



22nd April 2012

**"Digital Black &
White"
Tony Worobiec**

Coopers Hill Community Centre,
Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 7QS

For full details see the EVENTS listing on Page 4 or
contact: Roger Norton LRPS
Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk
Phone: 01628 622279

Do we have a valid email address for you?

An email was sent out in January 2012 to all DIG members for whom we have an email address. If you did not receive the email then either the RPS does not have a valid email address for you or you have opted not to receive email communications.

If you would like to receive email communications from us in future then please contact Simon Bibb at simon@rps.org to let him know your preferred email address.

20th May 2012

**Rosie Armes on "The Joy of
Seeing", followed by the DIG
Thames Valley Centre Annual
PDI Competition**

Coopers Hill Community Centre,
Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 7QS

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10th June 2012

**A Creative Day of
Photography with Irene
Froy**

Foxton Village Hall, Cambridge,
CB226RN

For more details see the EVENTS listing on Page 4 or
contact: John Margetts LRPS
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6



15



24

DIGIT

WINTER 2011/12 ISSUE NO 52

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FRONT COVER IMAGE

Silverback Gorillas Fighting by Marilyn Taylor ARPS

RPS DIGIT Magazine Winter 2011/12

CONTENTS

4	EVENTS
5	EDITORIAL Dr David F Cooke ARPS
6	PHOTOGRAPHING MODELS Tim Pile ARPS
11	'SILVERBACK GORILLAS FIGHTING' AND OTHER IMAGES Marilyn Taylor ARPS CPAGB
15	THE DIGIT CHALLENGE 15 Nash Point, Peter Phillips LRPS 16 A Glimpse into my Soul, Helena Berney LRPS
18	THE RAYMOND WALLACE THOMPSON TROPHY Betty Billingham ARPS
20	MEMBERS' DIGITAL PROJECTED IMAGE COMPETITION 2011 20 Silverback Gorillas Fighting, Marilyn Taylor ARPS (Gold Medal and Raymond Wallace Thompson Trophy) 21 Indian Friends, Eddy Lane ARPS (Derek Dorsett FRPS Ribbon) 22 He Loves His Oats, Graham Worley LRPS (Derek Dorsett FRPS Ribbon) 23 Merlin in Snow, Gordon Follows ARPS (Barry Mead FRPS Ribbon) 24 Biting the Dust, Malcolm McBeath ARPS (Barry Mead FRPS Ribbon) 25 The Body Shop, Ruth Nicholls LRPS (Vanessa Slawson FRPS Ribbon) 26 Danny Harris's Goal in the Back of the Net, Carol White-Griffiths LRPS (Vanessa Slawson FRPS Ribbon) 27 Other Accepted Images
48	IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

EDITOR: DR DAVID F COOKE ARPS
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Thanks to Janet Haines ARPS and to Elizabeth Restall LRPS for their invaluable help in the production of this issue of DIGIT.

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EVENTS

Details of all DIG events are available on the group's website at:
www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/events

11th March 2012

Ian Bateman FRPS MPAGB with Theatre Photography & Peter Lovelock with Nik Software Demonstration

Aldbourne Memorial Hall,
Oxford Street, Aldbourne SN8 2DQ
Wiltshire

Time: 10:00 am - 4:30 pm

Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £8.00

Contact: Maureen Albright ARPS

Email: maureen@maureenalbright.com

Phone: 01672 540754

Attendees are encouraged to bring work along to show & discuss if they wish.

Please bring along a packed lunch

11th March 2012

DIG AGM & Print Exhibition Selection, followed by a William Cheung FRPS presentation

The Old Schoolhouse, Oldbury, West Midlands, B692AX

Cost: There will be a charge for the afternoon lecture of £5 for non-DIG members

Contact: Janet Haines ARPS

Email: janet.haines@btinternet.com

Phone: 01308 428219

Annual General Meeting at 10.30 am followed at 11.30 am by the selection of Prints for the 2012 Annual Print Exhibition. Selectors are William Cheung FRPS, Clive Haynes FRPS and Fiona Senior FRPS. Lunch may be booked (A lunch booking form can be downloaded from <http://tinyurl.com/8xb8n64>).

At 3.00 pm, William Cheung FRPS will present his talk "My Passion for Photography"

25th March 2012

Jeff Morgan

Coopers Hill Community Centre,
Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 7QS

Time: 10:00 am - 3:30 pm

Cost: £5.00

Contact: Roger Norton LRPS – Thames Valley Centre Organiser

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

22nd April 2012

"Digital Black & White" Tony Worobiec

Coopers Hill Community Centre,
Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 7QS

Time: 10:00 am - 3:30 am

Cost: £5.00

Contact: Roger Norton LRPS – Thames Valley Centre Organiser

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

Tony will consider which files work well as mono and why. Standard digital techniques will include mono conversion, local tonal adjustments, toning, split toning, creating a lith effect. Tony will demonstrate mimicking of more advanced monochrome techniques such as cyanotypes, gum bichromates, sabbatier, hand-colouring etc.

Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a packed lunch.

Advance booking advised.

For more information about the speaker, please see the DIG Group Website at the address given above

20th May 2012

Rosie Armes on "The Joy of Seeing", followed by the DIG Thames Valley Centre Annual PDI Competition

Coopers Hill Community Centre,
Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 7QS

Time: 10:00 am - 3:30 am

Cost: £5.00

Contact: Roger Norton – Thames Valley Centre Organiser

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

Morning: The Joy of Seeing by Rosie Armes FRPS DPAGB EFIAP BPE3*

The first part of Rosie's talk will be about some of her personal favourites, with the accent on the pure enjoyment she got from a particular moment in time.

The second part of Rosie's presentation will focus on aspects of a compositional eye and timing within the genre of travel photography.

Afternoon: DIG Thames Valley Centre Annual PDI Competition

Judge: Rosie Armes FRPS DPAGB

EFIAP BPE3*

Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day.

Bring a packed lunch.

Advance booking advised.

For more information about the speaker, please see the DIG Group Website at the address given above

10th June 2012

A Creative Day of Photography with Irene Froy

Foxton Village Hall, Cambridge, CB22 6RN

Time: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £5.00

Contact: John Margetts LRPS

Email: events@rpseasterndigital.org.uk

Phone: 01223 700147

Irene Froy, EFIAP, MPAGB, HonPAGB, BPE4* : Irene describes herself as a pictorial photographer, with a leaning towards landscape, but has an interest in all types of photography. In recent years she has concentrated on interpreting the landscape and villages of France, using delicate colour and soft images to convey the mood. But her new season's lecture features trips to the Hebrides and Cairngorms in 2010 as well as her latest trip to France.

For more information about the speaker, please see the DIG Group Website at the address given above

24th June 2012

321 International AV Challenge Gala Day

Time: 10:00am - 5:00pm TBC

Aldbourne, Wiltshire SN8 2DQ

Cost: £10.00 TBC, Members' Rate:

£8.00

Contact: Maureen Albright ARPS

Email: maureen@maureenalbright.com

Phone: 01672 540754

More details to be confirmed later

Please bring along a packed lunch, refreshments available

Day starts at 10am with tea/ coffee.



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the winter 2011/12 issue of DIGIT.

This issue contains all the accepted images in the 2011 DIG Digital Projected Image Competition. Unlike the DIG Members' Print Exhibition, where everyone who enters is guaranteed to have one print accepted, the DPIC is run as a competition.

Each of the three selectors allocated a score of up to 5 to each image. Scoring was done on electronic keyboards so each selector scores completely independently of the other judges' views or knowledge of the photographer of the images. The standard of entry was very high. The maximum score achievable was 15 and the acceptance score was 12. This resulted in 131 entries being accepted, just over 20% of those submitted. In addition to voting on each image, each selector awarded two Ribbons and all three decided on the overall winning image. This was awarded a Gold Medal and the Raymond Wallace Thompson Trophy for the Best Digital Projected Image of the Year.

The Trophy was presented for the first time in 2011 and was bought using a legacy from the late Raymond Wallace Thompson ARPS. Betty Billingham ARPS looks back on Ray's life and on some of his photography achievements on pages 18 and 19 and you can also see some of Ray's images there. We are most grateful to Ray for his kind thought and gift and hope that the new Trophy is a fitting tribute to him and to his active participation in the Group from its inception.

All the accepted images are printed in this issue of DIGIT.

In addition, there are comments from the selectors and the photographers of each of the Ribbon winning images, and by all three selectors on the overall winner (pages 20 – 26). Marilyn Taylor ARPS, whose image 'Silverback Gorillas Fighting' was

judged as the overall winner, talks about her photography in her article starting page 11. Marilyn tells us how she made the award winning image and shows us some of her other work. An electronic slide show of all the selected images will be published soon on our website and an email will be sent to all members for whom we have an email address when the slideshow is available for download. If you are not sure if the RPS has a valid email address for you, please see the advert on page 2 to find out how to get one registered.

The Competition seems, certainly from the number of people who entered, to have been very popular and a great success. There have been several emails saying how useful the feedback on individual scores has been. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to the success.

In this issue, we also have an article on 'Photographing Models' by Tim Pile, starting on page 6. Tim has had great success with his images in International Salons and Exhibitions and his article is a fascinating insight into this genre of photography. Our regular 'Digit Challenge' feature, this time with 2 members of the group telling us how they created their images starts on page 15.

Alongside this editorial, you will find a list of members who have gained RPS distinctions in 2011. On behalf of the DI group, I should like to offer many congratulations to all those listed and I hope they are enjoying their success. It is a great achievement to gain an RPS distinction.

I hope that you enjoy reading the articles and looking at the images in this issue of DIGIT and that you will find them interesting, entertaining and inspiring.

Congratulations to the following members of the Digital Imaging Group who gained RPS distinctions in 2011.

LRPS

Phil Bird
Malcolm Blackburn
Andrew Brooks
Stuart Crump
Roy Davies
Jennie French
Tim Hancock
George Imber
Shian Lee
Don Mccrae
Mary Averil Pipkin
Martin John Ridout
Diane L Rowe
Paramjit Sandhu-Dickens
Leslie Smith
Rachael Talibart
Robert Taylor
Alida Tricker
James Walker
Colin Wright

ARPS

John Cooke
David Cummings
Janet Haines
David Kershaw
Viveca Koh
David Norfolk
Tim Pile
Richard Prior
David Stubbs

FRPS

Veronica Barrett

Editor's note: We believe that the above list is complete but if you gained a distinction and your name is not on the list, please let me know and I'll correct the omission in the next issue of DIGIT.



Alone in the Woods

PHOTOGRAPHING MODELS



After a long break from photography, Tim Pile came back to it about three years ago to discover that the world had changed with the advent of digital capture and manipulation. After a short spell shooting landscapes again, he teamed up with two other photographers and together they decided to photograph models. Here, he describes what he has done since then and shows us some of his images.



Reflection In Red

When I was asked to write this article on my photography and images, I was given some guidance about the sort of things to include such as “what attracted you to taking them?” and “what excites you about them?” Now, as I shoot nudes predominantly, I have to be a bit careful here!

I had a short spell as a mono landscape darkroom worker in the 90s, and then, about three years ago, I came back to photography after a long break, and wow! had the whole world changed with digital. This was to my advantage given my IT background.

I began with taking landscapes but, living in Birmingham and having a full-time job, I found this rather

unproductive. The same also goes for natural history. I then teamed up with two female photographers from my camera club, Smethwick Photographic Society, Dinah Jayes LRPS and Mary Jennings LRPS. Between us we decided we should like to shoot models, and by shooting together we could split model costs as well as learning together, and from each other. We decided to ask Garry James LRPS, an experienced photographer at our camera club, for some guidance and he very kindly taught us the basics of studio photography and a lot, lot more. Unlike landscape, wildlife and sports photography where you go to the subject, with model photography you already have the subject and it's a



The Sunflower

matter of finding where and how to photograph them. You can then add props if you wish to enhance (or sometimes spoil!) the image. In this way, I find shooting models is very similar to still life; you have a substantial amount of control of the positioning and lighting of the subject.

I didn't quite fall into shooting models; it was more a process of elimination of what I couldn't do with the equipment and time constraints I had. It helps that I have a very supportive and understanding wife who loves my images.

I am quite selective in which models I work with. I choose models who are as passionate as me about creating great images. Also, two brains are better than one; the models will make suggestions and also point out things I may have missed. In fact,

every model image I have produced is not really my image but a collaboration with the model.

In general, I am trying to create images that show the beauty of the female form. For a long time in photography this meant monochrome images in classical static poses, so to try to be a little bit different I create mainly colour images using dynamic and expressive poses. I tend to find myself working with the same models repeatedly because, once we are used to working together, the creative partnership becomes increasingly productive.

I am always on the lookout for locations where I can shoot and this often entails asking the owner whether I can shoot nude images there. The answer is usually a straight yes or no, and more often yes than not. It helps that I have a substantial portfolio of similar work



The Dancer



Pearls, my first medal winner and image by which most people know me

to show them.

When I started doing digital photography I wanted to improve my photography, and the first step to this was joining a camera club. These can get very bad press, but I found that the more I put into the club the more I got out of it. By attending exhibitions put on at the club, including most of the major RPS exhibitions, and also helping out on exhibition judging days held at the club, I was exposed soon to a huge variety of high quality images. The problem with exhibitions and

other competitions is that with the same images entered you can get totally different results. Once you get over this and accept that judges will have different opinions to yourself, and to each other, then they are a good way of getting your images in front of other photographers. I measure the improvement in my photography not by the number of exhibition acceptances and awards I get, but by whether I think my newer images are better than those I was taking 12 months ago. I have also applied for distinctions

with the RPS, PAGB and FIAP with some success. When you go for a distinction you are only really competing against yourself and even if you are not successful your photography improves by the very act of preparing work for it. The highlight of my photography so far has been gaining my ARPS Visual Art in October 2011. Other outlets which allow people to view and appreciate my images are my website <http://www.photopile.co.uk> and blog <http://timbham.blogspot.com>.



Simply Red, my most successful image

Most models I work with have one or both of these, so one Saturday afternoon just under two years ago I set out about producing my own, and I finished them both that day!

I wanted my website to be low maintenance and for me to be able to add new images and galleries relatively easily. I achieved this by using a couple of inexpensive plugins for Lightroom from The Turning Gate. The total cost was \$25. Now I can add a new gallery of images simply by selecting a number of images in Lightroom, giving the

gallery a name, and uploading. In practice, I do not update my website as often as I should, even though it is so easy. However, I am more active with my blog, usually managing around 3 new posts per month. To those who do not know what a blog is the standard definition is "A Web site on which an individual or group of users record opinions, information, etc. on a regular basis".

I try to keep the text in my blog relatively informal and I put up lots of images, assuming that's why

people visit. I don't know who visits my blog unless they tell me, but every month the recorded number of viewers from all around the world reaches four digits.

So with exhibitions, distinctions, my website and blog, I'm kept pretty busy and this motivates me to be a prolific creator of images. I hope everybody gets as much pleasure from looking at my images as I do in producing them, and in the words of the guidance given to me can see "what excites me about them".



The Bather



Jump!



Shards



Silverback Gorillas Fighting

‘SILVERBACK GORILLAS FIGHTING’ AND OTHER IMAGES



Marilyn Taylor has taken photographs all her life, but bought her first digital camera in 2000. She has been a member of the Guildford Photographic Society since 2007 and currently is the Chairman. Her image ‘Silverback Gorillas Fighting’ won the Gold Medal and Ray Wallace Thompson Trophy in the 2011 DIG Digital Projected Image Competition. Here, she describes how she made the image and shows us some of her other work.

Silverback Gorillas Fighting was taken in March 2011, at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park. I had been wanting to visit Ruanda/Burundi for ages to see the gorillas, but I haven’t been able to do so ... yet! When I saw a gorillas’ photographic workshop advertised on a weekend by Photographers On Safari at Port Lympne, it seemed a good chance to see what the difficulties might be in taking photographs of such a powerful yet endearing primate. Our group was allowed in before the general public, and had early access to

the family groups. Later we went over to the young male enclosure, where we were able to stand right up to the outside wall, whereas the general public were required to be a bit further away. I had been waiting for one of these young males to start walking on his hind legs, because it had been reported in the newspapers a week or two earlier. One of the keepers had kindly indicated which ape it was, and I was pointing the camera in his general direction. Two of the gorillas started snarling at each other. I had the camera in high burst mode already and on servo focus, so I started

shooting and the two young males began throwing left and right hooks at each other. It lasted for about 15 seconds and then it was all over and calm resumed. I thought I had a good series (about eight) when I looked at the images on the LCD, and when I loaded the card at home, I was quite pleased (English understatement).

At the Guildford Photographic Society, we have a Nature Trophy in April, and I thought I had a really good chance with what I thought was the best of the series. I hadn’t manipulated the image at all, just a slightly tighter crop, and some



Silverback Gorillas Fighting The Original Image

standard sharpening and levelling (the original was a jpg not RAW). To my dismay, the judge gave it only a 'Commended' because he thought the grass in the background was too pale. The pale fringing at the back of the main gorilla was from the back lighting and the lighter fur. This image is straight from the camera (Canon 7D, 70-300mm DO IS USM lens, 1/250 second, f5.0, 400 ISO).

Earlier in the year, I had been preparing for an exhibition of orang-utan images. These had been taken during two trips to Borneo. The images were good, but not exciting, and I decided to experiment with some filters, specifically Fractalius. This is quite an interesting filter, which you often see used on big cat images. Fractalius has several sliders and options, all of which make fur swirl and glow. I chose a combination of sliders, which was a little less dramatic than the others, and applied that to the orang-utan images with a normal blend mode and a reduced opacity. With a simple mask to protect the facial features, the tone and texture of the fur improved enormously.

So then I thought I'd try that with the gorillas, knowing that this technique would forever make these manipulated images unsuitable for wildlife / nature competitions. The use of the same Fractalius settings that I'd used for the orang-utans was very disappointing. The different tonal content of the original images has a big effect on the result. So I tried several other slider settings (Fractalius has a handy 'random' option). This took quite a while, because to see the effect of each setting meant rendering the image completely back into Photoshop, and then applying a levels opacity. This takes a least a minute, sometimes five, depending on the size of your image, and of course the speed of your computer. After several false starts, I found something that I thought should work.

I had to de-saturate the image (as there was still too much yellow from the offending grass) and then it was much easier to remove any remnants of grey from the background. Now they looked as though they had been taken to a well known High Street high key photographer! A mask to restore the snarling faces and some of the colour in the fur, a touch of High Pass sharpening, and I thought it was ready. Or nearly.



Baby Orangutan Before and After Treatment with Fractalius

Another filter with which I've experimented in the past is Filter Forge. It has a huge number of creative (and crazy) filters, as well as some framing tools. Any other framing product would offer a similar set of options. I discovered a 'grungy' frame so I thought I'd try it on the gorillas, and it really set off the subject well with a vignette type of darkening. Again I used a mask to limit the darkened areas and now it really was finished.

You would deduce from this set of notes that I do a lot of experimentation. That is not generally the case. In fact, very rarely do I 'play'. But for this set of images (I have about eight very similar), which I thought had a lot of competition potential, I was almost driven to find a way of presenting them better than the 'straight' images.

The sad thing is, that even if I published all the settings and layers that I used, it would do none of you any good, because the next set of images, yours or mine, will have different characteristics.

For your interest, I did get the gorilla walking on his hind legs, but only from the side (see Walking Gorilla).

Silverback Gorillas Fighting has brought me a lot of success but my main body of photographic work is the recording of re-enactments. I joined the Sealed Knot photo team in 2009 after attending a number of their English Civil War events as an ordinary member of the public.

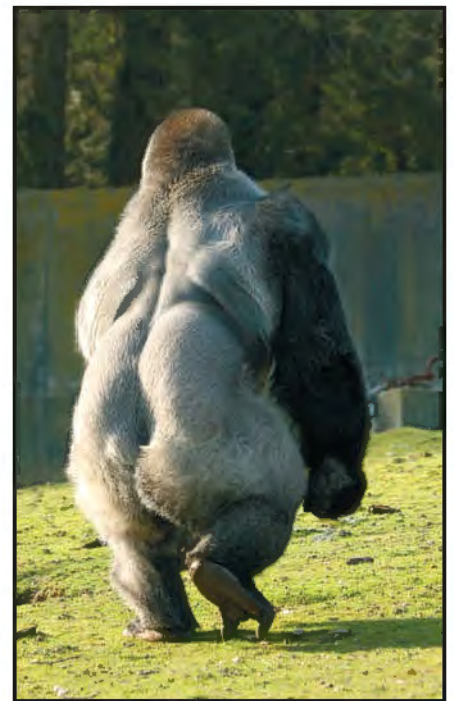
These events are very attractive from a photographic point of view. There's a lot of action; the 'actors' are all dressed immaculately and happy to have their photographs taken; the events are usually based on specific historical events and, in general, there's something for the whole family.

I've been to several different re-enactment periods – from the Battle of Hastings to World War I. The best for me in 2011 was the Battle of Waterloo in Belgium, probably because of the sheer number of participants, and the cavalry. Some of the hussar uniforms were absolutely exquisite.

'Into the Breach' was one of the first photos I took in Old Basing April 2008, and brought me my first 10 in a club competition. I adjusted the saturation slightly, but essentially this was a straight shot. The sunlight coming through the musket smoke was really atmospheric, and it's a look I try to reproduce.

The re-enactment image with which I've done best in competition was a montage

called 'King's Guard Ensign'. The background scene was, like 'Into the Breach', quite atmospheric, with the musket smoke hanging over the field, but I improved it with BuzzSim and some desaturation. The Ensign himself was one of the photos that I had taken while they were in action because I liked his expression. Putting the two together was straightforward, and it was one of my successful ARPS panel. I am a member of SWPP as well as RPS, and they have a monthly competition. This image was awarded a Gold medal for Events (they award several every month), but it was short listed for the annual awards and I was named the Society of Professional Imagemakers - Event Photographer of the Year for 2010. There were some amazing images in all the groups, but I don't think that the judges had seen many re-enactment images, and I'm sure that the use of unusual subject matter can be to your advantage in open competitions. Also I like taking close-up or macro photographs – I try quite hard to get the



Walking Gorilla

image absolutely right in the camera. Unfortunately, because I have a reputation for being something of a Photoshop expert, people who know



Into the Breach



King's Guard Ensign



Climbing the FTi



Eyes Wide Open

me think I've created the images by manipulation. I'm not sure whether that's good or bad. Here are two that essentially are straight out of the camera ('Climbing the FTi' and 'Eyes Wide Open').

One of the problems that I find with assessing my work, and its value, is that you get an emotional attachment to the image. Perhaps you were feeling really good that day when you took the photos, or sometimes the opposite, you were really low, or cold and miserable, and you look at an

image on the LCD and it's marvellous, and your spirits are lifted. That feeling stays with you forever somehow even though it's less than perfect once you have it on your computer at 100%.

But also, say, I've been looking for a portrait for a competition, and remembered something vaguely good. With a bit of filter manipulation, or conversion to mono, the image can be transformed into an excellent piece of work. That image will always be special to you. One of the most important things that I've learnt lately is how important the background details are, as in the case of my pale grass. Once a

bright area catches a judge's eye he/she can't look at the rest of the image properly, and you will be marked down.

At the moment I am working on some long shutter speed images – mostly at re-enactment events. I'd like to be able to take two simultaneous images where the one shutter speed is 1/250 say, and the other half a second. The technicalities of that are defeating me at the moment, although I have bought a 3D camera recently which is giving me some food for thought. Taking a burst of images and then merging them doesn't give the same result at all. Here's one I took last summer where luckily the captain was more or less stationary.

Hopefully 2012 will bring us all opportunities to take some wonderful images, and improve our post processing skills. I'm looking currently for a Fellowship project, but even when I find the right content I know the execution is going to be exacting.

You can see more of my images on my Website at: www.taylormadeimagery.co.uk



French and Indian Re-enactment

THE DIGIT CHALLENGE

This time we have two images from DIG members who explain how they created them. I hope you'll find these interesting and helpful techniques to use in your own photography. If you do, why not join in and send some of yours to me at: davidfcookearps@gmail.com.

Nash Point by Peter Phillips LRPS: The geology on show at Nash Point, Nr. Marcross in South Wales is a landscape photographer's heaven. My image is the result of manipulation to achieve a stronger image out of what otherwise would have been a disappointing day's shoot. I had done my usual research on the best time of year and day for sun angles, together with a check on weather conditions and tide times. Everything seemed right as I arrived one August at midday with plenty of time to reach the location and prepare for the golden hour before sunset. I had pre-visualised my image wherein the last rays of sunlight would provide dramatic, glancing illumination to enhance the rock strata on both cliffs and foreshore, against an interesting twilight sky. By tea time, however, this was not to be. The weather changed for the worse, and as you see from my 'original raw' image (Figure 1), taken to record a composition and location to re-visit, it turned out to provide no more than a cloudy dull, low contrast, lacklustre image.

It was also a time when I was experimenting with dramatic B&W conversions to add impact and interest. So at home, I set about post-visualising an image in Photoshop to make the image that I had hoped to capture originally.

The image was created in CS4 as follows:

- 1 Raw file conversion using ACR with +40 Clarity and +20 Vibrancy to boost the mid-tones.
- 2 Converted to a monochrome image using a B&W adjustment layer (Figure 2) This provides some increase in contrast and tonal range, but the image lacks a focus, with distracting peripheral features that lead the eye out of the frame.
- 3 The Layers Palette (Figure 3) shows the nine layers used to enhance or suppress features to provide the much needed lead-in features and focus of attention.
- 4 Steep curve adjustment layers were used for selected areas with heavy feathering and pulled-in black points, to ensure that highlights were not clipped.
- 5 The dodge & burn layers use a 50% grey filled new layer with an overlay blend. A very soft, low opacity, black brush was



The Final Image



Figure 1: The Original Image



Figure 2: Conversion to Black and White

used then to 'burn in' selected areas or a white brush to 'dodge' selected areas. I am very pleased to say that the final image was awarded the best monochrome print in my local Kingswood Photographic Society 2010 Annual Members' Exhibition and was accepted for the 2011 Bristol Salon. Also, many favourable and constructive comments were received in the "Images for Discussion" section

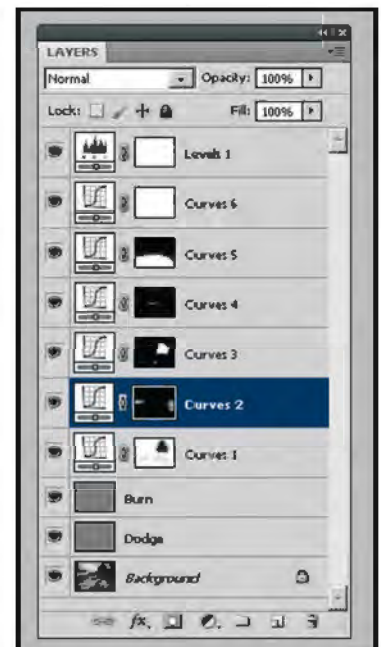


Figure 3: The Layers Palette

of the DIG Forum, which I heartily recommend. I am indebted also to Andy Beel, FRPS who advised me on the application of the post processing treatments used. *Editor's Note: For details of how to access the DIG Forum, please see our website at: www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging*



A Glimpse into my Soul

A Glimpse into my Soul by Helena Berney:

When the world says, "Give up," Hope whispers, "Try it one more time." ~Author Unknown

I'm fairly new to photography and finding it all a bit of a rollercoaster. I suffer from crippling self-doubt. This, coupled with the fact I can't photograph what's in front of me, but only the way I feel at any particular given moment makes for some interesting reactions from people. These reactions have ranged from complete silence to "I quite like some of your stuff, but it's not photography" to "very talented". It has left me in quite a dark place.

This image (and the accompanying

quote) is a response to struggling to articulate my thoughts and feelings verbally, so I have done it visually. It represents my hope that I can overcome my feelings of inadequacy and eventually I'll get out of this place and let my work soar, not held in by the boundaries I've allowed inside my head. As for how I did it, it is four separate shots blended in Photoshop. After making global post processing alterations in Lightroom to each of the individual images, I imported them into Photoshop.

Each of the four shots needed a little work before I could start to combine them into the final image. I began work

on the image of the owl. In order to get rid of the background I needed to create a mask. I selected calculations from the top menu: Image>calculations. This tool merges two channels and creates a new alpha channel. For the mask to work the alpha channel has to be black and white with no shades of grey, so I altered the brightness and contrast on the new channel followed by painting over the channel using a soft brush set to overlay. The brush was set to white in order to brighten the light grey areas and black to darken the darker grey areas. Once I was happy with the mask I converted it into a selection. The selected owl was now ready to be imported into my final image. The image of the candle was made by using my daughter as a model. I draped some black velvet around her so that only her hands, arms and the candle were showing. I lit the candle, turned out the lights and took the photo. The texture shot is a badly scratched laminate floor which I felt suited the slightly uncomfortable atmosphere of the image. I converted this to mono (the floor was supposed to be black anyway) before importing it into my final image file.

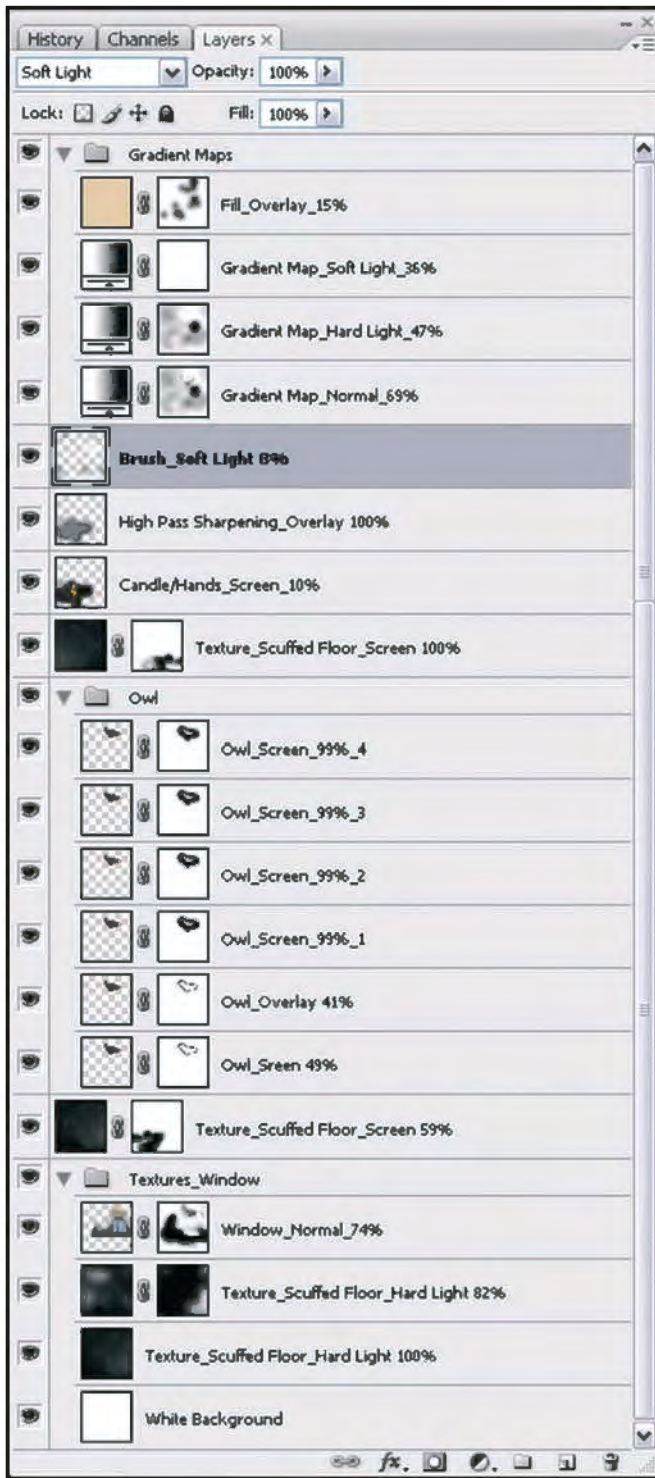
The last shot is a beautiful window and roof detail which was taken at the Modern Art Gallery in Edinburgh. This shot was imported into my final image file and then a layer mask applied in order to hide the parts of the image not relevant to the story I wanted to create. Once I had all four images in one file I was able to refine the image. I unlocked the background candle layer so that it became a floating layer and added a white layer to the bottom of the stack. Then, I imported my texture image. I set the blend mode to hard light and left the opacity at 100. This gave me a good base to work on. I copied the texture layer, set the blend mode to hard light



Owl



Candle



Layers Palette



Texture

and reduced the opacity. I also rotated this layer and used a layer mask to gain further control over the scratched areas. I imported the window layer, reduced the opacity so that some of the texture was revealed and, using another layer mask, I painted using a large soft brush in order to soften the window area and get the look and feel I wanted.

The owl is made up of six duplicated layers, each one set to a different opacity and blending mode. This allowed me to make very precise subtle changes again using layer masks and a soft brush until the owl looked right.

The bottom layer in the stack of six has a very small Gaussian blur applied so that it doesn't look like a cardboard cut-out.

I imported the hands image, masking off the areas I didn't want, using my preferred

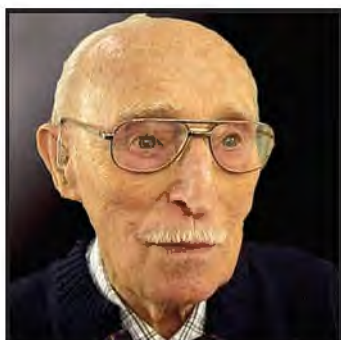
large soft brush. I duplicated the layer, applied a high pass filter, then set the blend mode to overlay. This sharpened the image. I masked off any areas I didn't want to sharpen. Towards the top of the stack three new adjustment layers each set to a different blend mode and opacity were created. Finally, I added a fill layer to the top of the stack in order to create an almost monochrome image. Part of the fill layer was masked to reveal a hint of the blue in the window and soft hints of the original colours throughout the final image.

Once the layers were flattened, I altered the levels using an adjustment layer. I saved my new file, made a print of it and uploaded it to the digit forum for critique and comment.



Window

THE RAYMOND WALLACE THOMPSON TROPHY



The Photograph of Ray Wallace Thompson used in his Spring 2010 DIGIT Article on Stereo Photography

Ray Wallace Thompson ARPS, a long-time member of the RPS and of the Digital Imaging Group, kindly left a legacy to the Group in his will. The DIG Committee decided that a fitting way to use this was to commission a trophy for the Group's Digital Projected Image Competition. The Trophy was presented for the first time for the 2011 Competition. Betty Billingham ARPS looks back on his life and some of his photographic achievements. The accompanying photographs, by Ray, have been taken from earlier issues of DIGIT magazine.

Ray Wallace Thompson ARPS sadly passed away in October 2010 at the age of 93. It was in 1934, while studying the history of Architecture that Ray acquired a Zeiss 520 and became fascinated with photography. "Rather frustrating", he remarked, for the photographs were in B&W and he was studying space, form and colour. In 1939 matters looked up as he shot his first colour pictures on a rather grainy Dufay.

Many cameras later, he became an Associate of the Royal Photographic Society, and of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain; an Honorary Member of the Indian International Photographic Council with whom he was long associated; an Honorary Member of the Lebanon Pennsylvania Camera Club; Honorary Member and Founding Chairman of the Third Dimension Society and an Honorary Member of the Stockton-on-Tees Photo Colour Society.

Service Medal. He also edited a couple of international magazines as well as writing numerous articles for the PSA Journal and was awarded 2 Editorial Silver Stars followed by the Keaton Award. In 1967 he was elected an Associate; got his Fellowship in 1989 and ultimately in 1999 he was elected an Honorary Member of the PSA.

He joined the Photographic Society of America (PSA) in 1963, was their representative in the UK, their Travel Aide for the UK, and was awarded the

WWII meant 5 years in the army before Ray once again returned to his cameras. With the advent of digital photography, Ray was quick to acquire the very latest equipment and soon learnt to master computer manipulation, remaining a member of

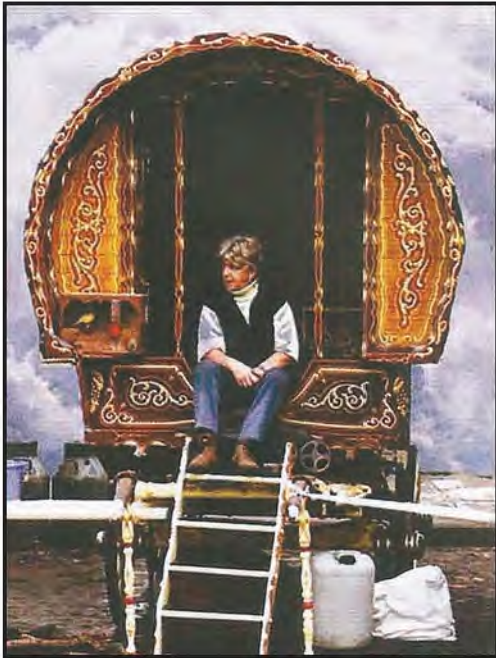


The Raymond Wallace Thompson Trophy

Marilyn Taylor ARPS



Window and Doors, 2001 Members' Exhibition



Modern Gypsy, 2007 Members' Exhibition

the PSA Study Group No1 till the very end, as well as regularly contributing to the RPS Digital group both articles for the magazine and the on-line forum.

Ray also was a fine guitar player, regularly playing with a band as he became much involved with stereo and built himself an elaborate sound system and mini theatre, continually keeping up with the very latest technology. Ray spent a lot of time and effort passing on his extensive knowledge and found one of the best ways was via producing A/Vs and Essays, also incidentally winning many medals and a Plaque. At the age of 92 he won yet another Gold Medal from the PSA. Many of his photographs were of his home area of which he was very proud, and of his long hikes



In Retreat 2003, Members' Print Exhibition



A Prayer at the Pantheon, 2002 Members' Exhibition

around the Lake District with his wife Dorothy who sadly passed away less than a year before him. Being an architect, he had an extensive and detailed record of slides taken over the many years he worked at Stockton and one of his

last official acts was to present his collection to the town at an elaborate function honoured by the mayor and Town Council. As a side-line, my friend Ray also produced some excellent wine!



Victorian Street, Preston Park Museum, Stockton on Tees

MEMBERS' DIGITAL PROJECTED IMAGE COMPETITION 2011

SILVERBACK GORILLAS FIGHTING

MARILYN TAYLOR ARPS



Derek Dorsett FRPS: There is no doubt that this image was the most striking in the exhibition entry! Anyone who has attempted this type of action picture will appreciate the good fortune needed to catch the right moment to record the event, and this shot is close to perfection. I loved the sheer aggression in the eyes and those huge canines look absolutely lethal. Strangely, a feature I liked was the patterns created by the hair on the body and the right arm, which is presumably reaching out to strike his opponent. Somehow this seems to enhance the pictorial element of the image and prevent a ding-dong effect. The

background is suitably vague and the vignetting effect is well handled, the glimpse of the other gorilla just giving confirmation of where the strike was directed. All the features that were under the control of the photographer were well handled - and those that could not be controlled....well, we make our own good fortune.

Barry Mead FRPS: This was a wonderful image showing creatively the powerful aggression these animals can have on the rare occasions they need to use it. Excellent composition which added to the overall effect of power being unleashed. Worthy Gold Medal by any standards

Vanessa Slawson FRPS: This image is an excellent example of digital art where the enhancement and manipulation to the image has added an extra dimension. The action has been caught at the optimum moment giving not only realism to the viewer but also a sense of drama.

The tonal control and simplicity of colour is also another factor that gives this image the edge. The composition of the main subject matter and the inclusion of the second gorilla adds to the impact. An exciting and powerful image.

INDIAN FRIENDS

EDDY LANE ARPS



Derek Dorsett FRPS: There were several pictures competing for my ribbon winners. I chose this for one of them because it was well seen and illustrates clearly the relationship that seems to exist between the boy and the water buffalo. The animal has no problems with the fact that the boy is holding on to him, and if anything is looking at the camera as if the photographer has disturbed them and might be up to no good. The image benefits from the fact that the horns have been docked and might otherwise have been intrusive. The colours are soft and muted and despite the dark colour, the animal's hair is well depicted. The picture is not obviously posed and

produces an element of surprise and intrusion suggesting a reaction of "where did you come from". It is this relaxed quality of everyday life that separates it from so many of the images that come from India that gave it an immediate appeal.

Eddy Lane ARPS: This image was taken during the RPS/DI Group Tour of Northern India of 2009, led by Graham Whistler FRPS. We had detoured around the back of the Taj Mahal onto the beach by the river for some reflection shots, when this young man approached with his livestock. When he saw the camera he bent down and put his arm around his favourite cow for this unusual shot – I

gave him a few rupees as he had made us all smile. He was a very bright lad, and talked to us continually about cricket and football as we made our way back to our vehicle. The image was cropped and the light sand background toned down to try to emphasise the two pairs of eyes.

HE LOVES HIS OATS

GRAHAM WORLEY LRPS



Derek Dorsett FRPS: It speaks well for the unanimity of the selectors that there were plenty of pictures in the high marks bracket to be able to select our individual choices with few problems. This image ranked high in my personal rating right from the start. The setting for the picture appears to be a wartime railway station in the nineteen forties. The tape across the windows is to stop flying glass in the event of an exploding bomb. The advert and the dresses are all in keeping with this time. The composition of the picture is superb. The lady on the right is balanced by the advert for Oats, and the lady in red

commands your attention with her legs and direct gaze. The colourful costumes and furs are all typical of the period. It begs the question why and where are these ladies going, all dressed up for the kill? It doesn't take much imagination to think of a few reasons, and if you need it, the title will give you a clue! I like pictures with a storyline and this one takes me back a few years. Excellent.

Graham Worley LRPS: I try to attend as many 40s re-enactments as possible. This image was taken at The Severn Valley Railway in 2011. Just lately numbers of re-enactors has dropped, so

it has been made all the harder with them being well out-numbered by photographers and visitors. I always watch and look for a moment in time and never pose them, the three ladies were well into conversation. At the moment I pressed the shutter the lady in red looked my way. I had photographed the Oats sign beforehand, so placed it there. The lady in the centre was holding a drink, but if I asked her to put it down I should have lost the shot I wanted. I placed a box brownie case in place of the drink in Photoshop.

MERLIN IN SNOW

GORDON FOLLOWS ARPS



Barry Mead FRPS: An excellent image of a Merlin in very cold weather conditions showing the bird quietly weathering the snowstorm. I liked particularly the soft lighting which emphasised the Merlin's feather detail.

Gordon Follows ARPS: The image is a straight forward nature photograph of a captive adult male bird. My thought processes during the photographic session were

- to show the wonderful sky-blue mantle plumage to best effect; hence the back view
- select an attractive perch, placing the subject off-centre
- take advantage of light snow to create mood.

Since a relatively slow shutter speed was necessary to create the diagonal streaks of snow, it was important to ensure that

the visible background was a good distance behind the bird to achieve the softness required. This in fact is an out of focus distant birch woodland.

Technical details were

- Camera Nikon D300
- Lens 500 mm f 4 tripod mounted
- ISO 400 with -1.0 compensation
- Exposure 1/125 sec @ f 6.3

BITING THE DUST

MALCOLM MCBEATH ARPS



Barry Mead FRPS: I particularly liked the moment chosen to press the shutter and the composition which resulted from the moment of capture. Although we see a lot of Rodeo images this, I felt, captured the event and inevitably asked the question what happened next. Again, simplicity without the usual cluttered background.

Malcolm McBeath ARPS: This image was taken at a local rodeo in Stony Plain, Alberta, Canada. An advantage of going to a smaller rodeo is that you are allowed to crouch down and photograph the action over the barrier. My Nikon D300 & 70-300mm VR lens was used, although, if going again, I should not change lenses, as a serious amount of dust is kicked up: afterwards my camera required a good clean up, inside and out!

A scattering of spectators in the background was cloned out in Photoshop, and distracting advertising signs were reduced to dust-coloured

mono, leaving the rearing horse & thrown cowboy in colour for maximum impact.

THE BODY SHOP

RUTH NICHOLLS LRPS



Vanessa Slawson FRPS: The interaction between the figures in the window and those on the outside has been positioned carefully to create a great narrative. The monochromatic treatment is perfect and adds to the simplicity of the overall image. I loved the humour of the image and the idea that getting a new body could be this simple was a good one. The male mannequins have added an additional element to the storyline. The image demonstrates a great use of tonal control as well as an understanding of directional lighting, reflections and shadows. A worthy winner.

Ruth Nicholls LRPS: My husband said 'There might be a picture downtown in a shop window, models with no clothes on...' Passers-by gave me some funny looks as I took the photographs. This image is the result. Only later I realised that the words were reflected in some of the shots, from a well-known shop opposite. Back-to-front of course. This added extra scope for a creative image. My image was made from 3 originals: the lady models, with window furniture, but with a lot of decorator's mess removed, as the window was being redecorated; the words, extracted from an image of the men's window, and

finally, the two men, extracted from another shot, added after I had 'done' the ladies and the words. I wanted the men to be looking into the window from outside, so I had to construct a 'space', in front of the window, and their shadow. Finally it was flipped so that the words ran correctly. The interpretation is in the eye of the beholder. Others have seen transsexual or homosexual connotations, but for me I see the men admiring the ladies in all their glory, but they are safely separated by the glass...

DANNY HARRIS'S GOAL IN THE BACK OF THE NET

CAROL WHITE-GRIFFITHS LRPS



Vanessa Slawson FRPS: This image stood out for me as the action has been captured at precisely the right moment. There are a number of important elements in this image (most out of control of the photographer) that demonstrate the photographer's skill in anticipating when to press the shutter. The low viewpoint, the celebrations of the team scoring and the dismay on the faces of the defenders all make this an outstanding sports image. The narrow cropping also has added to the impact and the placement of the ball is spot on! Lucky shot perhaps? No - good planning and understanding of the sport by the photographer.

Carol White-Griffiths LRPS: In the last few seasons I have become involved with my local Blue Square South league team, so much so that I am now the 'official' match photographer. I love the action, emotion, highs and lows of the game, in all conditions. I try to capture different angles on the game, something different from the usual, and use a basic remote set up behind the goal. The ability to anticipate the action, as well as when to press the shutter, are skills you need, together with good camera equipment. This shot, for me, sums up the reason why the supporters turn up for games, why the team trains hard every week,

and what the manager hopes to achieve. Even if you are not a football fan, you cannot fail to be caught up in the positive energy. I just wish you could hear the supporters cheering too.



The Gents, Martin Addison FRPS



Engine Shed, Clifford Banks LRPS



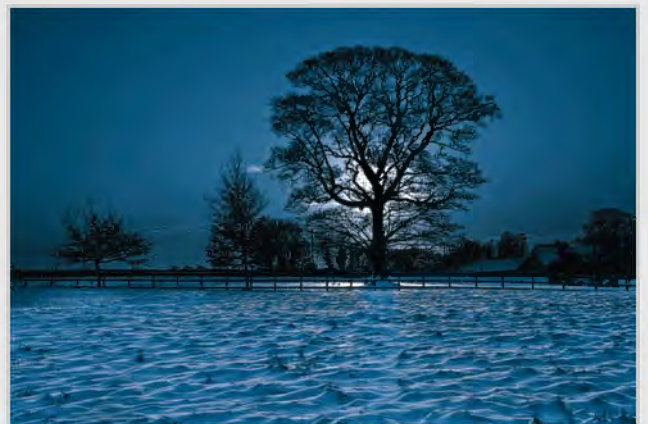
Old Lorry, Clifford Banks LRPS



I Can't Hear, Veronica Barraclough ARPS



The Model, Veronica Barraclough ARPS



The Sycamore Tree, Jeffery Bartlett ARPS

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



Twinkler, Brian Beaney FRPS



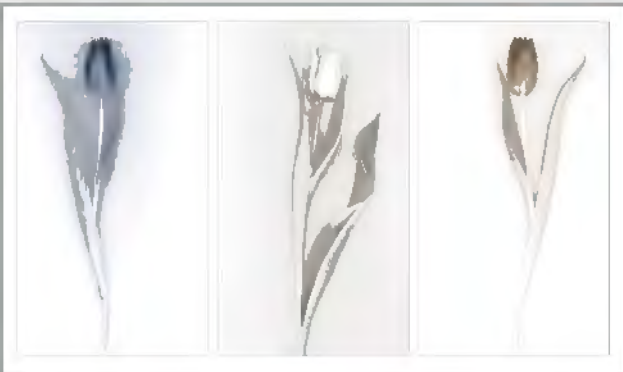
The Guardian, Helena Berney LRPS



Learning the Hard Way, Kenneth Biggs FRPS



Two of a Kind, Kenneth Biggs FRPS



Tulip Triptych, Eric Bower ARPS



Forest Fantasy, Tom Bowett FRPS



Rydal Morning, Tom Bowett FRPS



The Final Furlong, John Boyd LRPS



Gareth, Clifford Brown LRPS



Bell Foundry, Brian Burrows



On a Hot Seat, Ashwin Chauhan ARPS



Shaping Brass Pots, Ashwin Chauhan ARPS

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



At the Steam Fair, John Childs ARPS



Racing for the Finish, John Childs ARPS



Wast Water 2, Keith Chinn ARPS



Moon over Half Dome, Peter Clark FRPS



Grasses, Ann Cole LRPS



Rainman, Gerry Coles ARPS



Urban Glory, Gerry Coles ARPS



The Man in the Hat, Dr David F Cooke ARPS



The Woman with the Bottle, Dr David F Cooke ARPS



The Face of Cardiff Bay, John Cooke ARPS



Twins, John Cooke ARPS



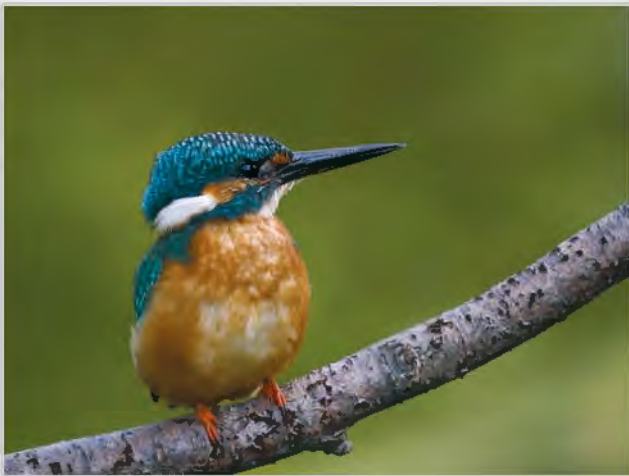
Cloud Gate Reflections, Alan Cross LRPS



The Passage of Time, Alan Cross LRPS



A Shoal of Snappers - Ras Mohammed, Len Deeley FRPS



Female Kingfisher, Brian Eacock ARPS



Goldfinch, Brian Eacock ARPS



Gas Station, Alan Edwards ARPS



Learning to Fly, Sue Eley



Frozen Orange Juice, Brian Farey ARPS



Long Way Down, David Faulder



Algarve Beach, Melvyn Frewin LRPS



Birkdale Valley, Melvyn Frewin LRPS



Evening Light, Pat Frewin LRPS



Tight Bend, Ron Gafney LRPS

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



Veteran Car Run, Ron Gafney LRPS



The Door, John Gall



Ring, William Gleeson ARPS



Moonglow Avebury, Ray Grace ARPS



Storm over Derwentwater, Ray Grace ARPS



Gone to the Beach, Janet Haines ARPS



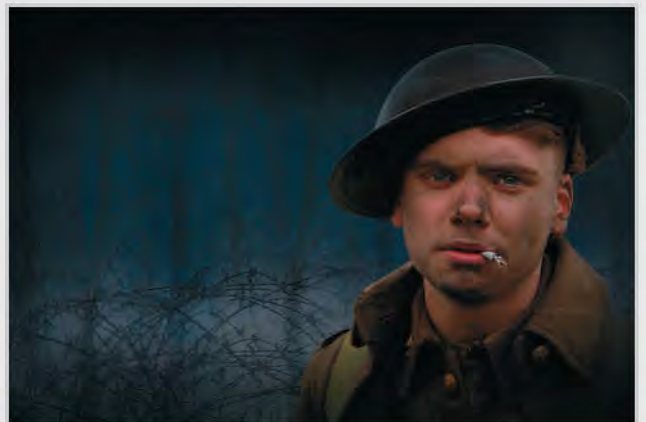
Aiden, Steve Harratt LRPS



Blue Mood, Colin Harrison FRPS



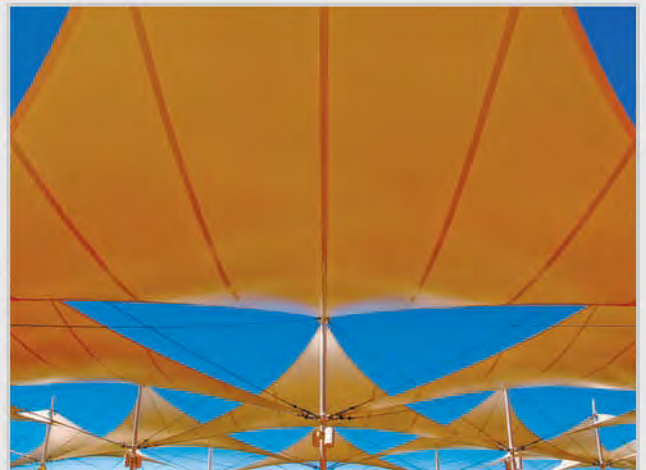
Cromer Pier, Colin Harrison FRPS



Last Smoke, Colin Harrison FRPS



Are They Done, Graeme Hawley



Awning in the Sky, Graeme Hawley

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



Determination, Sheila Haycox LRPS



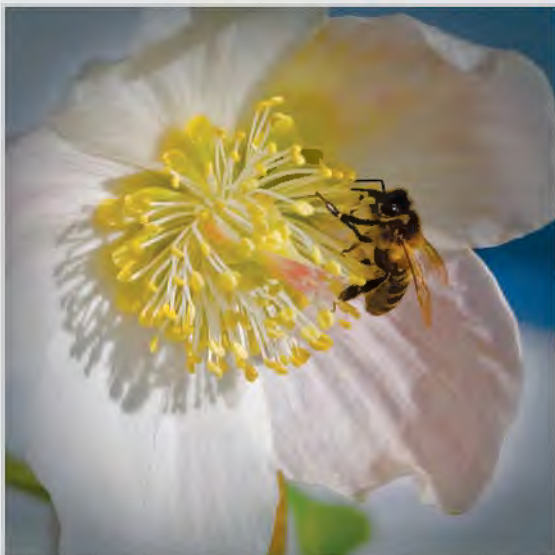
Id and Ego, Clive Haynes FRPS



Troopers, Clive Haynes FRPS



Melody, Peter Hemment LRPS



Heliborus with Insect, Mike Higgins



All Girls Together, Howard W Hilton ARPS



Dawn, Ron Holmes ARPS



A Backward Glance, Dinah Jayes LRPS



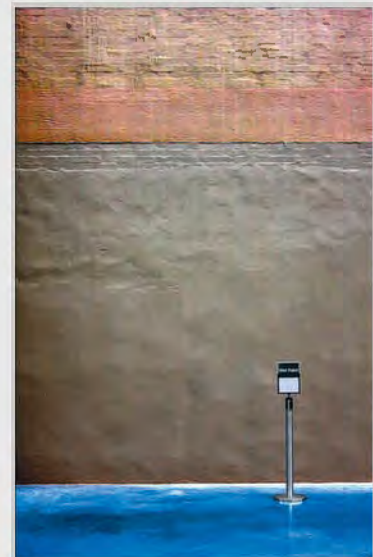
Awakening Beauty, Dinah Jayes LRPS



Lady in Red, Paul Johnson



Do It This Way, Roy King ARPS

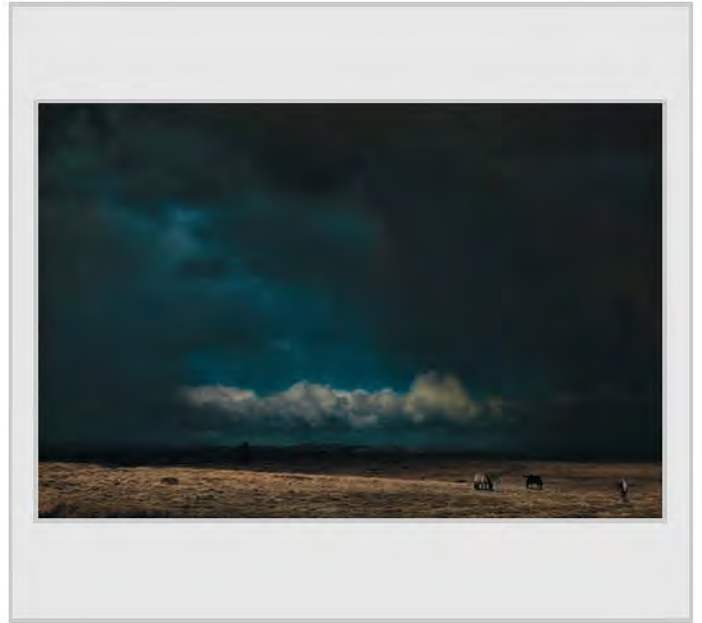


Wet Paint, Roy King ARPS

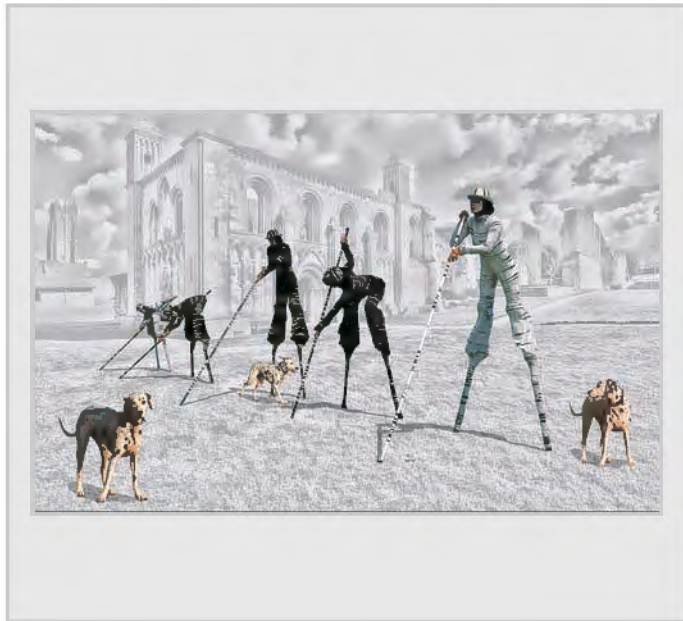
OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



Graphic Design, Sylvia Kislingbury ARPS



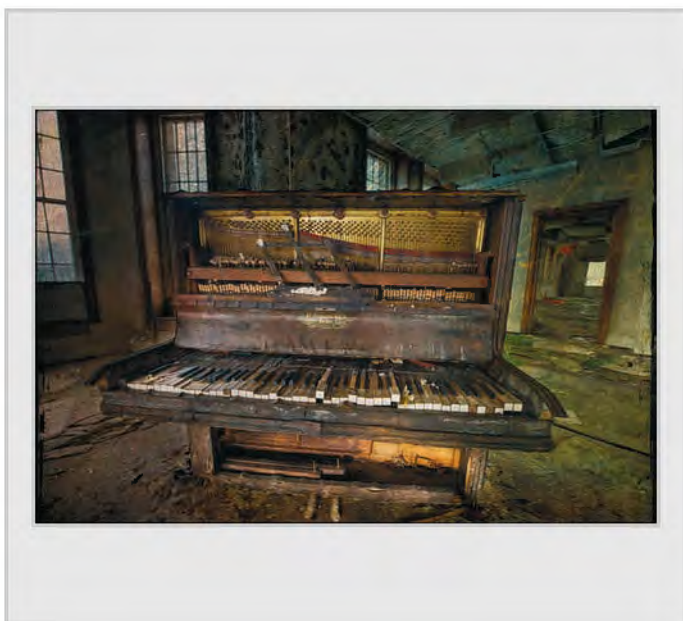
Approaching Hail Storm on Dartmoor, Malcolm Kitto ARPS



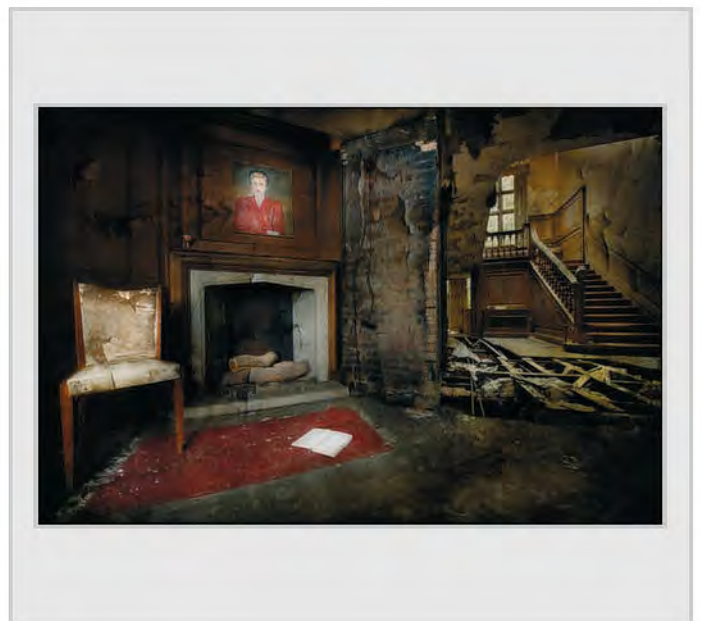
Stop That Dog, Malcolm Kitto ARPS



Red Sky in the Morning, Judy Knights LRPS



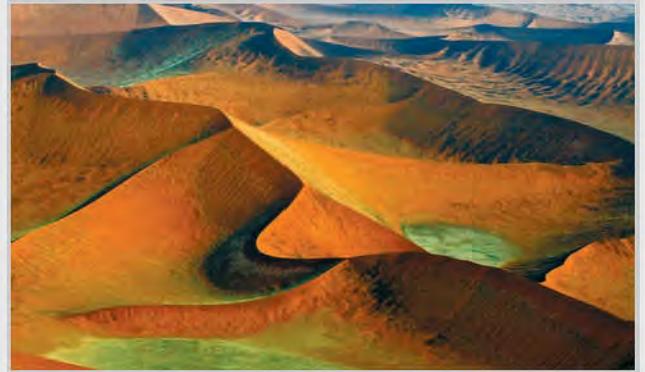
Desolation Echoes, Viveca Koh ARPS



The Watcher, Viveca Koh ARPS



Iced in the Arctic, Eddy Lane ARPS



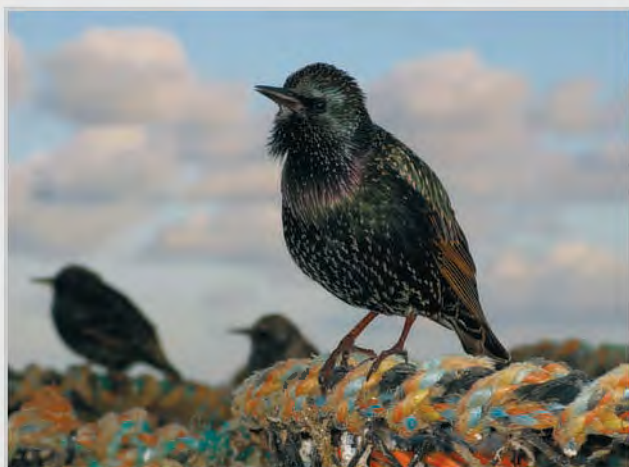
Creative Dunes, Pam Lane ARPS



No Parking, Reg Law LRPS



Arctic Leap, John Lawton ARPS

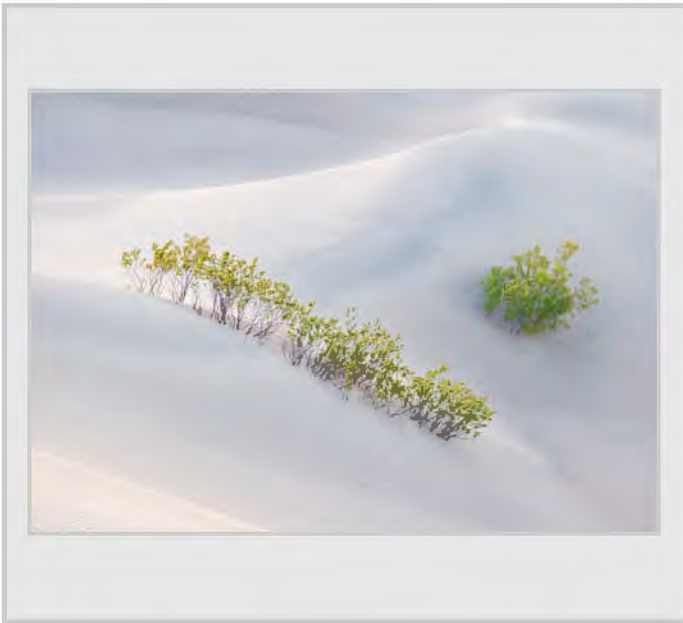


Mudford Starling, Eric Leeson LRPS

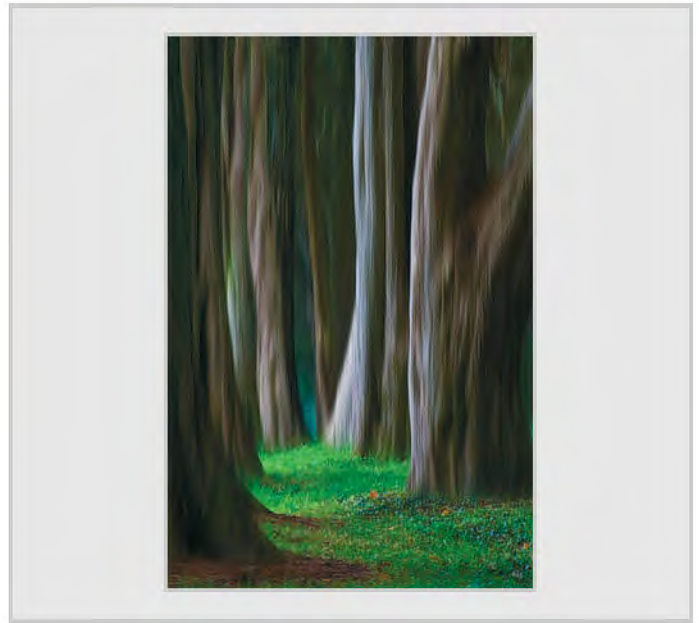


People at Play, Sam S Levy ARPS

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



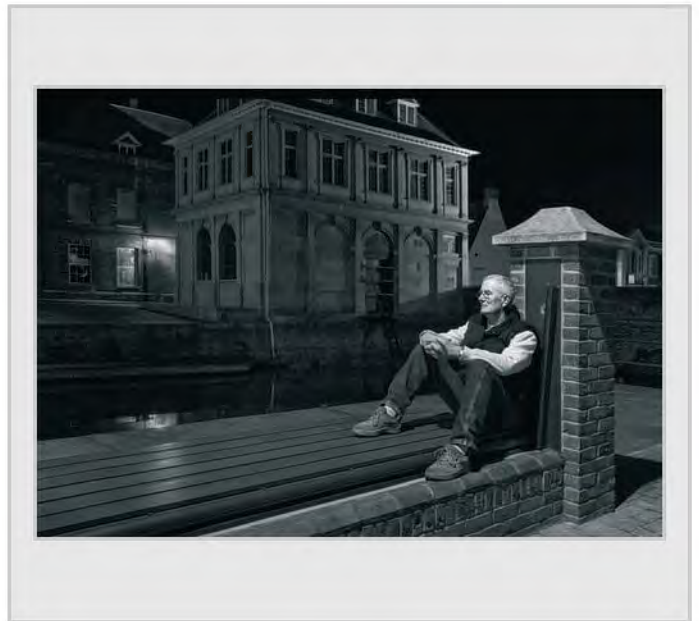
Early Morning, Death Valley, Carole Lewis ARPS



Enchanted Forest, John Lewis LRPS



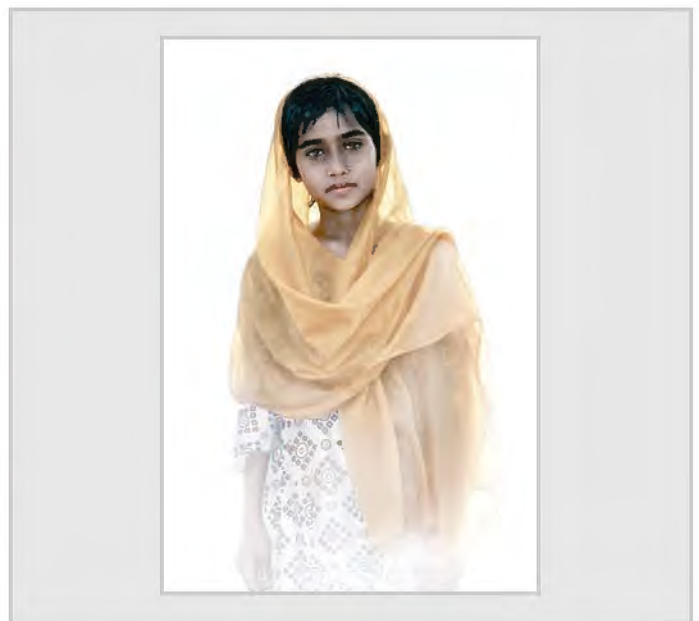
Hank, John Long ARPS



Reflective Pose, Tony Luxton LRPS



Together, Dr Dorrette McAuslan LRPS



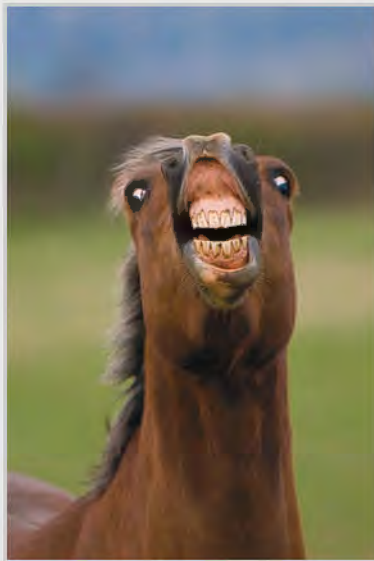
Suddenly There She Was, Paul McCullagh ARPS



Swallow Parent Feeding Fledglings, Paul McCullagh ARPS



Fall, Peter Meade



Flehmen Response, Peter Meade



Forgotten, Ruth Nicholls LRPS



Windswept Beach, Roger Norton LRPS



Pearls, Tim Pile ARPS

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



Snakeshead Fritillary, Clive Rathband FRPS



The Long Walk, Clive Rathband FRPS



Pasque Flower with Stamens, Joan Ryder Rathband FPRS



Oddington Old Church, Peter Read LRPS



Ghostly Stairs, Steve Reynolds ARPS



Breakfast, Garry Ridsdale ARPS



Lunch, Garry Ridsdale ARPS



Beneath the Lake, Hilary Roberts FRPS



Boy with Harmonica, David Robinson ARPS



What's Going On, David Robinson ARPS



Even Dragons Care, Gwynn Robinson FRPS



Frozen at Anchor, Gwynn Robinson FRPS

OTHER ACCEPTED IMAGES



The Horror of War, Margaret Salisbury FRPS



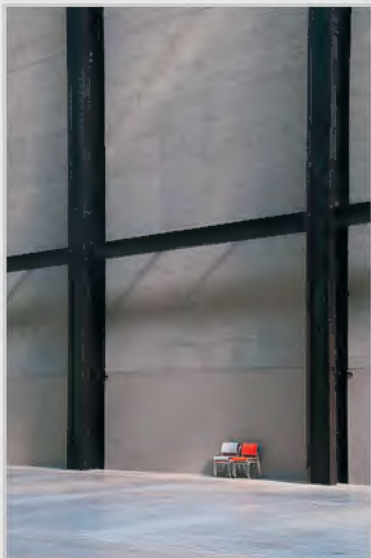
When I Grow Up, Margaret Salisbury FRPS



Modern Communication, Paramjit Sandhu-Dickens LRPS



Fly Agaric, John Scotten ARPS



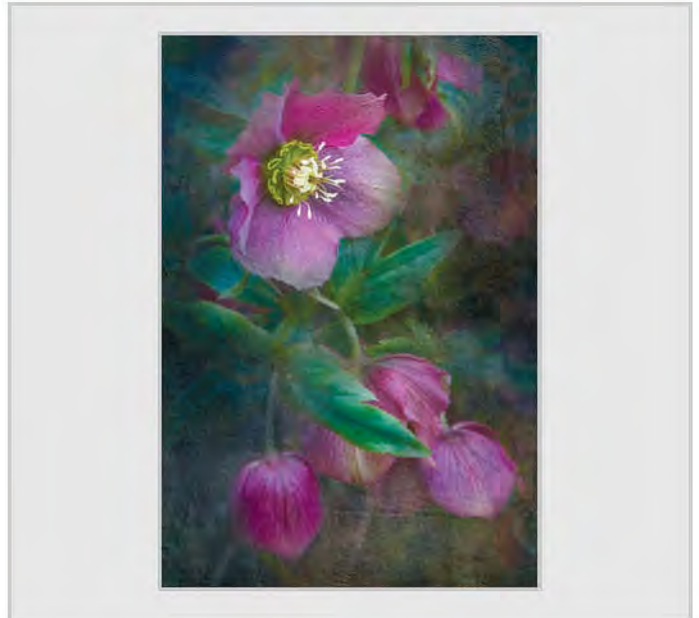
Surplus to Requirements, John Scotten ARPS



Praying Mantis, Fiona Senior FRPS



End of the Shift, Huanan, Ian Silvester ARPS



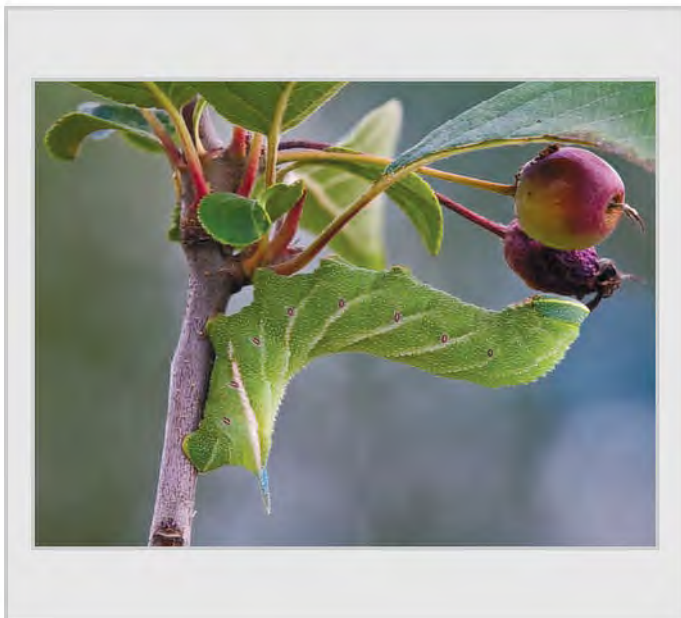
Helleborus, Alan Smith LRPS



On Her Own, Patsy Southwell ARPS



Dusty Undulations, John Stringer



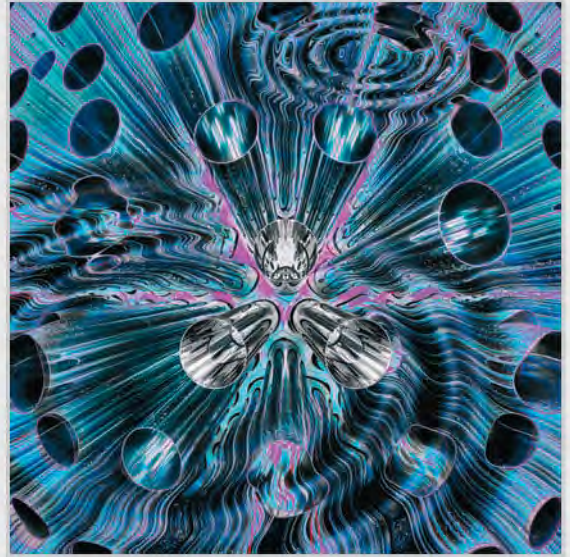
Eyed Hawkmoth Caterpillar, John Stringer LRPS



Storm over Nantucket, Rachael Talibart LRPS



Defence of Old Basing, Marilyn Taylor ARPS



Aeolian Pipes, Gerald Thompson LRPS



Gannet, Gerald Thompson LRPS



Storm over Madeira, Gerald Thompson LRPS



Blown Away, Ian Thompson ARPS



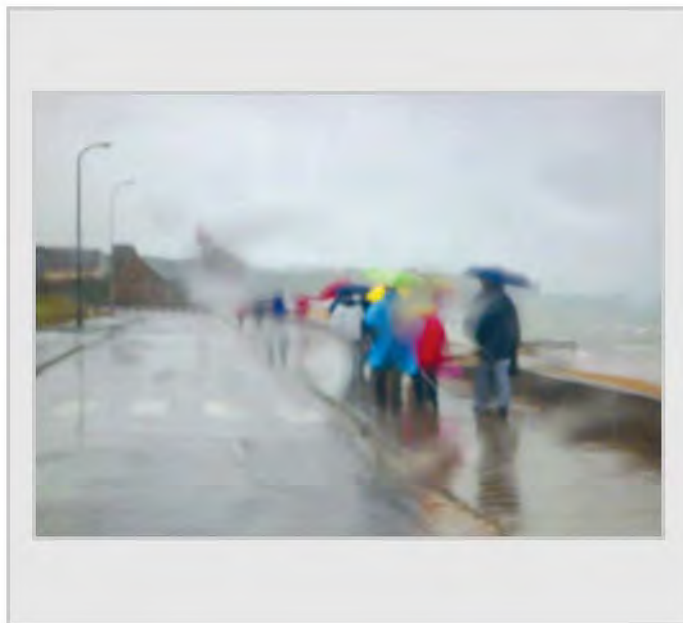
For Those in Peril, Ian Thompson ARPS



Three Flames, David Tickner ARPS



Amaryllis, Donald Waller LRPS



Walking in the Rain, Dee Wareham



Spinning Wool, Graham Whistler FRPS

IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

A searchable, cumulative contents list of previous issues is available from the downloads section of the group's website at: www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads

SPRING 2011 ISSUE NO 49

- 4 EVENTS
- 5 EDITORIAL
Dr David F Cooke ARPS
- 6 ENERGY IN IMAGES, AND MY BASIC WORKFLOW
Bruce Smith
- 12 MY 'JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES' APPROACH TO PHOTOGRAPHY
Herbert Housley MBE ARPS
- 16 MATCHING THE PRINT TO THE MONITOR - THE EVER PRESENT PROBLEM IN IMAGING
Mike McNamee FRPS
- 21 THE DIGIT CHALLENGE
 - 21 Face in the Shadows, Carole Hewer-Irving ARPS
 - 22 Surreal Dream, Janet Haines ARPS
 - 24 "Taste the Difference", Dr Ian Wilson ARPS
- 26 DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP PRINT CIRCLE 1
Andrew Brochwicz-Lewinski ARPS
- 28 EXPOSING FOR RAW CAPTURE: EXPOSING THE MYTH
Roger Norton LRPS
- 30 INSIGHTS INTO IMAGING
Clive Haynes FRPS
- 32 IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

SUMMER 2011 ISSUE NO 50

- 4 EVENTS
- 5 EDITORIAL
Dr David F Cooke ARPS
- 6 FINE ART IMAGES USING TEXTURE OVERLAYS
Viveca Koh ARPS
- 12 FAVOURITE IMAGES FROM MY COLLECTION
Christine Langford LRPS CPAGB
- 16 THE DIGIT CHALLENGE
 - 16 Meeting Adjourned, Paula Davies FRPS
 - 18 Sunbeams over Studland, Keith Mercer LRPS
- 19 DIG AGM AND PRINT EXHIBITION SELECTION 2011
- 23 DIG MEMBERS' PRINT EXHIBITION 2011
 - 23 Frosty Morning, Christine Langford LRPS CPAGB (Gold Medal and Chairman's Cup Winner)
 - 24 Penarth Pier, Andy Beel FRPS (Martin Addison FRPS Ribbon)
 - 25 Neighbourhood Watch, Hilary Roberts FRPS (Martin Addison FRPS Ribbon)
 - 26 A Walk in the Park, Ray Grace ARPS (Steven Le Prevost FRPS Ribbon)
 - 27 Convenience Kitchen, Geoff Lea ARPS (Steven Le Prevost FRPS Ribbon)
 - 28 Tea for Two, Arnold Hubbard FRPS (Sheila Read FRPS Ribbon)
 - 29 Early Snow, Peter Stevens ARPS AFIAP DPAGB (Sheila Read FRPS Ribbon)
 - 30 Other Accepted Images
- 48 IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

AUTUMN 2011 ISSUE NO 51

- 4 EVENTS
- 5 EDITORIAL
Dr David F Cooke ARPS
- 6 GOOGLE +
Martin Addison FRPS
- 9 PERSPIRATION TO INSPIRATION – THE ROCKY ROAD TO MY 'DREAMS' ASSOCIATESHIP PANEL
Janet Haines ARPS
- 14 PREPARING IMAGES FOR DIGITAL PROJECTION
Mark Buckley-Sharp ARPS
- 17 WHERE TO NOW?
Gwynn T Robinson FRPS
- 21 DIGITAL CONTACT SHEETS
John Wild LRPS
- 24 THE DIGIT CHALLENGE
 - 24 A Bit of a Flap, Elizabeth Restall LRPS
 - 25 Men of the North, Derek Dorsett FRPS
 - 26 Summer Breeze, Gerry Coles ARPS
 - 28 Thames Barges, Alan Edwards ARPS
 - 30 Storm Clouds over Abbaye de Boscherville, Vanessa Herring LRPS
- 32 IN PREVIOUS ISSUES