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7days

A week in photography



'People who need people are the luckiest people,' sang Barbra Streisand, and it's true that portrait photography can be hugely rewarding. No two

people are alike, so making images of our fellows is never dull or predictable. However, some people aren't always comfortable with having their portrait taken or don't have the time to hang around, so you need to work quickly, accurately and consistently, especially when it comes to lighting and editing. This week's issue is dedicated to the art of people shots: from the best portrait lenses and lighting accessories, to posing and editing tips. Our experts cover a range of subjects, from kids to fashion models, as the skills you need will change accordingly. I hope you find it useful, and do send us your best portraits.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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amateurphotographer magazine

ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK

Glowing in the Wind

by Martin Dolan

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 16-35mm, 1/13 sec at f/8, ISO 200

This stunning sunset was uploaded to our Twitter page using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. It was taken by photographer Martin Dolan. He tells us, 'A hazy Saturday evening showing all the signs of a decent sunset saw me venture to a high vantage point at Hengistbury Head, Dorset to capture the sunset while being able to get the coastline in the shot.'

'A fairly strong wind meant capturing this image would be a challenge, but seeing the light caught in the grass was too good to resist. With a higher ISO and wider aperture than I would normally use I was able to capture the grass with a very slight amount of movement. An extremely intense afterglow soon followed this image – a very memorable evening indeed!'



Win! Each week we choose our favourite picture on Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter or the reader gallery using #appicoftheweek. PermaJet proudly supports the online picture of the week winner, who will receive a top-quality print of their image on the finest PermaJet paper*. It is important to bring images to life outside the digital sphere, so we encourage everyone to get printing today! Visit www.permajet.com to learn more.



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Send us your pictures If you'd like to see your work published in *Amateur Photographer*, here's how to send us your images:
Email Email a selection of low-res images (up to 5MB of attachments in total) to appicturedesk@timeinc.com.
CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 53.
Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.
Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 53.

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by Amy Davies and Hollie Latham Hucker



© MAREK STANIAK

Institution of Engineering competition launched

Supported by *Amateur Photographer*, the IET Engineering and Technology Photographer of the Year is open to any photograph of an engineering-related subject that captures the dynamic, creative and progressive face of engineering and engineers today. Photographers can enter up to five photos across five categories. See theiet.org/photo-competition for more details.

Datacolor and Fujifilm team up for discounts

Datacolor, a global leader in colour management solutions, and Fujifilm Imaging Products & Solutions have announced a working partnership. Customers who purchase a qualified Datacolor Spyder product, such as the Spyder5Express, will receive a 50% discount on a Fujifilm Fotoservice pro product of their choice, including photobooks, canvas and aluminium prints.



Sony launches new SSD series

Sony is expanding its External Solid-State Drive (SSD) range with its new top-of-the-range SL-E series. Smaller than a credit card, with up to 960GB of storage, the SSD is equipped with compact and reversible USB Type-C ports, for use with mobile devices, as well as standard-A cables, for use with a computer.



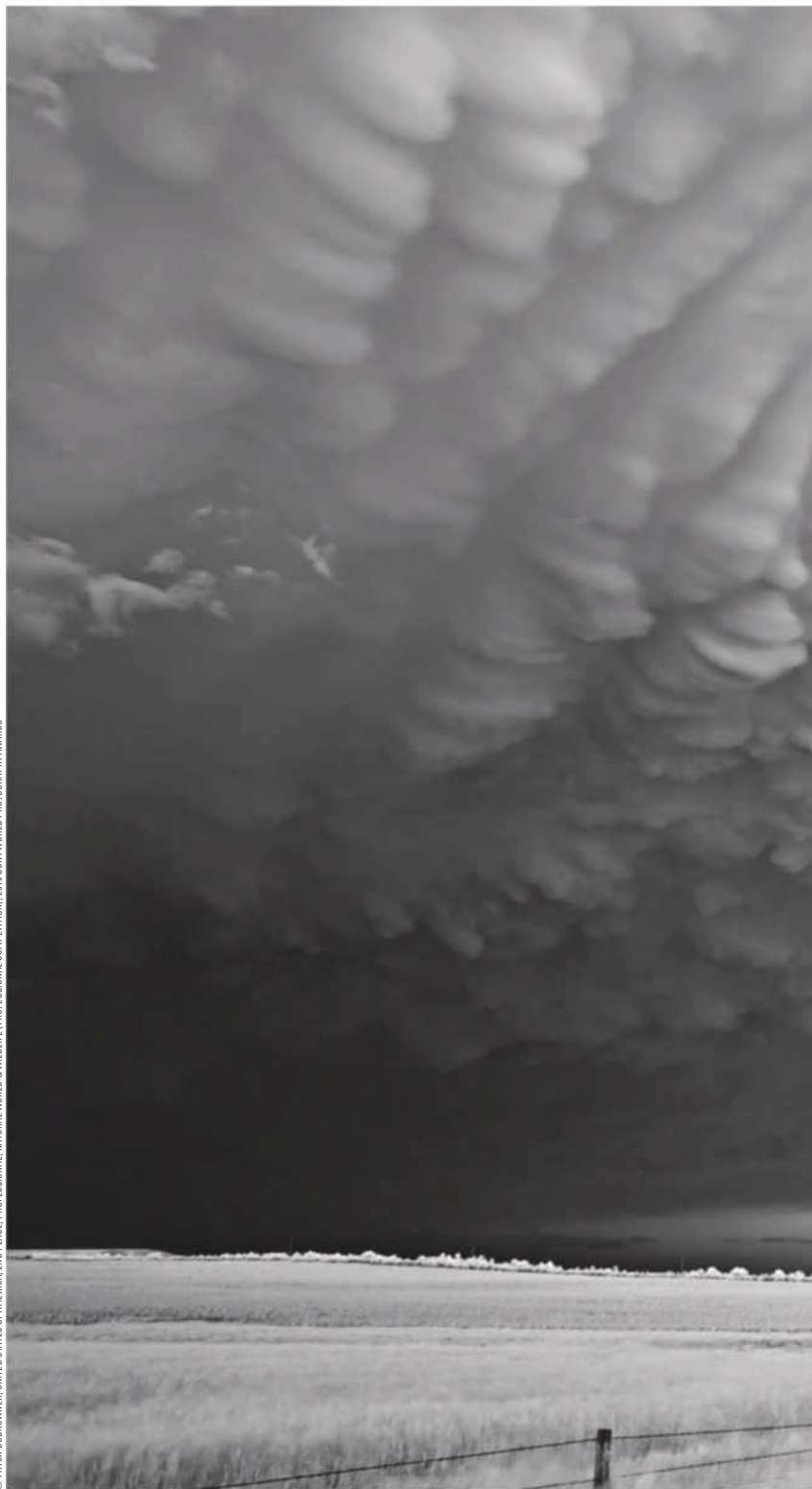
Olympus launches cashback deals

Selected OM-D cameras and M.Zuiko lenses bought between now and 31 July 2018 are subject to a cashback reward of up to £175. Some of the cameras included in the promotion are the E-M5 Mark II, E-M10 Mark II and E-M10 Mark III. For the full list of included models, see bonus.olympus.eu.

8 gigapixel time-lapse of London skyline

The biggest ever time-lapse photo of London's skyline, taken from the roof of 1 Canada Square in Canary Wharf has been released. It's titled '24 Hour London'. A total of 6,240 photos were taken across a 155° view over 24 hours, before being stitched together. Pre-programmed robotic motion-control technology was used to repeat the same photo pattern 260 times an hour, without a single pixel of discrepancy. See www.lenstore.co.uk/vc/24-hour-london.

© MITCH DOBROWNER, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ZIN PLACE, PROFESSIONAL, NATURAL WORLD & WILDLIFE PROFESSIONAL COMPETITION, 2018 SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPH AWARDS



BIG picture

Amazing storm photo recognised at Sony World Photo Awards

Capturing the power and beauty of a storm can be a moving experience, says American photographer Mitch Dobrowner. 'I see storms as living, breathing beings,' he explains. 'They are born when the conditions are right, they gain strength and they grow, they fight against their environment to stay alive, they change form as they age... and eventually,



they die. They take on so many different aspects, personalities and faces; I'm in awe while watching them.'

Dobrowner's series 'Storm Systems' was awarded the 2nd place in the Natural World & Wildlife Professional category at the Sony World Photography Awards this year. To see more of his work visit www.mitchdobrowner.com. And to find out more about the Sony World Photography Awards, visit www.worldphoto.org.

Words & numbers

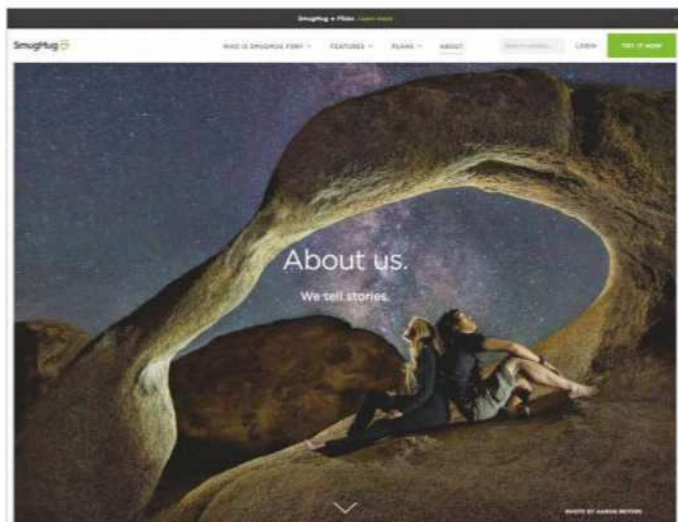
One reason I was interested in photography was to get away from the preciousness of the art object

Cindy Sherman

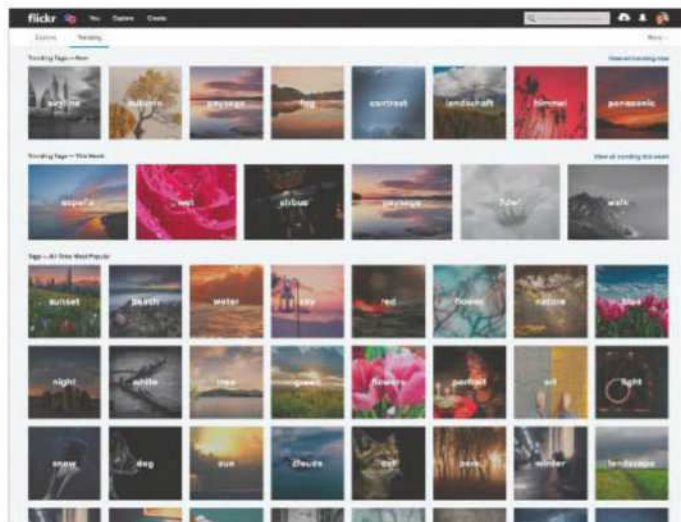
American photographer and film director

100 million
The number of active Flickr users per month

SOURCE: WWW.FLICKR.COM



Flickr and SmugMug will remain separate brands after the buyout



A SmugMug or Flickr user typically has thousands of photos in their account

The Flickr buyout: your questions answered

The news that photo-sharing website SmugMug has bought its giant rival Flickr from Yahoo raises interesting questions about the company's plans. Nigel Atherton talked to SmugMug CEO Don MacAskill for some answers

What went wrong for Flickr and why have you bought it?

I think that it's probably just that Flickr has never been Yahoo's big focus. Yahoo knew that it had something great but I'm not sure it ever fully understood Flickr, fully embraced it or fully invested in it. And they never really kept up with the changes that have happened in the world of photography and online services. But it's remarkable how big and important Flickr still is. Something like 100 million people use it every month. We have long admired Flickr as a brand and as a community of very passionate, engaged photographers. So when the opportunity arose, we jumped at it.

What are your plans for Flickr and SmugMug?

We will keep them as separate brands. I don't totally know yet what we're going to do because we're still learning what works and what doesn't at Flickr and what Flickr's community really wants us to build. They have made it clear that they want us to get them off Yahoo's log-in authentication system, so we are already turning the wheels to make that happen.

We've also heard that people want a free account, and that's good because we also want that. Other than that we're going to collaborate with the Flickr team on creating a roadmap that will thrill Flickr customers.

What are the main points of difference between them?

If you want to engage with a big, deep, community around your photos, within the application, learn from them and get feedback on your own work, then Flickr is the answer. SmugMug is more about creating a beautiful customised website for your photos, where you can control how they are displayed and who has access. And it's also for the working professional who wants our deep e-commerce tools and features. Lots of photographers want both of those things, and it will be interesting to figure out how we can build bridges between the two products.

Are Flickr and SmugMug primarily desktop or mobile apps?

Our focus is on both. Mobile is growing and exceeding desktop as



SmugMug CEO Don MacAskill admires Flickr's engaged community

a consumption mechanism, but our customers are looking for a deeper and richer desktop-based experience too, particularly as they are organising their photos. A typical SmugMug or Flickr photographer is likely to have thousands or tens of thousands of photos in their account and I think that requires a large-screen desktop experience to curate. But those photos will be viewed in large numbers on mobile devices.

What are the advantages of your platforms compared with Instagram?

They are very different. Instagram is a wonderful place to showcase your photos, but you are looking for a quick hit of engagement and a whole bunch of likes and comments for a day, and it's a difficult place to tell a long-term story. It's a place where there is a constant churn on activity feeds and streams, and photos just don't have a lot of longevity. People often don't get to come back and revisit those photos at a later date, and it's hard to connect a series of photos together to tell a story. SmugMug and Flickr, on the other hand, are far more structured around allowing users to build something permanent and tell long-lasting stories, and to use the functionality to engage over years and years and know there is some level of permanence.

Do you see the main social media platforms as rivals?

Their products and their business models are widely different from ours. They're very advertiser focused, so most of their effort goes into thinking: 'How can we sell more and better advertising around people's photos?' We just don't see the world that way. Our photographers are our focus.

Call to restore a legend's grave

ANYONE who is interested in 19th-century travel photography should see the exhibition of images from China and Southeast Asia taken by John Thomson (1837–1921). The show, which is on at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS, University of London, until June 22, is a revelation if you don't know Thomson's work.

From humble beginnings in Edinburgh, he became a top society portrait photographer in Bangkok and Hong Kong, making memorable images of the then King of Siam and some of the most powerful ministers in China's Qing dynasty. He was also the first European to photograph the Angkor Wat temple complex – a project which nearly killed him because he caught jungle fever – and was a highly skilled landscape and architectural photographer, capturing Bangkok, Beijing and Hong Kong in the era before globalisation.

Although Thomson achieved some fame in his



Just one of the striking portraits from the SOAS exhibition

lifetime, bolstered by his controversial project on urban poverty in association with Adolphe Smith called *Street Life in London*, his final resting place in Streatham is now sadly neglected. To rectify this, a grave restoration committee has been formed, including RPS director general Michael Pritchard and Thomson expert Betty Yao, and it has set up a crowdfunding campaign to restore his

resting place. 'John Thomson's photographs provide a rich and lasting visual record of the Far East,' said a committee spokesperson. 'It is fitting that we restore the grave as a renewed memorial to the man and his work.'

You can donate at justgiving.com/crowdfunding/johnthomsongravestone. Watch out for a feature on the SOAS exhibition in a forthcoming issue of AP.

DxO Labs bankruptcy confirmed

DESPITE DxO Labs's decision to file for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy Protection, the company is confident that customers should not feel any ill effects.

In a blogpost on the DxO Labs website, a statement read, 'We are very confident that this procedure... should not last for more than a few weeks.'

Furthermore, updates to DxO's flagship software, DxO PhotoLab, is promised for June (version 1.2), while a new version of the Nik Software Collection, which DxO acquired from Google at the end of 2017, is also anticipated for the same month. This first



DxO is updating its Nik Software Collection

'by DxO' version focuses on fixing bugs and ensuring compatibility with the latest Mac OS and PC platforms.

Back in the day

A wander through the AP archive. This week we pay a visit to 1977



AH, 1977, the year of the Queen's Silver Jubilee, punk, the death of Elvis... and an AP cover model lying on sheepskin, surrounded by SLRs. This cover would make us a laughing stock nowadays, but there you go. Inside the issue was a big competition to photograph happiness, with a handsome purse of £1,500 and some unintentionally funny captions to accompany the 'inspirational' images: 'how happy this seal looks, languishing in his sunlit pool.' On a darker note, one of the judges was Rolf Harris, who seemed to crop up like a bad penny in AP back then. Other highlights included Victor Blackman photographing a 'tennis girl with grit' (eh?) and a major guide to SLRs, which were clearly causing a lot of excitement. You'd never call AP back then particularly 'punk', but the sub-editor may have been a Sex Pistols fan: 'Never mind the viewfinder, what about the view,' they wrote. Nice!



Happy? These youthful subjects certainly were

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

Exhibition

Up Close with Marilyn: Portraits

by Milton H Greene

In her time **Marilyn Monroe** was one of the most recognisable people in the Western world, and this exhibition explores her versatility, says **Oliver Atwell**

'Up Close with Marilyn' runs at Proud Central, London, until 24 June 2018. Entry is free. For more details, visit www.proud.co.uk

Of all the movie stars of the Western world, perhaps the most iconic at least in terms of photographic representations and reproductions, is Marilyn Monroe. Born in 1926 in Los Angeles, she became the original 'blonde bombshell' – almost a prototype of a wave of female actresses that appeared in her wake. So far-reaching was her influence that the image of Monroe has almost become a mythic archetype. Her look is consistently mimicked – one that is used to evoke a particular era and attitude. In her short career she was often cast as the 'dumb blonde', particularly in films such as *How to Marry a Millionaire* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. However, it's easy to forget that beneath that fabricated screen presence was a human being who was easily 10 times as clever as any director and producer. In fact, that aforementioned typecasting was a source of constant

despair and frustration, for Monroe always knew she was capable of so much more.

Despite her on-screen persona, Monroe was a smart and savvy individual who knew how to build a character that would be etched into the minds of moviegoers. Bear in mind that she was married to American playwright Arthur Miller, a hugely influential and intellectual figure, and she also amassed a library of books so large it actually had to be catalogued at the time of her death at the age of just 36.

Portraits of an icon

We could perhaps also look to Monroe's smart pickings when it came to the photographers she had relationships with. Both Bert Stern and Eve Arnold are especially notable for the iconic images they took of Monroe. You can see in those images how utterly photogenic Monroe was and how responsive she was to the



'The images demonstrate the versatility of an artist pigeonholed for years'



ALL PICTURES: PHOTOGRAPHS BY MILTON H. GREENE © JOSHUA GREENE WWW.ARCHIVEPAGES.COM

Greene's images of Marilyn reveal a more multifaceted persona



'The Black Sitting' wasn't released until 1973, 11 years after her death



process of collaboration. However, of particular interest here is the work she produced with American-born celebrity and fashion photographer Milton H Greene. While Greene was a prolific individual (he was also a film producer), he is best known for his images of Monroe.

The pair first encountered one another during a photoshoot for *Look* magazine in 1953. They quickly formed a partnership and even founded a company together – Marilyn Monroe Productions. As a duo, they attempted to steer Monroe away from the ‘dumb blonde’ stereotype and take back control of her career. Part of this came in the form of an archive of images, all of which demonstrate the versatility of an artist pigeonholed for years.

The most famous image featured in this exhibition, hosted by Proud Central in London, is ‘The Ballerina Sitting’ from 1954 (see above). So famous is this shot that *Time* magazine nominated it the third best photograph of the 20th century. In this image, Monroe sits in a tulle-and-satin dress that is two sizes too small, an error due to Amy, Greene’s wife, shopping for the dress and not knowing Monroe’s

correct dress size. It really is a striking portrait. Monroe’s pose – her face, one elevated arm (the only way she could keep her dress up) – as well as Greene’s straightforward photography, works perfectly as a clear demonstration of the power of portraiture.

Another image of particular note is ‘The Black Sitting’ taken in 1956, and it is this one that is perhaps most popular with Monroe aficionados. This image was the result of a four-hour shoot which saw Monroe posing in a variety of outfits. In the end, Greene threw away the clothes and wrapped Monroe in black velvet. The images from this shoot were never released during Monroe’s lifetime and only found their way into the world upon the publication of Norman Mailer’s book *Marilyn: A Biography* in 1973.

Viewing the images, it’s difficult not to feel melancholic. Monroe is one of those icons who, had she lived, would likely have demonstrated a range of talent that was only hinted at in her few film roles and the photographic records she left behind. It’s a shame, but at least we have these images to commemorate the talent.



Also out now

The latest and best books from the world of photography



© JUDIS QUAIL

Big Brother

By Louis Quail, Dewi Lewis, £35, 196 pages, hardback, ISBN 978-1-911306-31-3

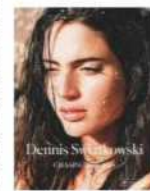


Of all the recent conversations that have opened up across society, one of the most prevalent and far-reaching has revolved around the issue of mental health. Platforms such as Twitter have allowed numerous individuals to connect with one another and

engage in dialogues revolving around their own personal struggles with depression, anxiety and otherwise. In this new book published by Dewi Lewis, photographer Louis Quail presents his own take on the issue as he presents the story of his brother Justin, an individual living with the spectre of schizophrenia, a condition that has seen him sectioned on three separate occasions. What’s especially interesting about this book is the lack of distance. Louis gives us an intimate insight into the life of his brother, and the book also includes texts by Justin himself. *Big Brother* is an important book that works to destigmatise such a misunderstood illness, and is well worth your time. ★★★★★ **Oliver Atwell**

Chasing Dreams

By Dennis Swiatkowski, Prestel, £35, 212 pages, ISBN 978-3-7913-8426-9



If you’re looking to get away from the grey skies over Britain but can’t quite afford the airfare, then sit back in your most comfortable chair and let young hotshot photographer Dennis Swiatkowski guide you through the lush grasslands, beaches, mountains and forests of the world. Swiatkowski is a photographer much in demand, and has been commissioned by publications such as *Glamour*, *Elle* and *Vice* as well as photographed for brands ranging from Nike and Adidas to Tommy Hilfiger. Swiatkowski grew up in the Netherlands and South Africa so from an early age was infected by the wanderlust that can so often guide the most intrepid travel photographers. This a glossy publication that will appeal to travel and fashion photographers. ★★★★★ **Oliver Atwell**



Viewpoint David Healey

The latest equipment is no guarantee of the finest photo or the greatest happiness

When Nikon introduced its ground-breaking 35mm F system SLR in 1959, it may not have expected the Nikon F to still be in production in the 1970s. Its successors – the F2, F3, F4 and F5 – were around for a much shorter time, about eight years apiece. Digital cameras have even shorter life cycles: Canon's online museum shows a new variant of the EOS 5D appearing nearly every three years.

Continuous advances in digital technology make shorter product life cycles. And, of course, one of the marks of consumerism is innovation – we expect a 'better' offer to turn up regularly. So we are used to frequently replacing all sorts of consumer products for many reasons, of which not all are good.

Yet 'new' does not always mean 'better'. The latest model's advantages may be only at the extremes: my 24MP Nikon D750 has a better low-light capability than my 12MP D700. But at ISO 200 would most people spot the difference? My Nikon F2 may be as good a light-tight box (what a camera body is in essence) as my F3... or an F6, if I had one. The later models are more versatile. But if we upgrade our cameras, what do we do with the old ones? How many of us have perfectly good cameras that languish in a cupboard?

A change of perspective

Something doesn't have to be new, shiny or expensive to be of worth to someone, or indeed facilitate good pictures. At one inner-city school where I work, we are building a stock of donated (as we have no capital budget) DSLRs to lend to GCSE photography students unable to afford their own camera: 26% of our Y7-11 students are on pupil premium: funding given to state schools to help us raise the attainment of 'disadvantaged' pupils. On the strength of such statistics, a friend donated his Canon EOS 40D. Its maximum ISO of 1600 and 10MP sensor will matter little to the student who otherwise would have no access to a camera more versatile than his phone.

Most of all, whether a photographer has an eye for light and can 'see' pictures is more important than the number of megapixels owned. Giving a teenager the chance to use a camera will help reveal that. The 40D will now have a new lease of life; the students who use it will be blessed by his generosity and may become even better photographers. And it's one less piece going into landfill!

David Healey ARPS chairs the RPS's Analogue group and tutors photography at King Edward VI Aston and Handsworth schools. See www.facebook.com/groups/rpsanalogue/



Nikon's F2 was on the market from 1971 to around 1980

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS COLUMN ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER MAGAZINE OR THE ICA (UK)

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 53 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

In next week's issue

On sale Tuesday 22 May



© JAMES ABBOTT

Absolute sharpness

Wary of the complexities of focus stacking? James Abbott makes it easy for you



Panasonic Lumix DC-TZ200

Andy Westlake finds out if the best travel camera just got better

Google Pixel 2

A simple but powerful smartphone camera that's worthy of your attention

Here's the news

We bring you the most compelling pictures from World Press Photo 2018

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STREET



Perfect portraits

From beautifully lit **beauty portraits** to candid **travel photos** and action-packed **sports shots**, our **top pros** offer **expert advice** to help improve your **portraiture skills**

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Fine art

Keep it simple with lighting and post-production, and take the time to choose your model and get to know them

Trevor and Faye Yerbury



Trevor and Faye have won awards for portraiture, classical nudes, wedding and avant-garde work. Faye uses a Fujifilm X-T1 with 16mm-55mm and 56mm prime lenses. Trevor also enjoys shooting film with a Hasselblad and 150mm lens. www.yerburystudio.com.



2 Don't overdo it

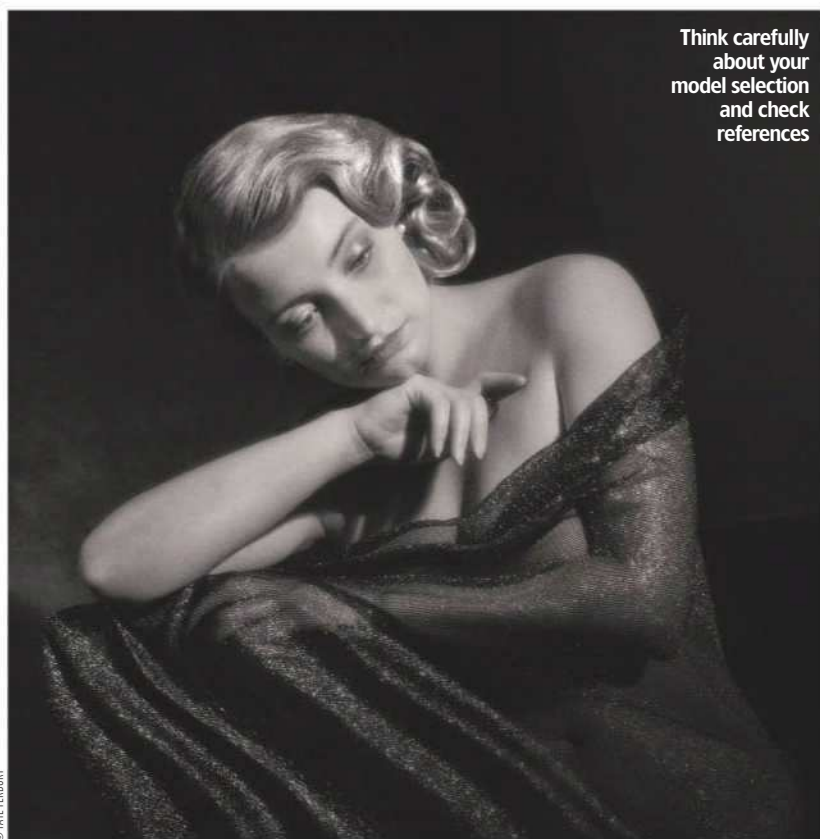
We see plenty of images where the post-production has been overdone. Often skin has been softened so much that it has no texture left and can look like plastic. Too much sharpening is also a common mistake, leaving a white line around the blacks in an image.

3 Keep lighting simple

In our studio we work mainly with one large softbox and a gold reflector, or a beauty dish and reflector. These simple set-ups provide great starting points and allow us to concentrate on our subjects. On location we work exclusively with natural light.

4 Get to know your model

Spend some time with your subject and find out why he/she wants the portrait taken. This knowledge will allow you to generate ideas. As a portrait photographer you get to spend time with people you have never met, and this can be an invaluable educational experience.



Think carefully about your model selection and check references

1 Check model references

Models can be found online via various model pages, but check their references for reliability and punctuality so you will not be disappointed on the day of the shoot. Models, whether male or female, should be made to feel comfortable and relaxed in your company. If you are a male photographer, having a wife, partner, hair/make-up artist on the shoot is helpful.



5 Use a bespoke background

For studio work we commission our own backgrounds. We design each of them ourselves. We have never understood the point of having a background that several other people might own. On location we look for several things in a background: texture, solidity, distressed architecture, sand, or anything else that we can place a figure in front of. Our standards are high, though, so many are found but few are used.

Travel

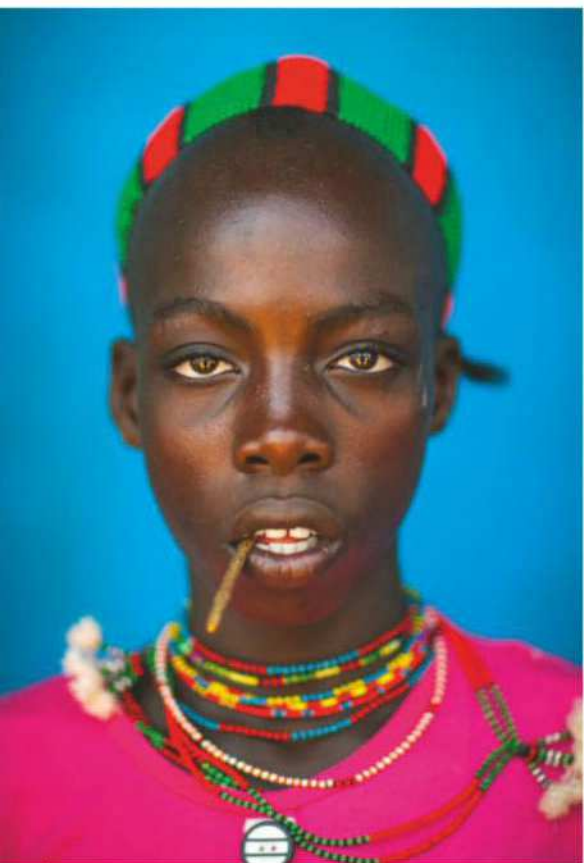
Respect your subjects and ask politely for their permission. Think about the backdrop and try to shoot wide open

Eric Lafforgue



Eric Lafforgue has a passion for travel. He started taking pictures in 2006, and it wasn't long before prestigious magazines including *National Geographic* and *Lonely Planet* were featuring his work. Eric spends most of his time travelling. He currently uses a Canon EOS 5D Mark IV with an 85mm lens. Visit www.ericlafforgue.com.

ALL PICTURES ON THIS PAGE © ERIC LAFFORGUE



9 Shoot at f/1.2

Don't follow the rules. Try to shoot at f/1.2 if your lens allows it and focus on your subject's eyes. Ask him or her to keep a suitable distance from the background to achieve attractive blur.

10 Leave a gift

Carry an instant camera – it will enable you to hand out pictures as gifts and to share your passion with local people. Sometimes, in poor areas, people do not own a single picture of themselves.



Avoid distracting backdrops and consider colour combinations

6 Choose the background carefully

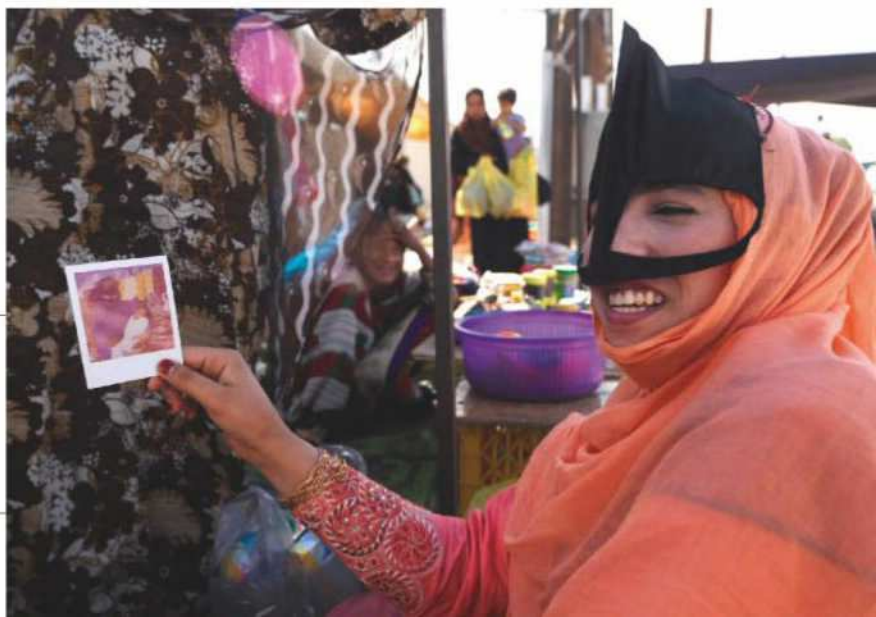
To obtain a good portrait you need to consider the background. Take the time to move your subject in front of a backdrop that can be blurred for a better effect, or perhaps move him/her in front of a bright colour that will make the head pop out of the picture.

7 Pay when asked, but not too much

In many countries local people will ask for money in exchange for taking their picture. You must not turn this activity into a business for the locals, especially children. I usually offer enough money to buy food or, better still, I buy food for my subject.

8 Make people feel confident

Taking portraits can be quite nerve-racking, but asking costs nothing and in many situations people will say 'yes'. In Somalia, for example, I was able to take countless pictures just because I asked politely. Take your time – never shoot and run!



Environmental

When working with ambient light, consider the strength, direction and temperature, and shoot manually for control

Peter Searle



Peter Searle makes portraits of people from all walks of life. He loves going to an unknown place with unknown conditions. He currently uses a Fujifilm GFX 50S with GF 32-64mm, 110mm and 63mm lenses and a Fujifilm X-Pro2 with Fujinon 18mm, 56mm, 35mm, 23mm and Samyang 12mm lenses. www.petersearle.com.

11 Shoot manually

Without exception, I shoot manually – it is the best way to be in complete control. Decide how much available light to use and then set your controls accordingly. Introduce flash if it is to be your key light and set the correct power output. Adjust how much the ambient light fills the shadows by changing your shutter speed.



Assess the ambient light conditions and introduce flash if necessary



ALL PICTURES ON THIS PAGE © PETER SEARLE

12 Establish a rapport

If, like me, you don't like having your own picture taken, use this to put your subject at ease. Make it clear that you will direct, which absolves the subject of responsibility. Hardly anyone likes having their portrait taken – cabinet ministers and actors included.



Less is more when it comes to post-production

13 Use mixed lighting

To emphasise your subject, light them with a colour that is the opposite of the background. To warm up the background, for example, light your subject with a slight blue filter. When this is neutralised in post-production, it will make the background appear warmer.



14 Assess the location

Study the direction and strength of the available light. Are you going to work with it, against it or eliminate it entirely? If you shoot with it, you can use the ambient light to fill the shadows and even make the flash invisible. It will still lift the image.

15 Take care in post-production

Avoid using too much shadow recovery and clarity when processing raw files. We've all done it but it's already old hat and looks like an attempt to make an average or bad image look better. Less is more, as they say.

Lifestyle

Put your subject at ease with a pre-shoot consultation and a relaxing but fun shoot environment for the best results

Sharron Goodyear



Sharron Goodyear has won multiple awards in portrait and wedding photography. She was also a 2017 MPA Photography Awards finalist in Wedding Classical. Sharron launched her beauty and boudoir business last year. She uses a Nikon D750 and her favourite Nikkor 85mm f/1.8 prime. Visit fabulouslysharrongoodyear.com.

16 Experiment with lighting

I use a Nikon D750 as my camera body and mostly shoot with a Nikkor 50mm f/1.8, 85mm f/1.8 lens or a 24-120mm f/4. As an ambassador of Phottix Lighting I use a Mitros TTL Flash for Nikon (off-camera) and an Odin TTL Flash trigger that I combine with natural light.

17 Enjoy home comforts

I live in a new-build property and have an attic bedroom that I have styled for high-end boudoir shoots. I have white walls and a white wooden floor, a velvet chaise longue, velvet headboard and champagne tones to create an upmarket boutique hotel feel. This saves a fortune on hotel costs.



Ensure your subject is relaxed to get natural-looking results

18 Offer a pre-shoot consultation

Try to build a rapport with your subjects so they feel comfortable. Before my clients arrive at the studio, I have already put them at ease with a pre-shoot consultation where I guide them through what to expect and how much fun they are going to have.

ALL PICTURES ON THIS PAGE © SHARRON GOODYEAR

19 Have some fun

I usually begin a session with some fun posing first, using props such as my Olympus PEN camera for the subject to pretend to photograph me, or I ask them to throw a pillow around to suggest a pillow fight. I always have music on, too. This helps people to relax.

20 Perfect your post-production

In post-production, I work with Mastin Labs Lightroom presets to give images a filmic look. Alien Skin Exposure X3 and Florebellia actions in Photoshop are my go-to filters to bring images to life.



Street

For a successful shoot scout the location, research your subject and be true to your photography style and vision

Peter Dench



Peter Dench is a photojournalist, writer, presenter, curator and Olympus Visionary. He is best known for his work documenting Great Britain and British people. Peter's go-to kit is an Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II with an M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-40mm f/2.8 Pro lens and Olympus Electronic Flash FL-900R. Visit www.peterdench.com.



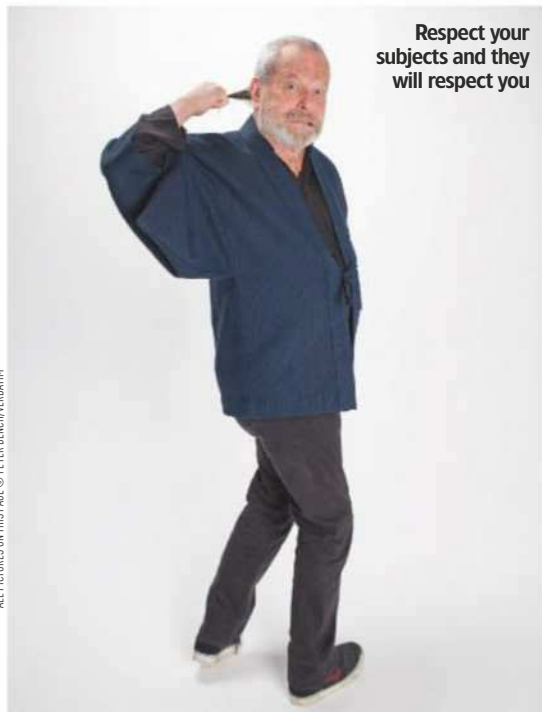
21 Be true to yourself

Unless instructed, don't stray too far from your style. You have been commissioned to take the portrait on the strength of your portfolio or archive, so be true to that. A portrait should be a collaboration. You should respect the person you are taking a portrait of and what they do, and they should respect your ideas and creative eye.



22 Scout the location

If it's an environmental portrait, arrive early, scout the location and have a few options in mind to discuss with the subject when he/she arrives. Be prepared to adapt and work quickly. Shoot a few safer options first before pushing on with something more daring. I have, on occasions, only been given a few minutes to take a portrait.



Respect your subjects and they will respect you

23 Take an assistant

Take along an assistant or somebody to help even if you think you may not need them. They can field questions and deflect unwanted attention from you, so you can concentrate on getting a great shot. The worst feeling is leaving a great portrait opportunity and regretting that you didn't achieve the maximum potential from it.

24 Have a go-to lighting set-up

If I'm looking for a spontaneous street-style daylight portrait, I'll have my Olympus set to f/8 at 1/125sec with a hotshoe flash at two stops under for a bit of fill-in. If I'm in the studio, I'll get set-up before the subject arrives, and will usually replicate the daylight lighting with a large softbox directly overhead and a second one by my side pointing directly at the subject, set a stop or two under.

25 Do your research

Research your subjects and have an idea of what they have done on previous shoots and may be prepared to do on yours. Turning up without a clue about who you are photographing would be foolish. Own the situation, be confident without being arrogant and direct them if necessary. Work hard to add some of their personality into the portrait.

Beauty

Consider the moment you want to capture and ensure your subject is relaxed before you start to shoot

Damien Lovegrove



Damien Lovegrove has been a professional photographer for over 30 years. He started out shooting weddings but is best known for his beauty portraiture. Damien is a Fujifilm X-Photographer and his current go-to kit is his GFX 50S with Fujinon GF 110mm f/2 and 32-64mm f/4. Visit www.lovegrovephotography.com.



29 Relax that pose

Whenever I'm photographing someone I look for a surface for him or her to lean against or rest on. A wall, door frame, tree, chair or even the floor can be used. When the upper body weight is transferred through an object or surface, the muscles relax.

30 Use a tripod

I always use the Fujifilm GFX 50S on a tripod to give me more precision over the framing and to eliminate camera shake. I start with the camera off the tripod and determine exactly the place I want to shoot from; then I rig the tripod to the desired height and place it in that exact position.



Consider the scene as a whole and what you want it to say

26 Use a narrative

Have a reason for the shot or story you want to shoot. Share the mood and energy that you want to capture. I create moments and then capture them. These moments can be fun, sad, aggressive or playful. A bit of acting goes a long way.

27 Clear your mind

Get the technical stuff – camera settings, lens choice, composition, framing and all other decisions – out of the way before you start to interact and shoot. You can then concentrate on your subjects and give them 100% of your attention as you create and capture moments.

28 Use light creatively

Even if you are shooting in natural light think about how you are going to use it to your advantage. I love hard light from the sun or a spotlight because I can modify it. When you see great light make a mental note about its direction, colour and contrast to help you recreate it or spot it again at a later date.



Learn how to work in a variety of light conditions

ALL PICTURES ON THIS SPAGE © DAMIEN LOVEGROVE

Children

Look for natural frames within the landscape, keep it simple with natural light and make it fun for your subjects

Saraya Cortaville



Saraya Cortaville is an established and award-winning portrait photographer based in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. She specialises in beautiful images of children on location. Saraya is a Fujifilm X-Photographer and her go-to kit is a Fujifilm XT-2 with the Fujinon XF50-140mm f/2.8 lens. See www.sarayacortaville.co.uk.



32 Keep it simple

Keep the camera set-up as simple as possible. I shoot in manual mode, more often with the lens wide open at f/2.8 or lower if the lens allows, ISO at 200–400, and as fast a shutter speed as possible. I find that these settings are a good starting point for most of my location portraits, with a few tweaks as the light changes.



35 Location scouting

When searching for shoot locations, there are certain things that I look out for. Natural frames, such as doorways or trees, textures, leading lines and colours. These are however all dependent on good light. This will always be my priority for shooting flattering portraits of children.

31 Shoot in the morning

When I photograph children I will advise the parents that the shoot will have a more successful outcome if taken in the morning. Not only will the children be fresh and full of energy (as would the photographer!), but the light will be more flattering and the locations generally quieter with fewer distractions.



33 Natural light

I always work with natural light on locations, especially when working with children. I try to keep my equipment as simple as possible. If working in bright, harsh sunshine, I will try and move to the shade, or shoot into the sun to create a more flattering light.

34 Build a rapport

I build a rapport with all my clients as quickly as I possibly can. With children I will come down to their level and communicate with them in a friendly and fun manner – I quite often will play games and make faces to gain good expressions and a fun atmosphere on a shoot.

Children can lose interest quickly so be engaging and make it fun



Families

Discuss what it is your subjects want and start with tried-and-tested poses before advancing to more ambitious ideas

James Paterson



James Paterson is an award-winning journalist and photographer. His work has appeared in countless magazines and books, and in 2014 he was appointed editor of *Practical Photoshop* magazine. His current go-to kit is the Nikon D850 and Nikkor 70-200mm f/2.8E. Visit www.patersonphotos.com.



© GEORGE CARINS

37 Posing families

Kids will usually want to hog the limelight, while parents (and Dads, in particular) may not be totally into it. So try bringing the kids forward and have the parents in the background. Similarly, if their pet is along for the shoot then frame it up in front with everyone behind for a fun family portrait.



© JAMES PATERSON

36 Get down low

Shooting from a low camera angle gets you on eye level with young kids and babies, which is important for creating a connection. It also means the background is usually pushed further away so it's easier to throw it out of focus, which is handy when using a blanket for the background.



© JAMES PATERSON

38 Go-to camera settings

I like to shoot in Manual Mode with Auto ISO. This way I can keep the shutter speed fast enough to capture the action (usually 1/250sec or higher) and adjust the aperture to control depth of field. With single portraits I use a wide aperture around f/2.8 for shallow focus, while with groups I would rarely go below f/5.6.



© JAMES PATERSON

39 Keep it fun

Children tend to get bored quickly so if you sense attention levels are dropping then try injecting some energy into the shoot: ask them to jump around, play catch with their siblings, shout silly words, tickle each other – anything that perks them up. Even if you don't get any good shots during the action, you're more likely to catch better expressions afterwards.

40 Planning is key

If you have a family portrait shoot coming up then jot down a few posing ideas beforehand. Things can often change when the shoot gets going, but if you can call upon a few tried-and-tested poses first then you can lead up to more ambitious ideas afterwards. Before you get the camera out, spend time chatting with the family to find out what they want to get out of the shoot as well.

Sport

The key to sports portraiture is going prepared, working quickly and being able to adapt to last-minute changes

Mark Pain



Mark Pain is a multi-award winning sports photographer with over 25 years' experience. He has covered major events worldwide from the Olympic Games to football and rugby World Cups. His go-to kit is a Nikon D5 with a 28-70mm f/2.8, 85mm f/1.4, 35mm f/1.4 and 70-200mm f/2.8. Visit www.markpain.com.

ALL PICTURES ON THIS PAGE © MARK PAIN

Using a stand-in subject to set up a shot can save you time



42 Use a stand-in subject

With very little time usually allocated to the portrait, you have to be ready to start shooting immediately. Get someone to stand in for you so that you can fine-tune the lighting and camera settings before your subject arrives. If you have a particular idea in mind take several frames of your stand-in doing exactly what you want your subject to replicate.

41 Keep your lighting simple

I use one or two lights to keep the set-up simple. You will be surprised how dramatic an effect you can create with very few light sources. You need plenty of energy in the power pack for your lights so that you can fire shots off quickly to capture an expression. There is nothing worse than waiting for your power pack to recycle and missing a great moment or expression.



43 Expect the unexpected

A sudden change of circumstances can ruin your best-laid plans. Be prepared for last-minute changes where you might have to move your set-up or have less time to shoot. Even difficult subjects can cause chaos. I've had experiences when sports stars refuse to pose in a certain way. With this in mind, always have a couple of backup poses and ideas for portraits.

With very little shooting time you'll need to learn to work quickly



44 Work quickly

Learning to work quickly is key to sports portraiture. Top athletes and sports stars have increasingly busy lives and are surrounded by people managing their lives and daily schedules. Very little time is allocated for photo shoots as they often have other time pressures such as interviews and commitments to sponsors.

45 Be confident

Sports stars often have big egos and need convincing that they should do what you're asking them to. Have an image to hand that you can show your subject and it will go a long way to reassuring your subject that he/she should do as you ask. Be confident when explaining your idea. The more confident you are as the photographer, the more quickly your subject will relax into the session.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Mono musings

Can I reprogram my old Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ8 to shoot in black & white? When I got it in 2007, my first shooting job was a triathlon club bash – the club's second 'go' at the annual Club Relays. I had competed in one in 2006! Not having a computer back then, I transcribed the memory to a disc in Boots and lent the disc to the club's magazine editor – 45 years' photo experience applied in one day. A later club meet exposed the camera's limitations: its 36mm (35mm equivalent) short end of the zoom and abysmally slow processing of images. I was shooting competitors in the club hill climb. Run as a time trial, the coach and his mate had a racing tandem and caught up with the guy in front in 400m – right in front of me and my unresponsive camera! Hence my recent purchase of a Lumix FZ82. So I'm wondering if I can use my FZ8 for black & white? Sadly my instructions got 'pulped' in a thunderstorm.

Bill Houlder

You can download a copy of the original manual at bit.ly/f78manual. In the meantime, going to Record Menu > Col. effect > B/W on the camera is worth a try. You can also convert your images to black & white on your computer using some excellent free software. Our favourite is Silver Efex Pro, which is part of the Nik Collection and available from nikcollection.dxo.com. We're very glad Google sold this package to DXO who will hopefully give it a new lease of life. I can understand that you would want to have two camera bodies, one for colour and one for black & white, but here's one final thought: why not just switch your shiny new FZ82 back and forwards between colour and mono? – Geoff Harris, deputy editor



The science bit

S Cave's letter in *Inbox* (AP 5 May) revived memories of the many years I worked in the Ilford R&D function on paper product development. Ilford's Ilfobrom on traditional fibre base was launched in 1967 and proved successful. However in a few years, it was apparent that monochrome prints were threatened by the falling cost of neg/pos. colour. This had been

made possible by a new base in which a thin layer of polythene was extruded on both sides of the paper. Kodak called this RC but we preferred polythene laminated. The main advantage of lamination was faster processing, particularly washing and drying. However there were two big problems associated with the new base. If the print was subjected to temperature cycling the face

polythene could disintegrate like that described by your correspondent. The silver image was susceptible to aerial oxidation as the paper fibres could no longer absorb oxidising gases. This was not a new phenomenon as many old prints in family albums show bronzing round the edges. However it was faster on the new base. For the base, manufacturers modified the face polythene to increase resistance to crazing. We investigated additives to add to the emulsions to protect the silver filaments. A very effective way for a user to do this with little change in print colour is to tone with selenium – a favourite of Ansel Adams. The end result of this work was Ilfospeed, and the system was completed with the Ilfospeed dryer and processor. However, if you wish your cherished prints to have a long life, there is no substitute for good storage conditions, and your reader must have these in her home.

Tony Bond

Thanks for your erudite and interesting letter, Tony. And people think digital imaging technology can sound complicated – Nigel Atherton, editor

The 'right' strap

I chucked to read Jerry Scott's letter 'Left out in the cold' in *Inbox* (AP 5 May) because I was about to write to you to suggest that camera grips should be on the left side – but more so because I am right-handed.

The cameras I use everyday have excellent touchscreens, and I find that I use the touchscreen increasingly more. So much so that a year ago I moved my camera's wrist strap from the right-hand side to my left. I wish there was more of a grip on the left, together with a control dial and perhaps a button or two, leaving the right hand free for the touchscreen and for initiating a photograph.

Mike Cowlshaw

This is a good point, Mike. Are there any right-handed readers out there who also struggle with this issue? Let us know – Nigel Atherton, editor

What a card

I have a pocket-sized laminated card from Blue Crane Digital



Keith uses a pocket-sized quick reference card for his EOS 5D Mk III

which is a quick field reference for my Canon EOS 5D Mark III and has been a huge help in finding and remembering my way around the 5D's menu system. Now I am moving on to a Sony Alpha 7R III and wonder if there's anything similar available?

Keith Ward

We couldn't find anything on Google or Amazon, but there's nothing to stop you from making your own laminated card, as there are plenty of guides to this camera available in print or online. Check out the tutorial at bit.ly/2rsNHAc – Geoff Harris, deputy editor

Buyer beware

Michael Topham's excellent all-revealing test of the Sony A7 III (AP 5 May) carries persuasions galore for this certain-to-be classic camera in time. As always, quality comes at a price.

Much as the camera's attractions are strong, the disruption factor for many will be too great. The need to sell existing kit and probably make a brand switch form a tough blockage. Neither is easily handled, with a serious cost factor to consider. Admiring from a distance is one thing – actually taking the step to buy is truly something else.

Is it the case, with this model and other rivals, that makers are luring potential buyers who are content with current kit but see the virtues of swapping if they feel the financial knocks can be borne? Acquiring a new camera these days must involve a broader outlook than in times before. Surely there can be few potential first-time Sony buyers without existing kit already. And is the risk to a newbie buyer akin to handing a racing car to a novice driver?

Graham Ashton

Kit between his teeth

Utter the words 'kit lens' and many photographers will visibly flinch, probably with a sharp intake of breath. Chances are there will be more critics than supporters. True, makers were guilty of producing low-performance, low-cost offerings when

DSLRs and other interchangeable lens rivals were trying to break through at a given price point. User criticisms were quick, but were some of the cheapies really that bad? On a personal note, quite a few of my shots printed to A4 using 'low-cost value' glass, to be polite, managed to beat off competition challengers using more expensive options.

Move on to today's offerings and things have undoubtedly improved, if you shop carefully. As a confirmed Micro Four Thirds fan my kit lens is one of the most dependable and best-performing alongside three other more costly stablemates.

Perhaps makers have realised that a change in focus to bring improved quality benefits to a kit lens makes good buying sense in a marketplace crowded with plenty of choices. As always, a touch of brand snobbery will remain, and vocal pixel peepers will express their wisdom. So here is a message to the critics: 'Always try before you decry' – you might learn something.

Aidan Stewart

Good point, Aidan, and some of the kit lenses supplied with mirrorless cameras in particular are surprisingly good. To limit yourself to one lens, however, is missing out, but yes, they are a good foundation for a decent lens system – Nigel Atherton, editor



Graham warns that a buyer's decision to switch brands can be a costly one

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Round three Mono culture

When we remove colour, the rules of composition, framing and lighting shift their parameters and require us to see the world differently. With everything pared back we can focus on the graphic elements of a scene. To hone your skills look at the work of monochrome masters such as Michael Kenna and Sebastião Salgado.

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Leading professional photographers reveal how they capture world-class images using their Canon EF lenses

Every photographer has a go-to lens that's a permanent fixture in their kitbag. Whether they are shooting wildlife, sports, portraits, or any other kind of professional photography, the quality and reliability of the lens is paramount to success.

In the field, in sometimes challenging conditions, professionals need a lens they can rely on to deliver precision autofocus, speed and weather sealing to truly make the difference between capturing an iconic image and a wasted opportunity. Pro photographers of all stripes naturally turn to Canon's L-series lenses for their excellent quality and reliability.

To anyone who knows anything about lens manufacturing, this won't be a

surprise. Sci-fi-style robots, fault-hearing engineers, anti-static shoes – Canon's Utsunomiya lens factory is a hotbed of innovation and precision. Canon's L-series lenses have a global reputation for professional-quality build and producing sharp results, but to make such outstanding lenses requires impressive levels of craftsmanship, attention to detail, and a few surprising practices, including the hand-testing and calibrating of every Canon L-series 16-35mm lens – not just the samples – ensuring that each lens meets the high standard expected in the premium line.

Here, the world's leading photographers tell us how the craft behind the lens helps them to tell their story.

© ALDIN BRARISEN



© DAVID NOTON

David Noton

Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM

Several pro photographers make good use of Canon lenses, including Canon Ambassador David Noton, who captured this shot of Durdle Door in Dorset, England, while the galactic centre (the brightest part) of the Milky Way was visible. 'For night sky photography – when the maximum amount of starlight needs to be captured in an exposure lasting less than 20sec – quality lenses are a must, and the wider and faster they are, the better,' says David.

The Milky Way over Durdle Door, Jurassic Coast, Dorset, UK
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV with a Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM lens, 120sec at f/2.8, ISO 12,800

'I'd previously tested the EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM lens and been impressed by its corner-to-corner performance at its maximum aperture of f/2.8, even at its widest focal length of 16mm. This L-series lens now resides virtually permanently in my camera bag. I had a composition in mind that would balance the arc of the Milky Way above with the sweep of the beach and Durdle Door below. With my 16-35mm lens at its widest angle and aperture, I composed, then focused on the lights in the distance, zooming in on Live View to check accuracy, then I locked focus by switching to Manual. I dialled in the settings, checked all was level, fine-tuned the composition and waited for the magic moment.'

Canon

Live for the story_

Diving humpback whale, Arctic coast
Canon EOS 5D Mark III with
a Canon EF 70-200mm
f/2.8L IS II USM lens,
1/640sec at f/2.8, ISO 1600



Alessandra Meniconzi

Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM

Take this impactful profile, shot by documentary photographer and Canon Ambassador Alessandra Meniconzi, of a Mongolian eagle hunter. Alessandra had wanted to photograph these hunters for 18 years, having become fascinated with their hunting techniques after first meeting some in Kazakhstan in the late 1990s. In October 2017, she travelled to the Altai Mountains in Mongolia to realise her dream.

'The Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM is great for flattering facial proportions and the f/2.8 aperture creates excellent depth of field,' she explains. 'It is also very light and discreet. Moreover, the lens has been created for small details – the images really are razor sharp! And finally, you can get closer to your subject.'

Portrait of a
Mongolian eagle
hunter, Mongolia
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV with
a Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L
Macro IS USM lens, 1/60sec
at f/6.3, ISO 100



© ALESSANDRA MENICONZI

Audun Rikardsen

Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM

Norwegian pro photographer and Canon Ambassador Audun Rikardsen says that Canon L-series lenses have helped him to capture the majesty of nature in his photographs of whales on Norway's polar night. 'In the past few winters, hundreds of humpback whales have arrived at Tromsø in northern Norway to feed on overwintering herring,' explains Audun.

'They come during polar night, where there's no sun above the horizon, making the light and the weather conditions challenging. The Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM is my favourite lens for photographing the humpback whales during this period because of its robustness, large aperture and accurate focus during low-light conditions. This zoom lens always delivers, even in the most challenging conditions!'

To sign up to the Canon Europe newsletter, and read more about the Canon L-series lenses that world-leading photographers are using, simply visit www.canon.co.uk/pro/stories

Technique

The circular shape of the Rotolight AEOS results in attractive round catchlights in your subject's eyes
Nikon D810, 70-200mm, 1/320sec at f/3.2, ISO 900





James Paterson

James is an award-winning journalist, skilled photo editor and photographer. His work has appeared in countless magazines and books, and in 2014 he was appointed editor of *Practical Photoshop* magazine. Although James specialises in portraiture, he shoots a range of subjects. Visit www.patersonphotos.com

Can you see the light?

With modern LED lighting it's easier than ever to create classic lighting set-ups for portraiture. **James Paterson** explains how

One of the most obvious, and useful, benefits of using LED lighting is their 'what-you-see-is-what-you-get' quality. For portraits, this gives us a definite advantage. It means we can be very precise with the lighting – making fine adjustments until it hits our subject at the correct angle, height and distance, with

the right spread and colour. We can see exactly what we're going to get before we press the shutter button.

A set of LED lights like the Rotolights we used for our portrait shoot here are ideal. We used two Rotolight AEOS lights, and two of the smaller NEOs (although not every light was used for every photograph you see). It does depend



Using a constant light source allows you to be very precise with the lighting by making fine adjustments

KIT LIST

◀ **AEOS**

This disc-like LED can be used in the studio or on location. It offers both powerful constant LED illumination and high-speed sync flash, with a battery pack that lasts for up to three hours' use.



NEO 2 ▶

The NEO 2 is the most portable light in the Rotolight range. Like the AEOS, it also offers a combination of bright, constant LED illumination and high-speed sync flash.



◀ **Rotolight softbox**

A softbox diffuses and softens the light, which smooths out the shadows and evens out contrast. As such, it's the ideal modifier for portraiture. The Rotolight softbox shown here fits over the AEOS LED.



Reflector ▶

Useful for bouncing light back into shadows and to even out the contrast over faces, a reflector is an inexpensive and invaluable piece of kit for any portrait photographer.



▶ **Elinchrom Skyport Trigger**

The NEO 2 and AEOS used here come with inbuilt Elinchrom Skyport receivers, which means that you can pair them with a Skyport transmitter like this to control and trigger high-speed sync flash.



On the number of lights you wish to use and the style you'd like to recreate, but with these LED lights we can easily create several classic set-ups. We'll explore a few of these set-ups with our model – from the timeless Rembrandt treatment to the flattering Butterfly look.

Precise positioning

The direction of the light, how it hits the face and the hardness of the shadows all play a vital part in the success of these

'Rembrandt lighting is a technique that results in an attractive triangular patch of light on one cheek, formed by the shadow of the nose'

techniques. For example, Rembrandt lighting results in an attractive triangular patch of light on one cheek, formed by the shadow of the nose. But to get the perfect Rembrandt light, the shadow should ideally be angled towards the corner of the lip, and it needs to join up with the shadows on the lower part of the cheek.

Building the light

When such precision is called for, continuous light really shows its worth.

We get instant feedback from even the tiniest adjustments to the position, distance and height of the light – it's more precise than a modelling light could ever be. It also makes it easier to build up the lighting. There's no need for guesswork when bringing in a second or third light. So when it comes to adding in a fill light, or bouncing light back into shadows with a reflector, we can be very exact with the amount of fill. With a quick tweak we can switch between a strong fill with soft shadows, or a subtler fill with just a hint of detail in the darker areas.

Modifiers and output

The dials on the Rotolights let us control the power and the colour temperature.

CLASSIC LIGHTING SET-UPS



Rembrandt lighting

Named after the Dutch master, the aim with this technique is to create a triangular patch of light on one cheek, cast by the shadow of the nose. Ideally, the point of the triangle should aim towards the corner of the mouth. In this single-light set-up, we positioned the Rotolight AEOS above and to the left for this look.



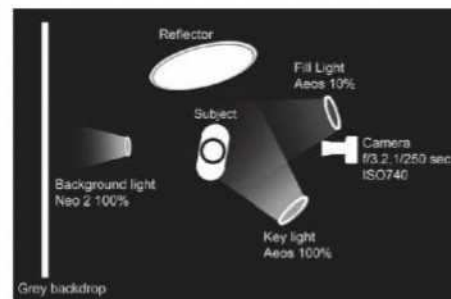
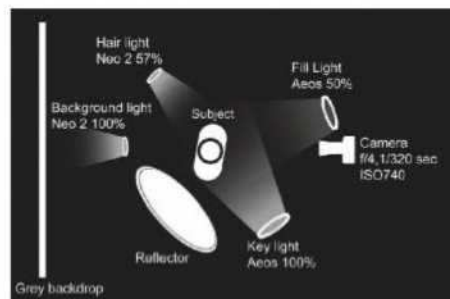
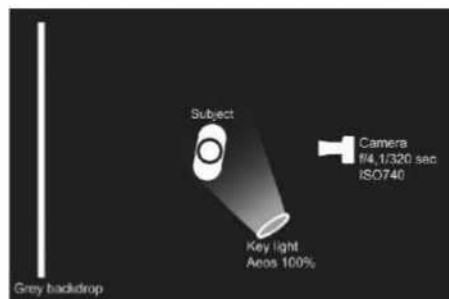
Rembrandt with fill

Once our key light is positioned for Rembrandt lighting, we can build on the set-up to fill in the shadows with a fill light: a second AEOS positioned to the right of the camera and extra lights to pick out other details. Two NEO 2 lights are placed behind the subject: one angled on the hair and the other on the backdrop.



Loop lighting

With Loop lighting the angle of our AEOS is similar to the Rembrandt set-up, but this time the aim is to create a small circular shadow – or loop – underneath the nose to one side. For this, we focus the AEOS slightly straighter on. Our background and fill lights also come into play here.



When used bare, the circular lights create attractive round catchlights in the subject's eyes, and the quality of light produced by the AEOS is similar to that of a beauty dish. Additional modifiers such as barn doors, softboxes and colour filters further let us tweak the quality of the light. The continuous lights are strong enough for most needs, but on those occasions when more power is required both the AEOS and the NEO 2 feature a high-speed sync flash mode that increases the output.

Judging the light

Those experienced in lighting with flash may argue that – with practice – studio flash is just as controllable as LEDs, and

offers a higher output. Which is certainly true. But for those of us who struggle with lighting, flash can be a difficult beast to get right. There's an inherent difficulty in lighting a subject with a burst of flash that is impossible to judge by eye. With continuous LEDs, we just eyeball it. We can instantly see whether the lighting works, which not only makes lighting our subject a quicker task but also inspires the confidence to try more ambitious set-ups. When using the Rotolights, lighting isn't nearly as complicated as it's sometimes made out to be.

Stills and video

There are other less obvious benefits to using LEDs on a studio portrait shoot like

this. The lights never get hot, so we can bring them in as close to the face as we like without having to worry about our subject beading up, or breaking out in unflattering hot spots over the cheeks and nose. It also means there's no need for noisy fans to keep everyone cool, which helps to create a relaxed atmosphere in the studio. Of course, another huge benefit for many will be the ability to shoot both stills and video, which is increasing in demand these days – and certainly came in handy when producing the behind-the-scenes video for our shoot.

Go to: www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/technique/portrait_photography/lighting-set-ups for AP's video on using the different lighting set-ups.

AP



Butterfly/Clamshell lighting

This set-up is named after the shape of the shadow that is cast by the nose which, at the correct angle, looks like a butterfly. We position the light directly above the face angled downwards at 45°, with either a reflector or second light (set at a lower power) positioned opposite below the chin.



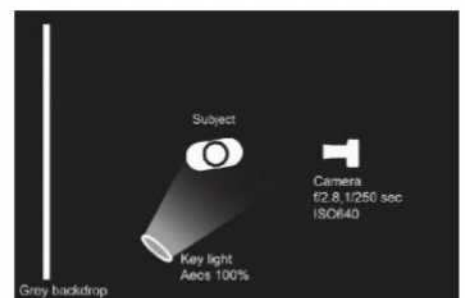
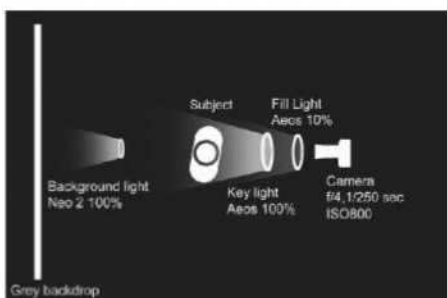
Split lighting

The key light is moved directly to the side, which creates a stark shadow on the opposite side of the face. To enhance the split lighting, a second light is directed towards the right half of the backdrop so that the shadow side of the face stands out, contrasting with the left-to-right light falling on the subject.



Back lighting

A single AEOS is positioned behind the subject to one side, lifting the very edge of the face and body. It works best with a side-on pose. Lighting the side of the face that is pointed away from the camera like this is sometimes called 'Short' lighting – as opposed to 'Broad' lighting, in which the near side is lit.



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Martin Evening

Martin is a photographer with a commercial background in beauty photography. He is known for his in-depth knowledge of Photoshop and Lightroom and as an author on digital imaging. His recent books include: *Photoshop CC 2018 for Photographers* and *The Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Classic CC Book*. Visit www.photoshopforphotographers.com

Get perfect portraits

When it comes to retouching your subject, less is more. Our Photoshop guru **Martin Evening** shares his top tips for natural portraits



Experiment with Adobe profiles when processing your raw files in Photoshop or Lightroom

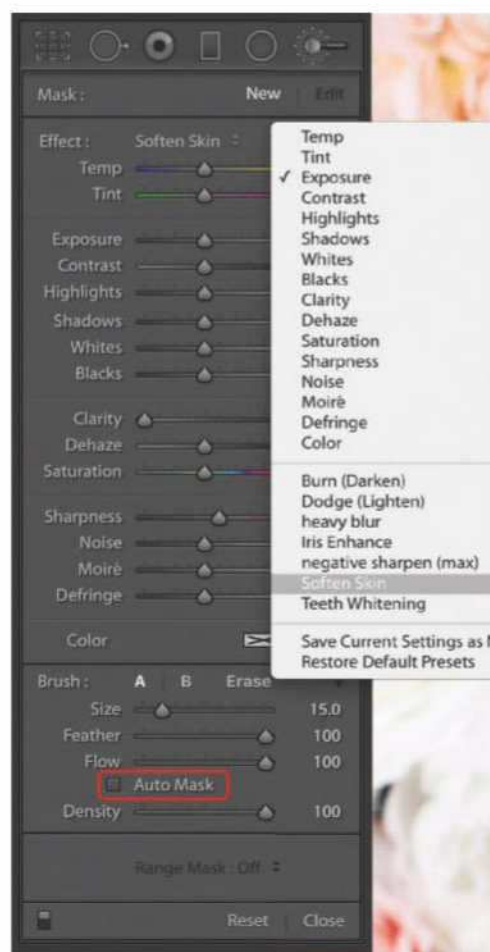
Portrait retouching is a tricky topic, as it is so easy to mess up through over-lightening or over-smoothing the skin.

Even if you think you've done a good job, people's opinions of your work will always be subjective. The overuse of Photoshop retouching, which the press anachronistically refers to as 'airbrushing', remains a hot topic, especially with regard to how women are portrayed in fashion magazines. Photographers and retouchers do have a responsibility as well as an opportunity to influence how people are portrayed. Among the retouchers I know, I see a trend towards less manipulation, or at least, less obvious retouching, and ensuring their portrait subjects look natural. It is a question of knowing how to use the tools in Photoshop with restraint. One way to do this is to use the frequency separation technique described here to ensure the skin tone texture is preserved as you carry out your retouching. The other thing you can do is to fade the opacity of your retouch layers so that spots and creases remain, but appear subdued instead. However, the steps to better portrait photos can all begin at the raw processing stage when editing in Camera Raw or Lightroom.

Start with the Portrait Profile

If you are processing your raw photos using either Camera Raw or Lightroom, consider changing the profile from Adobe Color to Adobe Portrait. This profile setting is now much improved

Use the **Soften Skin** brush preset for retouching work



and been optimised for a wide range of skin tones from dark to light. Whereas the old Adobe Portrait profile used to make skin tones warmer, the updated version will smooth out the skin tone contrast to produce more pleasing results without any colour shifts. To change the profile, click on the Profile Browser icon highlighted in the Basic panel. Click to select the Adobe Portrait profile and continue editing in Lightroom or Camera Raw as normal.

Portrait retouching in Lightroom

When working with the Adjustment Brush in Lightroom or Camera Raw you can make use of some of the brush presets that are available specifically for portrait retouching work. For example, Soften Skin reduces the Clarity while adding more Sharpness. Iris Enhance lightens the Exposure and adds more Saturation, while Teeth Whitening lightens the Exposure, but decreases the Saturation. When using the Iris Enhance or Teeth Whitening presets you might also want to have the Auto Mask box checked so the adjustment is constrained to the sampled colours only. When lightening the eyes and teeth take care not to overdo it. After working on the image close-up, zoom out to see how it is looking and whether the eyes or teeth look unnaturally bright.

© GETTY IMAGES





How to tackle tricky details



For picture-perfect results, use the Oil Paint filter to smooth stray and fuzzy hairlines

Hair smoothing using the Oil Paint filter

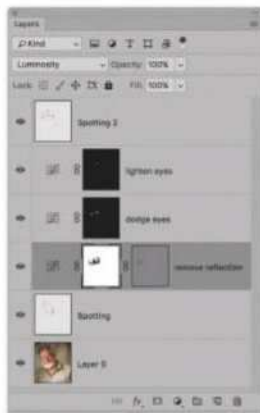
A quick and easy way to make someone's hair look smoother is to use the Oil Paint filter. This is located in the Filter>Stylize submenu. The sliders in the Brush settings section can be adjusted to refine the oil paint effect, while the Lighting section can be used to adjust the angle of the lighting. The Shine slider can make a big difference to the relief texture of the oil paint effect. Here, I applied the Oil Paint filter to a copied layer of a beauty headshot using the settings shown here. I added a layer mask to the filtered layer (filled with black) and then painted with white on the hair areas only to reveal the Oil Paint filter effect.



Use Layer Masks to selectively apply the Oil Paint filter effect to your portraits



Removing reflections from glasses



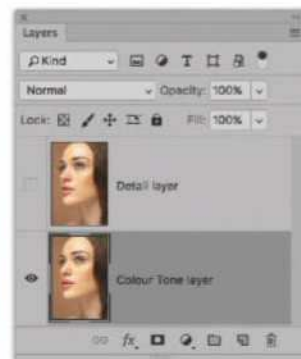
With the photograph shown here, the main problem was the reflections in the glasses. To remove these I added a Curves adjustment layer and edited the curve shape to darken the reflections. I then used a combination of a Vector mask and Pixel mask to selectively hide the adjustment layer to ensure that this darkening affected the reflections only.



Retouching the hair

Hair is one of the trickiest things to retouch. For hair to look convincing you should be able to trace each strand of hair back to its root and, for the most part, adjacent hairs should be of roughly equal length. I mostly work on a Wacom tablet and use the Clone Stamp tool using a small brush size with Opacity and Brush Size linked to the applied pressure. Bold pressure strokes are used to do the heavy lifting, filling-in work, while gentle strokes are used to draw single hairs. With really messy hair it can be like trying to untangle a jumble of wires, so a lot of patience is needed. Where a lot of hair retouching is required I try to avoid super-smooth edges and will sometimes add a few stray hairs in order to make the hair look more realistic.

FREQUENCY SEPARATION TECHNIQUE



1 Frequency separation

Photoshop frequency separation techniques are really useful to use when retouching skin tones. It's all about separating out the fine detail skin tones from the soft tone texture. If you convert the Colour Tone layer to a Smart Object before applying the Gaussian Blur filter you retain the ability to adjust the blur settings before you start editing on the layer above.

2 Add Gaussian Blur

Open your image in Photoshop and choose Layer>New>Layer Via Copy. Rename the top layer 'Detail Layer', hide this layer and rename the original layer 'Colour Tone layer'. With the Colour Tone layer selected, go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and apply a low Radius setting of 2.0 pixels (or higher if necessary) to blur and essentially soften the skin tones.

Before

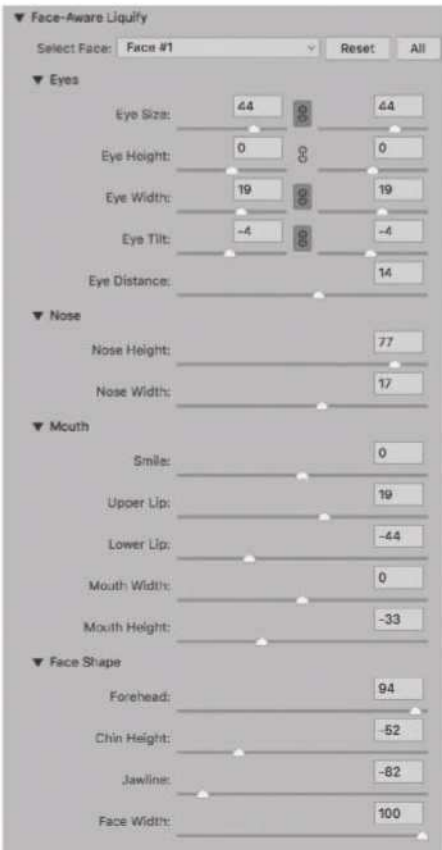


Using the Liquify filter

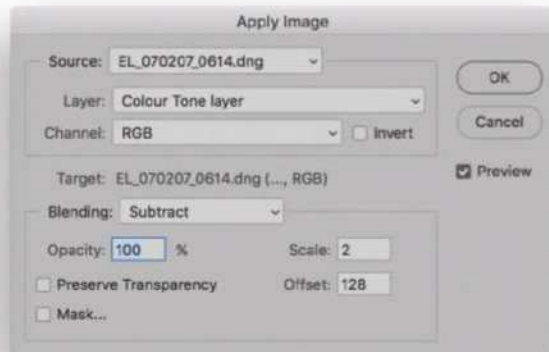
The Face-Aware controls in the Liquify filter can be used to manipulate facial features. When using the Liquify filter, if a face is detected in an image, the Face tool is selected automatically and the Select Face menu can then be used to select the desired face to work on. If the photograph contains more than one person you can select the desired individual by choosing Face #1, Face #2, etc. The following sections provide slider controls to adjust the: Eyes, Nose, Mouth or Face Shape. You can click and drag on these sliders to adjust the individual parameters to change the facial characteristics. With the Face tool active you can even click and drag on the image directly. As you do so, outline guides will appear, although you can hide these by unchecking the Show Face Overlay box in the View options.

1 Here is a picture of a model who was photographed by Andrew Sydenham for an *Amateur Photographer* feature, where the model was made up to look like Marilyn Monroe. The photography, lighting, dress, makeup and wig all helped achieve the desired result but using Face-Aware Liquify we were able to make her look even more like Marilyn.

2 I chose Liquify from the Filter menu and applied the Face-Aware Liquify settings shown here to adjust the shape of the eyes, nose, mouth and overall face shape. Having done that I used the Forward warp tool to flatten the line of the upper lip and make the eyebrows more angled. I also used the Bloat tool to make the eye on the right slightly bigger. I then clicked OK to apply the Liquify filter.



Use the Face-Aware controls in the Liquify filter to manipulate individual facial features



3 Set the Blending mode

Add a new empty layer above the Colour Tone layer and rename it 'Colour Tone retouch layer'. Reveal the Detail layer so it's visible. With this layer selected go to Image > Apply Image, and make sure the Colour Tone layer is selected as the source. Set the Blending mode to Subtract and click OK. Finally, set the blending mode for the Detail layer to Linear light.

4 Retouch with Clone tool

Having set up the image layers, you can select the Colour Tone retouch layer and retouch using the Clone Stamp with the Sample option set to Current & Below to remove the most obvious blemishes. Depending on how much work is required, I will sometimes add a second retouch layer above before painting with the Brush tool to add shading.

5 Remove fine details

As you work on the retouch layers the Detail layer above at the top of the layer stack will preserve the fine skin tone texture. However, if you wish to edit this layer to remove further fine details such as fine wrinkles and creases, you can do so by using the Clone Stamp tool. Make sure that you set the sampling to the Current Layer only.

The garden and west front of Newton House at Dinefwr



PHOTO ROADSHOW

Living history



Home to the historic Newton House, and a sizeable herd of deer, Dinefwr is a gem of a location, reveals **Justin Minns**

Dinefwr in Carmarthenshire, Wales, is an iconic location, surrounded by magnificent landscaped parkland, grazed by a herd of ancient and rare White Park cattle, and home to the historic Newton House, which dates back to 1660.

Perched dramatically on a steep hilltop in the 800-acre estate is the medieval Dinefwr castle, seat of the Kingdom of Deheubarth. And as if that isn't historic enough, the site of two Roman forts have also been found on the estate.

Rich in flora and fauna, Dinefwr Park is a national nature reserve (NNR) and a designated site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The parkland is home to some of the oldest trees in Britain with oaks more than 400 years old, and a deer park roamed by a large herd of fallow deer.

Justin's top tips

- 1** Look for a strong focal point in woodland compositions. Try using a long lens and wide aperture to simplify scenes. Don't rule out 'bad' weather, as overcast or misty conditions are often good for woodland photography.
- 2** Capture sweeping views in a panorama. With the camera on a tripod, make sure everything is level and take a series of images, stitching them together in post-production to create one vista.
- 3** Get up early and/or stay out late for atmospheric images of deer in the mist and warm, low light. Approach quietly so as not to disturb the deer and use a telephoto lens to shoot from a safe distance, especially during the rut (in the autumn).

Fact file

Dinefwr

Location: Dinefwr is on the A40(T); from Swansea take M4 to Pont Abraham, then A48(T) to Cross Hands and A476 to Llandeilo. Please do not follow your satnav.

Cost: Free to National Trust members. Refer to the website for non-member ticket prices, www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dinefwr. Dinefwr Castle is managed by Cadw; admission to the castle is free.

Opening times: Dinefwr Castle is open 10am-4pm year round; Boardwalk and Deer-park 11am-4pm; Parkland and Billiard Room restaurant 11am-5pm; and grounds, shop and Newton House 11am-6pm, until 3 November.

Visitors to National Trust properties can take pictures out of doors for their own private use. Amateur photography (without flash and use of a tripod) is permitted inside some National Trust properties at the General Manager's discretion. The National Trust does not permit photography at its properties for any commercial or editorial use without first seeking permission from National Trust Images. Fees may be charged. (Licensing images of National Trust properties through professional image libraries isn't permitted). Requests to use any photographs for commercial or editorial use should be directed to images@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Shooting advice



Justin Minns

Justin is a landscape photographer and workshop leader who has been working with the National Trust for several years. His images have been widely recognised in photography competitions including Landscape Photographer of the Year. Visit www.justinminns.co.uk

Shoot a panorama

Some landscapes refuse to be squeezed into a standard format. In such instances try a panorama. Make sure the tripod is level so that when you rotate the head and camera the horizon remains straight. Set the camera in portrait orientation to reduce distortion and level it vertically as well as horizontally. Wideangle lenses can cause distortion so I use a focal length of 35mm or more. To make sure the joins are seamless, set the exposure, white balance and focus in manual mode and avoid using a polariser because the effect will be uneven across the shots. Look for a strong focal point. Take a series of images, overlapping each by around 25% so they are easy to align. Work quickly in case the light changes before the series is finished. Stitch the images together using post-processing software.

Photographing deer

Wild deer are usually wary of people, but those residing in deer parks, like the one at Dinefwr, are often accustomed to humans, making it easier to photograph them. Deer have a very good sense of smell so stay downwind and approach quietly. Wear muted clothing and avoid sudden movements that might disturb them.

The best time to photograph deer is in spring, when the stags' new antlers are covered in velvet, or during the rutting season (usually autumn depending on the species) when competing males fight for the right to breed.

Stags can be aggressive during the rutting season – even those in parks that are used to people – so keep your distance and treat them with respect. Never get between a male and his group of hinds, or between rival stags about to rut. Early morning and late evening when the deer are most active is a good time to photograph them.



The east front of Newton House at Dinefwr

Photographing trees

The woodland in Dinefwr Park contains some magnificent ancient oaks, but while such habitats are lovely to walk through, they can look chaotic through a lens, making them challenging to photograph.

The conditions make all the difference with woodland photography: avoid harsh sunlight, which can cause burnt out highlights and very dark shadows, and opt for bright overcast days with soft, even lighting. Foggy or misty days are also ideal for adding atmosphere, while the reduced visibility simplifies 'busy' scenes.

Look for a 'star': a focal point that you can base your composition around. This could be an interesting tree, a group of foreground flowers, a path winding through the trees, a fallen bough – anything that grabs your attention. While composing your picture, pay attention to any potential distractions around the edges of the frame: bright areas of sky, for example, can take attention away from the main subject.

To simplify woodland scenes zoom in with a 70-200mm lens and frame a section of the view. Use a wide aperture (such as f/4) for shallow depth of field. Wideangle lenses work well for individual specimens, so try getting low and close, looking up to fill the frame with branches.



Fallow deer in the deer park at Dinefwr

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© NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/ANDREW BUTLER

KIT LIST



▲ Panasonic LUMIX DC-G9

The fast AF and generous continuous firing rate make the Lumix G9 the perfect camera for wildlife photography, ideal for photographing deer.



▲ Leica DG Vario-Elmar 100-400mm f/4-6.3 lens

The focal length and fast aperture of this telephoto zoom lens (200-800mm: 35mm equiv.) is a great choice for photographing deer while keeping your distance.



▲ Panasonic LUMIX DC-GX9

This compact system camera is ideal for woodland photography, particularly using the tilt screen or angled viewfinder when you want to look up from a low angle.



▲ LUMIX G Vario 12-60mm f/3.5-5.6 lens

Corner-to-corner sharpness and a versatile zoom range (24-120mm: 35mm equiv.) make this lens an ideal choice for shooting panoramic images.



Newton House with its Victorian facade

© NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES/DAVID NOTTON

Join Panasonic LUMIX at Dinefwr in Wales

Come along between 10-4pm on 2/3 June

AS PART of its long-standing relationship as official photography partner for the National Trust, Panasonic will be holding events around a variety of stunning National Trust locations over the coming months. The Panasonic LUMIX team will be at Dinefwr in Carmarthenshire, Wales on 2/3 June.

Dinefwr has been a site of power and influence for more than 2,000 years, earning itself an iconic place in the history of Wales. There are two forts on the site, showing a strong Roman presence, and the location

was once home to Lord Rhys, the ruler of the kingdom of Deheubarth in south Wales in the 12th century – a man of significant influence.

On the weekend of 2/3 June, Panasonic LUMIX will be offering visitors to Dinefwr the chance to try out its latest cameras and lenses, and to take advantage of expert advice. Normal entry fees (and photo restrictions) apply – see page 38 for more details.

To find out more about Dinefwr, visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dinefwr or phone 01558 824512.



© ANDREW STODENHAM

Other events coming up

The Panasonic LUMIX Roadshow, in partnership with the National Trust, will be touring various National Trust locations throughout the summer (see below), and AP will be featuring articles to offer tips and techniques for shooting some of these beautiful places. See www.nationaltrust.org.uk/panasonic-roadshows.



How to get there

- **By car:** Dinefwr, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6RT. Dinefwr is on the A40(T); from Swansea take M4 to Pont Abraham, then A48(T) to Cross Hands and A476 to Llandeilo. Please do not follow your satnav.
- **By rail:** Llandeilo, 1 mile.
- **By bus:** Services to Llandeilo, 1 mile.

Studland Bay	Dorset	9/10 June
Fountain's Abbey	North Yorkshire	16/17 June
Bodiam Castle	East Sussex	23/24 June
Lacock Abbey	Wiltshire	30 June/1 July
Knole	Kent	7/8 July
Mount Stewart	NI	18/19 August
Giant's Causeway	NI	1/2 September
Dunham Massey	Cheshire	8/9 September



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Light me up

The quality of the light can make a spectacular image stand out from an ordinary one.

Michael Topham takes a closer look at various lighting solutions to suit all budgets



Lastolite Fabric Grid for Ezybox Hotshoe

● £65 ● www.manfrotto.co.uk

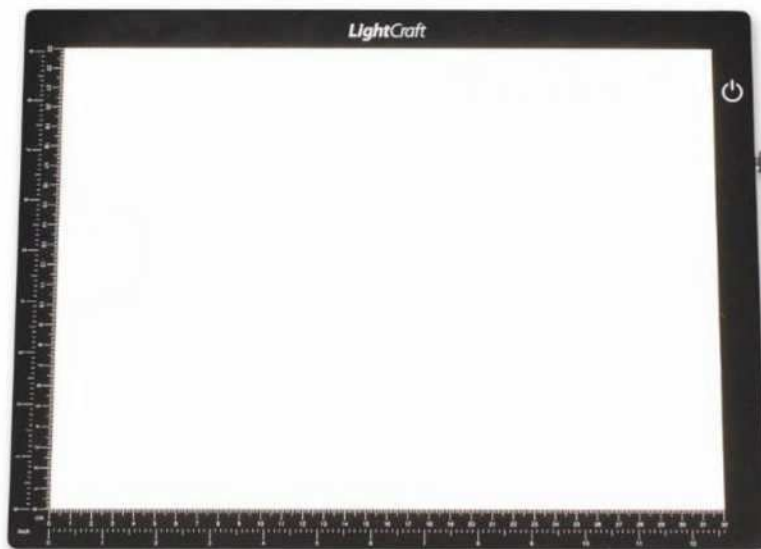
This optional accessory is for Lastolite's 2462 Ezybox Hotshoe 54cm – a portable pop-up softbox that converts harsh directional light from a flashgun into a much softer diffused light that's perfect for portraits. The fabric grid comes in its own carry bag and secures easily to the front of the Ezybox by Velcro. Once attached, the fabric grid prevents light spillage and helps direct the light onto your subject more effectively. It's an extra that is worth considering by those who already own or are looking at the Lastolite 54x54cm Ezybox Hotshoe.



Lastolite Ezybox Speed-Lite 2

● £52 ● www.manfrotto.co.uk

Small, lightweight and featuring a near-flat profile when folded down, the Manfrotto Ezybox Speed-Lite 2 is designed for photographers on the go. With a 22x22cm diffusion panel and a second diffusion layer, the softbox loses 2 stops of light but provides great diffusion as a result. As the mounting mechanism is universal, you can attach the Ezybox to practically any flashgun. You can also connect Lastolite Honeycomb Grids and a Gel Holder (both not included) to it.



Ultraslim A4 LED Lightbox

● £50 ● www.hobbycraft.co.uk

If you'd like to experiment with your photography and try something different, shooting some backlit still-life set-ups on a lightbox can be good fun. Flowers and sliced fruit are classic still-life subjects that can create plenty of impact. Hobbycraft stocks Ultraslim LED lightboxes, which are easy to store and come with a two-metre USB cable for use with a computer or laptop, or any mains plug that has a USB slot. If A4 size is too small, then an A3-size Ultraslim Lightbox is also available for £100.

Rogue FlashBender 2 XL Pro Lighting system

● £95 ● www.expoimaging.com

What you're looking at here is one of the most versatile light-shaping systems on the market for a flashgun. The kit includes the FlashBender 2 XL Pro reflector – the largest reflector available – a softbox diffuser attachment for softening the light, and a strip-grid attachment (strip diffusion panel and fabric grid) for directional concentration of the light. Don't expect the quality or spread of light to be as good as a purpose-built softbox, but if you'd like to sculpt a snoot or add a little fill-light, the results can be impressive.



Phottix Luna Silver folding beauty dish 85cm

● £68 ● www.phottix.com

If your portraiture photography takes you out and about, and you own a portable lighting kit, you'll want a folding beauty dish that's easy to use on location. This example from Phottix is far easier to transport than traditional metal beauty dishes and is constructed from high-temperature softbox material, with internal fibreglass supports. It's supplied with a Bowens-compatible speed ring and white diffuser, but other speed rings for Profoto, Elinchrom and Balcar are available. It's also compatible with the Phottix HS Speed Mount II for use with hot-shoe flash.

Ray Flash Universal Ringflash adapter

● £99 ● www.ray-flash.com

The Ray Flash Universal Ringflash Adapter is the perfect way to transform a standard flashgun into a ringflash in just a few seconds. The Ringflash adapter attaches to the front of your flashgun and hangs over the lens with an aperture for the lens to poke through. It replicates the unique lighting effect produced by heavy, high-powered and expensive studio ringflash units, plus you can shoot with the flashgun in TTL mode or manual mode with no effect on colour temperature.



Manfrotto Lumimuse 8 LED

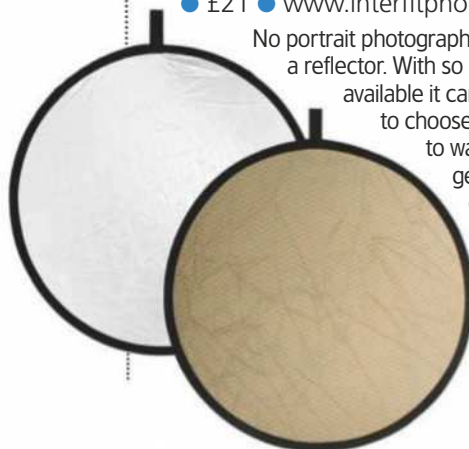
● £95 ● www.manfrotto.co.uk

As its name suggests, the Lumimuse 8 is a compact LED light comprised of eight LEDs. It includes a 6.4mm thread to attach it to a standard tripod head or other mount, and provides four-step dimming control to regulate the intensity of the light. It can be recharged via USB and comes with a snap-fit filter mount and filters for colour correction and creative use. A Lumimuse 8 Bluetooth edition is also available for £129. It leverages built-in wireless technology to give users control of power output from 0-100% from iOS devices running the free-to-download Lumimuse app.

Interfit 82cm Soft Sun/White reflector

● £21 ● www.interfitphotographic.com

No portrait photographer's kit is complete without a reflector. With so many varieties and sizes available it can be difficult to know which to choose, but if you know you'd like to warm up skin tones in a gentler manner than with a gold reflector, a Soft Sun/White reflector can make the best choice. This 82cm reflector comes with a carry-pouch and represents very good value for the price.





Metz Mecablitz 52 AF-1

● £209 ● www.intro2020.co.uk

With a maximum guide number of 52m @ ISO 100 and 105mm, the Metz 52 AF-1 mid-range flashgun includes both manual and TTL flash control, and lens coverage of 24-105mm. Also, there's an illuminated touchscreen display that turns by 90° when the camera and flashgun are in portrait format. The head swivels and rotates, and features an integrated diffuser and a white reflector card. The Metz 52 AF-1 is available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Olympus/Panasonic and Pentax cameras, and comes with a slave stand.



Nissin i60A flashgun

● £239 ● www.kenro.co.uk

Designed with mirrorless users in mind, this nifty flash offers a good amount of power for its size with a guide number of 60m @ ISO 100 (at 200mm). It won't allow you to light up huge venues from great distances, but for smaller events it's more than adequate and can be used as a fill-in-flash on a bright day. The high-speed sync mode permits use of shutter speeds up to 1/8000sec, and its built-in wireless control means it can be controlled with up to three other groups of compatible Nissin guns. It's available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fujifilm and Micro Four Thirds cameras.



Westcott Ice Light 2 portable LED light

● £549
● www.fjwestcott.com

If you enjoy painting subjects with light at night, such as cars, the Ice Light 2 is the ideal tool for the job. This long, thin LED light creates a narrower beam of light than circular or rectangular LED panels and successfully squeezes 1,740 lumens of daylight-balanced (5500K) light into its compact cylindrical housing. Set to full power it offers one hour of constant flicker-free illumination and it allows you to drop out the rechargeable battery and replace it with a fully charged spare. Power is easily controlled across an 18-step range and optional barn doors can be bought separately.



Canon 470EX-AI

● £499 ● www.canon.co.uk

This is the most interesting Speedlite to be announced in recent years. It's a powerful mid-range flashgun, equipped with Canon's new Auto Intelligent (AI) bounce feature, which works out the optimum bounce position to eliminate unwanted shadows



before automatically tilting and swivelling the flash head for beautifully lit, natural-looking results. The guide number of this flash is 47m @ ISO 100 and it has a lens coverage of 24-105mm. It's one highly innovative Speedlite that we can't wait to test. Watch this space for our full review.



NanGuang LED Studio Light

● £340 ● www.kenro.co.uk

The NanGuang CN-900CSA is made up of 900 LEDs and is intended for those who need a high-power continuous LED light for video work or general photography. With two options for power – 240V AC via an adapter, which is included, or battery powered by a Sony V Lock, Panasonic or Anton batteries (not included) – the NanGuang LED Studio Light CN-900CSA is suitable for use both on location and in the studio. It comes in a carry case, is supplied with barn doors to control the spill of light and offers stepless colour control between 5600K (daylight) and 3200K (tungsten).



Profoto A1

● £874 ● www.profoto.com/uk

If you're after a versatile light source, which goes far beyond being just an on-camera flash, the Profoto A1 is worth a look. It can be used off-camera as a standalone unit thanks to its full integration into Profoto's Air-TTL system and can be connected and controlled with other popular Profoto heads such as the B1 and B2. It's powered by a large rechargeable Li-ion battery, features a modelling light, and has a smart magnetic mount that allows add-on modifiers like gels and diffusers to be attached. The round head is designed to create a soft, smooth and pleasing fall-off and you get a large, clear interface at the rear to make it intuitive to set up and use. It weighs 560g, recycles at a hasty 1.2sec at full power and has a 9-stop flash power range (2.0-10).



Nissin PS 8 Power Pack

● £149 ● www.kenro.co.uk

Fed up of forever buying batteries for your flashgun or replacing depleted batteries on long, intensive shoots? This 3,000 mAh power booster is designed to keep you shooting for longer and prevent worry about when your flashgun might run out of juice. It can power two flashguns simultaneously, is compatible with a variety of power supply cables for different camera brands and offers a USB port for fast charging of USB devices. One power cable is included for the price, with spares costing around £40.

Rotolight NEO 2 LED light

● £299 ● www.rotolight.com

The beauty of LED lights is they allow us to see how the lighting effect changes as the intensity or position of the light is adjusted. The NEO 2 is 85% brighter in its constant light mode than the NEO 1 and combines sophisticated LED modelling light features with powerful speed flash options in a robust, easy-to-use and portable package. Electronically adjustable colour temperature is available in both flash and constant light modes, it has a zero recycle time and you can expect to get 85,000 power flashes on a single set of rechargeable 6xAA batteries.



Wireless triggers & portable battery kits



Phottix Strato II Multi 5-in-1 Wireless Trigger set

● £140 ● www.phottix.com/en

The Phottix Strato II Multi 5-in-1 Wireless Trigger System allows you to trigger flashes and studio lights wirelessly, and fire your camera remotely. The latter can be achieved via a cable or wirelessly – you have one on-camera trigger and one or multiple receivers to fire one or more flashguns.



Profoto B2 250 Air TTL To-Go kit

● £1,569 ● www.profoto.com/uk

Thanks to TTL and manual control, high-speed shooting up to 1/8000sec and 9 stops of power control up to 250W, the Profoto B2 250 Air TTL Location Kit is a great option for professionals and serious enthusiasts who demand the latest and greatest features on offer. The battery can provide up to 215 flashes at full power, and the basic kit weighs just over 2kg, making it highly portable. The kit doesn't include stands or modifiers, so these will need to be purchased separately, and to take advantage of TTL shooting and high-speed sync you'll need to purchase the optional AirTTL-C or AirTTL-N controller based on whether you're shooting with a Canon or Nikon camera.



Phottix Indra360 TTL Studio Light and Battery Pack kit

● £629 ● www.phottix.com/en

Ideal for events on-location and anyone who needs to move fast and stay portable, the Indra360 TTL provides 360W of power, with the Phottix Odin receiver built-in for Canon and Nikon. It's powered either via a separately available AC adapter, or the included 4,000mAh rechargeable compact battery pack that has sufficient charge for up to 350 full-power flashes. A 7in (S-mount) reflector is included and you get 8 stops of power adjustment – from full power to 1/128 – perfect for overcoming midday sun or adding just a hint of light when shooting with large apertures. A large and clear interface at the rear complements the excellent design of this easy-to-use kit.



Nissin Air 10s Commander

● £160 ● www.kenro.co.uk

Replacing the Air 1 Commander, the Air 10s is compatible with Nissin's NAS-ready i60A and Di700A flashguns, as well as other flashguns connected to one of Nissin's Air R receivers. Operating via the 2.4GHz frequency, it offers a 100m range, TTL shooting and high-speed sync up to 1/8000sec. In addition, a new advanced groups control option allows users to mix manual and TTL modes in multiple groups to create complex lighting effects with multiple flash units. It's available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Four Thirds and Fujifilm users.



Hähnel Captur

● £49 ● www.theflashcentre.com

Offering two-in-one functionality, Hähnel Captur triggers are both wireless camera and flash triggers. As a camera trigger full functionality includes bulb shooting, and with flash they offer basic, reliable triggering of flashguns. They're available for Canon, Fujifilm, Nikon, Olympus/Panasonic and Sony cameras and flashes.



Metz BL-400 Twin Head Softbox kit

● £450 ● www.intro2020.co.uk

With a full power output of 400W, the Metz BL-400 Twin Head Softbox kit is at the more powerful end of the scale when it comes to mid-range studio lighting options. Each head is equipped with 0-75W modelling lamps, LED displays and overheat protection. The heads use the S-type bayonet mount, so plenty of reflectors and modifiers will be available. The Metz BL-400 Twin Head Softbox kit includes all you need to get going in the studio: two BL-400 flash heads, two air-cushioned stands, a pair of 50x70cm softboxes, a carry bag and a PC sync cable. No wireless trigger is included, but third-party options can be purchased separately.



Interfit F121 200W Twin Head Softbox and Umbrella kit

● £239 ● www.interfit.photographic.com

If you're working to a budget of less than £250, Interfit's F121 twin-head kit is one of the most affordable studio lighting kits you can buy. The 200W flash heads feature a 75W modelling lamp and provide 6-stop power adjustment from 2.0 to 7.0. You get a user-friendly touchscreen to adjust settings and both heads use the popular S-type mount ready to accept other types of softboxes and

reflectors. The flash heads have a recycle time of 1-2s at full power and can be triggered remotely using the Interfit on-camera remote INT910, which is available separately. As well as the two heads, you also get one 17cm reflector, two 4-section air-damped stands, one 50x70cm softbox, a 90cm umbrella and a bag to carry it all in. It's everything you need to get started in studio photography.



Elinchrom D-Lite RX One/One Softbox To Go Set

● £489 ● www.theflashcentre.com

This D-Lite RX One kit is a good introduction to studio flash and it makes the next logical step from using flashguns off-camera. With roughly twice the power of a speedlite and a variable power output of 6W-100W, it's ideal for smaller studio environments where space might be limited. It comes with a built-in receiver for wireless triggering with the EL-Skyport Plus and features a temperature-controlled cooling fan to prevent overheating. The RX One/One Softbox To Go Set includes: two RX One flash heads, two stands with a carry bag, two Portalite softboxes, one translucent deflector, an EL-Skyport Transmitter Plus and a robust storage bag to transport it all in. Note that no reflectors are included but they are available to buy separately.



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The Zeiss Batis 135mm f/2.8 is stunningly sharp wide open with lovely bokeh
 Sony Alpha 7 II, 1/160sec at f/2.8, ISO 125

© ANDY WESTLAKE. MODEL: ARIYANNE ANNOBINE

Prime portraits

Andy Westlake recommends the best optics to consider, for shooting excellent people pictures

Almost any kind of lens can be used to shoot great pictures of people. However, by 'portrait lens' we usually mean something specific: a short telephoto that will take head-and-shoulders shots without distorting your subject's features. Typically, this means lenses in the 85mm-135mm equivalent range.

For portraits, wide-open sharpness isn't essential; indeed, a little softness will often be flattering. However, the aesthetic quality of the out-of-focus blur, or 'bokeh', is paramount; a distracting background can detract from an otherwise fine image.

The obvious first step for APS-C DSLR users is to buy a 50mm f/1.8 for this kind of photography. But if you want to take your people pictures up a notch, these are the lenses you should be considering.

Canon EF 85mm f/1.4L IS USM

● £1,380 ● www.canon.co.uk

Canon users who want the very best need look no further than this image-stabilised fast prime. We think it's one of the finest primes Canon has ever made, and that its accurate autofocus, great handling and built-in optical image stabilisation are compelling reasons to choose it ahead of the pricier EF 85mm f/1.2L II USM. Meanwhile its gorgeous rendition of blurred backgrounds and very low levels of chromatic aberration mark it out from cheaper options. For Canon users on a tighter budget, the EF 85mm f/1.8 USM is still a worthy alternative at £414. I also have a soft spot for its slightly longer stablemate, the £454 EF 100mm f/2 USM.



Fujifilm XF 90mm f/2 R LM WR

● £849 ● www.fujifilm.co.uk

Fujifilm is arguably the only company that's treated the APS-C format as being entirely worthwhile in its own right, rather than just a stepping stone to full-frame. It's made several fine portrait lenses for its X system, including the budget XF 50mm f/2 R WR (£430), which we like a lot.

However the one that blew us away was the XF 90mm f/2 R LM WR, which does the job of a 135mm lens on full-frame. Wide open, it's extremely sharp and free from any worrying optical flaws. Users will also love its ability to create distinct separation between subjects and background, while the rendition of out-of-focus areas is delightful for portraits.



Laowa 105mm f/2 (T3.2) STF

● £749 ● www.laowalens.co.uk

Chinese firm Venus Optics is beginning to make a real name for itself with its quirky manual-focus lenses, and its 105mm f/2 (T3.2) STF is particularly interesting for portrait shooters. The STF designation stands for Smooth Trans Focus, indicating that this is one of just a handful of lenses to include an apodisation element for smoothing out background blur. Unusually it has both a 14-blade stepless aperture calibrated in T-stops for video, and an 8-blade aperture with clicked f-stops for stills shooting.

Available in Canon, Nikon and Sony FE mounts, this all-metal lens handles nicely and gives very attractive images. It's best used in live view to enable critically accurate focusing, so is especially well-suited for use on mirrorless cameras.



Nikon AF-S Nikkor 58mm f/1.4G

● £1,499 ● www.nikon.co.uk

No that's not a typo – I really do mean 58mm, rather than 85mm. This Nikkor is a rare example of an optic that has all the hallmarks of a classic portrait lens, including a flattering softness with the aperture wide open and absolutely gorgeous bokeh, but with a wider-than-usual focal length. This design approach makes it something of a niche lens, but then again, so does the price.

If you understand exactly what it's for, though, this lens will reward you with really stunning images. It's well-suited to shooting couples, or portraits that aim to include more of the subject's surroundings while still blurring the background. Naturally Nikon also offers more mainstream alternatives: we recommend the £449 AF-S Nikkor 85mm f/1.8G.

Samyang 50mm f/1.2 AS UMC CS

● £349 ● www.samyanglensglobal.com

Most third-party lenses are made for DSLRs, so if you've made the switch to mirrorless you might think you're out of luck when it comes to finding interesting alternatives to the manufacturers' own lenses. But not necessarily: this Samyang optic for APS-C cameras brings a faster maximum aperture than anything you can get for DSLRs at the price. It's available in Canon EF-M, Fujifilm X, Micro Four Thirds and Sony E mounts.

In fact this is a very fine lens indeed. Because of its inherently simple mechanical design, Samyang has been able to concentrate purely on the optics, which are much better than you'd expect for the price. If you're prepared to live with its manual-focus design, it's a great choice.



Sony FE 85mm f/1.8

● £599 ● www.sony.co.uk

While Sony has been perhaps the most innovative camera manufacturer over the past decade, it hasn't always appeared to have a lens strategy to match. Most obviously, it prides itself on the small size of its full-frame Alpha 7-series mirrorless cameras, but then makes vast, expensive lenses to go with them. For example, its FE 85mm f/1.4 GM is absolutely phenomenal, but sadly its £1,649 price tag is prohibitive for all but the most well-heeled enthusiasts.

Enter the FE 85mm f/1.8. This is a relatively compact, lightweight prime lens, and therefore it makes a much better match for Sony's small cameras. Crucially, it also delivers extremely pleasing images. It's a great choice for photographing people, whether you're using a full-frame camera or an APS-C one.



Sigma 135mm f/1.8 DG HSM Art

● £1,199 ● www.sigma-imaging-uk.com

Sigma has been on a roll recently, delivering a string of stellar lenses that are easily a match for Canon and Nikon's own optics. In the classic portrait range it has produced the superb 85mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art, and we're really looking forward to its upcoming 105mm f/1.4.

However, I loved another standout design when I reviewed it last year: the 135mm f/1.8 DG HSM Art. This monster of a lens offers outrageous sharpness coupled with dreamy bokeh, and is almost immune to chromatic aberration. In fact your main challenge is focusing it sufficiently accurately to get really sharp images. Achieve this, though, and this fabulous optic provides a look that few other lenses can match.





Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 75mm f/1.8

● £699 ● www.olympus.co.uk

Micro Four Thirds users have access to an impressive range of high-performance primes, but one that really stands apart from the crowd is Olympus's 75mm f/1.8. For a start, its 150mm-equivalent focal length is slightly longer than the average portrait lens, which allows you to shoot from further back than usual. This generates a flattering compression of perspective and simplifies backgrounds, making especially attractive images. The lens is also stupendously sharp, while rendering gorgeous bokeh.

Meanwhile, those on a budget need look no further than the Olympus M.Zuiko Digital 45mm f/1.8. It's a lovely little lens that's unobtrusive but gives a good combination of sharpness and background blur. At just £199, it's a steal.

Panasonic Leica DG Nocticon 42.5mm f/1.2 ASPH OIS

● £1,199 ● www.panasonic.co.uk

Another standout gem of the Micro Four Thirds system, Panasonic's 42.5mm f/1.2 has the distinction of being one of the fastest lenses on the market to feature optical image stabilisation. With such a large maximum aperture this may sound redundant, but it helps you get sharper images at marginal shutter speeds in low light and is great for video shooting, too. Image quality is everything we'd expect given the Leica badge, with superb sharpness across the frame even at f/1.2, and minimal chromatic aberration.

If this pricey optic is beyond your means, Panasonic also offers the compact, image-stabilised Lumix G 42.5mm f/1.7 ASPH OIS for an altogether more affordable £299.



Pentax SMC DA 55mm f/1.4 SDM

● £649
● www.pentax.co.uk

While neither Canon nor Nikon have shown much enthusiasm for making APS-C-specific primes, there's a decent range available for Pentax users. Despite its focal length, the SMC DA 55mm f/1.4 SDM is designed to be used as a portrait lens on APS-C DSLRs, offering a classic 85mm equivalent view. Its large aperture, weather-sealed construction and silent focusing go a long way to explaining its relatively high price. Optically it's well-suited to its job, with a flattering slight softness with the aperture wide open and gorgeous bokeh.

Full-frame Pentax users, meanwhile, have a unique portrait lens of their own to play with, in the shape of the SMC FA 77mm f/1.8 Limited. At £929 it's pricey, but beautifully built, with old-fashioned manual focus and aperture rings.

Tamron SP 85mm f/1.8 Di VC USD

● £749 ● www.tamron.co.uk

At first sight, the idea of buying a third-party 85mm f/1.8 for £300 more than its Canon or Nikon equivalents makes little sense. But it turns out Tamron's 85mm f/1.8 is no ordinary lens. For a start, it's a member of the firm's premium SP line-up, which means high-quality optics and moisture-resistant construction. It also includes optical image stabilisation, which will help you get sharper pictures when shooting in low light.

Most importantly, it's capable of providing the kind of dreamily beautiful pictures that mark out a really superb portrait lens, and it works equally well on full-frame and APS-C cameras. With excellent sharpness, gorgeous bokeh and minimal chromatic aberration, it's worth every penny.



Zeiss Batis 135mm f/2.8

● £1,549 ● www.zeiss.co.uk

Sony has really shaken up the market with its full-frame mirrorless cameras, but even with a frenetic development programme, it still can't match the DSLR makers' lens line-ups. Currently its longest FE prime is just 100mm. Luckily if you prefer a longer portrait lens, Zeiss has the answer, with its superb Batis 135mm f/2.8.

In terms of specification it ticks all the boxes, with weather-sealed construction and optical image stabilisation. But typically for Zeiss, it's the sheer optical quality that really stands out. The lens delivers sensational sharpness, and with its apochromatic design, no hint of colour fringing from chromatic aberration. Out-of-focus backgrounds are blurred away beautifully. I simply can't imagine anybody being disappointed by this lens: it's absolutely sublime.



Triad-Orbit T2 stand

This novel lighting stand system could revolutionise studio work, says **Andy Westlake**

● £207.60 ● www.colorconfidence.com

WHILE we often cover lighting kit in AP, we've never contemplated reviewing a flash stand before. This is because they all follow almost exactly the same design, with the only real difference being between the cheap and nasty versus the pricey but well-made. Quite frankly they've always been utterly boring – until now.

Triad-Orbit may be a newcomer to the photography market, but it's not a new company. Its core business lies in making high-quality microphone stands for musicians. But it has spotted what it considers to be a gap in the photographic lighting market, and is pitching almost exactly the same kit as a complete re-invention of the studio lighting stand. What's more, it might actually have a point.

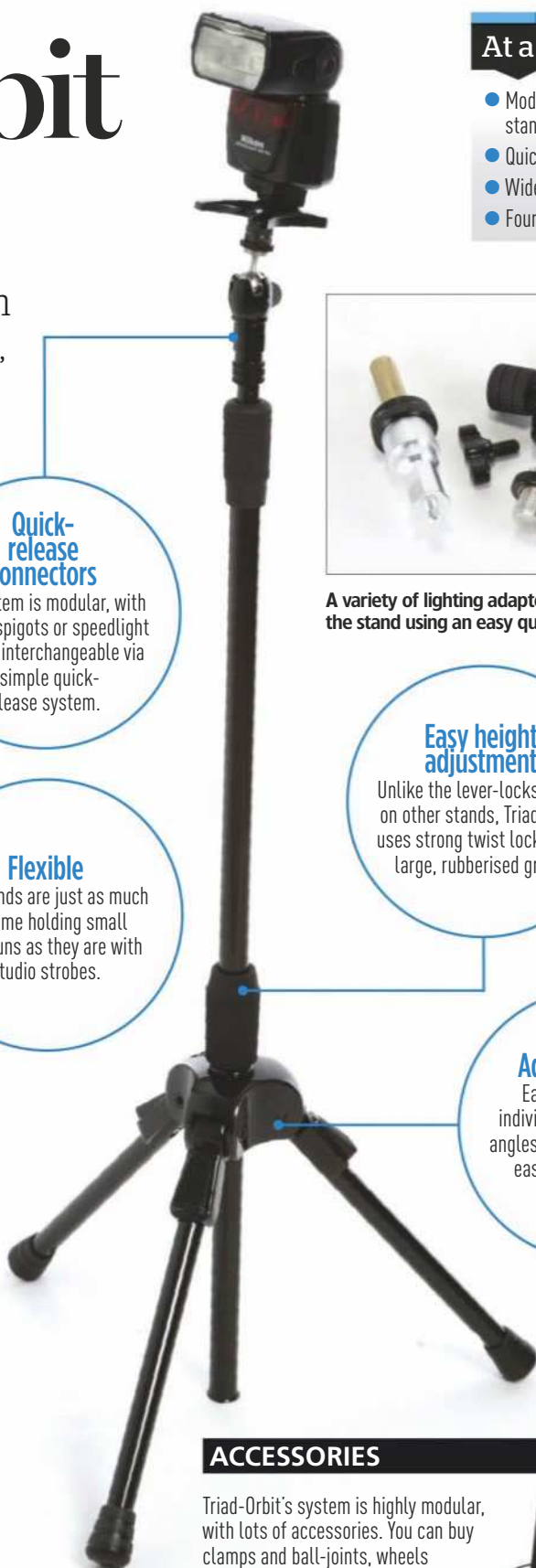
Key to the design is the tripod base, which is completely unlike a conventional light stand. The three legs are mounted to a weighty central casting that sits close to the ground, with the resultant low centre of gravity imparting vastly improved stability compared to conventional designs. You can knock the stand way off-centre and it'll just rock back again, like a Weeble or roly-poly toy. Each leg can be independently set to one of four closely spaced angles, which means the stand can still be set up near-vertically if you're using it on uneven ground, or even on stairs.

The second innovation is the modularity: all of the components can be taken apart and reassembled in different ways using the same, easy-to-use system. The hexagonal brass connectors simply push into place, and are released by pulling down on a metal collar. For example you can attach a Y-shaped adapter for using two flashguns on the same stand, or a boom for overhead lighting. Crucially, the big, weighty base means that you might not even need a counterweight to stop it from falling over.

Materials, fit and finish are all superb. Indeed, there's a real sense of quality about all of Triad-Orbit's kit. But this comes at a serious price: the T2 stand featured here costs £207.60 for a maximum height of 162.5cm. In a kit with a Boom arm, you're looking at spending £338.40. Alternatively the three-section T3 stand will set you back £273.60 for an extra 19cm of height.

Verdict

Triad-Orbit generated a lot of excitement at its UK debut at The Photography Show, and it's easy to see why: its kit is ingeniously designed and of superb quality. It's probably too pricey for most, but if you need something quick to set up and more flexible than conventional lighting stands, it might just be the ticket.



At a glance

- Modular lighting stand system
- Quick-change connectors
- Wide range of accessories
- Four stand sizes available



A variety of lighting adapters can be attached to the stand using an easy quick-release system

Quick-release connectors

The system is modular, with booms, spigots or speedlight holders interchangeable via a simple quick-release system.

Flexible

The stands are just as much at home holding small flashguns as they are with studio strobes.

Easy height adjustment

Unlike the lever-locks found on other stands, Triad-Orbit uses strong twist locks with large, rubberised grips.

Adjustable legs

Each leg can be set individually to one of four angles, with the angle locks easily operated using your feet.

ACCESSORIES

Triad-Orbit's system is highly modular, with lots of accessories. You can buy clamps and ball-joints, wheels for the T3 stand and a wall mount. There are even tablet and laptop holders, with the latter including safety straps for such things as hard drives and power supplies (see right).



TechSupport

Email your questions to: ap@timeinc.com, Twitter @AP_Magazine and #AskAP, or Facebook. Or write to Technical Support, Amateur Photographer Magazine, Time Inc. (UK), Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7BF

Switching shutter modes

Q I'm embarrassed to say I have the instruction book for my Panasonic Lumix DMC-TZ100 shutter but can't determine how to change from an electronic to mirror shutter. I am currently on electronic shutter mode and happy with it, but fancy taking some 10sec or 20sec light-trail shots which require the mirror shutter.

Patrington1a (AP forum)

A I think you mean 'mechanical' rather than 'mirror' shutter? The main point of your question is easy to answer – go to page 199 of your instruction book, and it's all explained there. Hit the Menu button, go to the [Rec] option and choose 'M' for mechanical shutter (and back to 'E' for electronic shutter when you need it.) The encouraging thing is that you know the difference between the two modes. Just the other day I borrowed my daughter's camera to take a

picture while we were on a family holiday; she had no idea her camera was on electronic (i.e. silent) shutter mode. This meant that the exposure metering and shutter speed range were limited compared to when using the mechanical shutter. On a more general note, depending on your camera model, the use of electronic shutter mode could produce motion distortion and banding, among other effects. It's safer to use your camera's mechanical shutter by default.

Redundant Epson Stylus R2880

Q I bought an Epson Stylus Photo R2880 printer just before my interest in photography waned, and it's hardly been used. Unfortunately, it's been sitting without any use for three years now. It indicates three empty cartridges, but perhaps that's because the ink has congealed in the nozzles or something. I don't want to spend £90 to get new cartridges to test it. I thought of selling it on eBay, but as I don't really know how well it performs I probably won't. I would give it to a school, college or charity if they will use it, but it might need a little bit of

attention. I'm sure it's nothing much, probably just needs ink and the heads cleaning, and it would be good to go. **Willie45 (AP forum)**



Willie45 wishes to sell or donate his Epson Stylus Photo R2880 printer

Sony A7R III rattling sound

Q I'm a proud but slightly anxious new

owner of a Sony Alpha 7R Mark III. I haven't yet used it because ever since I first took it out of its box I have detected an almost inaudible rattle from the camera body. I can also see the sensor lolling about with the lens removed. I'm nervous that I have a faulty camera and using it will simply make things worse.

Chris Fielding



The A7R III's sensor can rattle

A There is almost certainly nothing to worry about. Sony's in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) system means the sensor assembly is a highly mobile component that, when in use, is held in place by electromagnets. When the camera is switched off, the electromagnets don't exert any force on the sensor assembly, so it is free to move and you can hear it doing so. This is completely by design and so nothing to worry about. Try turning the camera on – can you still hear the rattle? Hopefully, not. Even if the camera was faulty, assuming it's new you should be covered by your warranty. And even if it's not new, the Mark III has only been on sale for about six months so, again, you should be covered. Incidentally, in the future, if you need to physically clean the sensor you should use the appropriate menu function to physically lock the sensor so that cleaning with swabs, etc., can be performed without the sensor moving around.

A My guess is that you have not replaced the cartridges that came with the printer. These are 'get-you-going' cartridges and only contain a relatively small amount of ink for priming the print head and producing a modest workload of prints. The cartridge status is primarily based on actual usage (dots printed) plus ink used to maintain the print head through cleaning cycles. I have noticed that after an extended period since the previous use, nearly finished cartridges will mysteriously become empty, so your scenario isn't really surprising. A school or

charity may well take your printer if you donate it, especially if they already have a 2880; then they can swap cartridges temporarily to get your printer up and running. On eBay you could list it as for 'spares only' and this will effectively mean you won't be responsible if the printer refuses to work. The last option would be to invest in the missing cartridges, and even if you can't get the printer working again, you could retain some value in the cartridges as you could sell them as used with a screen shot or the cartridge status display.

Q&A compiled by Ian Burley

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Fujifilm X Lenses

Table listing Fujifilm X lenses with details like 10-24mm XF R OIS, 14mm F2.8 XF, 16mm F1.4 R WR, etc.

Micro 4/3rds Lenses

Table listing Micro 4/3rds lenses from Panasonic and Olympus, including 7-14mm F4 G Vario, 12-32mm F3.5-5.6 OIS G, etc.

Sony E-Mount Lenses

Table listing Sony E-mount lenses such as 16-70mm F4 ZA OSS, 16mm F2.8 Nex Lenses, 16-35mm F4 ZA OSS FE, etc.

Canon EOS Lenses

Table listing Canon EOS lenses including 10-22mm F3.5-4.5 EFS, 11-24mm F4 L USM, 135mm F2 L USM, etc.

Table listing Canon EOS lenses (continued) such as 55-250mm F4-5.6 EFS IS II, 60mm F2.8 Macro USM EFS, 70-200mm F4 L IS USM, etc.

Canon Manual

Table listing Canon manual lenses like F1NAE Black Body Only, T70 Body Only, T50 Body Only, etc.

Digital Compact Cameras

Table listing digital compact cameras including Canon Ixus 95 IS, Powershot A3400, Powershot G1X MkIII, etc.

Digital Mirrorless

Table listing digital mirrorless cameras like Fujifilm X-Pro2 Body + MHG-XPro2 Grip, X-Pro2 Body Only, etc.

Table listing digital mirrorless cameras (continued) such as X-T2 Black Body + Handgrip, X-T2 Black Body + Vertical Grip, etc.

Table listing Olympus cameras including E-M1 MKII Black Body Only, E-M1 Black Body + HLD-7 Grip, etc.

Table listing Panasonic cameras like DC GH5 Body + Battery Grip, DC GH5 Body Only, DC GH9 Body Only, etc.

Table listing Sony cameras including A7 II Body + VG-C2EM Grip, A7R II Body Only, A7S Body Only, etc.

Digital SLR Cameras

Table listing digital SLR cameras such as Canon EOS 1DX Body Only, EOS 20D Body Only, EOS 350D Body Only, etc.

Table listing Nikon cameras including Nikon D3 Body Only, D300 Body Only, D3000 Body Only, etc.

Table listing Nikon cameras (continued) like Sony A200 + 18-70mm, A200 Body Only, etc.

Table listing Nikon cameras (continued) such as A300 Body Only, A3000 Body Only, A33 Body Only, etc.

Leica M

Table listing Leica M cameras including MP 0.72x Ralph Gibson Edition, M7 0.72x Black Body Only, M7 0.72x Chrome Body Only, etc.

Sigma - Sony AF fit

Table listing Sigma lenses for Sony AF fit like 10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC, 12-24mm F4.5-5.6 EX DG, etc.

Nikon AF Lenses

Table listing Nikon AF lenses such as 10-24mm F3.5-4.5 G AFS DX, 12-24mm F4 G AFS DX ED, etc.

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28mm F2.8 AF.....	E+ £149
28mm F2.8 AFN.....	E+ / E++ £129 - £139
35-105mm F3.5-4.5 AF.....	E+ £79
35-135mm F3.5-4.5 AF.....	E+ £59
35-70mm F3.3-4.5 AF.....	E+ £29
35-80mm F4-5.6 AFD.....	E+ £29
35mm F1.4 G AFS.....	E++ £849
40mm F2.8 G AFS DX Micro.....	E++ £179
50mm F1.4 AFD.....	E+ / E++ £139 - £179
50mm f1.8 AFD.....	Mint- £79
55-200mm F4-5.6 AFS DX G VR.....	E++ £85 - £99
55-200mm F4-5.6 G AFS DX VR II.....	E++ £119
55-300mm F4.5-5.6 G AFS VR.....	E++ £189
60mm F2.8 AFD Micro.....	E+ £249
70-200mm F2.8 G AFS ED VR.....	E+ £649
70-200mm F2.8 G AFS ED VR II.....	E+ £999
70-300mm F4-5.6 ED AFD.....	E+ / E++ £89 - £109
70-300mm F4.5-5.6 AFS IF ED VR.....	E+ £299
75-240mm F4.5-5.6 AFD.....	E+ £79
75-300mm F4.5-5.6 AFN.....	Unknown £59
80-200mm F2.8 ED AF.....	E+ £299
80-200mm F2.8 ED AFD.....	E+ £249
80-400mm F4.5-5.6 AFS VR.....	E+ / E++ £359 - £399
80-400mm F4.5-5.6 G AFS ED VR.....	E+ £1,199
85mm F1.4 AFD.....	E+ £499
85mm F1.8 AF-S G.....	E+ £339 - £379
85mm F2.8 D PC Micro.....	Unknown / E+ £799 - £849
85mm F3.5 G AFS Micro VR DX.....	E+ £269
105mm F1.4 E ED AF-S.....	Mint- £1,589
105mm F2.8 AFS G VR Micro.....	E++ £429
180mm F2.8 ED AF.....	E+ £249
200-400mm F4 G VR AFS IFED...E+ / Mint- £1,849 - £2,099	

Nikon Manual Lenses

18mm F4 AI.....	E++ £349
20mm F2.8 AIS.....	E++ £399
20mm F3.5 AIS.....	E++ £189
24mm F2.8 AIS.....	E+ / E++ £129 - £279
28mm F2 AI.....	E+ £179
28mm F2.8 AIS.....	E+ £149
28mm F3.5 Non AI.....	E+ £75
28mm F3.5 PC Shift.....	E+ £279
35mm F2 AIS.....	E+ £189
35mm F2.8 AI.....	E+ £79
35mm F2.8 PC Shift.....	E+ £179
45mm F2.8 P.....	E+ £249
50-300mm F4.5 AI.....	E+ £299
50mm F1.2 AIS.....	E+ £399
50mm F1.8 AIS.....	Unknown / E++ £39 - £119
55mm F2.8 AIS Micro.....	E+ £99
70-210mm F4.5-5.6 AIS.....	Unknown £29
75-150mm F3.5 Series E.....	E+ £39
80-200mm F2.8 ED AIS.....	E+ / E++ £1,499 - £1,999
80-200mm F4 AIS.....	E+ £129

Olympus OM Lenses

21mm F3.5 Zuiko.....	E+ £249
24mm F2.8 Zuiko.....	E+ / E++ £89 - £99
28mm F2.0 Zuiko.....	E++ £249
28mm F2.8 Zuiko.....	Unknown £39
28mm F3.5 Zuiko.....	E+ £49
35-105mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko.....	E+ £59
35-70mm F3.5-4.5 Zuiko.....	E+ £39
350mm F2.8 Zuiko.....	E+ £1,950
35mm F2.8 Zuiko.....	E+ £69
50mm F1.2 Zuiko.....	Mint- £499
50mm F1.4 Zuiko.....	Mint £179
50mm F2 Macro Zuiko.....	E++ £389
50mm F3.5 Macro Zuiko.....	As Seen / E+ £39 - £89
55mm F1.2 Zuiko.....	E+ £299
65-200mm F4 Zuiko.....	As Seen / E+ £45 - £99
75-150mm F4 Zuiko.....	Exc / E+ £29 - £39
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85-250mm F5 Zuiko.....	Unknown / E+ £79 - £129
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100mm F2.8 Zuiko.....	E++ / Mint £129 - £179
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250mm F2 Zuiko.....	Mint- £3,499

Pentax AF Lenses

10-17mm F3.5-4.5 DA Fisheye.....	E++ £239
12-24mm F4 DA ED AL (IF).....	E++ £459
14mm F2.8 DA ED IF.....	E+ £349
14mm F2.8 SMC DA.....	E++ £399
16-45mm F4 DA ED AL.....	E++ £169 - £179
16-50mm F2.8 A* DA SDM.....	E++ / Mint- £429 - £549
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*Canon Cashback ends 15.05.18

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PowerShot G1 X Mark II Premium Kit	£669

IXUS 185 HS	£99
IXUS 285 HS	£139
PowerShot SX60 HS	£369
PowerShot SX620 HS	£159
PowerShot SX730 HS	£319.99
PowerShot G9 X II	£399
PowerShot G1 X III	£1089
£1009 inc. £80 Cashback*	
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£739 inc. £40 Cashback*	

FUJIFILM Black or Silver X100F	24.3 megapixels 1080 movie mode
X100F	£1199
£1024 inc. £175 Cashback*	
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Panasonic Black or Silver Lumix LX100	12.8 megapixels
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Lumix TZ200	£729

Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX15	20.1 megapixels
Lumix DMC-LX15	£599
£549 inc. £50 Cashback*	

Lumix FZ1000	£568
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Stylus TG-5	£379

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RICOH Theta S Digital Spherical Camera - White	360° stills with RGB internal storage, lithium ion battery, iOS and Android supported
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Cyber-Shot HX90V	£299
£249 inc. £50 Cashback*	

SONY Cyber-Shot RX10 Mark IV	20.1 megapixels
Cyber-Shot RX10 Mark IV	£1799
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SONY Cyber-Shot RX100 Mark V	20 megapixels
Cyber-Shot RX100 Mark V	£949
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Coolpix W300	£389

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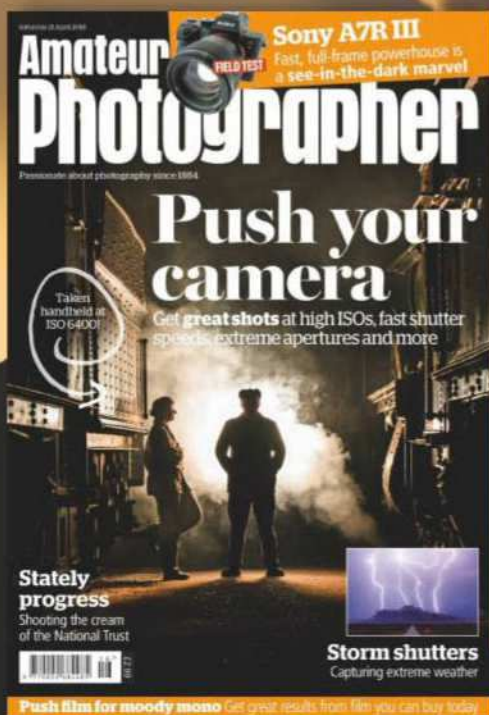
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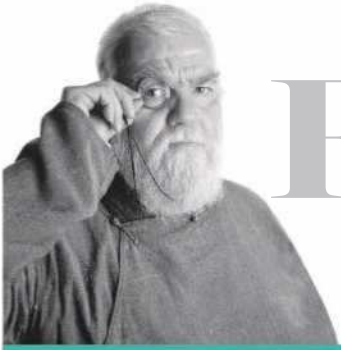
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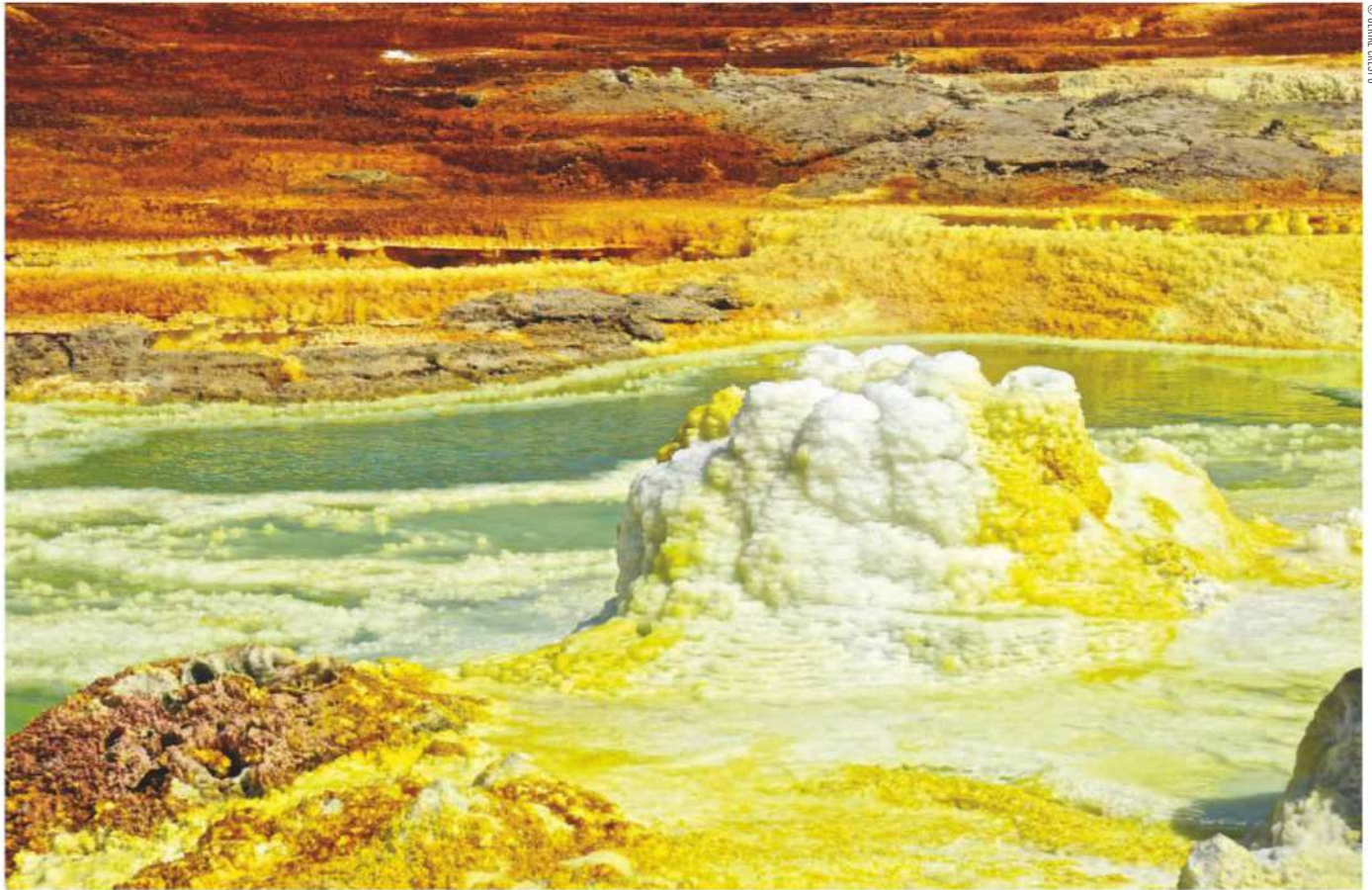
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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'Danakil', 2017, by Ulrike Crespo



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Whenever I get a press release from Kehrer Verlag I scan it eagerly. At least half the books they publish are wonderful. As for the rest, well, there's no arguing about taste. Except perhaps on the internet.

Danakil was well into the wonderful half for me. It shows that there are parts of the world that are not only stranger than we imagine: in some ways, they are stranger than we *can* imagine. Various things got in the way between Kehrer kindly sending me the picture, and my writing this; and in the intervening few weeks, I had sort of forgotten about it. I remembered no details, just a strange yellow lump: definitely nothing as weird and wonderful as it is. In fact I was beginning to wonder why I had chosen it. Then I saw it again.

Sometimes memory outstrips

photography, but sometimes, photography outstrips both memory and experience. With the tiniest effort on our part, we can wander through both time and space. In this column, in the past few weeks, we have voyaged from the Crimean War to the gayer aspects of present-day Mexico City, and now we are in the Ethiopian desert. The Danakil Depression is apparently the hottest geothermal area on the surface of the planet, and although parts of it are 'familiar' in the sense that we've seen pictures of camel trains, others are... well, here's proof.

Stepping above the 'quality plateau'

What really struck me about this, though, was the question of quality. Few of us will ever get to the Danakil desert. But if we did, how could we ensure we'd take the best pictures we possibly could?

First, we need cameras and lenses that are at or above the 'quality plateau': the level at which a 'better' camera or lens won't give 'better' pictures, because the limiting factor is the photographer's skill. Obviously this varies from person to person, but it's worth a bit of self-examination to ask ourselves what sort of photographer we really are. Second, we need to know how to use it. Very often, this is no more than a question of practice, and of taking the time to do things properly, even with a tripod if necessary. This tends to be the difference between the photographer on holiday, often being dragged on by others in the party, and the photographer who is there to take pictures. Both can be lucky or unlucky, but the one who puts in the time and effort (including prior research), and carries the right kit, is likely to be luckier.



Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his new website at www.rogerandfrances.eu). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. Next week he considers an image by Jeff Johnson



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