocks.

Above, at Wiseman's Bridge. Below, early morning at Mumbles.



Towards the end of daylight – top left, Ceredigion coast near Mwnt; bottom left, Ceibwr Bay. Above, sunset at Burry Port. Below, before nightfall at Strumble Head.



Blue hour does not reward speed or ambition. It rewards patience and presence.

Standing alone during blue hour, I often feel time loosen its grip. Minutes stretch. Thoughts slow. The internal noise that so often follows us begins to soften. This is where photography becomes secondary to experience.

Guided by the light

Another reason blue hour resonates so deeply with me is that it cannot be rushed. The changes are subtle, almost imperceptible unless you are fully attentive. Turn away for a moment, and the light has already shifted.

This teaches a different way of seeing.

In the early morning as darkness lifts, noticing compositions and detail appear. A distant ridge separates gently from the sky. Reflections gain clarity. Foreground textures reveal themselves quietly. Everything just slowly unfolds before you, and this is where just being, watching, listening is so rewarding.



Above, the first touch of gold against blue with a mirror-still Llyn Ogwen

I feel I am guided by the light rather than driven by it.

This approach has changed not only how I photograph, but how I experience the landscape. I am just attentive, mindfully waiting to respond to what it offers, when it is ready.

Blue hour has taught me that subtlety can be powerful. That quiet moments often carry more meaning than dramatic ones. That restraint can say more than excess.

Blue Hour always so special

Golden hour may draw the eye, but blue hour holds the soul.
It is where I feel most aligned with my reasons for photographing the landscape at all. It helps me to slow down. To remember that beauty often whispers rather than shouts.

When I look at my prints made during blue hour, I do not just see a place. I remember the silence. The cool air. The stillness. I remember how it felt to stand there, alone but deeply connected, guided gently by a subtle light that only asked me to pay attention.

Golden hour will always have its place in my work. It brings warmth, clarity, and hope.



But blue hour—quiet, subtle, and unassuming—is where I truly belong.

It is there, in that delicate balance between night and day, that I find not just images, but deeper meaning and appreciation for life.

For coastal long exposure experiences on the South Wales coast and Nigel's printing masterclass please contact Nigel: **nigetom@btinternet.com**

Left, misty mauve reflections behind the straining tower of the Lake Vrynwy reservoir.

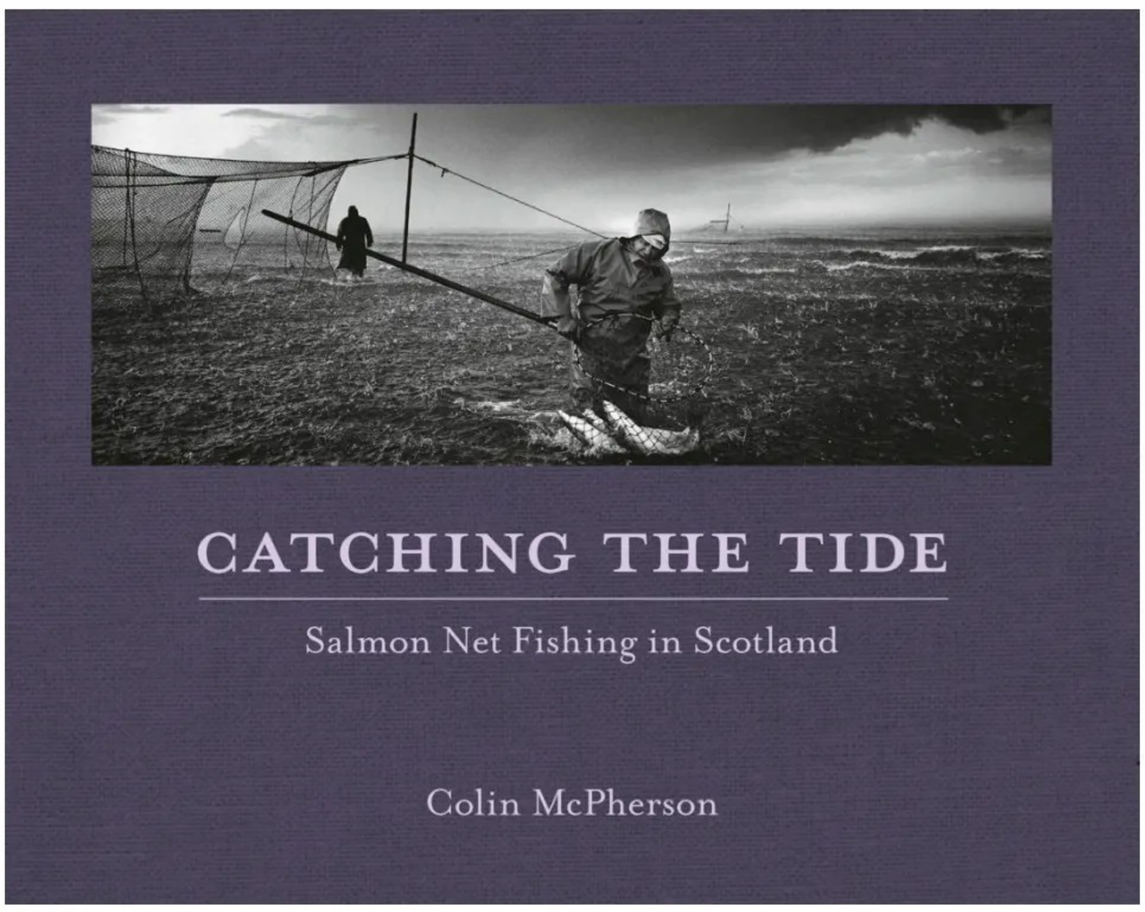
Right, blue hour moonrise at Mumbles.



The famous Lone Tree at Llyn Padarn, Llanberis, in the blue hour.

CATCHING THE TIDE

To be published by Dewi Lewis, Colin McPherson's book on the threatened estuary-mouth netting of salmon off the shores of Scotland has just over two weeks left to hit its Kickstarter target – see http://kck.st/3ZM2LcN



Spanning the last thirty years, *Catching the Tide* is a lyrical portrayal of salmon net fishing in Scotland. Through his photography, Colin McPherson introduces us to the men he met and worked with over three decades as they strived to make a living from a way of life that stretches back many generations and which has all but disappeared from the country's coastal communities today.

Colin writes this about the origins of the book:

"In 1996, when walking along the endless golden beach at St. Cyrus on Aberdeenshire's southern boundary, I came across a series of structures made of netting, ropes and poles sunk into the sand, set at right angles to the incoming tide: interceptory nets used to catch the wild Atlantic salmon as it made its way back to its native rivers to breed. A solitary fisherman was walking along the top of the leader, silhouetted against the silvery sea. It was an unforgettable image of human endeavour and ingenuity set against a stunning backdrop. He was about to harvest a fish caught in a fly net and I was about to embark on a project which has lasted three decades.

"Over the subsequent years, I met and befriended salmon net fishermen at a variety of locations around Scotland. The practice of catching salmon and sea trout using traditional forms of nets and traps dates back centuries, while the laws dictating where, when and how the fish can be caught and sold were put in place in the 19th century. Over the following one hundred years, tens of thousands of men (it has always been an almost exclusively male job) made a seasonal living at fishing stations in every coastal community. They worked with the flow of the tides and the rhythms of the seasons to supply Scottish salmon to customers in this country and abroad. By the mid-1990s, however, a complicated mix of economic and environmental factors meant the industry was in sharp decline, making my work a race against time to photograph the last salmon net fishermen.

"Rather than creating an inventory of every working fishing station, my approach was to collaborate closely with a smaller number of fishermen over a longer period of time. By getting to know them and gaining their trust, they allowed me free rein to photograph as I wished. The result is a body of work which is, I believe, an honest and truthful documentation of a unique way of life. The images from *Catching the Tide* have been exhibited and published in newspapers and magazines internationally. Photographs from the project reside in prestigious collections and archives, acknowledging the cultural and social

Above: Salmon net fishermen crossing Lunan Bay on the way to fishing bag nets at Auchmithie, Angus.
Below: Bob Ritchie and Jim Mitchell on their way home after fishing, Kinnaber, Angus.



Salmon netters hauling the dirty net aboard a coble during the fortnightly change of nets on the fly net at Boddin Point, Angus.

Salmon net fishermen James Mackay watching his son Neil putting a newly-caught wild Atlantic salmon into a box whilst fishing one of his bag nets in the sea at Armadale, Sutherland.



Salmon net fishermen in a coble, a type of flat-bottomed boat, harvesting sea trout from a bag net at Boddin Point at the north end of Lunan Bay, Angus.



Salmon net fisherman Simon Paterson and his son James fishing bag nets at the Strathy fishing station, Sutherland.

importance they carry to understanding the world around us.

"For many years, I have dreamt of bringing out a book which tells the story of salmon net fishing in Scotland through my photography. For this dream to become reality, I need to raise the funds myself to cover the design, production and printing costs. Dewi Lewis Publishing will be responsible for the printing and distribution of *Catching the Tide*, subject to funding being in place. Their reputation for producing excellent photobooks is, I believe, second-to-none in the country and I am excited at the prospect of working with Dewi.

"The amount of money I need to raise is substantial and I would be grateful for any amount of backing through Kickstarter to get to where I need to be. Please take a few minutes to look at the Rewards for your support on offer and watch the short film I have made which explains more about *Catching the Tide*."

Colin McPherson has enjoyed a 35-year career as a photojournalist and documentary photographer covering news and features at home and abroad for leading newspapers, magazines and photo agencies, principally *The Independent*, *Independent on Sunday*, *The Guardian* and *The Times*. His work has featured in over 30 solo and group exhibitions and he is a founding member of the Document Scotland photography collective. He is a long-time contributor to When Saturday Comes, which in 2024 published *At The Match*, a compendium of photographs from the monthly football magazine's archives taken over the least 20 years. Colin is an Associate Member of the Salmon Net Fishing Association of Scotland. If funded *Catching the Tide* (**http://kck.st/3ZM2LcN**) will be released by Dewi Lewis Publishing in summer 2026. The proposed format of the book is 300mm x 245mm, with 120 pages and 97 tri-tone monochrome images from the project. The book will feature a cloth cover and be presented on Gardapat Kiara paper. It will be produced at the renowned EBS printers in Verona, Italy and finished to the highest standards. The photographs in three different film formats – Hasselblad Xpan, Mamiya 6 and 35mm – will be presented alongside an introduction to the project, a short history of salmon net fishing in Scotland and a glossary of terms used by fishermen.



Facing page top: Salmon net fishermen constructing the fly net, Boddin, Angus. Sweep net fishing at dusk on the river North Esk, Angus.

FRIEDMAN ON AI

AI backgrounds and lighting to enhance shots

Following the last issue's exploration of AI based on using existing photographs to create group shoots which never happened – individuals separated by time or space – I have been looking at other possibilities, using Google's AI App *Nano Banana Pro*.

On this page, you can see a set of pictures based on an idea I had for a shot I wanted to take of a college frisbee champion, but the subject was moving into his college dorm that day and didn't have time to actually do it.

I texted him: "Hey, when we see each other tomorrow, I'd like to take this shot for the cover of my next book! It will look like this but have lighting like this".

The 'look like this' is one of my own test shots, top right. The 'lighting like this' prompt is a shot of the cover of a *Strobist Portrait Lighting Techniques* guide, by Zeke Kamm, Volume 2 in the *Photo Trade Secrets* series *(inset)*.

These are the examples I sent him. I had my A7V and Godox flashes ready to go, but he didn't have time, so I fed them into AI and said:

"Create a sports portrait of the person in the first image. The pose should look like that in the 2nd image. The lighting should be dramatic and with a dark sky, as demonstrated in the 3rd image."

The AI did a perfect job. I also produced the AI-generated behind-the-scenes shot, upper left… but can you trust web gurus and brands now when they show you BTS images?

Just imagine how good these tools will get in another couple of years. I've used them to do some programming also, with very mixed results.

– Gary Friedman

For Gary's monthly blog and updates on progress see:
friedmanarchives.com/blog
For everything else including details of photo books and new Sony A7V Guide, just see
friedmanarchives.com











Here are two more picture pair examples of the same Google Nano Banana Pro AI generated retouching. They go far beyond the face reshaping, smile enhancing and relighting functions found in programs like Anthropics Portrait Pro, which editor David Kilpatrick has followed from its launch to the point where checking new functions involved repetition. The plain backgrounds are the target result, the changes in the faces, hair, lighting, colour and poses of the subjects are ones the AI program decides to make, while offering choices that can be accepted or rejected. With previous auto-retouching programs, some portrait sitters have loved the results while others immediately say "that's not me". What are your views or experiences? Drop in to Cameracraft's Facebook group if you want to comment on this article and let us know! ***https://www.facebook.com/groups/36038656784***





Viltrox E-Z Mount Adaptor

A slim, affordable adaptor that allows the use of Sony E-mount system lenses on Nikon Z bodies



Sony 85mm ƒ1.8 on Nikon Z7II using Viltrox E-Z.









Seamless translation seems to be the in thing these days - from websites and smartphones automatically offering to make any material accessible in your chosen language, to Apple's latest AirPods apparently performing the role of Douglas Adams' Babel Fish and converting speech on the fly. Though apparently, it still struggles with drunk Glaswegian.

Many of these solutions rely on AI, but Viltrox has been playing with Ai – or rather, a descendant of Nikon's early lens coupling and exposure system. We've seen smart adaptors for lenses before of course. Viltrox even offers Canon EF to Sony E with an OLED aperture display, and MonsterAdapt has made the Nikon FTZ everyone wanted – with a screw-drive AF motor for old Nikkor AF lenses.

Adapting traditional SLR to to mirrorless gives lots of room to play with. Mirrorless to mirrorless? That's somewhat harder.

Ignoring the vast amount of electronic communication now involved between lens and body, Sony E-mount's flange focal distance is just 18mm. Mirrorless systems are small because they lost the mirror, reflex and prism, and every manufacturer aimed to capitalise on that.

Incredibly, Nikon achieved 16mm for the Z. There's not much room for well, anything, between them. This is one of the most critical measurements for accuracy in optics, even with the flexibility of in-body stabilisation, a small discrepancy in register can wipe out the advantages of using the best glass. For most users the critical measurement is 'can the lens achieve infinity focus'.

Yet these adaptors claim to achieve that, and sufficient electronic translation for EXIF data, stabilisation, fast and accurate AF, all in the space of 2mm. Quite an achievement.

Wafer-thin tricks

If Sony had designed E-mount for full-frame at the outset, this wouldn't be possible. It has a 46.5mm diameter throat where Nikon Z is 55mm, and the ability of the E-mount to almost float within the Z-mount has allowed some ingenious mechanical adaptors. The electronics have followed suit, and there are several similar options for Nikon users wanting to try Sony (or Sony compatible) lenses. See close-ups above.

Viltrox is not the first, and E to Z adaptors have been on the market almost as long as the Nikon Z itself. Rather, this is one of the cheaper options. Fotodiox's SNE-NKZ-FSN Mk II costs around £200 from Amazon or $287 plus tax + shipping direct, and the Megadap EZ21 Pro+ is similarly priced – it offers weather sealed mounting). Neewer, Techart and Meike also offer variants on the same theme. The Viltrox can be found retail for £125 or on AliExpress for as little as £55 plus import costs.

You might assume these adaptors are just the same OEM item with different branding, but they are not. Mechanical differences abound, from the material used for the mount itself to the release button, provision for firmware updates and of course, the quality of electronic translation.

Viltrox is definitely at the cheaper end of the market here not just in purchase price. Where other adaptors might connect for firmware updates via a mount cap with a USB C-port, or a bespoke magnetic contact, the Viltrox has a USB cable terminating in four long pins and a corresponding row of holes with a small silkscreened "+" on the PCB. The manual does not explain the cable orientation either, but it does explain an important distinction in the firmware.

The release button is a wobbly, shiny chrome push release. It works well when the mount is on the body and you want to release the lens though by design, is irritatingly close to the function buttons and a similar shape on the



The wide throat of the Nikon Z mount allows the much smaller Sony bayonet to fit and retain infinity focus.





Success in AF and lens based stabilisation with the 70-300mm Sony G OSS wide open at ISO 6400 on Z7II – canine 1/60s at 150mm, feline 1/80s at 300mm. Below, books Viltrox 16mm ƒ1.8 wide open, ISO 200, 1/30s; door, Laowa 10mm ƒ2.8 at ƒ8, ISO 200, 1/8s at ƒ8 for depth of field, in-body IS. All hand held. (DK)

Z7 – I'd probably prefer a sliding release here. The bayonets work in opposite directions, so the Sony lens rather neatly aligns the dots with the body when locked.

To test the Viltrox E-Z adaptor we put together the 35mm FE ƒ1.8, FE 85mm ƒ1.8, and FE ƒ4.5-5.6 70-300mm G OSS stabilised zoom. The latter might seem like an odd lens to adapt, but it's roughly the same price as the Nikon AF-P 70-300 and offers similar performance without the bulky FTZ adaptor. It does allow a direct comparison of usability.

Performance with the prime lenses is impressive, given the nature of the adaptation. Focus and in-body stabilisation work as well as third-party Z-mount lenses. Interestingly, between the shipped firmware and updated the 85mm seemed to take less time focusing in dark conditions, but focus is still a little slower to lock than when using Nikon glass.

This is the same as when using Viltrox or Meike Z-mount lenses, and I suspect there's a degree of predictive AF going on when the entire process is Nikon.

Worth it for good glass

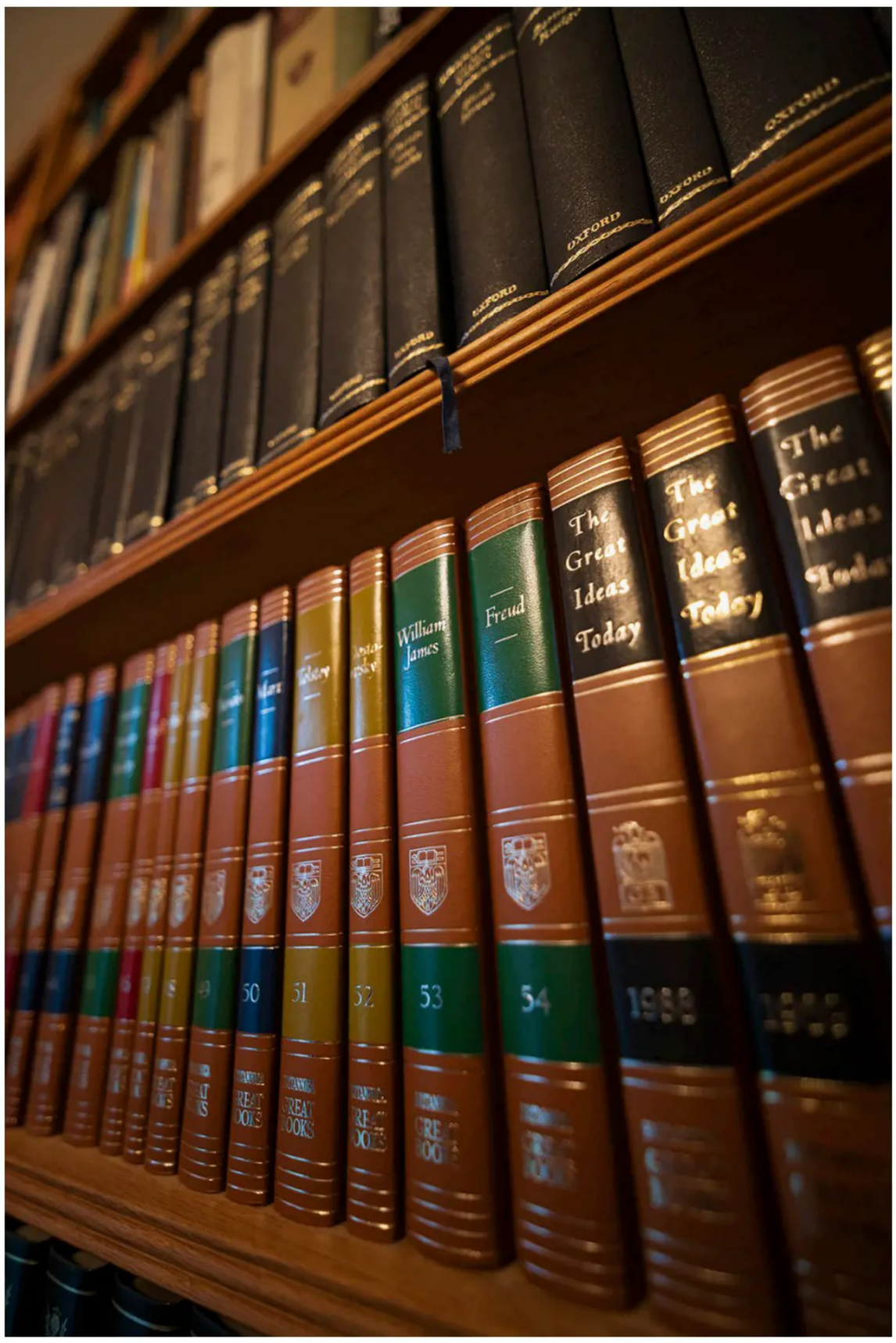
Using the adaptor doesn't mean losing the controls on Sony lenses, or at least, not all of them. The custom buttons can be assigned in the Nikon's setup menu for example. However, the 70-300 G focus limiter did not appear to work, and while lens stabilisation does work you need to turn off the in-body stabilisation where applicable. All full-frame Nikon Zs are stabilised, it's only the APS-C bodies that rely on VR.

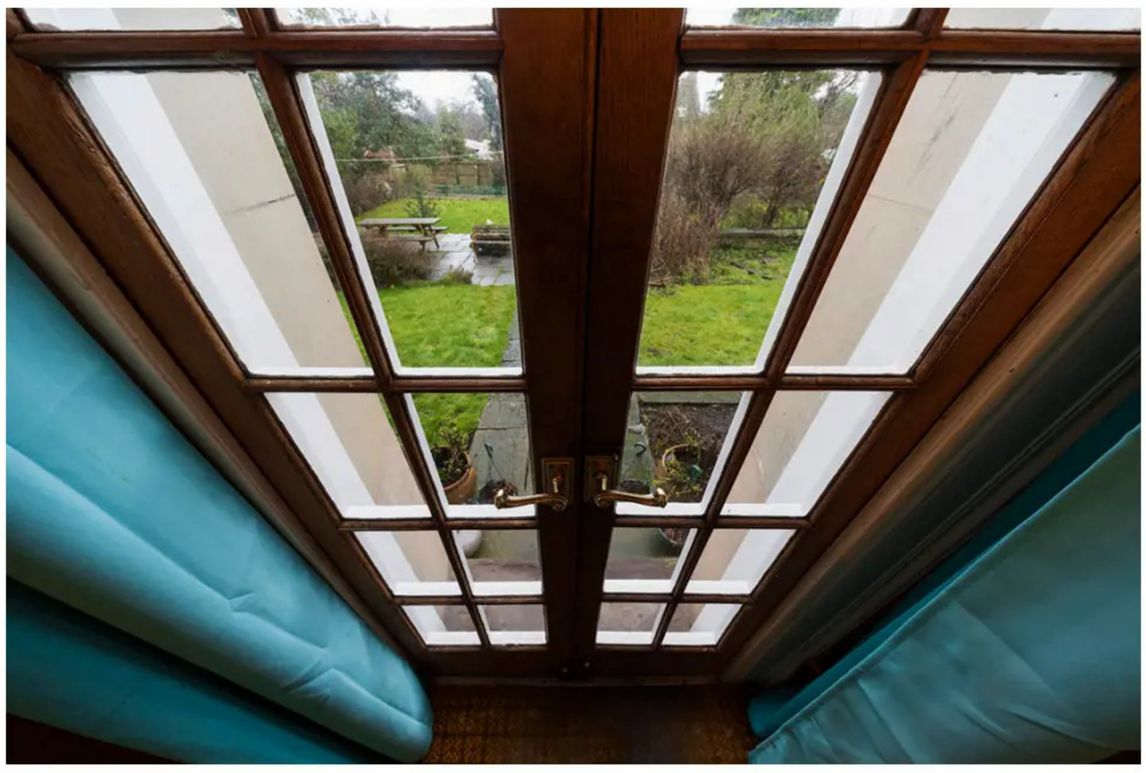
When using a Nikon VR lens, either native Z or F-mount on the FTZ adaptor, Nikon combines optical stabilisation with in-body sensor stabilisation. The VR switch duplicates the quick menu setting, allowing quick chances from unstabilised for tripod or faster shutter speeds on shorter lenses, sports tracking for better panning (where the combined lens and body system works best) or normal.

To use an adapted Sony lens you need to choose which system you want, and the switch on the lens does not change the body setting. It simply enables or disables optical stabilisation. For longer primes and super-telephoto zooms, optical stabilisation is generally better anyway.

For higher-end lenses such as the FE 100-400mm ƒ4.5-5.6 GM OSS, there is both a good reason to consider an adapted lens – and some justification for the quirky VR mode behaviour. A used Nikon Z 100-400mm ƒ4.5-5.6 is typically £400-750 more than the Sony; this difference is just as applicable when looking at the most recent standard telephotos such as second-generation FE and Z S 24-70 ƒ2.8 models.

For our comparison, it's a pairing that doesn't make sense. Sony's 70-300 prosumer-level G lens is shorter but fatter than the Nikon AF-P and FTZ adaptor, and weighs 100g more with the Viltrox adaptor in place. It needs a larger filter, and feels a little slower to find focus and track. Both lenses are equally affordable new or used, as well – and the Nikon AF-P is a very strong performer for the budget and expectations, unlike the APS-C DX version which is cheap throughout.





Stabilised lens support

For reasons that aren't entirely clear, Viltrox offers two firmware versions for the E-Z adaptor (and there are two versions of the adaptor, V5 and V6, identified on the PCB). Regardless of adaptor revision, firmware ending in 0 has OS enabled, 1 has OS disabled.

Our adaptor shipped with 4.01, so it needed an update 4.40 to allow the use of a stabilised lens and fix a couple of bugs which probably don't affect what we have on hand. It also adds support for the Sigma 35mm ƒ1.2 Art.

The instructions with the firmware update were just a changelog, but eventually, hidden behind a scrolling set of update instructions on the website, there is the vital info - the update cable plugs in to the camera body side of the mount, and the curved edge goes to the outside. This would be much simpler if a coloured dot were silkscreened on the cable and the PCB.

Not that it made much difference, the STM32 storage device appeared on the Mac's USB device list but the drive did not mount. In the end it was necessary to resort to a Windows 7 'Toughbook" usually used for car diagnostics and reprogramming BIOS chips… while holding the adaptor in the air supported on the prongs of the wire to make the connection consistent!

It worked, but I'd probably have paid £20 more to have a lens cap with USB-C port, as the upgrade cable's four long pins have no protection. Even the demo video shows it inserted the wrong way. You will definitely want to keep it in the box as the firmware may need updating.

Is Sony to Nikon so EZ?

These adaptors have been on the market since 2019, but prices have fallen significantly in that time and there have been many revisions and brands. It would take a forensic approach to work out which firm originated the design and where you'll find the best firmware, build and mechanical interface but even the earliest models got good reviews for retaining focus speed and accuracy.

Viltrox is notable for the low price and trusted brand, offering this adaptor for £76. It's a type offered by many unbranded sellers but AliExpress does list it as Viltrox at similar prices so the chances are Viltrox is the OEM manufacturer. At this price I can see buying two or three adaptors for favourite E-mount optics and leaving them on the lenses all the time.

In 2019, Nikon Z didn't have a wide selection of lenses unless you used the bulky FTZ – and very few fast, mirrorless-optimised designs with all mod-cons for AF and stabilisation. It's 2026 now, Nikon's Z lenses are entering second-generation refresh stage with a massive used market to choose from, and third party support for the Z is established. Sigma may still be catching up on their range compared with E and L mount, but Viltrox offers native Nikon Z models, as do many other new brands from China.

It's an impressive feat of engineering and a fluke of widely-different lens mounts that has allowed engineers to squeeze a single-PCB thickness of contacts and adaptors into the 2mm gap, but it's the relatively low price that makes the Viltrox E-Z worth buying. Or buying several of if you have a stable of E-mount glass and are changing system, or don't mind a minor inconvenience to save £400-700 over a Nikon equivalent lens by buying used or new Sony.

– Richard Kilpatrick

See: https: www.viltrox.co.uk





Viltrox 16mm ƒ1.8 and 14mm ƒ4





35mm Sony ƒ1.8 wide open clockwise from top left: no correction, Nikon JPEG in-camera, ACR with Sony profile, ACR with Nikon 35mm G (DX) profile. Below, real-world 35mm ƒ1.8 shot wide open, ACR Sony profile used. (RTK)



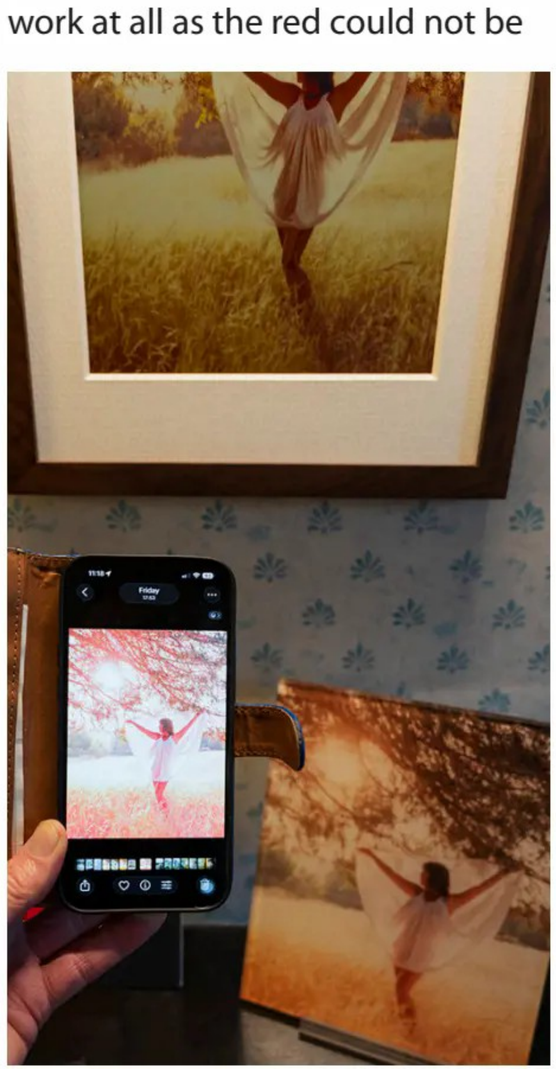
ReflectionFrame display

Send pictures from your smartphone to a framed, matted 10.5 x 8" 'print' and change the image any time

ReflectionFrame is a US-made home décor product with a USB rechargeable backplane able to store one picture at a time and render it for months or years on one charge. With that full charge, you can replace the image over a thousand times, to be hung anywhere with enough ambient light. It's not a bright paper white, and testing one, I found a USB charged picture light *(seen above it)* useful to make the picture stand out next to other art. It's not the best light for a 12 x 16" vertically hung frame and is more suited to a 24 x 16" landscape, but this light has adjustable colour temperature and brightness. This helped as the ReflectionFrame image benefits from warmer lighting.

I was warned that the **e-Ink Spectra® 6** 150ppi dithered colour can not reproduce some colours well – "e-Ink Spectra 6 does not contain a true magenta pigment, so the frame has to simulate pink using a mix of red, white, and blue pixels", said CH Chan of Reflectionframe.com.

So I challenged it by loading up one of my favourite shots which I had inkjet printed. At the bottom of this column you'll see how extreme a colour adjustment was needed on Apple *Photos* on my iPhone to achieve the colour in the frame. When not shown side by side, it would not look so different. The red top and painted door photo in the black mount did not work at all as the red could not be reproduced, but tests with strong yellow, blue sky and white clouds and monochrome or line art images were impressive. With experience you can make contrast and colour adjustments, testing them. It's not an expense like making test prints! My close-up shows the low dpi and dithered shading on a black and white version. This is not obvious in a photo on your wall .



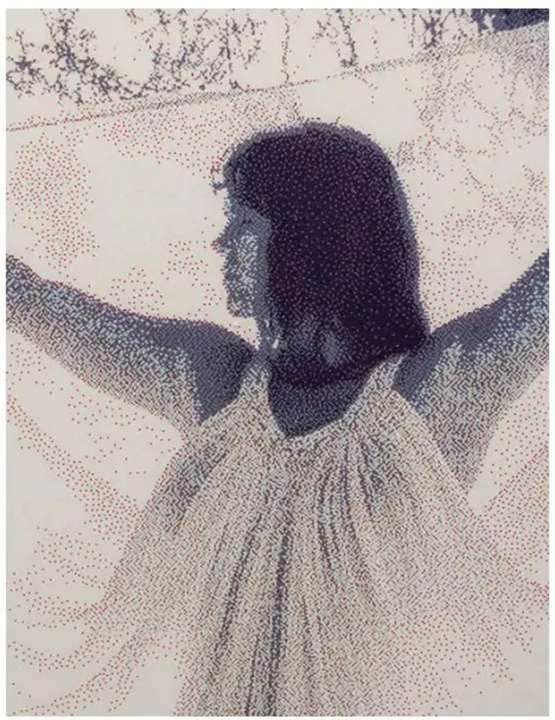
It's fun selecting images loaded into your *Photos* app (iOS) and trying them out, and there's a good library of ready-made art to display, well tuned to the colour range of the ReflectionFrame. You can also make great menus, info panels and other text-based images which display really crisply – update to the next menu or event any time by holding the phone's NFC spot near the one corner of the frame. It takes a minute to transfer and render the new image, and the app saves all the ones you use so you don't need to trawl through your ten thousand cloud-stored shots to find them again.

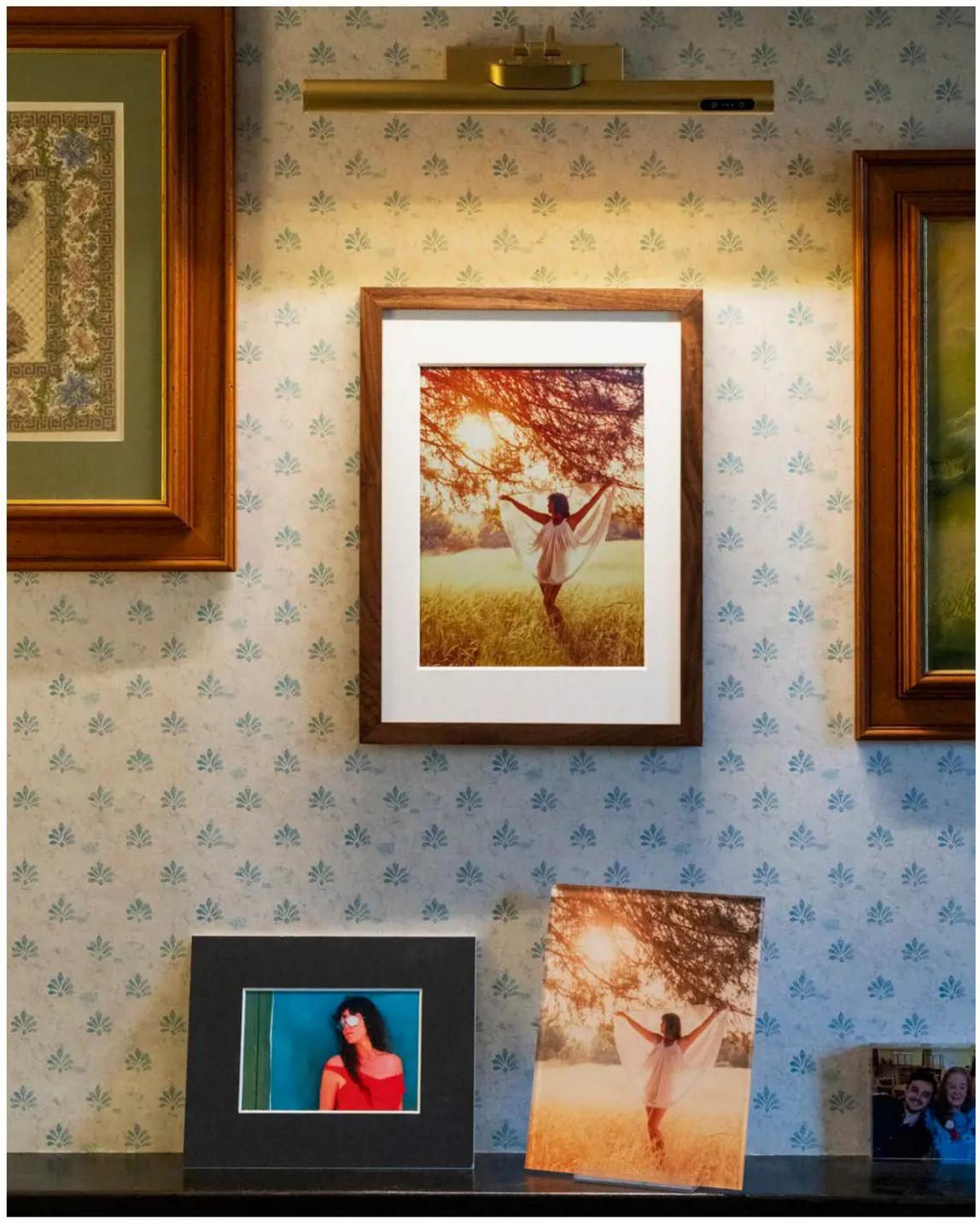
Crop your pictures and resize to 3000 x 2400px to remove black top/bottom or left/right margins, or use the 'Fill Frame' option. High key works better than low key, pastel or toned better than saturated. The frame comes with a white mat overlay but this can be changed, and something like dark olive green might be better to make the image pop.

Classic black or engineered wood mitreless and glass-free frames cost £280 and £295 respectively in the UK.

– DK

See: www.reflectionframe.com





Above, getting the best from a difficult image for the technology to handle. Below, compare to our cover – Shirley's landscape renders in faithful colour.



CAMERAS

Yashica FX-D 100

A point and shoot JPEG camera with a tiny sensor, this SLR lookalike can lend design tips to some more serious makes

When is a camera real, and when is it fake? There are so many toys or outright cons sold on-line to imitate cameras worth using that the risks of making what is essentially a very good small-sensor digital look like a classic SLR are considerable.

Well, we are not going to launch into the **Yashica FX-D 100** on the basis that it is not a classic Yashica, nothing to do with the original film FX, not a DSLR and does much less than the smartphone anyone over 16 is likely to have on them all day.

Instead, we will say what is good about it. The first key point is that it's been gifted with excellent firmware and functions accessed through a good rear screen menu system (it does not have an EVF though there's an FX-D 300 which does). The range of picture looks and the ease of getting to these, using the faux lever wind stand-off to enter a 'film simulation' mode for the next exposure and choose from the last simulation you used or a different one, is not fakery as they are truly worthwhile with both subtle and strong differences.

The point of the mode dial with no fewer than four custom memory positions for saved set-ups is to make the camera as easy to use as a DSLR with similar memory positions. And then the Chinese maker throws in a real surprise – a position marked 'IR' seems to click a physical filter in or out of place inside the camera. It also looks like real IR black and white in the JPEG, though this setting doesn't allow the adjustment of contrast provided in the film or digital modes. The default mode, when not using the SCN Scene settings or fully auto or the film looks, is active when the lever wind is in rest position. The 'rewind knob' gives access to many effects such as colour-toned or high contrast processing. Just below the lever there's a zoom actuator as an alternative to using the lens barrel, though both do basically the same and control a motorised zoom setting. The back of the top plate has the red Record button for the Movie mode to the right of this, AE and AF hold buttons to the left, and on the left hand end the on/off button and one which invokes the film simulation settings. The 'eyepiece' of the faux prism has indicator lights for functions.

The rear controls are familiar from most digital cameras, but the ± exposure adjustment self-cancels after the next shot – no risk of leaving it set. To do this for a snow or beach shoot, for example, the Fn button has a second ± method which shifts all exposures as required until changed. An example of how well planned the firmware is – use the ± from the rear rocker switch in P mode, when a ± setting is active from Fn, and this only applies to one shot before reverting to the Fn set choice. But if you use the separate – and + on the left and right of the rocker, whatever you set sticks. And it's in 1/3rd stop increments. Go to S mode and the rocker and + or – now steps the shutter speed, from 1s to 1/8000s in 1/3rd steps, with exposure preview on the screen.



It's a fixed zoom lens



There is a hot shoe connection but no flash setting and when fitted, no flash fires



In the film simulation mode there's a great range of adjustments

The hinged selfie screen is sharp and bright – there's no EVF



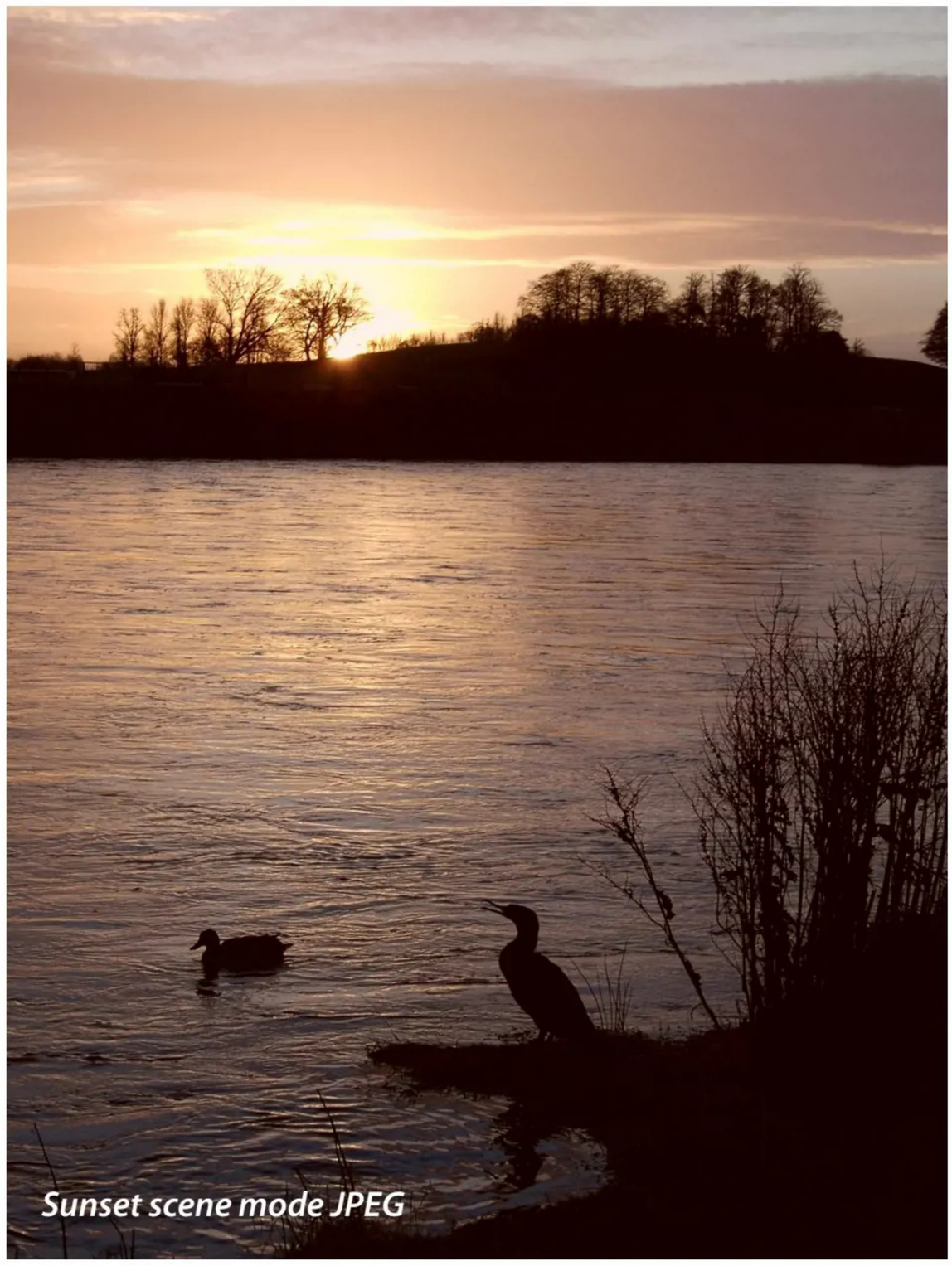
Battery life is good, charged via USB-C





It's not the Yashica you remember but the old film FX design used as a basis for a clever entry-level digital.





Above, default JPEG look above, and SCN mode set to Sunset, right (seven minutes later). Below, the six 'Analog' film simulations and at the bottom the result of using the separately set IR position on the mode dial. Despite winter sun, the grass shows this is a true infrared mode not just created from RGB.

The sequence shooting is at a fixed ≈3fps, and the Fn choices of 3, 5 and 7 are to set the number of frames. ISO can be set from 100 to 3200 or Auto, but with a really tiny 1/3" sensor (3.2 x 4.8mm) as found in smartphones, the high settings are best avoided. The 24MP JPEG setting, scaled from its 13MP sensor, is fairly clean and sharp at 100 too. The lens stays at ƒ1.6 full aperture most of the time at the 3.45(=25)mm wide angle end, falling to ƒ2.8 at the 10.5(=75)mm end and like most very small sensor lenses loses sharpness if you stop down. There is not even an 'A' mode, just Program or Shutter priority.

When you add to this pretty good close focusing, an additional 4X digital zoom (to avoid), and movie settings with 4K at 30p, internal or plug-in mic with gain control, Full HD at 60p plus 2X or 4X slo-mo at HD or 720p the spec on a £295 plastic camera looks pretty good. The 640 x 480 res 2.8" rear screen flips to horizontal selfie view for filming. Digital IS can be activated but the video without it is much better. This and noise reduction for low light takes can make the movie quality plummet.















There's more we could write about this novelty because it is so packed with functions, features, wifi connectivity, app and settings which work well – but it's still a tiny sensor and of course JPEG-only. The FX-D 300 partially addresses all this but with a fixed focal length lens. We'll have a look at it if possible. If this was a one-inch sensor camera it would win! In many ways ways the Yashica FX-D idea takes its inspiration from Fujifilm X film looks – but there never WAS a 'Yashica 400' film…

https://www.yashica.com

VINTAGE FILM

Iron Curtain classics

David Kilpatrick down memory lane again with East German and Russian cameras still capable of surprising

On a January day with freezing temperatures but good sunshine I decided to check out two vintage cameras I bought on eBay to add to a collection of gear which carried memories.

For Christmas 1968, my late wife Shirley got a Zeiss Werra 1 from her dad – an ideal choice at that time for a 16-year-old keen to learn photography. The CZ Jena Tessar 50mm ƒ2.8 was as good as the same lens on the Praktica L she upgraded to soon after it was launched the next year. I was not able to find a working Werra 1 with the same contoured body shape (Werra 1E), but a Werra 3 came up at a very good price of £67. She would have loved the better viewfinder and coupled rangefinder, but possibly have bought its interchangeable 35mm and 100mm ƒ4 lenses and missed out on the far more versatile SLR.

In 1971, I entered my first ever *Amateur Photographer* monthly competition for black and white prints submitted by readers. By this time I had a Pentax Spotmatic – my winning entry had been taken in 1968 when I was 15 and borrowing my father's Honeywell Pentax H1a. The prize of a brand new Zorki 4 with 50mm ƒ2 Jupiter lens was my introduction to using a Leica-type rangefinder. I could not track down a 1971 example but found a 1972





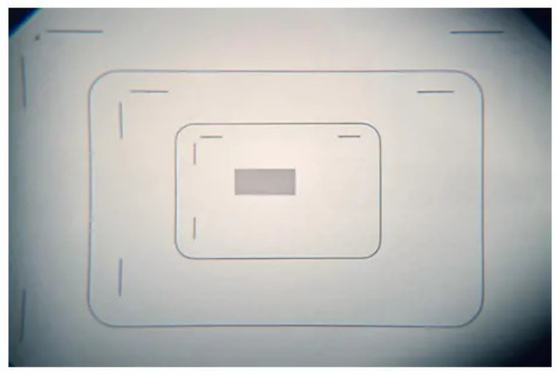


serial number identical to the one I owned, again a very good deal at under £50 as the lens alone is often sold for more.

Both cameras are of course purely manual. The Werra 3 has a behind-the-lens Prestor leaf shutter speeded 1 to 1/750s with no 1/500s, the Zorki has a fabric focal plane shutter speeded 1 to 1/1000s. It's mostly this roller-blind mechanism which makes the classic Leica body a much longer one than leaf shutter cameras. Where the Werra has a unique twist-barrel (behind the lens, next to the body) to wind each frame on rapidly, the Zorki 4 has a knurled wind-on knob much slower to operate as its resistance rules out the index-finger backswipe fast wind technique used by experienced Leica screw mount owners.

In the cold, these metal camera quickly gave me numb fingers. The aperture, shutter and focus of the Werra lens are packed into place on the small lens barrel and not at all easy to set though linked shutter and aperture help with quicker 'same EV' adjustments like 1/30s at ƒ16 to 1/250s at ƒ5.6. It seems to be able to handle half-stops. The split image rangefinder, working more like an SLR split-image focusing aid, goes down to 0.9m with parallax markings, as a central brightline between the outer 35mm view and the 100mm crop.

The Zorki rangefinder is coincident image down to 1m, with adjustable dioptre also changing the view slightly, and no brightline just a vaguely visible limit all round, and no parallax correction or markings. However it's longer in base and higher in magnification so more accurate, as required by interchangeable lenses up to 135mm. The Jupiter lens has a focusing barrel which rotates the aperture ring, set at the front and marked in log spaced non clicked stops making setting half-stops after ƒ5.6 tricky. The aperture is easily shifted when focusing, and the focus shifted when changing ƒ-stop. The shutter speed dial is typical early focal plane – non-linear spaced with tiny gaps only from 1/60s to 1/1000s, needing to be set strictly *after* the film is wound on to avoid damaging the mechanism, by lifting the marked centre against spring pressure and dropping down to align with the speed.



The Werra 3 finder markings

Both these cameras were SO much more difficult to handle in the cold than any familiar film SLR. The Werra is easier to load and rewind. The Zorki had to be taken indoors and allowed to warm before the rewind clutch, a tiny collar round the shutter release, could be turned between finger and thumb. Both have very poor frame counters, and exposing under half a 24-exposure roll in the Werra then reloading into the Zorki was a bit hit and miss.

The whole exercise showed why I sold my prize Zorki after putting a few films through it, though it's the reason I then bought a Leica M3, double wind with collapsible ƒ2.8







It looks great, but the skinny rings and hard to position settings make the Werra lens control ergonomics frustrating.





Elmar – the lowest priced entry to used Leica ownership in 1972. Shirley's dad inherited the Werra plus an exposure meter and took many pictures with it successfully. She got the new Praktica which she took on our motorcycle honeymoon to Keswick in 1972, with her 50mm plus a 30mm ƒ3.5 Meyer Lydith and 135mm ƒ3.5 Hanimex we shared. Life was much easier with simple loading, lever film advance, well separated focus and click-stopped aperture rings and modern focal plane shutters with clear large shutter speed control.

One lovely aspect of the Werra remains its deep and effective 50mm lens hood, which reverses to screw on to the rear of the control barrel forming a pretty weatherproof shell. What I did not remember was how difficult it is to adjust focus with the hood fitted, restricting easy access.

The Flektogon 35mm ƒ2.8 and Cardinar 100mm ƒ4 lenses unfortunately cost the better part of £150 each, and although these lenses include their own focusing mount the aperture has to be linked to the Werra body shutter unit making adaptation to mirrorless difficult. The excellent 35mm Flektogon ƒ2.4 for Praktica wins any day. There was never any other version of the Cardinar, but the Meyer Orestor 100mm ƒ2.8 pairs well in M42 mount.

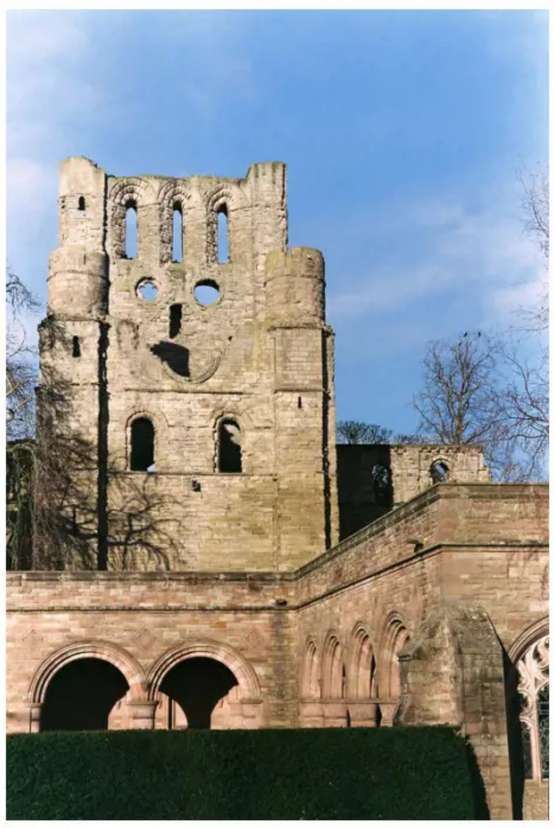
The Zorki's Jupiter-8 50mm ƒ2 is a different story. In Leica M39 thread, it is easily fitted to mirrorless via either standard or helical close focusing M adaptor and an LTM-M ring. I tested my example with a K&F adaptor, and the infinity register was perfect. Wide open the lens has the cocktail







Not very inspiring but in a run of endless rain a sunny day seemed enough in its own right! The Zorki shot above is exactly as intended. The vertical shot, left, shows how the focal plane shutter has deteriorated. Below right, the Zorki's closest focus at 0.9m with guesstimated parallax compensation.





Below, the Werra at 0.9m is surprising much closer.



of off-axis aberrations expected from a modified 1930s Sonnar but produces a sharp, medium contrast image corner to corner once down to ƒ4.

It doesn't have a flat field for close ups so test chart shots can show poor focus sharpness on top of vignetting, spherical, astigmatic and coma softening at 20mm off axis unless stopped down. Real-life 3D subjects are fine and the subtle focus transitions add to this fall-off. At ƒ2 the look can be romantic, at ƒ8 the image is clinical.

With the high costs of film and processing, I opted for dev and scan of one 24-exposure roll of 2004-expiry but deep frozen Fujicolor Superia 100 to check whether both cameras worked. The roll was shot with nine exposures on the Werra plus an extra pre-shoot frame allowed because the Zorki needs more leader exposing to load, then rewound and loaded into the Zorki with twelve lenscapped blanks shot. The actual gap was only two frames, and managing 15 exposures before the film ended gave some worry because Zorki wind-on is notoriously stiff. It easily ends with torn sprockets as the frame counter is hard to trust. The results were surprisingly good.

The Werra's leaf shutter exposure was more accurate, with even exposure across the frame. The closer 0.9m focus makes a difference. The Zorki rangefinder was more accurate and the lack of parallax lines like the Werra finder didn't make much difference. The focal plane shutter was sluggish and uneven at higher speeds especially when held vertically, showing the slot between the blinds was bulging. Both cameras were not easy to handle in the cold, especially the Zorki shutter speed setting and the film rewind clutch round its shutter release. No-one would ever choose to go back to this from digital!

Well, the eBay Werra and Zorki are destined to go into the cupboard of memories but the Jupiter lens will get some use. I've had identical model lenses to try on digital before but this one (from 1970 by serial number) is the first which matches the look I liked back in 1972… on FP4!

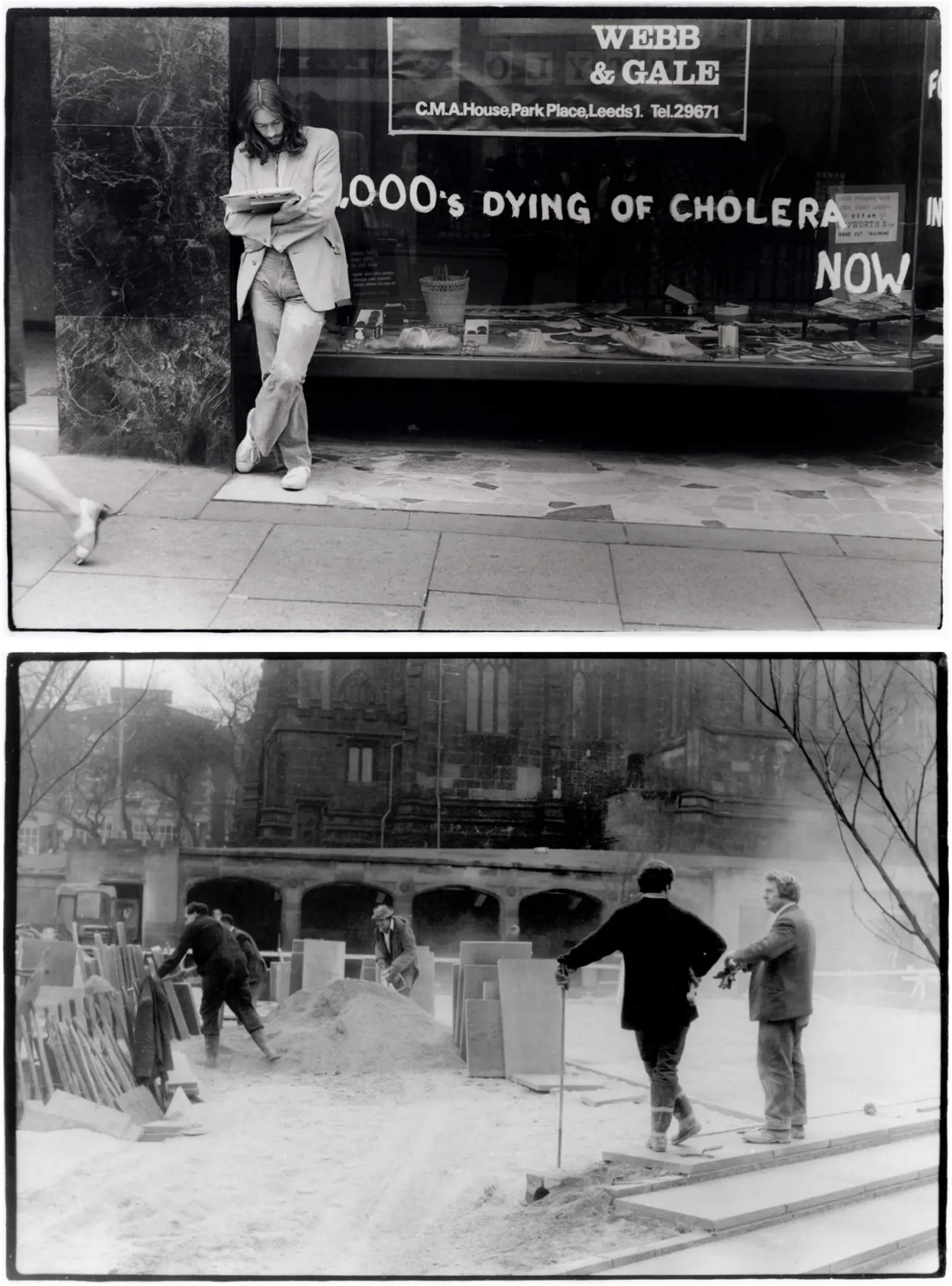
IMPROVISING A DARKROOM

Although darkroom work can be totally modern and silver image wet processing is not just a retro fad, it's very costly to equip a workable darkroom now and some of the items needed are hard to find. It's a good idea to head for the Analogue World at The Photography Show where just about everything connected with film, developer, fixer, paper, stop bath, toners and beyond can be found. Either that or just head for the Fotospeed stand!

I sold my fully fitted darkroom over 20 years ago for £850 to an Edinburgh student who replied to my spreading the word it was going. I had just acquired an Epson P3800 A2+ pigment ink printer – which is still going strong in my grandson's gallery and studio – and the contrast between the hassle of trying to make perfect 20 x 16 prints with drum processing for colour and just sending a file to the big printer was only bettered by the huge cost saving.

I had invested in an excellent Fujimoto 6 x 7cm colour enlarger, and for smaller prints a Durst benchtop processor. For black and white I still had my dishes, of course, though the practical limits were 12 x 16 on resin-coated paper with Durst hot air drying, or single prints on fibre based paper with an ageing flatbed dryer. Anything larger meant using a lab. At a pinch, I could take exposed RC paper into the imagesetting room and feed it through the dev and fix intended for page films for printing magazines.

But the print world changed – and I had helped it along willingly. Film became redundant, files were transmitted to CTP (computer to plate) systems anywhere in the world. Kodak, Agfa and 3M no longer got their weekly orders for 30m rolls of laser-tuned lith film or the chemicals consumed. It was that change, little to do with photography, which deprived their amateur and professional photo divisions of budgets, new products, advertising, awards competitions and much more. My selling off my darkroom was part of it.



Full neg prints from Zorki, top, and Pentax Spotmatic show how the size and position of the camera's film gate affects the self-printed black border. Both shots in or near All Saints' Square, Rotherham, in 1970.

But things are different now. I have bought a vintage 35mm-only, BW-only Leitz enlarger, the Valoy II with long column and anti-Newton condenser. I made some of my best prints very early on as a teenager using a Valoy 1 passed down by my uncle Len Davies. He had been an R&D scientist-engineer at AEI developing mercury vapour industrial and street lighting, and had fitted it to use one of his light sources similar to cold cathode. I put a regular bulb back in to eliminate the external transformer or ballast thingumajig and eliminate warm-up time. Some 70 or 80 years later I was able in my 'new' Valoy to use a large opal bulb type LED he would have loved – lower contrast than a tungsten bulb, but very even condenser illumination and short exposure times with no warm-up at all.

Enlargers like this sell for £100-250 on eBay, and the long column Valoy II with the AN condenser is the best option. The negative carrier is the key to quick accurate use. Some on sale have the carrier ruby windows to see the frame numbers missing, most have a hint of corrosion or wear like mine, and some Valoy or Focomat 1 enlargers are missing the carrier. As these fetch £80-100 it matters!

When writing up the Werra and Zorki, I remembered a shot *(upper left)* taken on my 1970 Zorki and took a look at the neg projected by the Valoy. Its early 1950s Ross Resolux 50mm ƒ3.5 lens is sharp but a modern Componon or EL Nikkor will be higher in contrast.

This reminded me I had bought a box of 500 sheets 7 x 9.5" (18 x 24xm) Ilfospeed Multigrade IV RC gloss in 2020, unopened and marked 'new 2015'. So I made up a litre of Adox Adotol Konstant print developer which costs under £10 – once mixed and stored in a full bottle can last up to a year. Even dish use doesn't oxidise it much so it's ideal to keep around for making occasional prints. I already had some Tetenal rapid fixer bottled – again, it keeps a long time.

Print vs scan vs capture

Why bother when the negative can be scanned? I already had a scan of the *1000's Dying of Cholera* FP4 neg.

Well, the MGIV 'no filter so G2-ish' print has a contrast with my LED source similar to Agfa Special, that paper uniquely between Grade 1 (soft) and 2 (normal). The print, with about 2X burning in to the pavement in the bottom left corner and a touch less graded to the right, lacks exhibition or print judging d-max. However, this is ideal for scanning using my Epson Perfection 1660 Photo USB flatbed scanner. It's still supported on OSX Tahoe on my M2 Studio Max, using Ed Hamrick's *Vuescan* software.

While printing does render grain sharply it's very different from a 35mm neg scanner or a macro lens digital copy. The grain and the tonal range are both much less gritty in a scan from print.

Because I no longer have a darkroom set-up, I had bought a few items on eBay over time – dishes, a safelights from Paterson (ortho red!) and Photax (orange) both known to be safe for MGIV. Then a pack of Multigrade filters, 85mm square and easy to pop inside the cool-light Valoy head on top of the condenser. And a Paterson 10 x 8 Speed washer, basically a tray with flow.



It's hard to find a really good example of the Leitz Valoy II now and it has flaws, such as light leaks which shine on the ceiling through its ventilation holes. Using an LED bulb means those can be masked off. The big paper box holds paper half its size, 500 sheets of 7 x 9.5", so 10 x 8" dishes are ideal. This could all fit a worktop on the width of two kitchen 600mm units. The seed propagator heat mat can help keep solutions at 20°C but it's only 17.5W.



I had not yet made a wash water exit pipe connection so I used a spare processing tray of water to hold the prints before taking them out to a sink. I used no dish warmer but started with dev and fix around 25°C to allow 30 minutes of working. I laser printed an A4 sheet with the 7 x 9.5" paper size in white with a black surround. This I used in the absence of a masking frame to centre up the 9 x 6" image – if the film gate of the camera is well positioned, the Leitz carrier has a 24.5 x 36.5mm window which gives a black border, long considered a proof of an uncropped shot. An LPL Focus Scope helped with grain focus but really needed an ND filter to be comfortable! The sheets of paper lay flat when removed from their 125-sheet black poly packs (four of these in the 500-sheet box). The paper did not move during exposure but it was tricky not to shift my loose-laid guide.

My first guessed exposure was four times too much as the LED source proves to be highly actinic. My next guess was the other way. I used six sheets of paper to get my final two prints, having never printed the 1970 workmen laying Rotherham's newly landscaped All Saints' Square before. This neg needed a Grade 4 filter.

The paper has probably lost contrast with age, but this does not matter with scanning in mind. I set the scans to save as 48-bit RGB as Greyscale is a very poor option for making good reproductions (scan in RGB and reduce Saturation to 1% – Adobe may convert anything with zero saturation to Greyscale).

A darkroom can be any room you can black out with a metre of worktop for the enlarger and dishes, plus somewhere to keep the paper and negative files safe. I dried the RC prints by propping the bottom edge of each vertically placed sheet on the interior fins of a sandwich type central heating radiator, the top leaning on the wall. A clothes drier net/mesh would be as good.

What's best is that this brief process was enjoyable. I have bought a Durst Comask 7 x 9.5" multi aperture easel which will also allow test prints, four per sheet. A £14 EL Nikkor 50mm ƒ4 has replaced the 1950s Resolux. Why not ƒ2.8? I don't need the full colour printing correction that offers or the large print size it's computed for, and ƒ2.8 designs don't fit the Valoy's recessed M39 mount. As a solution to dish warming I've got an HGN Heat Mat made to go under seed trays – £13 from Amazon, waterproof with a 10 x 20" footprint that fits under the more important dev and fix trays and uses just 17.5W. That and keeping the room warm…

– David Kilpatrick

Cameracraft Picture Clue Crossword

by Phoebus

An idea from an old friend of this magazine, dreamed up over a Gregg's coffee. For the solution, visit: https://cameracraft.online/xword1























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8							■		■	9				
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10									■	11				
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12				■	13	14		15	16					
	■		■	■	■		■	■		■	■	■	■	
17	18			19	■		■	■	20	21		22		
■		■	■		■	23		24	■		■		■	
■		■	■		■		■		■		■	25	■	■
26							■		■	■	■		■	■
■		■	■		■		■	27		28				29
30					■		■		■		■		■	
■		■	■		■		■		■		■	31		


26 ACROSS


OS
PERIGO
DOMU
4 DOWN


18 DOWN
CAMERACRAFT

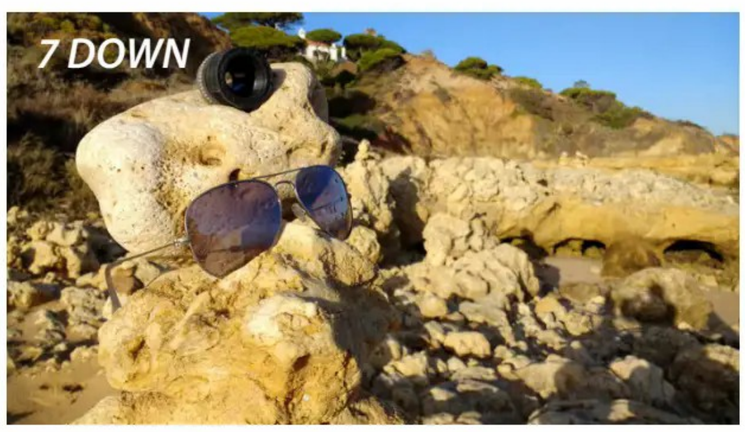

Bury St
Edmunds
Where?
Colchester
Clacton-on-Sea
27 ACROSS


5 DOWN


19 DOWN


30 ACROSS


6 DOWN

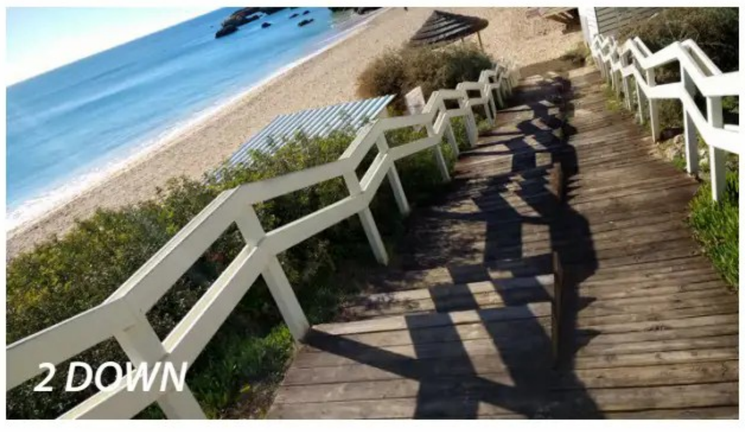

7 DOWN

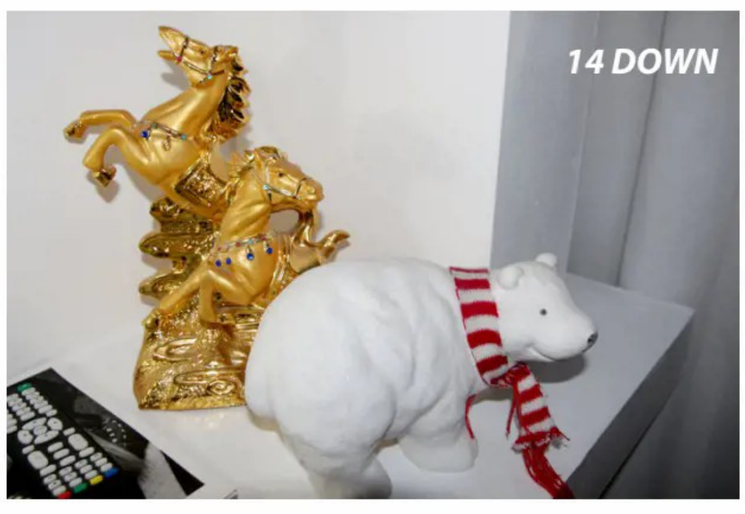

21, 22 and
25 DOWN


31 ACROSS

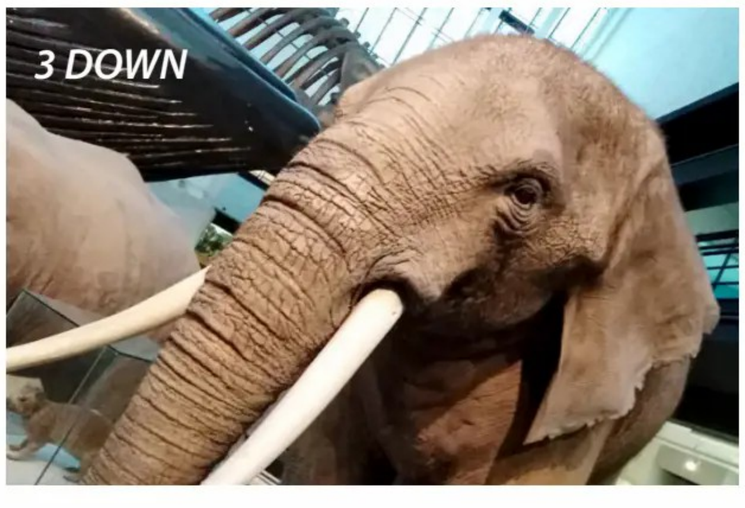

10 DOWN


TRAINING
ADVISORY
CENTRE
TRAINING
ADVISORY
CENTRE
Southern Derbyshire
Training Enterprise Council
Mrs. EDWINA CURRIE
24 DOWN


2 DOWN


14 DOWN


28 DOWN


3 DOWN


16 DOWN
299-201
West 33rd St
ONE WAY
Subway


29 DOWN

CAMERACRAFT
REARVIEW

These three images are selected from annual awards of The Guild of Photographers 2025, judged from the ten months of entries from members. The awards were presented at the beginning of February and for the first time included the UK Photography Print Awards. See **photoguild.co.uk** for details of membership and the monthly awards.



Above, Members' Choice Image of the Year by **Martin Robinson**. Below, one of many 'Pets' Golds from Overall Photographer of the Year **Callie Soden**.



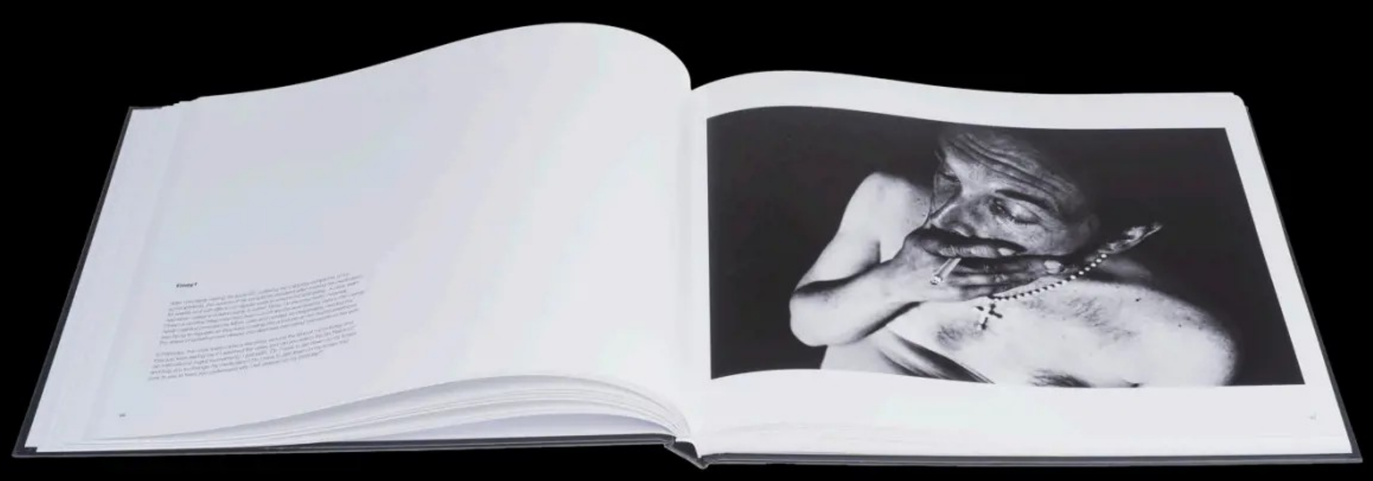


By **Ryan Hutton** – the Judges' Choice Overall Image of the Year, also the Urban Image of the Year, and winner of the Landscape Category in the separately-entered UK Photography Print Awards sponsored by Epson and Photoshield Insurance.



The day we were going to press our copy of J A Mortram's second book, *Small Town Inertia 2*, arived together with his signed darkroom print – a valuable reward for subscribing to Jim's Kickstarter to get the book into print. Published by Image & Reality, ISBN 978-1-73834245-9-7, it appears seven years after the original *Small Town Inertia* which we featured with a portfolio of Jim's gritty but always compassionate social documentary work. It documents destitution, and every right-hand page photograph in the large format 216-page book is faced by a text. Some are long, some very brief, and it opens with a very personal account. Stories thread from photograph to photograph through the pages.

In it we see battles against a bureaucracy which fails to serve those who can not serve themselves from the depleted and often inaccessible menu of state and local authority life support. This is photography and reporting which neither the national nor local press, nor broadcast media and mainstream net platforms, have the guts to champion. Perhaps Sir Stephen Fry's endorsement will give Jim help, as his enthusiasm did for the musician Jon Gomm. Please look at: https://www.imageandreality.co.uk/store/p/small-town-inertia-2



It's always exciting to encounter a new, energetic and individual voice. For me that excitement is magnified hugely when the voice is local to Norfolk, the county I am proud to call home. Rich with passion and fire, but free of self-pity and misery - these poems, photographs and paragraphs take us into a world and a life that most of us are lucky enough not to know. But we should know, for this is a story of our fellow citizens trapped in a system that simply isn't good enough. Look through these pages and be moved and marvel at Jim Mortram's passion and sensitivity for his people and understanding and respectful love for his home town.

Stephen Fry.

Sir Stephen Fry