



DIG Members' Digital Projected Image Competition 2012

**OPEN AND
CREATIVE SECTIONS**

FREE ENTRY

Closing Date for Entries
5th October 2012

Further details will be available in July on
our Website at:
www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging

24th June 2012

Workshop

The Merryfield Hall, Ilton,
Somerset, TA199HG

A workshop led by Sheila
Haycox in the morning followed
by a 'Show and Tell' session in
the afternoon.

For more information see the EVENTS listing on page 4 or
contact Janet Haines ARPS, Email:
janet.haines@btinternet.com, Phone: 01308 428219

The 2011 Members'
Print Exhibition will be
on show as follows:

2nd July 2012 until 27th July 2012
Link Centre Library Swindon,
Whitehill Way, Swindon SN5 7DL.

1st Oct 2012 until 31st Oct 2012
Smethwick Photo Society
Clubrooms, Oldbury, West Midlands.
B69 2AX

For more information see the EVENTS listing on
Page 4 or contact Alex Dufty LRPS
Email: exhibition@digit.rps.org or 01454 778485

Wednesday 24 & Thursday 25
October 2012

**PORTRAITS,
FASHION AND
NUDES**

**A DIGITAL STUDIO IMAGING
TWO - DAY WORKSHOP**

at the new venue: Film Photo Studios
Enterprise Way, Cheltenham
GL51 8LZ

For more information contact: Graham Whistler FRPS,
Email: graham@gwpmultimedia.com; Phone: 01329 847944
or download an application form from the Downloads
section of the Group's website at:
www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads



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DIGIT

SPRING 2012 ISSUE NO 53

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FRONT COVER IMAGE
Twins by John Cooke ARPS

RPS DIGIT Magazine Spring 2012

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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.

DIGIT is the magazine of the RPS Digital Imaging Group and is provided as part of the annual subscription to the Group.

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Printed by Ian Allan Printing, Riverdene Business Park, Molesey Road, Hersham, Surrey, KT 12 4RG

EVENTS



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

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 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.

17th June 2012

Jeff Morgan - Total Fitness Workout and Creative Photography and Photoshop

The Old School House, Oldbury, B692AS

Time: 10:30am - 3:30pm

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £7.00

Contact: Tim Pile ARPS

Email: tim.pile@gmail.com

24th June 2012

321 International AV Challenge Gala Day

Aldbourn, Wiltshire SN8 2DQ

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

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.

24th June 2012

Workshop

The Merryfield Hall, Ilton, Somerset, TA199HG

Time: 10:00AM - 4:00PM

Cost: D.I.Group members £3.00, all

others £5.00

Contact: Janet Haines ARPS

Email: janet.haines@btinternet.com

Phone: 01308 428219

A workshop morning led by Sheila Haycox to include Layers, Layer Masks, Opening in Raw etc. Specific questions to Sheila at sah2@talktalk.net Meeting at 10.00 am for 10.30 am start. Lunch 12.45 - 13.45.

The afternoon session at 13.45 is 'Show and Tell' please bring prints, digital images and AV's for discussion. The project for this meeting - bring a picture or projected image which has been treated in TOPAZ.

2nd July 2012 - 27th July 2012

DIG 2012 Print Exhibition

Swindon Link Central Library, Whitehall Way, Swindon, SN57DL

Time: 9:30AM - 5:00PM

Cost: Free

Contact: Alex Dufty LRPS

Email: exhibitions@digit.rps.org

Phone: 01454 778485

Digital Imaging Group 2012 Print Exhibition. Available to view during library opening hours.

16th September 2012

"Gorilla in a Yellow Field Surreal Photographic Art"

Mark Mumford FRPS

Please note new date and new venue

Woosehill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 2TS

Time: 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Cost: £5.00

Contact: Roger Norton - Centre Organiser

Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk

Phone: 01628 622279

IMPORTANT: Very limited number of tickets available - please see the Thames Valley Centre 'Booking For Events' page on the DIG Website.

Mark will talk about his artistic background and how it has influenced his work today. He will also show us images of the South Wales Valleys and locations used in his work. His surreal

work has a distinct style which is primarily landscape photography but with slight hints of Dali, Bosch and MC Escher. We will see how he builds and creates fantastic images from his library of images. His work is so different from the norm, you will be amazed by his images and imagination. We will also get to see his surreal Visual Arts A and Contemporary FRPS panels.

16th September 2012

RPS DI Group Midlands: Annual Workshop

The Old School House, B69 2AS

Time: 10:30AM - 3:30PM

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £7.00

Contact: Tim Pile

Email: tim.pile@gmail.com

This will be the ever popular annual workshop for the Midlands centre. Generally speakers are members of the group passing on their expertise. We also hope to have some live demonstrations this year, as well as the usual trade stands. Further details will be posted shortly on the DIG Events Page

1st October 2012 - 31st October 2012

DIG 2012 DIG Print Exhibition

The Old Schoolrooms, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 2AX

Cost: Free

Contact: Alex Dufty LRPS

Email: exhibitions@digit.rps.org

Phone: 01454 778485

Available to view during the Venue's Open Hours

7th October 2012

A Day of Creative Photography with Mark Mumford FRPS

Foxton Village Hall, Cambridge, CB22 6RN

Time: 10:00AM - 4:00PM

Cost: £12.00, members Rate: £7.50

Contact: John Margetts LRPS

Email: events@rpseasterndigital.org.uk

Phone: 01223 700147



EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to the Spring 2012 issue of DIGIT. In this issue, we have an article by Andy Beel FRPS, who explains the difference between darkroom and digital Lith printing and gives detailed instructions on how to produce the effect (page 6); one by John Cooke ARPS on how he has used international salons as a means of developing his photography (page 10); and one by Helena Berney LRPS, who explains her journey to obtaining her Licentiate'ship (page 16). Max Green has been investigating various ink systems and he tells us about his findings on page 21. The regular 'DIGIT Challenge' has images by Tim Pile ARPS and Peter Keverne ARPS.

There's an article, starting on page 26, on the popular DIG Cheltenham workshops. This covers the experiences of two of the attendees at one of the workshops held last November, and presents some of the images taken on them. A further workshop is planned for this coming October (24th and 25th). An application form is available from the Downloads section of our website.

This issue also sees the introduction of QR codes on the 'Events' and 'In Previous Issues' pages. QR stands for 'Quick Response' and these codes were originally designed for use in the automotive industry. They are now becoming more common and you've probably seen them on posters and in magazines. If you have a smart phone

and the appropriate application, you can scan the codes and you will be taken automatically to the correct webpage. I hope you'll find these useful and they will appear in future issues as appropriate.

This issue also has the first in a new series of short articles called 'In My View'. These are intended to give the author an opportunity to express their views of some aspect of photography. The first of these is on this page and is by Tony Healy ARPS. It's called 'The Medium Fantastic'.

I hope you enjoy reading Tony's article and all the other articles in this issue and that you will find them helpful.

Dr David F Cooke ARPS, Editor



IN MY VIEW

The Medium Fantastic.

Photography, a word we borrowed from the Greeks, means writing or drawing with light. Today, that electromagnetic stylus has changed considerably, as well as the "canvas" on which it is recorded. This current visual medium should, more realistically be entitled Imagery. With the advent of digital technology our image capturing ability now extends beyond the visible spectrum, and software technology even allows the 'photographer' to start with a blank 'canvas' much the same as traditional painters do. The motion picture industry has blended these two technologies to create almost anything your imagination can conjure up. However, the traditional picture-taking rationale is still with us, with perhaps the greatest change being in the area of creative expression. This new area allows creators to enter into the realms of metaphors, allegory, mythology and fantasy with far greater ease than film could ever offer and will disturb the 'comfort zones' of many traditional viewers. Even more so, to appreciate fully some creative

works, the viewer needs an equal or greater range of intellectual and visual knowledge than this author. Much the same as when Dali and Picasso arrived on the art scene.

Not all recorded images are intended for Salons. Photography's role as a recording medium is still with us, whereby the illustration of objects and events having historical and scientific value can be archived. The majority of these images will not fit the accepted standards of photographic composition but that is not their intended role. Still, the late Douglas Lawson FRPS showed that even when taking photomicrographs of diatoms a certain amount of artistic endeavor could be used.

Perhaps its greatest recording role is that of individual family images. It is safe to say that at any given moment somewhere in the world a family event is being recorded. The use of personal family records has far exceeded the imagination of George Eastman when he gave the public the box camera. People interviewed after natural disasters will often lament the loss of family pictures above other material objects, which highlights the value of these images to

individuals. Unfortunately the plethora of image recording devices available has seen a reduction in the appreciation of picture quality. People now rely on auto exposure for their pictures whereas in the past, with the photofinisher as an intermediary, some exposure problems could be adjusted. But this is no longer the norm. A subject set against a bright background or the need for fill-in flash is now overlooked and accepted. Click the shutter and in a moment the result can be halfway around the world.

The role of pictures in education is still with us but with an expanded ability to explain concepts and ideas in an easily understandable way. Overlaying diagrams with actual images is now a low cost option, not possible with film. Printed media are still available but eBook publishing has made it so much easier to distribute visual material to students. This task in the past would have required a photographic print as a minimum.

In whatever genre one chooses to work, Photography or Digital Imagery, is a fantastic medium.

Tony Healy ARPS



Cafe View, London Bridge

DIGITAL LITH PRINTING



Andy Beel believes that many people would like to know how the look of digital Lith printing is achieved. Here, he explains the difference between darkroom and digital Lith printing and presents detailed instructions on how to achieve the effect. His article is illustrated with some of his digital Lith images.

I have noticed there is a constant stream of search engine terms – “digital Lith printing” coming up on my blog. This would suggest there is a desire to know how the look is achieved and that a Google search has taken people to my blog for the answer to this question.

For those of you who do not know what a Lith print is, I will explain.

The qualities of a Lith print are highlights with smooth contrast, a warm tone and fine grain; the shadows are a cool tone, contrasty with coarse grain and it produces a look that is unlike any other printing process.

A Lith print has nothing to do with Lith Film and separations. It is a darkroom

technique that vastly overexposes the paper under the enlarger by 3 or 4 stops and then it is developed in a special developer. The development of the paper is infectious; the longer the paper is in the Lith developer, the quicker is the rate of development, and hence it is called ‘infectious’. So, there is not a standard development time; the paper is snatched out of the developer when the blacks have reached the density required. The snatch point is decided by eye and instinct. One of the joys and frustrations of darkroom Lith printing is that every print is unique.

The colour of a darkroom Lith print is dependent on the type of paper used, exposure and development time. The

longer the paper is in the developer the larger and cooler the grain will be. Lith printing is a very adaptable process and can be very fine and delicate or rather coarse depending on effect required. Any negative or picture can be used but the trick is to decide what you want the end result to look like. The major difference between digital and darkroom Lith print is that in the darkroom you have two basic decisions to make

- 1) the exposure under the enlarger and
- 2) when to snatch the print from the developer.

With a digital Lith print you will have to make all the usual decisions like the overall brightness and contrast. In

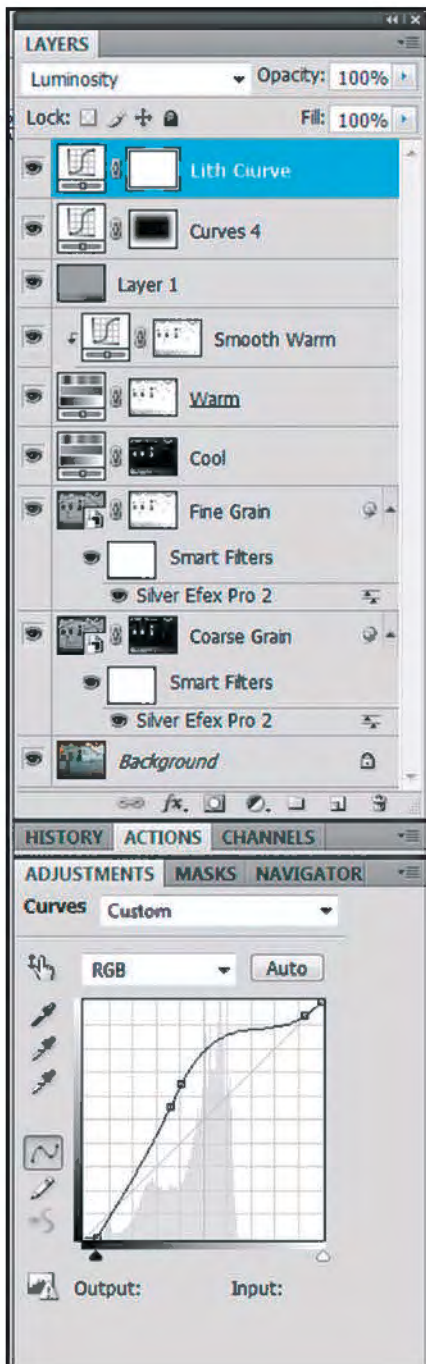


Figure 1 Cafe View Layers

addition to these you will have to decide what grain size you want and where it goes, i.e. in the shadows and mid-tones NOT in the highlights (please refer to point 10 of the following method), what colour the highlights should be along with the hue, saturation and lightness and where it goes in terms percentage brightness. Note well that a key requirement for making a successful digital Lith print is the control of print contrast. It is best to start with a file that is low in contrast and not over bright, but that does not mean you under expose in the camera. Files should be selected with very low or no noise. The effect you want to see is film grain not noise. We want groovy



Blackpool Steps

film grain not soul-less digital noise in the mid-tones and shadows. I use Lightroom 3 to import and tag my files. When a picture is selected for the Lith process it is copied and exported in to Photoshop. I use CS4 and Silver Efex Pro 2 software. I have been trying various methods over the past four years, but here is the digital Lith process as I am currently doing it. The process does require a working knowledge of layers and layer masking and I assume that you have the background knowledge or access to the basics of digital processing since space here doesn't allow a full click by click guide.

1 The Background layer is copied and

converted to a Smart Filter layer. Rename the layer "Coarse Grain" (See Figure 1). Silver Efex Pro 2 is opened on the Smart Filter Layer and coarse film grain is put in at say 3200 ASA. Before going back in to CS4, I usually adjust the brightness and contrast downwards as the effect of adding the grain is also automatically linked to a contrast curve in Silver Efex Pro 2. Check that you do not have burnt out highlights or blocked shadows. It is always easier to add contrast than to take it away later.

2 Repeat step 1 for say 125 ASA fine grain this time and rename the layer Fine Grain.

3 Above the Fine Grain layer, I usually



Avebury Trees

put in a brightness reduction curve in Luminosity Blending mode and this counteracts the brightening effect of the Lith Curve. Generally, I will pull down the highlight side of the curve to around 50% as a starting point and adjust it later.

4 Create a Hue and Saturation Adjustment layer and rename it 'Cool'. This will be the colour of the shadow tones.

5 Create another Hue and Saturation Adjustment layer and rename it 'Warm'. It will be the colour of the highlight tones.

6 Create a curve layer above the 'Warm' layer and clip it to the warm tone layer with a luminosity blending mode, renaming it 'Smooth Warm'. This will help control and smooth out the contrast of the highlights.

7 Create a 50% Grey Dodging and Burning (Lightening and Darkening) layer (Layer 1 in the Figure 1).

8 Create a curve to darken the edges of the print. (Curves 4 in Figure 1).

9 Create a Lith Curve at the top of the stack layer with a luminosity blending mode. Remember the properties of a Lith Print.

Now come the interesting bits.

10 A key component of a Lith print is coarse grain in the Shadows. With the Background layer active, select the Color Range tool Select > Color Range, in the drop down menu select Shadows and Feather say 5pixels (this selects all pixels between 0 and 30% brightness) apply the selection to Coarse Grain Smart layer.

11 With Coarse Grain layer mask thumbnail selected hold down the Shift+Ctrl+Alt keys click and drag the layer mask thumbnail over the Fine Grain layer and say 'yes' when asked to replace the layer mask. This has copied and inverted the layer mask from the coarse grain layer so now the mask has selected all the pixels from 31-100% i.e. the mid-tones and highlights.

12 Copy the Coarse Grain layer mask to the Cool Tone Hue and Saturation Layer by holding down the Ctrl+Alt keys, click and drag the layer mask thumbnail over the Cool layer thumbnail and say 'yes' when asked to replace the layer mask. This layer mask has restricted the cool tone to the shadows only.

13 Repeat the method of step 12 a second time. Copy the Fine Grain layer

mask to the Warm tone and warm smooth layers. This layer mask restricts the warm tone to mid-tones and highlights.

All the structure is in place. Now comes the artistic interpretation.

14 On the Cool Hue & Saturation (H&S) Layer tick the Colorize box, the Hue should be between 220-230 degrees, Saturation 3-10% Lightness 0-50%, the cool tone is to be very subtle.

15 On the Warm H&S Layer tick the Colorize box, the Hue should be between 25-50 degrees, Saturation 25-50% Lightness 0- +50% A smooth and delicate warm Salmon pink is a common Lith tone.

16 On the Smooth Warm Curve layer, flatten the curve to reduce contrast in the highlights by say 25% as a starting point.

17 The Lith Curve is a bit like an elastic band, it will probably need tweaking a few times to get the look you are after. I shall be looking for the highlights to be around 95%, the brightness curve in step 3 may need adjusting to get this brightness in the highlights.

18 The layer masks may have to be re-done after the contrast is decided upon



Slush Sold Here

as this may shift the location of grain and colour.

19 The file is saved as a TIFF file to keep the layers intact and then exported back in to Lightroom 3. Note: this method using Silver Efex Pro 2 twice, may create very large file sizes of nearly 1 GB.

20 When the file is back in Lightroom, I may adjust the crop. Again doing the crop in Lr3, I have control and can revisit my cropping decisions. It is important to note that the colour of the pictures used in this article are not the same and were not intended to be so. Repeating exact hue, saturation and lightness on the digital Lith print will be a challenge, as it is with the darkroom process when working with a number of different files.

An alternative to layer masking for the colour would be to use the Gradient Editor, but I feel I get more control with the method noted here.



Positive Steps

The beauty of this method is that it is all non-destructive and you can change your mind about any of the elements and re-do them, as everything is on adjustment or smart layers.

Andy's website is at:

www.andybeelfrps.co.uk and you can find his blog at andybeelfrps.wordpress.com.



The Face Of Cardiff Bay

INTERNATIONAL SALONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY PHOTOGRAPHY



John Cooke was encouraged to enter his images in International Salons by fellow photographers. He has been very successful and, using this route to gain experience and to develop his photography, he has been awarded his ARPS and other photographic distinctions. In his article, he talks about his path to these distinctions and encourages us to consider following his example.

We all enjoy taking photographs. That is why you are reading this. We take them so we can look at them and look back on them. Sometimes we look at them with satisfaction, sometimes we look at them and all we do is think about how they could be improved, how we should

change them in the post process-stage or even how we should approach the subject in a different way if we were to take them again.

We all know how rewarding it feels when you produce a photograph that you are really pleased with and that you think others will find equally appealing. So

then what? We show them to our family and friends some of whom will give their honest opinion, others, like your mum, will say how wonderful it is and what a fantastic photographer you are even if there are heads chopped off and everything is a blur.

Although I started out 30 years ago with



Good Morning Brockweir

a Zenith EM and developing my images in a dark room under the stairs, it was not until I joined Western Valley Camera Club that I started to show my work to a wider, more critical, audience. The only difference is they are not your mum and you know they will not tell you it's any good if it isn't, and so you learn, you progress and you have the opportunity to develop your skills and be judged within your peer group.

On occasions, remarks would be made on certain images like, "that would do well in an International" or that is a "Salon shot". These are phrases that, now, I find myself using but at the time, for me, a Salon was where you had your hair done. Thankfully, members of Western Valley soon pointed me in the right direction so, after having had some success in our camera club, the opportunity was there to enter a Salon run by The Welsh Photographic Federation (WPF).

My 12 entries, consisting of both prints and projected images, were prepared and sent in via our club competition secretary. All that was left was to await the results. When they arrived, some weeks later, joy of joys, I had 8 acceptances. Proudly, I

visited Swansea to view my images on display at the opening of the Welsh Salon.

Soon, there followed another opportunity to put my images up for judgment to a wider audience. This was the Welsh International Projected Image Salon (WIPIS), where people from all over the world submit their images. Just to give you some idea of the scale of this Salon this particular year there were 1270 entrants and over 12,400 images spread over 4 categories covering Creative, Natural History, Photo Travel and Open and I was able to submit a maximum of 4 images per category. The images were prepared in the same way and entered, and then the waiting game began.

When results day was upon us my report card arrived in my inbox telling me I had achieved 8 acceptances with one commended and one highly commended. When, finally, the day of the Salon arrived I am not embarrassed to say I was excited. I accepted my certificates with great pride, bearing in mind that the only certificate I had ever had was for swimming two widths of the baths when I was about 7 or 8. So chuffed, yes, I was

chuffed. They also presented me with an engraved glass plaque for the highest average in the "Photo Travel" section of the competition. This sits proudly on my mantelpiece.

It was at the Salon that I met Jan Cawley and other members of the WPF who, along with my fellow club members, encouraged me to submit an application to become not just a member but an Associate of the WPF. In order to be considered for this I had to produce, for assessment by a group of judges, a series of 12 images that, when looked at as a panel, worked together well. After much deliberation on whether or not to go for it, I took the bull by the horns and started to construct my images. The panel consisted of a series of photographs taken at an old abandoned asylum. I am pleased to say that it passed with a unanimous result. One of the judges approached me and said how good he thought my panel was and asked if I had any more images like the ones on view. When I told him 'yes' his advice was to take the next step and submit my panel to The Royal Photographic Society because, in his



Just The Two Of Us



Cinders

words, “That’s an absolutely cracking panel” and, as mine was the last to be viewed before the lunch break, he “pitied any poor soul that had to follow that”. How good did that make me feel? I walked tall for a while, I can tell you.

A few months went by. The deadline for entry to the next assessment with the RPS had come and gone. Bolstered by my success with the WPF, I continued along my path, entering more International Salons. I selected my images, spent hours thinking of titles for them, made sure they adhered to the size requirements, filled in the on-line application form and sent them via the Salons’ download link. The waiting game started all over again. When eventually the email arrived, the report card was opened and not one of my photos had been accepted.

What made this harder was the fact that I had also entered the same images into another Salon, so my anticipation for the next set of results became more of trepidation. When that result came through a week later, I opened the email, resigned to being disappointed again, so to say I was surprised to see that I had 5 acceptances and 1 with Honours is an understatement. My faith had been restored and it just went to show that “beauty” is indeed “in the eye of the beholder”. I have since entered a large number of Salons, with differing degrees of success. None of this would have been achieved if I had simply given up when I read that e-mail. It’s worth knowing that whenever you enter your images, regardless of the result, you will receive a catalogue or a disc containing a selection of work from that Salon. This allows you to view other entries, which can provide both insight and inspiration.

Criteria permitting, I entered two of my favourite images in as many Salons as possible. “The Face of Cardiff Bay” has had 26 acceptances and also earned an RPS Gold Medal and an SPS judge’s medal along with 5 other honours. “Twins” has had 21

acceptances as well as an honour. These Salons led to other successes including the distinction of AFIAP (Artiste Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique (The International Federation of Photographic Art)). FIAP Patronage is awarded to many International Salons. The minimum criteria for an AFIAP at that time was to get 30 acceptances with 10 different images in 5 different countries and 10 different salons. From 2013, this has been increased to 40 Acceptances with 15 different images in 8 different countries and 15 different Salons.

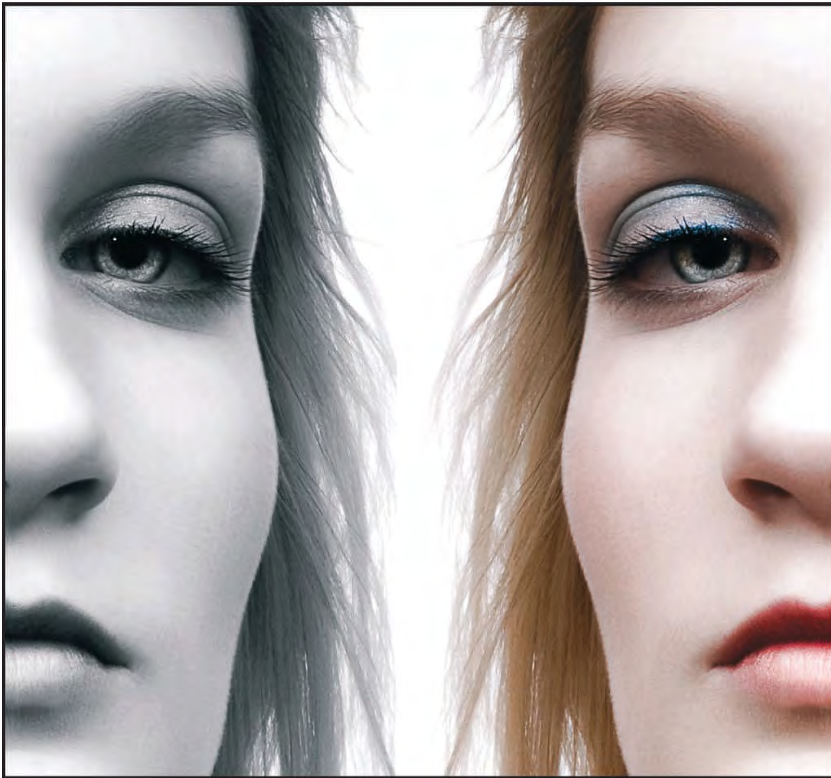
My success in internationals led me to the next step which was to have a go at obtaining a DPAGB, a Photographic Alliance of Great Britain distinction. For a Distinction with the PAGB you need 15 prints or projected images, the criteria being that these images should be of a standard that would



The Outcome



Dear Mum



Twins



Split Personality

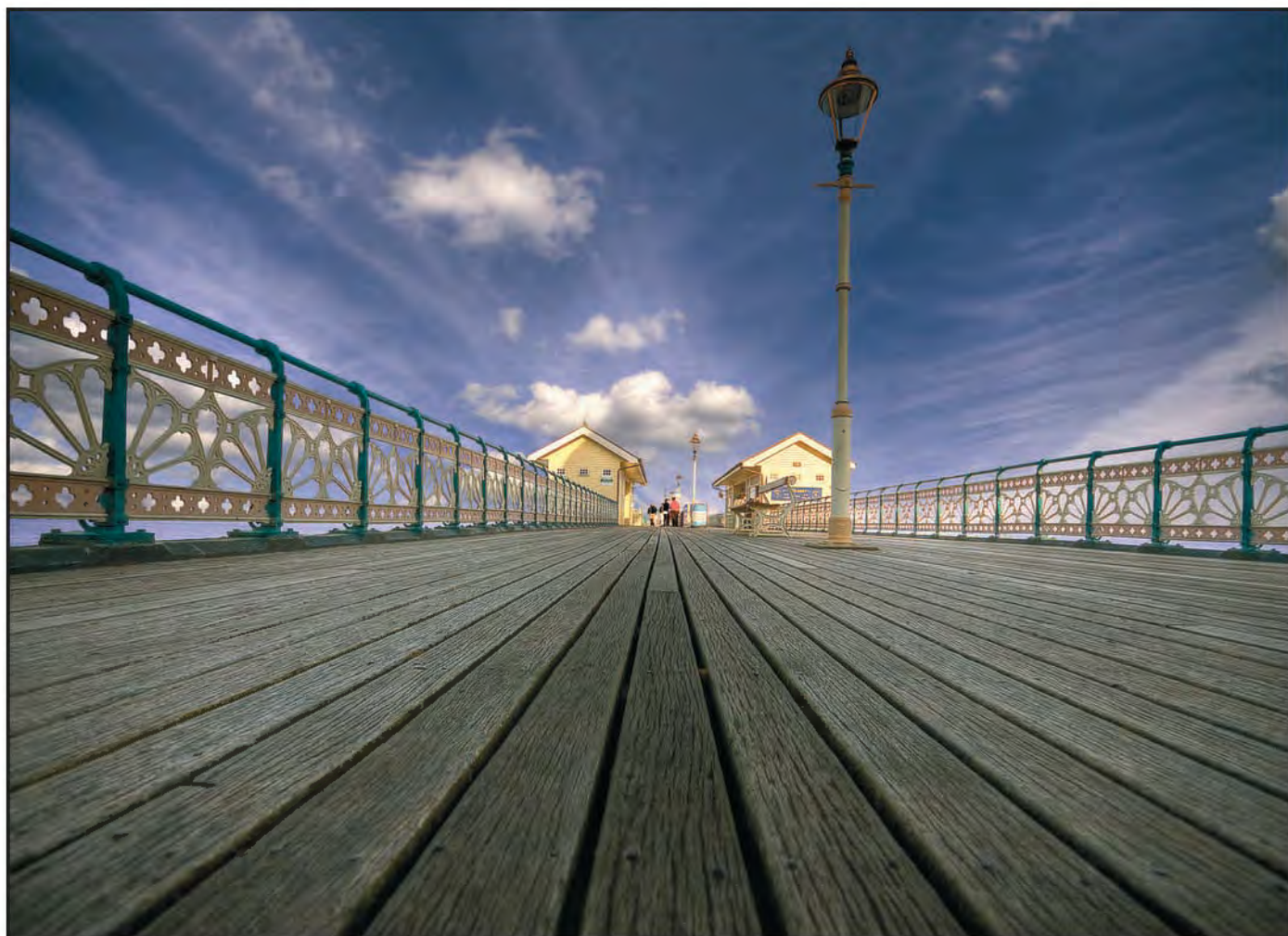
earn an acceptance in an International Salon. As apposed to images being seen and judged as a panel, for this assement, images are seen individually and randomly mixed with the work of up to 50 other participants. When planning the entry for this, I took, as a bench mark, the acceptances I had obtained in International Salons; using this as a guide to what to include for assessment. These images were then scored by 6 judges awarding between 2 and 5 points, the lowest possible score per image would be 12 and the highest would be 30. The pass mark was 300 so an average of 20 points per image was needed in order to achieve a DPAGB. On “Judgement Day” I took my place in the audience with all of the other applicants. One by one our images were placed on the light box, the title of each image was read out and the judges gave their individual scores. The total was announced; then they moved on to the next. This proved to be both intense and exciting but ultimately the most nerve-racking thing I have ever put myself through. Numerous images later, no nails left on either hand, we were down to the final image and our fate was cast. My score of 311 put me into the realms of the DPAGB honours. If you were to ask me why I do it, it’s a hell of a buzz when someone looks at your images and says “yes, that’s a good shot” and you get the recognition you think it deserves. As for the RPS, all the time I spent entering these Salons I kept coming back to the judge’s words at my assessment at the WPF, and eventually I set about adding the three images to go for an ARPS. I looked on the RPS website, found the next entry date, and sent off my entry form. The day of the assessment arrived and I turned up for the viewing of my panel at Fenton House in Bath. Now I’m not going to say, when they announced that I had received a unanimous positive result and been awarded my ARPS, that it was my proudest day. I am a dad

and, as any parent knows, we have many proud days. However, it does rank right up there. So there are numerous opportunities out there for you to have your photographs assessed and judged and for you to obtain some recognition for those images that they, and you, so rightly deserve. So go on and give it a go. Nerve-racking, yes, but very rewarding. With the digital age, it is easier than ever to show your images to the biggest family of all, that of photographic Salons. Just one final thing. I should like to take the opportunity to recognise the support and encouragement given to me by the chairman of our camera club, Vince Penticost, and Jan Cawley of the WPF, who have set me on this very exciting path - and also to my long-suffering family who just smile and say cheese.

You can see John's ARPS images at:
www.rps.org/portfolio/7138-John-Cooke%20ARPS



Vacant Chair



Above The Boardwalk



The Hanging Plan

THE JOURNEY TO MY LICENTIATESHIP



Helena Berney started the journey to her Licentiateship with a visit to an RPS advisory day in April 2011 and finished it with a successful application in January 2012. She talks about the process she went through and comments on each of the images in her panel.



Song Of Enchantment. This was taken at Dawyk Botanic Gardens last Autumn. Inspired by the last verse of the poem, A Song of Enchantment, by Walter de la Mare: "But the music is lost and the words are gone, Of the song I sang as I sat alone, Ages and ages have fallen on me, On the wood and the pool and the elder tree".

The journey to my Licentiateship began in April 2011 after I attended an RPS advisory day. Some of the images on show were striking, challenging, engaging and exciting; many of them beautifully presented. This, coupled with forthright views from the assessors, completely challenged my views on what photography was all about. After joining the RPS and the Digital Imaging Group, the next few months were spent learning the basics of printing, seeking advice from the DIG forum members and getting out and about with the camera, exploring different techniques and searching for a personal



Sighing of Leaves. This image is a comment on how leaves dance and sigh before finally succumbing to Autumn. The title is taken from the following verse of Treebeard's Song in The Two Towers by Tolkien. "To the beeches of Neldoreth I came in the Autumn. Ah! the gold and the red and the sighing of leaves in the Autumn in Taur-naneldor!"

style. Joining a local camera club also complemented the learning process. After a lot of thought, it made sense to attend another RPS advisory day and, this time, take a selection of work. The aim was to have experienced photographers comment on the general standard of the images produced. Expecting to be told, "good start, keep at it, come back next year and let us see your progress," this seemed the perfect place to gain some feedback in a relatively informal environment. The next advisory day was scheduled for November and, although sick with nerves, sixteen images were duly displayed in front of an audience of about fifty. The advisors and audience then stepped forward for a closer look. I consider myself very fortunate to have had Sandy Cleland FRPS and Rikki O'Neill FRPS advising that day. Following a series of questions and some positive feedback, they shuffled the images about, took out six, leaving a panel of ten. They both advised that an application for a licentiateship should be made for the next possible date available.

Two days later the application was sent off and the date set, Wednesday 18th January, 2012. Sandy arranged for Peter Paterson FRPS and Karen Berry ARPS to have a look at the



The Guardian. This sculpture is called a Guardian and was a gift to my husband on his 21st. Supposedly, it is benevolent, but most folk who walk into my living room hate it, so I've played to their perceptions by creating a swirling red mist (using a Maglite torch and some kitchen roll).



Ice Maiden. Originally titled 'The Spell Begins To Break' - The title of Chapter 10 from 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' by C.S. Lewis, one of my favourite books as a child. It was used as part of a panel of three for a club 'theme' competition.

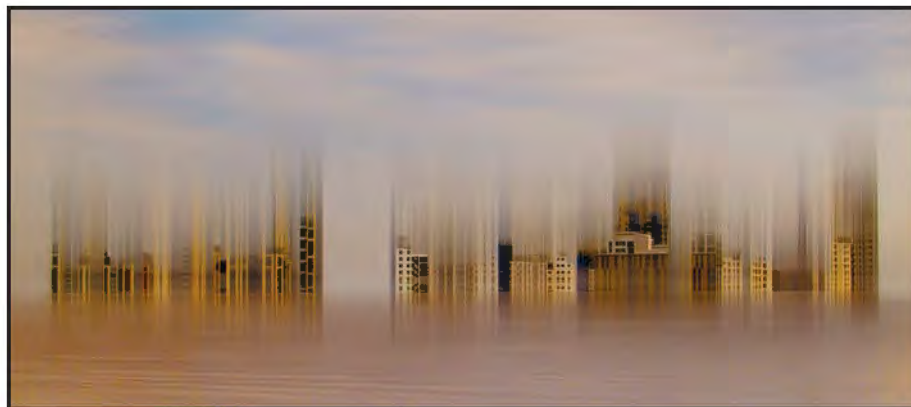


Time in a Bottle. Carved marble wreath covered by a glass dome. The wire holds the dome to its base although has long since rusted. The title is taken from the lyrics of the song 'Time in a Bottle' by Jim Croce. "If I could save time in a bottle, the first thing that I'd like to do, is to save every day 'til eternity passes away, just to spend them with you."

improvements. After this meeting, one image was replaced with another which showed a personal style developing, whilst another one needed some tidying up. Thank goodness for Photoshop's clone tool.

Everyone was satisfied with the quality of printing and mounting, so the panel was ready to go. The panel was boxed and sent to the RPS headquarters in Bath. Two weeks later an eleventh image was subsequently posted. This was to replace one that, in hindsight, didn't seem to fit with the rest of the panel. The staff at headquarters were really helpful organising the exchange of the images, which went smoothly.

At 5pm on Wednesday the 18th January, the results of the Licentiate applications were posted on the RPS website. I was delighted to see my name on the list. I was (and still am) elated by the news. For me, gaining the Licentiate is a testimony to the effort and passion that goes into producing my images. I now have more confidence in my work. Additionally, I've been gently guided out of my comfort zone and have



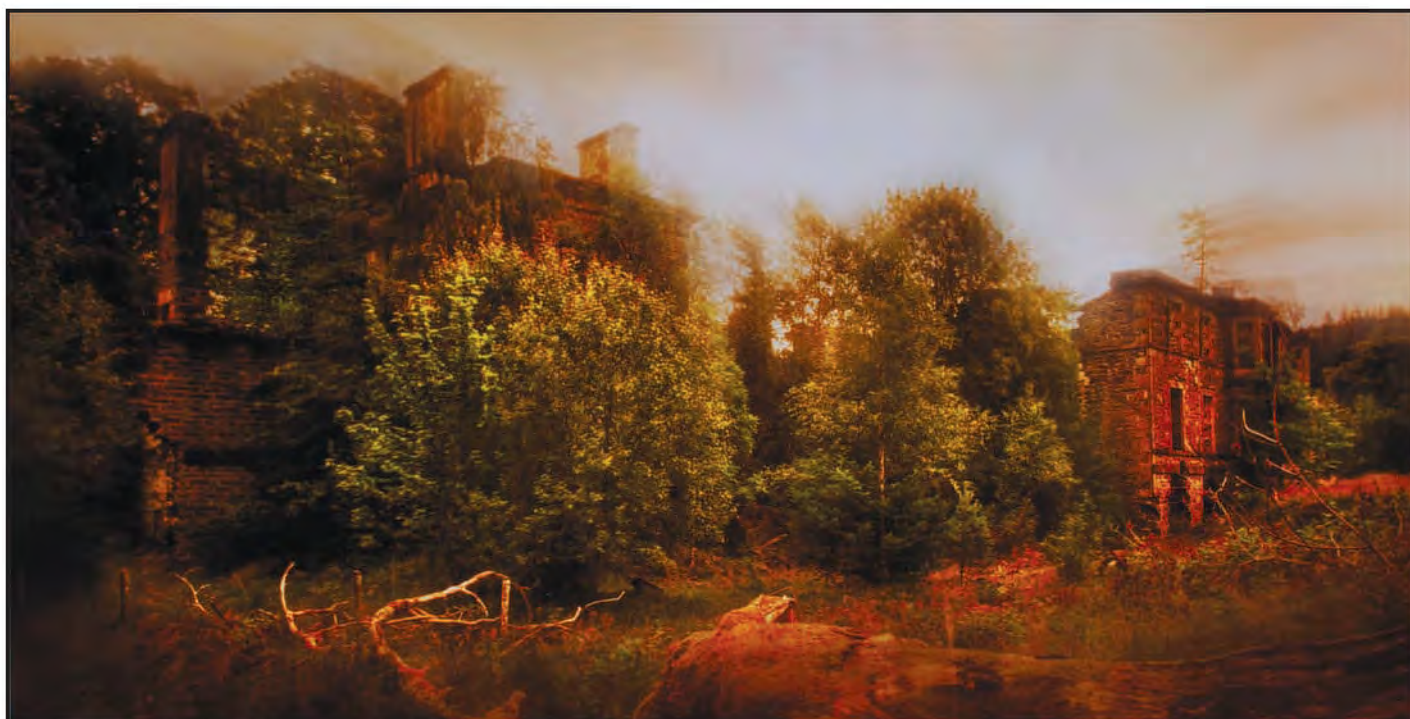
High Rise. The Leith Docks area has seen huge regeneration over the last few years. The Royal Yacht Britannia is moored there. The Scottish Executive buildings also can be found there as can many trendy restaurants and boutiques. All of this is now surrounded by modern high rise flats. I suppose this image is my interpretation of the speed at which things have changed and the motion of a city in general.

made many new friends. It's been an invaluable experience and one which I may repeat in a couple of years at Associate level.

As a child a lot of time was spent in a world fired by imagination; one where fairies hid under pink fringed daisies, battles were fought with mythical dragons, far-away lands explored, cats wore boots, cows jumped higher than the

moon and a hero could become the Lord Mayor of London.

As an adult, I'm still fascinated by that world; only now it's one that embraces serendipity whilst exploring the parts of life that are often glimpsed but rarely engaged in. Capturing moments, frozen in time, which are able to elicit an emotional response, evoke a dormant memory or wake-up lost thoughts and



Requiem for a Dream. I wanted to photograph this building and provide a comment about the passage of time, so I imagined a mono image, long exposure to blur the clouds and create movement. Mother Nature had different ideas though with only a grey sky punctuated by a weak sun! I took two exposures anyway and left it at that for a couple of weeks. In the meantime I did a little research on the building. Built by Lord Tweedmouth after his purchase of the estate in 1854, Guisachan

House was visited by many important people, including the Duke and Duchess of York (later to become George V and Queen Mary). The end came in 1939 when the house was purchased by the owner of nearby Hilton Lodge, Lady Islington, who was annoyed that Guisachan House was being used as a training centre, their activities included swimming in Hilton Loch; anything that could be moved was sold off and the roof removed. Armed with a little more information and coming back to the image, I felt I needed to

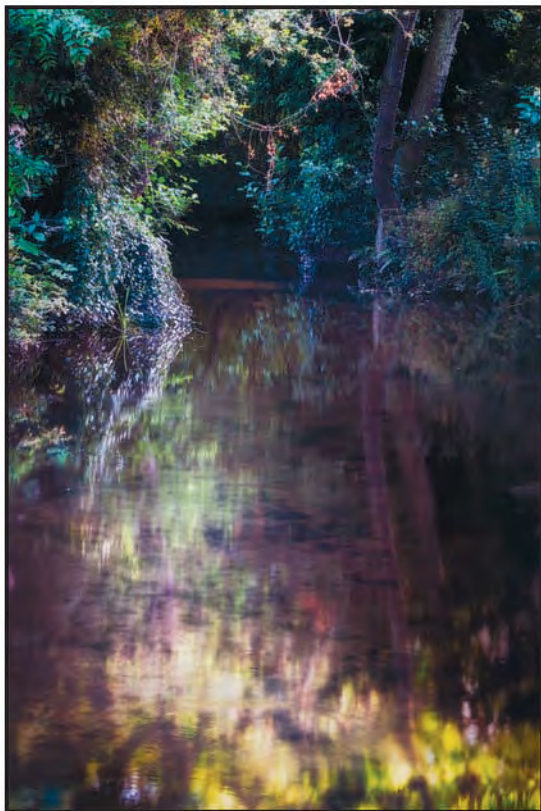
give a sense of the building's history - as if it were recalling old memories, evoking lost dreams. The house seems destined to live in a world of delusion, fantasy and reckless desperation, one that's being slowly overtaken and devastated by reality. The title was inspired by the first words of a requiem mass "Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine et lux perpetua luceat eis." - "Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them".



A Glimpse into my Soul. Editor's Note: Helena explained how she created this image in the 'DIGIT Challenge' on page 16 of the Winter 2011/12 issue of DIGIT (No 52).

lingering dreams is incredibly satisfying and cathartic. I don't consider myself a photographer but a visual storyteller. Creating visual messages allows deep feelings to be framed; thoughts, dreams and fears to be expressed. I try to be aware of emotional triggers at the time of photo capture so they can be assessed and allowed to swirl around in an imaginary world. Sometimes they coil into new images, sometimes they stay the same. The aim is to create visual clues which are an authentic expression of emotion rather than an image overtaken or devastated by reality. Inspiration comes from many sources; music, poetry, experiences, books and seeing. Albert Einstein once said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge for knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world."

If you would like to see more of Helena's work, visit her website www.edgesofvision.co.uk



Reflections. Taken at Preston Mill, East Linton, I was attracted to the arc of light in the early evening and had recently read the following proverb "We cannot see our reflection in running water. It is only in still water that we can see" Taoist Proverb.



Silver Light. My favourite image of the panel, taken on a misty morning near Glen Affric. "The one had leaves of dark green that beneath were as shining silver, and from each of his countless flowers a dew of silver light was ever falling, and the earth beneath was dappled with the shadows of his fluttering leaves." Excerpt from The Silmarillion by J.R.R. Tolkien

MY WAY: THE USE OF DIFFERENT INK SYSTEMS

Max Green has been investigating various ink systems for producing his prints. Here, he describes what he has found and tells us what he is using now as a result of his investigations.

I am a prolific printer, for my own pleasure as much as anything else, and I love an end product to hold in my hand. I had my own darkroom for about twenty years and loved monochrome printing and then Cibachrome. I purchased a Jobo Drum processor and started colour work, which I did enjoy but not as much as the more hands on approach of monochrome. Then, along came digital and, despite all the moans and groans about prints matching monitor, I don't think we have really ever had it so good. I used a Huey Pro for setting my monitor, and, together with a Canon printer with Canon paper and ink, I achieved almost perfect prints. I love the Lustre EG, Natural soft textured EG Fotospeed papers and these, with the free profiling service, worked just as well.

Then, I bought a new Canon Pro9000 MKII printer, I went to Focus and bought a Colormunki Photo. This is where things began to change. I could now profile my own papers of choice easily and try to economise on the high cost of ink.

Usually, I run my older printer for e-mail and general printing duties saving the new printer just for photo use. It was with this in mind that using expensive Canon ink in the older printer really seemed not to be cost effective. So, I bought cheap cartridges for my older printer but they failed very quickly afterwards.

I had decided not to try this again but then someone I met at our local art festival mentioned he had a Canon model not very different from mine and used Fotorite ink in a Continuous Ink Supply System (CISS) with very good results and no problems whatsoever. He had been in the trade and sounded knowledgeable on the subject. I intended to try this out on my older Canon Pixma IP5200 printer to start with but do not have room for a CISS system next to it so the alternative was to purchase

refillable cartridges.

I ordered these along with Fotorite ink from City Ink Express and they arrived very quickly by post.

Also included are some small silicone seals which fit over the existing ones in the print head. Apparently, a lot of problems are caused by air leaks. Probably due to this, I was experiencing problems with this printer already. Gradually, I replaced the cartridges as they ran out and once I was running on all Fotorite ink, I made print profiles with my Colormunki for Galerie and Fotospeed papers. The monitor profiling is very accurate and using soft proofing I can usually achieve a good print without further adjustments.

At the soft proofing stage, I always leave and save a Brightness/Contrast layer active to make my final adjustments and, if necessary, any slight adjustment after printing.

I am considering now buying a CISS system for my Canon Pro9000 MKII or maybe the refillable cartridges, but the CISS system would be much less trouble once up and running.

I can see very little, if any difference, in colour between Fotorite, once profiled, and the original Canon Ink (Figure 1 and Figure 2). Further, I usually make several prints a week and I have managed to reduce my costs by a substantial amount. Similar systems using Lyson ink are also available.

There is quite a lot of information on City Ink Express website (www.cityinkexpress.co.uk) together with videos covering the installation on nearly all models of printer.

The only down side I can see at the moment is that topping up the cartridges is a bit of a fiddle, but it can be done in the printer or you can remove the cartridges to top them up. I have topped up in the printer but, once the filler plug is removed, it changes the balance in the cartridge and does need a few cleaning cycles to get all running again. So, I

think I shall most probably go for CISS as it will be easier to use in this respect. I'm sure many of you are more knowledgeable than me, but as the title of this article suggests, this is my way with the equipment and knowledge I have at this time.



Figure 1: Canon 9000 MKII, Canon Ink, Colormunki Profile



Figure 2: Canon 5200, Fotorite Ink, Colormunki Profile

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.



Pearls, The Final Image

Pearls by Tim Pile ARPS: My first really successful image entitled 'Pearls' came about by accident, but a well planned accident if that makes any sense. In April of 2010, I was due to travel to Scotland to shoot some nudes in the landscape with another photographer, which was the beginning of my quest for my ARPS. I always try to prepare as well as I can for every photo-shoot I go on and so, in preparation for my trip to Scotland, I

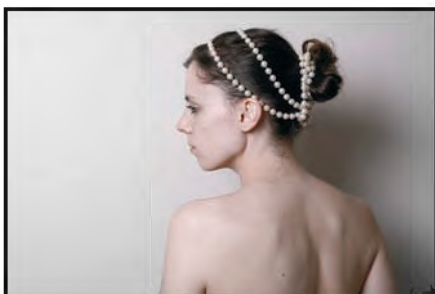


Figure 1: A photographer remarked that this looked like a Greek statue.

decided to do a practice outdoor shoot with a part-time model nearer to home, Nanette McCrone.

We agreed on a sunrise shoot at a local beauty spot but, unfortunately when we arrived, the light was poor, it was quite cold, and lots of trees had been chopped down since Nanette had last visited there. Basically, it wasn't really going to work, and the model suggested continuing the shoot back in her lounge. Her boyfriend would be asleep in the next room, but she said he wouldn't mind. I was a little disappointed, but I always try to make the best of any situation, and, as a contingency, I had bought along some Jessop's lights that I had purchased recently from a camera club member for £25.

Not being very experienced with lighting, I set up one light to my left with a small softbox on it and then hoped that the other walls in the room

would provide some fill-in of the shadows. We shot a number of interesting images with different props I had brought along. We were building up quite a rapport and her boyfriend got up and made me a cup of tea. One of the setups was with a string of pearls that Nanette had, which she posed with draped over various parts of her body. I always seek the opinions of other people on my images, usually showing the images online or in person using my iPod Touch. One photographer remarked that one of the images with the pearls in her hair looked like a classical Greek statue (Figure 1). I did play around with that image changing the hue and saturation, but then came across the image in Figure 2. It's an image you might easily pass by, but something struck me about it.

I have a mathematical and technical background and a very severe crop produced a much stronger image with interesting curves and shapes that appealed to me (Figure 3). This initial image does show my lack of lighting skills, with her left eye quite dark. Also, I should have got Nanette to tidy up the stray hairs from when she had put her hair up.

While the model has excellent skin, the early start showed a bit in her eyes. I now use a variety of skin-softening techniques, but at the time I simply used Gaussian blur on a duplicate layer with a black layer mask, and then rubbing through the areas I wanted to soften. Then, I used the clone tool and spot healing brush on an empty layer to tidy up the stray hairs. Following this, I created a layer filled with 50% grey and the blending mode was set to soft light. With a brush set at around 5% opacity and 0% hardness, I lightened areas by painting on this layer using a white brush and darkened areas using a black brush.

The statue look was purely by experimentation. I created a vibrance adjustment layer and settled on settings of vibrance of -71 and saturation of -24. On the layer mask of this layer, I painted with black to bring back the colour of

the lips as I felt they were important to balance the eyes. A levels adjustment layer with the middle slider set to 1.83 then gave me something now looking like the final image, and I used a brush with an opacity of 15% on the layer mask to just darken the eyes a bit as the levels layer had brightened them too much. The image now looked finished to me, but I recalled a conversation with an experienced photographer who said that the difference between an image that got accepted into exhibitions and one that got awards was attention to detail and that last bit of polish. When exhibitions are marked, the judges are usually sitting some distance from the images, when they give awards they usually look at the images from much closer up and notice little things. So I posted the image on a forum for critique and scrutinised the image myself close up and decided to do some further work on it. I pulled down her left hand shoulder slightly using the warp tool (Figure 4). The catchlights in each eye looked different so I cloned the one from her right eye to her left eye, and I tidied up a few more of the stray hairs. I then lightened her left cheek and darkened her left hand very slightly using the technique described earlier. I then sharpened her eyes and mouth, and very laboriously sharpened every single pearl. On an empty layer with the clone tool, I then removed little stray bits on the string holding the pearls together, as well as tidying up a small crack in Nanette's lips, followed by a small bit of darkening under one eye. The final act was a hue/adjustment layer with a setting of +20 on the hue which gave me the statue look I was aiming for. The final layer palette is shown in Figure 5.

This was the first ever image I

had put a significant amount of thought and work into, and it appears to have worked. Shortly afterwards, it won me my first ever medal in the 2010 Smethwick International, a London Salon Medal in my first year of entering, and the gold medal for the best colour print in the PAGB Inter-Federation championships, and it's the image many people know me by. It does much better as a print than as a projected image, and is printed on a baryt ivory paper to enhance further the effect of a statue. It also sits proudly in our lounge, as well as the lounge's of my Mother, Nanette, and her parents. I think this shows quite well how an ordinary looking image can be transformed into a much better image with a bit of work and advice from others. Producing that single image taught me so much about so many things, and led to improvements in a number of areas of my photography through the lessons learnt from it. All because of a bit of luck, and a model dipping into her jewellery box, thank you Nanette.

Editor's Note: You can see more of Tim's photography in his article "Photographing Models", which was published in the Winter 2011/12 issue of DIGIT, (No.52), pp 6-10 and at his website <http://www.photopile.co.uk> and blog <http://timbham.blogspot.com>.



Figure 5: Final layer palette



Figure 2: Image before being cropped



Figure-3: Tightly cropped, it is now looking like the final image

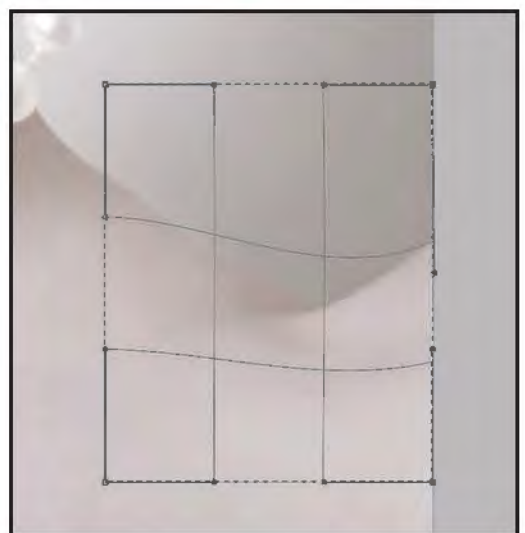


Figure 4: Warping the shoulder - I prefer warp to liquify as it is easier to control



Plant Composite: The Final Image

Plant Composite by Peter Keverne ARPS:

Over the six or more years since I entered the digital world, I have amassed a considerable library of software and plug-ins; all with the view of satisfying my creative juices, which the new medium had rekindled in me. Even so, I am always on the look-out for new software which can achieve

that something different. Recently, I came across some software called Smart Photo Editor (SPE) from the Anthropic company (www.smartphotoeditor.com). I downloaded a trial program and, though I found the tutorials sparse, it didn't take too long to get to grips with the plethora of effects and presets, which in turn can be further modified by tweaking the sliders.

When I came to save my first 'work of art' I found it was not possible and so I bought the software. My example, which has caused considerable interest on the DIG Forum, was taken initially at the National Trust Gardens at Trelissick near Truro using a Canon 7D camera with a Tamron 18x270 mm zoom, with a Canon 12 mm extension tube fitted. With the processed RAW file in Photoshop CS5, I followed my usual NIK software work flow but, to me, the final image lacked that something. I felt though that it had potential. I loaded this image into SPE (Figure 1) and, in truth, started to play with some of the effects, tweaking where required and confirming each likeable effect. Gradually, the final image evolved. For those who might be tempted to try this software, the effects in the order used were:- Enhance Sky and Sunset (Figure 2), Bokeh (Figure 3), Auto Correct with noise, HDR with noise control (Figure 4) and finally Burnt Wood. (The Final Image).



Figure 1: SPE Original Image



Figure 2: SPE Original+ Enhance Sky & Sunset



Figure 3: SPE Original+Enhance Sky & Sunset+Bokeh



Figure 4: SPE Original+Enhance Sky & Sunset+Bokeh+Auto Correct with Noise, HDR with Noise Control



People at the First November 2011 Workshop

DIG CHELTENHAM WORKSHOPS NOVEMBER 2011

Two of the popular DIG Cheltenham Portraits, Fashion and Nudes workshops, led by Graham Whistler FRPS and Simon Walden, took place in November 2011. Two of the attendees, Denis McConnell LRPS and David Thomas, describe their experiences and a selection of images taken on the workshop is presented on pages 28 to 31.

Denis McConnell LRPS: Portrait, fashion and figure photography in two days! That's the daunting challenge that Simon Walden and Graham Whistler set themselves on their two recent workshops.

I attended the second workshop, along with 19



Getting Down to Business (Elizabeth Restall LRPS)

other photographers, keen to learn about and discover the world of Studio Photography. At the start, we were split into two groups, Red and Green, and, apart from the lunch breaks, didn't see the other group for the next four sessions. The Green group's first session was with Graham and a character model. After a relatively short introduction and explanation of the lighting system, we were let loose with the model. We were each given 6 minutes and left to do our own thing. I was chosen to go first (standing in the wrong place again). As someone who is used to macro and some landscape photography and spends quite a lot of time composing, focusing, checking shutter speed and ISO settings, I found the pace of studio photography quite a challenge. Denis, our model for the session, did gently chide me for not taking photographs quickly enough. We were given the camera settings and,

after a couple of test shots, didn't alter them at all! This process was essentially repeated for the next three sessions. There are two studios, one high key and one low key, and two tutors, and our time was split between the studios and the tutors. The course is very much based around practical experience, and allows participants the opportunity to take photographs of models under supervision and in a studio. The six minute time allowance is a little restricting and does inhibit creative ideas and experimentation. However, as a newcomer to studio photography this is only a minor complaint. I wanted to gain some experience of studio photography and working with models and this course did exactly that. I should have liked some critique of my photographs and how I achieved them, and maybe some discussion with the rest of the participants, and even the models. Simon and Graham are both very experienced and successful photographers and it would have been

great also to see how they would operate. The models were the stars of the course. All of them were superb and made photography very easy, and they were a delight to work with. Denis, the character model was brilliant at changing from a potter to a painter instantly. Sharon, the nude model, was stunning and her ability to adopt graceful and beautiful poses was superb. Harriett and Brodie, the fashion models, were equally outstanding and worked very hard to accommodate our requests. Remarkably, at the end of the two days I had very few “instant delete” photos. I did have one problem which was that the charging time of the studio lights is quite long, so only one “action” shot can be taken at a time. Choosing the moment when shaken hair is at its best is difficult. Although they probably will not win competitions, the remainder of the photos will stay on my computer as a reminder of what can be done and an inspiration to do better next time!

David Thomas: I’m a keen amateur photographer, but family and a demanding day job have always limited the time available for developing my photographic skills. Now (semi) retired, I’ve been able to seek out opportunities to build my skills and broaden the range of subject matter that I can tackle. I joined the RPS at a ‘Think Photography’ event in West Bromwich in November 2010, which coincided with an exhibition of Martin Parr’s evocative “Black Country Stories” images. I spotted the notice for the workshop at Cheltenham Film Studios in the RPS newsletter, and was very pleased to get a place on the second November workshop. I’ve had some experience of studio work, but only infrequently, and with little or no guidance or tuition. The workshop was a great opportunity to build my understanding (technical and practical) of how to set up lighting, and also to try my hand at working in a range of genres, from portrait, through fashion, to figure nude. The Cheltenham studio is spacious and well-equipped, and Graham Whistler and Simon Walden did a great job as guides and tutors, explaining not only how to set up lighting but also how to approach working with models in each of the genres we were tackling. The course was also an excellent opportunity to meet other RPS members and share knowledge and experience. Now I understand why the workshops are so popular, and so difficult on which to secure a place. Attending one has certainly encouraged me to get back into a studio at the earliest opportunity.

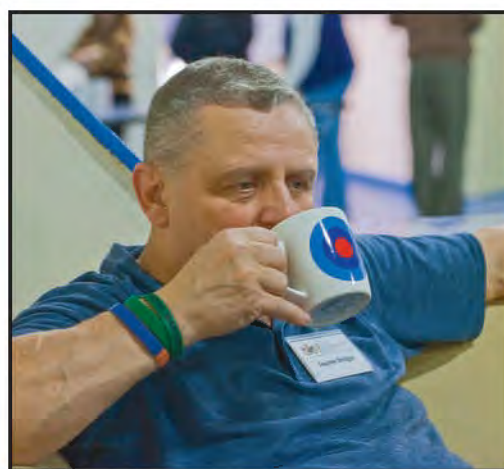
Editor’s Note: A further workshop will be held this October. Please the advert on page 2 for details.



Graham keeps a Watchful Eye (Janet Haines ARPS)



Trying a Different Angle (Elizabeth Restall LRPS)



Enjoying The Coffee Break (Elizabeth Restall LRPS)



Checking the Lighting (Elizabeth Restall LRPS)



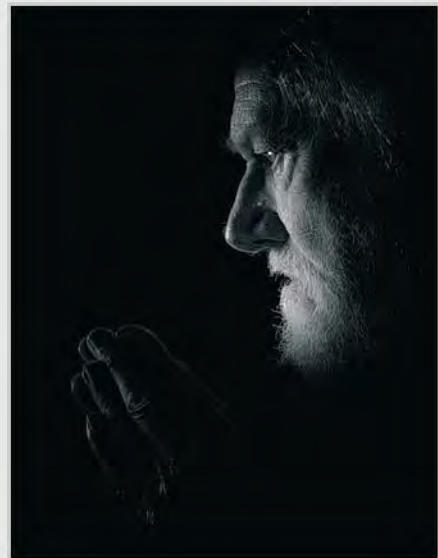
June Cook FRPS



Roy Davies LRPS



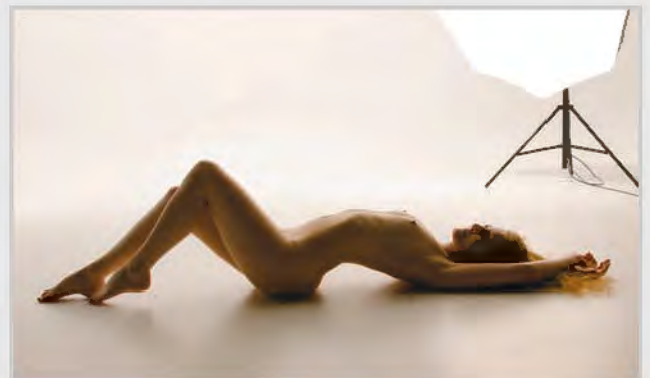
Roy Davies LRPS



Roy Davies LRPS



Janet Haines ARPS



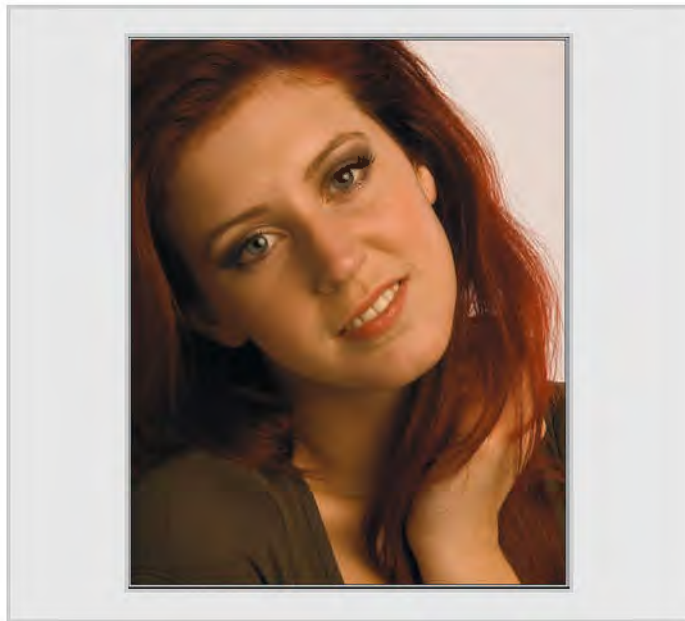
Janet Haines ARPS



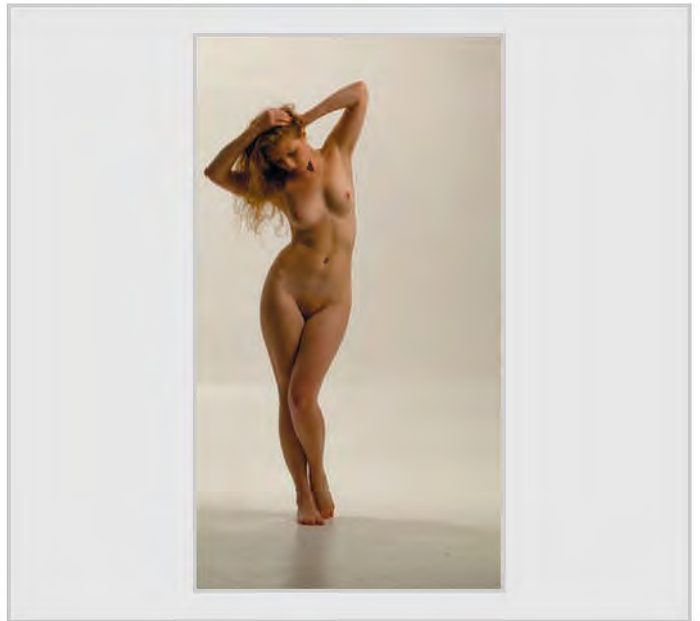
Ian Ledgard LRPS



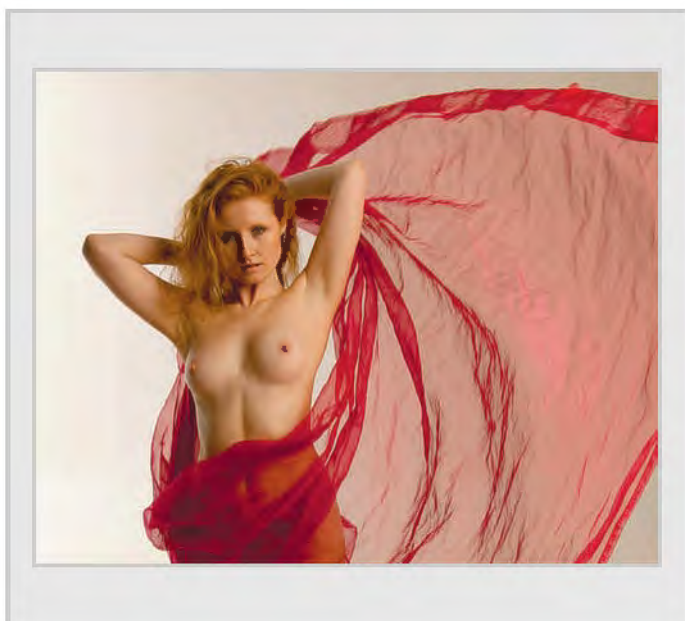
Ian Ledgard LRPS



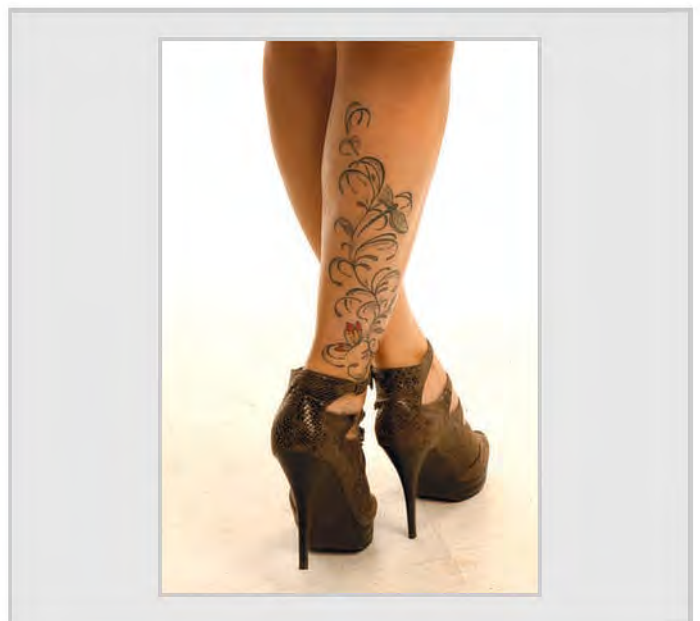
Ian Ledgard LRPS



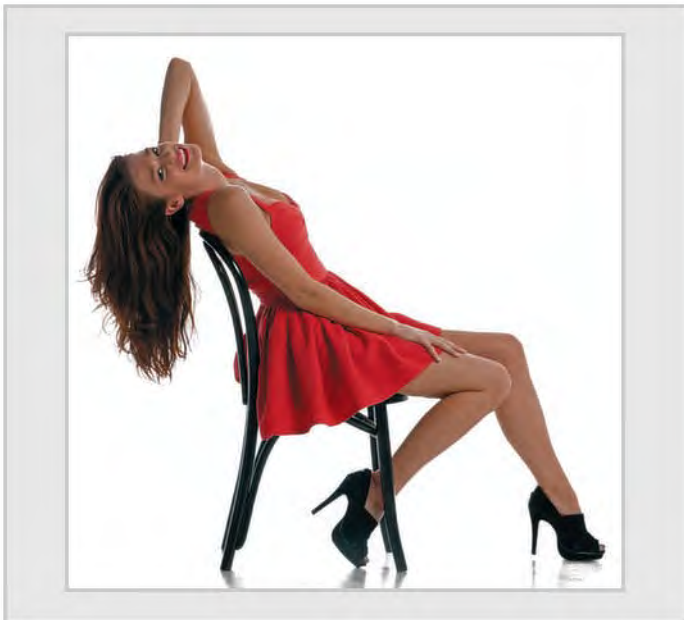
Denis McConnell LRPS



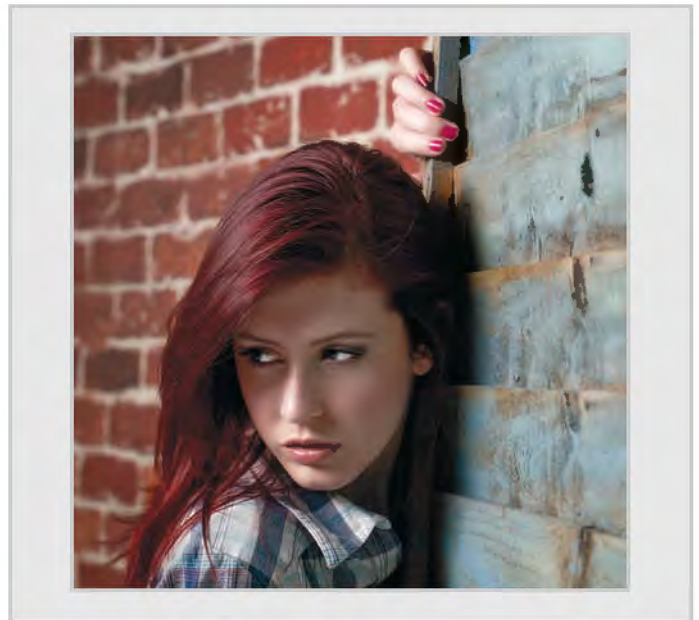
Denis McConnell LRPS



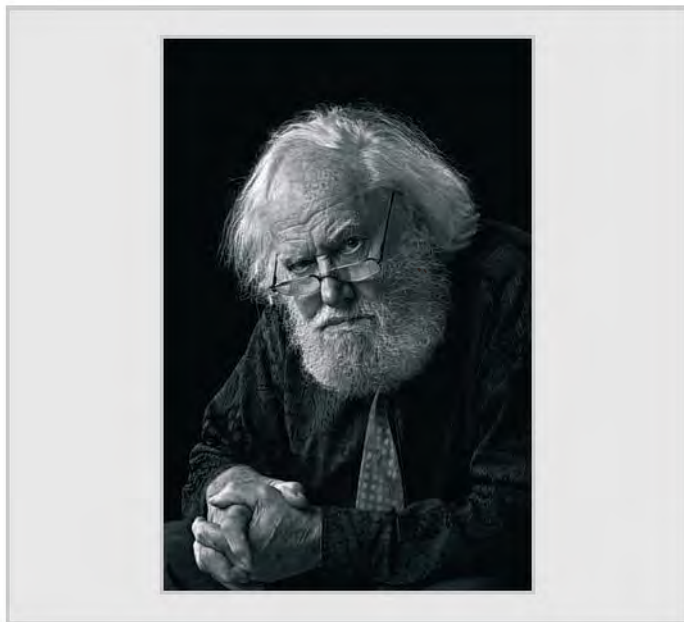
Denis McConnell LRPS



Elizabeth Restall LRPS



Elizabeth Restall LRPS



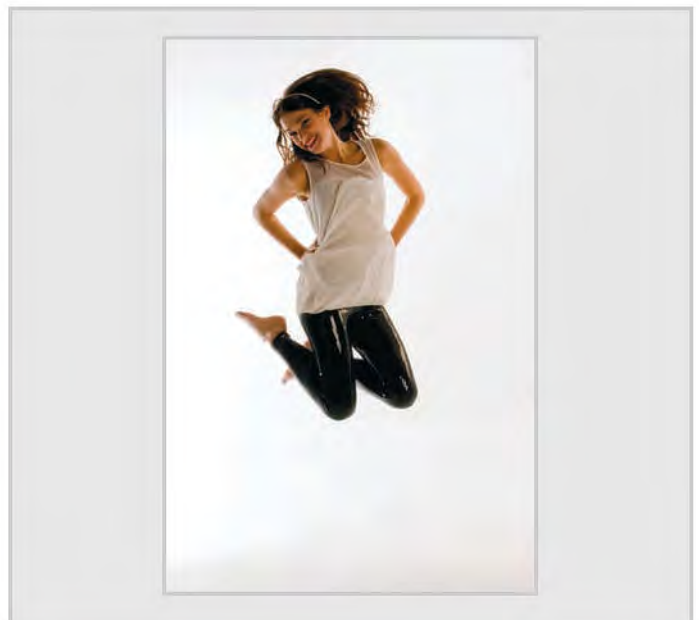
Mark Rogers



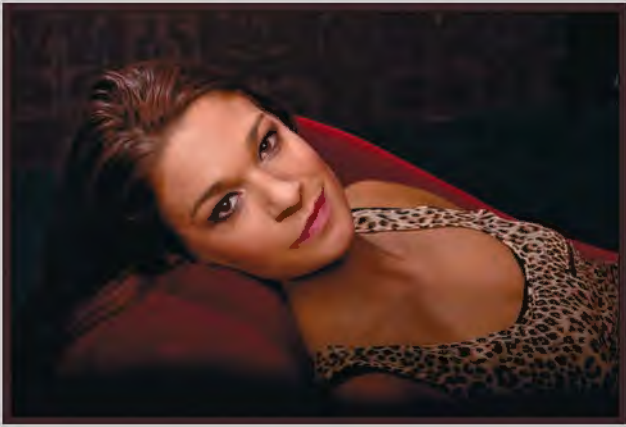
David Thomas



David Thomas



David Thomas



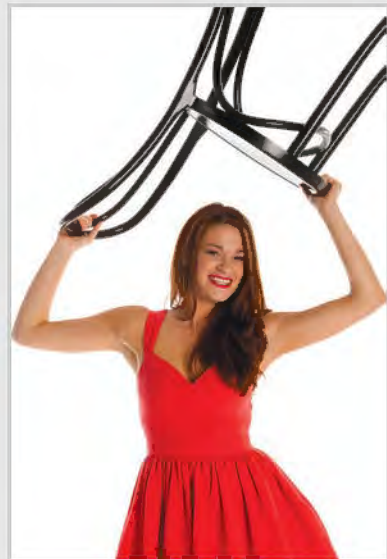
Graham Ward ARPS



Graham Ward ARPS



Andrzej Zawadzki



Andrzej Zawadzki



Andrzej Zawadzki



Andrzej Zawadzki

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