

DIGIT

June 1999 Issue 9

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The Royal Photographic Society
Digital Imaging Group

Why exhibit?

Over the last few years, I have sent my pictures off to exhibitions with a fervour that verges on eccentricity. Why? Because, I find it very stimulating.

Much of photography is a solitary thing – well, for me it is. Group outings may be fun and sociable, but I have never produced a good image as a result of such an event. Working on my own makes me use my grey matter a little harder and I do not feel inhibited by people round me staring and wondering what I am up to. There are exceptions, of course, such as the time I tried to photograph three nuns against a shop window full of exotic ladies underwear (the underwear was exotic – not the ladies). I eventually chickened out when a small group formed behind me, probably assuming that I was some sort of pervert.

The feedback from good exhibitions is also a great stimulus. Catalogues from some foreign exhibitions are of an extraordinary quality and for an entry fee of about \$10 to \$15 (they usually ask for dollars, although the French want francs!) you very often get an exhibition catalogue that would set you back two or three times that amount in a book shop – if it were available in a book shop. So this way you see images from photographers all over the world. The variety, originality and quality of many of these images is extremely high, but most exhibitions are trying to show a broad spectrum of work, so inevitably there will be some pictures that you do not like.

The cost of sending your work abroad is not now prohibitive, especially in Europe. Most European exhibitions will quite happily accept unmounted prints, so if you send 16" x 12" or A3 prints in a sensible package, it will cost you little more than sending a box of slides.

Of course, you need to be really well organised and dispatch your work in good time to beat the various postal systems through which it may have to pass, but to date, I have never had work delayed enough to miss the entry dates. So far, I have never lost a picture. They have all come back, although sometimes it can be quite a prolonged affair. Most entry forms will give you a calendar of events which includes the dates for the return of your work, but then you must add on the time in the post. Where do you find out about such exhibitions? There are a series of British exhibitions which have grouped together and information about them can be obtained from Don Brown, 60 Babingley Drive, Leicester, LE4 0HJ by sending a 9"x6" S.A.E.

Undoubtedly the easiest way to find out about international events is to contact the person in your local federation who is responsible for liaising with the PAGB. They will receive lists from FIAP at fairly regular intervals which give you much of the information you need, such as entry dates, type of work admissible and even a star rating for the quality of the exhibition catalogue! If you furnish such a contact with a supply of stamped addressed envelopes, they will pass on a copy of the list. If you are a member of Image Sans Frontier, their bulletin lists many of the international exhibitions available and one of their members even has a web site from which you can obtain entry forms!

Some of the photographic magazines also give details of exhibitions (and if you are so inclined – competitions with prizes) and of course there are exhibitions for prints and slides organised by The Royal Photographic Society which are very well worth entering. The London Salon are pleased to accept prints for consideration for their annual exhibition, which is perhaps one of the more interesting events in this country. So you send off your work and usually it gets rejected!

There is a learning curve! Exhibition photography is not the same as club and federation photography. The standard is somewhat higher, but this is surely all part of it! Why enter the easy ones? Getting your first acceptance in an international event is a great thrill and when you gain awards and medals you know that you have achieved a reasonable standard of work.

Digital work is now widely accepted in exhibitions, although a few unfortunate souls have decided to segregate it into specialised classes. To me, this is an unfortunate attitude, I have long held the belief that competition and exhibition should be open and that any form of segregation is to be regretted. A picture is a picture! Fortunately there are still some open exhibitions – the aforementioned London Salon being a classic example. A thick skin and a philosophical outlook are essential to the frequent exhibitor – the picture that earned you an award in exhibition 'A' may not even get accepted in exhibition 'B', but if you have chosen your exhibitions with care, you will see what sort of images beat yours when the catalogue eventually drops through the letterbox!

Occasionally, the organisers will write to ask if they can keep your work. (There seems to be a much greater value attached to photographic images abroad, than at home, especially in Spain). I usually agree to these requests – I suppose it is a bit flattering to think that they want your pictures for ever (?) but surely the main purpose of producing pictures is for them to be seen by others and for most of us the best way of achieving this is to have our work exhibited to as many people as possible. It is only by letting your work be seen by other people that you have the opportunity to communicate through your pictures – what other purpose really matters?

John W. West
FRPS MPAGB AFIAP



John Gray ARPS



Tom Bowett FRPS

It is only by letting your work be seen by other people that you have the opportunity to communicate through your pictures, what other purpose really matters?

- John West



John West FRPS



David Taylor ARPS

There are a series of British exhibitions which have grouped together and information about them can be obtained from Don Brown, 60 Babingley Drive, Leicester, LE4 0HJ by sending a 9"x6" S.A.E. - John West

John West FRPS



Coral Reef Studies:

A Digitally Printed FRPS Panel

Having been successful in gaining APRS in the Nature category during the Spring of 1998 with a Panel of 15 slides of underwater subjects, my thoughts turned to the next big milestone- Fellowship! Attendance at an excellent Advisory Workshop at Juniper Hall confirmed my hunch that making the transition to prints would give me much more opportunity to make the most of some of my existing material, in particular by cropping to improve composition.

Inspired by Paul Kay's success with a digitally printed panel and given the fact that I have no access to a dark-room, I decided to investigate the feasibility of producing a print panel at home. At this stage, I didn't even know whether the 'consumer market' equipment that I would be able to afford would be able to produce a good enough finished print! My next step was to attend a four day DI workshop at Duckspool which gave me a whistle-stop tour of Photoshop and a shopping list comprising an Epson Stylus 1520, a Minolta Dimage Scanner, plus Zip Drive, SCSI card and miles of cabling to connect it all to my Gateway PC. I also bought Photoshop4 bundled with PageMaker and other Adobe software.

I'm pretty much a beginner with computer technology, so it took me several weekends to get everything connected and working and to get a basic grasp of Photoshop, but I was very excited with the first few prints that I made. It was clear that I was going to be able to achieve very high definition and surprisingly faithful colour reproduction, so I committed myself to prints for what I believed would be my first of possibly several attempts at FRPS. It was now September and I also set myself a target of submission for the March'99 assessment, for no better reason than that for me, deadlines concentrate the mind wonderfully.

I selected nearly 40 images to work with, some of which I had already had commercially scanned onto PhotoCD for archiving purposes and some of which I scanned at home. I made rough prints of each one and whittled the list down to about 30, which I started to work on seriously. Some images required virtually no work at all, beyond cropping and printing. A number benefited from adjustments to brightness and contrast. In some cases, 'Autolevels' produced a perfect result, whereas in others it created rather bizarre effects and I made the adjustments manually, so to speak. About a quarter of the images suffered from minor 'back scatter' caused by the reflection of flash lighting from tiny particles suspended in the water- the bane of underwater photographers. I used the clone tool to eliminate these blemishes. However, I was scrupulous not to do anything which would fundamentally change the original image of a creature pictured in its natural habitat.

When I was satisfied with each image I set about producing full size prints 25x31 cm, using A3 sized Epson Photo quality Glossy Paper. My PC only has 56MB RAM and so to avoid making the print files too big to manipulate reliably, I limited the print resolution to 300dpi, giving print files of about 25 Mb, which I found wholly adequate for good quality results. I used the printer on its automatic settings and 360 dpi print quality.

However, I was not out of the woods! My first attempt at mounting the prints was disastrous. Since the printing paper was rather thin, I spray-mounted them onto mounting board, then finished off with a window mount. However, within 48 hours, almost every single print was peeling off the backing board and was ruined! I'd like to say a very warm thank you to all those members of the DI Group who responded to my rather desperate e-mail plea for help on what might have gone wrong and suggestions on how to mount digital prints successfully.

I received a magnificent 15 replies via phone and e-mail, with an interesting range of views. 5 recommended 3M

Photomount, while a further 3 said they never used spray mount at all because of the risk of damage to the print. 3 use dry-mounting tissue and 2 use self-adhesive board, while one gentleman (a man after my own head) said he'd found a professional willing to do the hard work for him!

In the end, I reprinted my entire my panel on heavier Epson Photopaper and followed Barrie Thomas' helpful guidance to simply stick the print onto the back of the window mount with masking tape, working on a light-table to be able to see what I was doing. This seemed the simplest method of all and in the end produced a very satisfactory result.

Then, with 30 prints successfully mounted came the hardest part of all, to make a final selection and put together a panel of prints that I felt would not only meet the standard individually, but that would work together as a whole. Here, I was on my own and Photoshop could do nothing to help!

Finally, I followed John Tyler's excellent article on how to make a contact sheet to show the hanging plan and after some last minute dramas when Parcel Force failed to deliver a transit case I had ordered, I managed to deliver my panel to Bath on the last possible day for the March assessment.

It goes without saying that I was more than delighted to be successful and attain FRPS at my first attempt. I have certainly enormously enjoyed the experience of learning digital printing, though I have no intention whatever of changing out my trusty Nikon 35mm cameras and beloved Fuji films. For me, digital processing and printing of images is simply an accessible and satisfying alternative to the Cibachrome prints that I used to have to rely on someone else to produce for me.

Anne Owen FRPS

AnneOwen@compuserve.com
(see the colour page 7)

Coral Reef Pictures

Spinechecked Anemonefish

This picture was taken in Papua New Guinea, on Velvia film, using a Nikonos RS camera with 50mm macro lens, and illuminated by two SB103 flashguns, on TTL control.

The original landscape format has been cropped, some minor blemishes touched out using the clone tool, and Autolevels applied.

These fish spend their lives amongst the poisonous tentacles of their chosen host anemone, to which they have become immune.



Colonial Anemone

This picture too was taken on Velvia film, this time using a Nikon F90X camera and 105 mm macro lens, enclosed in a Subal underwater housing. Again, I used two SB103 flashguns on TTL control.

The digital treatment was much the same as above. I was very pleased with how well the black background printed up.

This tiny anemone with its beautiful pattern was living high up under the roof of an underwater cave.



A Cry from the Wilderness

I live at the perimter of photographic knowledge, in Eaglescliffe, where the cliffe has gone, probably been looted by marauding southerners, and the last eagle was shot down years ago

Explorers have been known to penetrate this far and, if one proceeds carefully, plaques can be seen recording 'Barrie the Thomas was here'. Standing quietly, shoals of mini-digims can be seen searching around for bits of information on digimiting

Many months ago that very contagious digim disease struck me resulting in nauseating frustration and sclerosis of the bank account. This has been traced to a Carrier... the aforementioned B.Thomas, who has much to answer for.

Then came an attempt at salvation, for in a neighbouring settlement called Middlesbrough, a Leader of Quality arose, Brian of the Gilbert Tribe, and he led six or so smitten and struggling digims out of the wilderness. As the word spread there came a torrent of seekers and soon the roll call reached over thirty and it is rising as I write

By now strange happenings were beginning to take shape and in that Holy of Holies, BATH, where, in spite of mutterings of disaster and dissent, there came about a special major tribe or group entirely devoted to succouring the well being of digims. It is suspected that the conscience of that B.T. (no you fool not telephones) might have set it rolling but there came a beautiful scribe called Glenys, a writer of tablets William of Henley, and spreader of the word John the long one, and there were others.

So much complicated instructions were issued, even the great Pollock took a hand and so did Him of the Medics. Alas the words were many and complex, the prophets excelled themselves producing reams and reams of complicated measures on how to

do the same thing many many ways. Confusion reigned in the little grey cells of many of the digims. But they persevered and some success was shown, but there were residual troubles to be fought

A strange visual phenomenon was sought called wysiwyg which made what the fading eyes saw on a screen repeated on tablets. So many were disappointed because it did not happen and sabotage was suspected. Had those penetrating Southerners misled the simple ones? And this was further made ill by the substitution of different kinds of tablets in the scribing machine and all gave out differing results. There arose much discontent and wailing for some tablets had a beautiful gloss, were costly, but emerged from the womb of the scribing machine bearing different colours as though their forbears were not exactly what they had seemed. Not only that but when attempts were made to adhere those glossy results to mounting tablets they suffered badly from bubblitis and, although they were dead, they would not lie down and problems proliferated.

Then, one brilliant day, the water of despair sank a little and out of the Internet came a dove carrying messages of hope from a country many thousands of miles away. It bore messages telling of protective sprays enabling the original tablets to be used, it told of many experiments with many different makes and kinds of tablets. Then those frustrated tiny digims began to wonder if the prophets in their own land would seek out these alternatives, spread around the information and sources, and enable those further complicated writings to fulminate into glorious presentations.

Hope springs eternal, so let us spray for assistance.

Anne Owen FRPS

(see the colour page 7)

Ray Wallace Thompson
ARPS FPSA AIIPC

"Slippery When Wet"

With so many 'filters' now available for image processing software, such as PHOTOSHOP, it may be timely to remind ourselves of the creative possibilities that can be performed without recourse to complex mathematics. The basic eight operations in PHOTOSHOP³, when thoroughly mastered, can provide a very powerful tool-set upon which to expand **as and when the need arises**.

The initial inspiration for the image came from the modernistic apartments in Rotterdam, Netherlands. At first sight (Fig 1) they look just like 'cubes' perched precariously on concrete piles – and this is precisely what they are. Futuristic, certainly – but how do the carpets fit? A surreal image forged in the real world. Just my sort of thing. With so many straight edges the selection to extract the required elements from the background, was relatively easy (Fig 2). Control of contrast was followed by the enhancement of the colours (by 'Variations') until the desired effect was achieved. By use of the 'mirror copy' Fig 3 was achieved. These elements were positioned and sized before the sky was added to allow total control of the composition.

Foreground element started life as a shot of water droplets on the bonnet of my car (Fig 4). Yes, the car was recently cleaned but only for photographic purposes to get the regularly spaced mini-pools of water. The image was mirror copied to give a doubled image which neatly fits together, slightly twisted (sorry a filter used here! - but not absolutely essential). The dramatic colour comes from experimentation with the contrast control and the 'Curves' facilities. Fig 5 shows an intermediate stage before final colouring. A correction for perspective can be performed easily. The central 'church' (Fig 6), although initially very symmetrical, was used to link the architectural elements together with a slight 'Chesterfield' twist.

In my pre-digital period I used patterned glass extensively. Here a shot of a summer sky taken through the glazed front-door as been adjusted to yield a very dramatic sky (Fig 7) and slotted onto a layer behind the buildings.

The costumed swimmer was shot in a studio in a variety of poses to simulating back and front strokes. Experimentation showed that a fully nude study did not work as strongly in this particular image.

A well positioned 'banana skin' give an implied sense of the 'comic' to the image as we all have been brought up to know what is meant to happen in such circumstances! Is real life this predictable?

Finally the shadows are added to complete the image ...
SLIPPERY WHEN WET.

My Top 8.

'selection', 'cloning', control of brightness, contrast and colour. Resizing and perspective. Basic layer control.

*For more in this series see
DIGITAL PHOTO ART.*

**John Law
FRPS MFIAP**

(see colour page 9)

Notes on Two Pictures

Plate of Fruit:

This started life as a B & W neg. on TMAX which I scanned in as an RGB image. I created a new background copy layer and treated it to the Dry Brush filter at settings to suite the image. The original background layer was then deleted. I then painstakingly "hand" coloured the fruit with a soft edged brush used in color mode in order to preserve the grey tones, varying the opacity settings as required but leaving the silver plate

uncoloured as grey. I carefully selected all the fruit and plate, excluding the shadow, with the pen tool and converted the path to a selection - I could equally have used the polygon lasso tool - and saved this selection as a new channel mask. On a new layer, I then drew a large selection with the marquee tool heavily feathered (about 60 pixels) as a background area, filled it with a suitable pastel colour and added the saved fruit selection as a layer mask. I followed a similar procedure to create a third layer containing the saved selection, feathered and filled with a suitable grey to form the shadow, nudged slightly left and down, which I dragged below the background copy layer. (see colour page 7)

Swaynes Mead:

My objective with this image was to create a painted water-colour effect and to help newcomers to Photoshop (Version 4 in my case) I will try to explain how I achieved the final result.

I scanned in a colour neg. of the cottage, and firstly cleaned up the picture by cloning out road markings and TV aerials etc. with the rubber stamp tool. The original sky was rather bland, so I selected the sky area with the magic wand (tolerance set to 15), adding further sky areas as necessary by shift-clicking the magic wand until the whole of the sky appeared to be selected. With quick mask turned on and foreground and background colours set to default, I paid particular attention to the edges of the selection around the roof and the tree and with a small brush painted out any stray sky pixels remaining unselected which might later leave a white or grey edge around the unselected area. I saved the image at this point.

An alternative to this quick mask method, I could have expanded the selection by one or two pixels - Select>Modify>Expand. Once satisfied with the selection which I did not deselect, I opened another image of a more interesting sky, selected the area I wanted and copied



Anne Owen FRPS



Anne Owen FRPS



Dr E Sethna FRPS



David Taylor ARPS



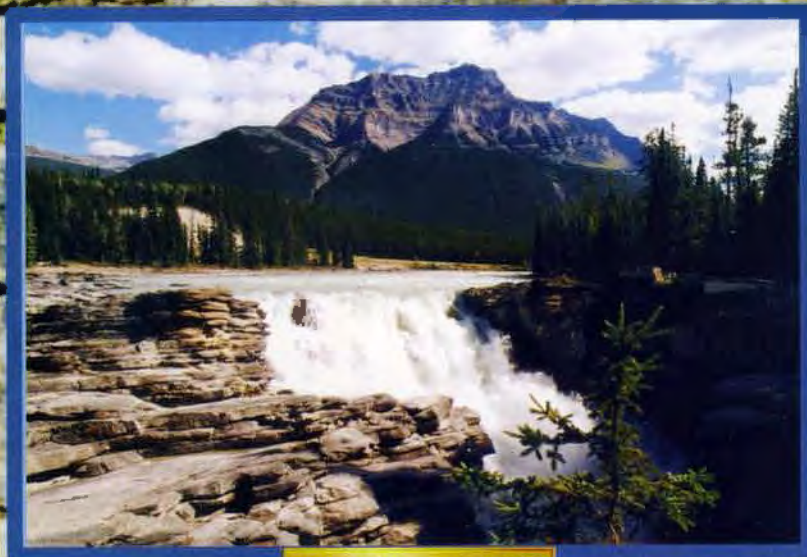
John Gray ARPS



Robin Mellor LRPS



Barrie Thomas FRPS



John Ainsworth ARPS



John Ainsworth ARPS

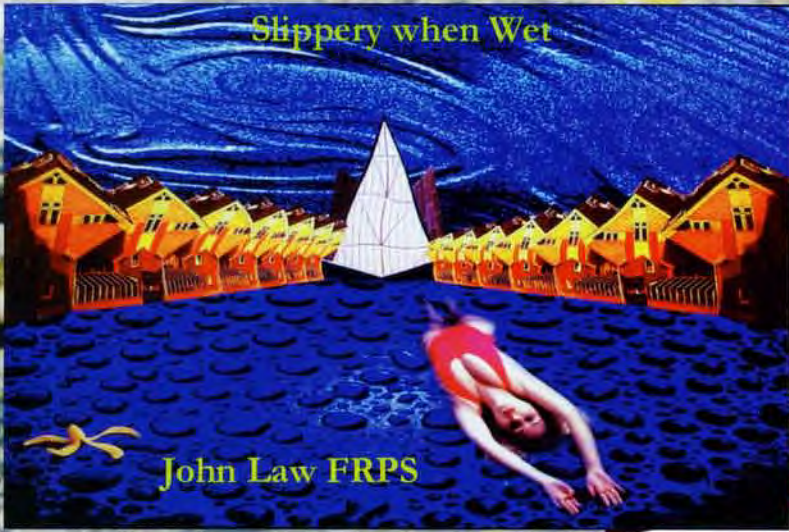


fig 3

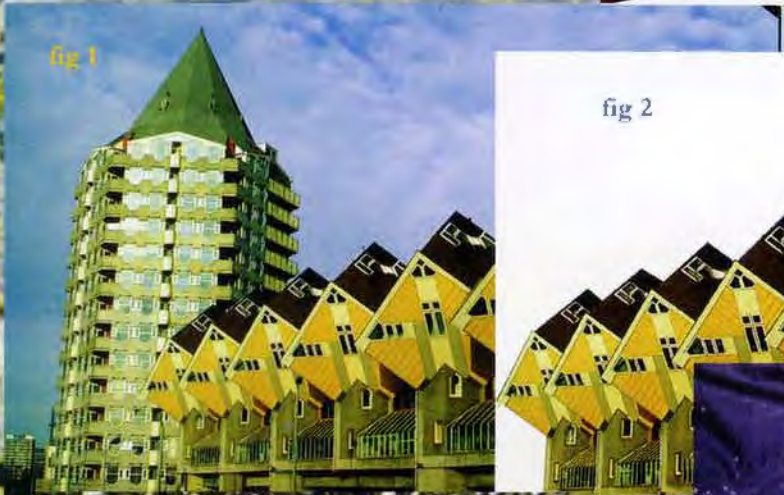
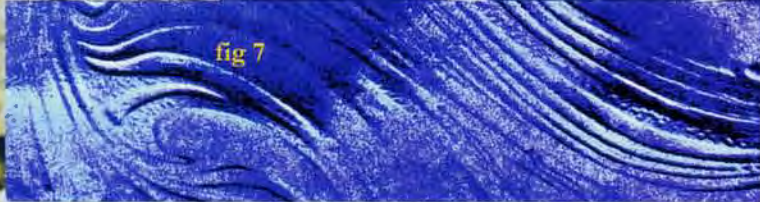
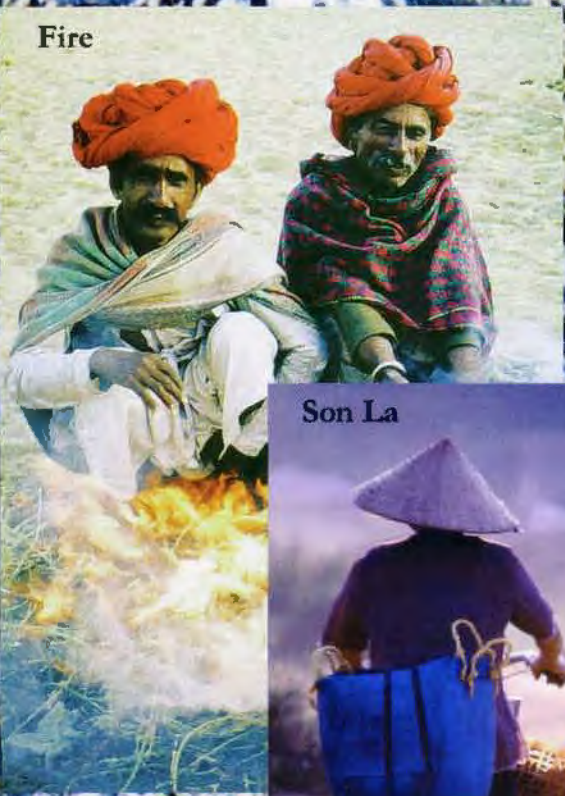


fig 5



Fire



Devotions



Son La



Bridge



Monk



Tom Bowett FRPS

Cyclist



it to the clipboard.(Edit>Copy or Ctrl+C). This second image was then closed and back in the original image I used Edit>PasteInto to insert the new sky which appeared on a new layer and which, with the move tool, can be moved around to suit. Once I was happy with the new sky, there was no longer any need for this separate layer so I flattened the image (Layer>Flatten Image) to keep the file size down and saved again.

To create the water-colour effect, I duplicated the Background layer by dragging its layer tile to the new layer icon at the foot of the layers palette and then subjected the Background Copy layer to the Dry Brush filter with settings chosen to suit the image. With the copy layer still active, I chose Luminosity mode from the drop-down list and reduced the opacity a little to achieve the effect required. Alternatively, I could have applied the filter to the background layer itself and used Filter>Fade immediately afterwards but this is irreversible once any further work is done. Using the copy layer method, one's options to change remain open!

To add the border, I increased the canvas size by about " " all round, used the marquee tool to include the whole image area plus about half the new border and then chose Select>Modify>Border to create a feathered selection x pixels wide ('x' depending on image resolution). This I then filled with a foreground colour chosen from the image - grey in this case - using the eye dropper tool to click on the colour and then Edit>Fill>Foreground Colour or Alt + Backspace. Before a final save, I printed the file with the Epson PhotoEX onto cartridge paper to enhance the water colour effect; only when I was satisfied with the end result did I flatten the file and save it.

(see page 3)

From my travels

Fire

This picture came from a colour slide taken at the Pushkar Camel Fair in India. The original slide was rather dark, so after scanning it into Photoshop I opened the Layers palette, copied the background to a new layer and blended this layer with the background using Screen blend mode to produce a lighter result. I then applied the Photoshop Dry Brush filter, followed with Lighting Effects and Texturiser.

Son La

I started with a colour slide of the cyclist on a dusty road in a small town called Son La in Vietnam. After scanning the slide I first used the Rubber Stamp tool in Photoshop to remove some highlights and an unwanted figure in the distance which clashed with the cyclist. The mother and child were then imported as a layer from another slide taken a few minutes earlier. I then had to produce the shadow of the mother and child to match the shadow of the cyclist. To do this I copied the layer, flipped it vertically, filled it with colour sampled from the cyclist shadow, used Layer-Transform-Distort to produce a suitable shape and finally blended the shadow layer with the road surface using Multiply blend mode.

Bridge

The original slide of a farmer crossing a suspension bridge in Vietnam was taken in low light and was not a success, but I was attracted by the interesting outline so I scanned the slide into my computer to have a play. I copied the background to Layer 1 which was then desaturated and red and yellow were added. Layer 2 comprised an image of a misty sunrise taken in Spain and for Layer 3 I copied the background again and applied

Highpass followed by Equalise. To achieve the final result I turned off the background layer and then blended Layer 3 using Overlay and Layer 2 with Multiply blend mode.

Cyclist

For this photograph of a passing cyclist taken on a recent holiday to Vietnam I panned the camera using a slow shutter speed to blur the background. After scanning the slide into Photoshop I increased the blur slightly using the Gaussian Blur filter with a low radius value and I removed one or two distractions from the background with the Rubber Stamp tool.

Devotions

The original photograph was taken from a boat in the early morning at Varanasi in India. After scanning the slide into Photoshop I opened the Layers palette and copied the background to a new layer. This layer was then subject to Add Noise, Color Balance to warm the image up a bit and then to the Posterised Edges filter before blending with the original background using the Luminosity blend mode.

Monk Darjeeling

The colour slide of the monk at a monastery was scanned into Photoshop in my computer using a Nikon Coolscan. The background beyond the door was over exposed with no detail and the backlit smoke/flowers came from another slide taken at the same location. After some small adjustments in Photoshop the picture was opened in Painter (this is Painter 3 which has been given away free recently with Macworld August 1998). I then used the Auto Van Gogh variant with the AutoClone command to achieve the effect.

Tom Bowett FRPS

(see the colour page opposite)

David Taylor ARPS
(see the colour page 7)

Point your browser at: <http://www.digit.org.uk>

EID On-line Forum

Re: Printing papers

Posted by Ruth Rittichler on Friday, 19 February 1999, at 11:11 p.m., in response to Re: Printing papers posted by Russell Rohde on Wednesday, 10 February 1999, at 6.54 p.m.

Try "Kodak Inkjet Photographic Quality Paper (Photo Weight)". I noticed on my newest pack they have changed the name to "Kodak Inkjet Photo Paper (117 lb. paper)". I prefer this over all the others you have mentioned. Although I have an Epson Stylus 600 printer, the Epson Glossy paper does not look as good to me as the Kodak paper. As you have noticed, the Epson paper prints too dark. I have entered Kodak Inkjet prints in the camera club Commercial Colour Print competition (it's permitted), and no one knew they were digital till I told them.

Original email:

I know sprays, lacquers, varnish coatings can give "glossy" spruced-up look to digital prints but I believe speciality papers is a better route. Generally I would reserve sprays, etc. to preserve colour, etc. for archival purposes to prevent fading, etc.

My personal experience with a goodly number of glossy papers is that it is hard to beat the Epson line of printing media: there are about 6 grades to choose from and I would limit choices to the better three which are all PHOTO QUALITY. (a) PQ IJ paper (b) PQ Glossy Paper (c) PQ Glossy Film (all Epson).

As you noted, the "gloss paper results are usually 'very deeper in shade' and this is really a plus and in my experience typical of brands other than Epson as well. If the shades are too much, then PS can cut contrast, and often I have done this using about 5-8% decrease contrast when the colours "jump out" too much. I found the saturation sometimes was because I

switched from 720 dpi on PQ paper to 1440 dpi on Glossy paper and film. I cringe to hear the term "Epson Ink Jet stuff"

I have recently tried "Great White" a glossy coated paper which reports to let inks sit up on the paper for more vibrancy. It is made from 25% recycled fibres. I have also recently used "Champion" Ink Jet High-Gloss finish (premium glossy coated paper) which is extra-heavy weight. Here the inks "dries on top" with precision and colours have added depth and brilliance. I find them comparable but not improved over Epson types described above. Prices are rather comparable for the similar types but a small premium added to the better known brands. I think the brand and quality of the printer has a lot to do with the print quality. I do not recommend using refilled cartridges. I find that outdated inks are a real disaster and that freshly dated inks are essential. Perhaps share your printer model and choice of ink with us. I also think some printers do best with certain papers and inks and that testing has to be done. I have 4 printers but I prefer to use Epson Stylus Colour 800 for most work. When I first started printings I used Canon papers but gave up. My best work is with dye-sub but that is another story and not what this discussion concerns.

submitted to DIGIT by:

Ray Wallace Thompson
ARPS FPSA AIIPC

raywal@onyxnet.co.uk

In Issue 8 of DIGIT, Mr. Bowman writes about the Epson printers discussion

group and also about the archival inks for his printer, but gives no details, phone, fax, email, addresses for either, so the rest of us can not get involved. May I ask you to provide contact details.

(edward@bowman.u-net.com)

I do agree with him about the lack of output. I read in the photo press that DI is either panned for being "naff" as the manipulation is visible, "awful" as it is cheating, and so on and so forth. Perhaps an exhibition that is "way out" and beautiful is needed, with all entries being as Jim Marsdens or Barry Colquhouns. I must admit that I try to make all manipulations I do invisible, such is my work, but it would be fun to go mad, knowing I had a chance of being exhibited.

Jackie Major LRPS LBIPP

It was with interest that I read the comments expressed by Edward Bowman in issue 8 of DIGIT, regarding the role and future of the DI

Group. As a very new member to DIG my major reason for joining the Group was the opportunity to view collections of images created by people who have come to DI, like myself, via conventional photography. A practice akin to attending photographic Salons. Secondly, to hopefully learn more on how to manipulate images to achieve ones own personal goals. Living where I am makes this last reason difficult unless some input appears in DIGIT. So what can DIGIT do ?

I have noticed that most of the members use Adobe Photoshop to manipulate their images. The User Manual that comes with the program tells you what the Photoshop will do but most people get more benefit from publications that explain how to use it. The Deke McClelland Photoshop book is a perfect example of this latter publication. A reader can view an image and ask themselves 'how did he do that?' and there in the book is the step by step process. You are then able to get one of your own images and see what it looks like with this treatment. For those who have upgraded to Photoshop 5 they now have the history palette.

For DI members who are happy to describe to others the steps in their

images they could copy the steps before 'saving' and have them published in an "How Was it Done" column along with the image. Personally I would like to know the steps used by John Colmer with his 'clown'. This information together with tips like Barry Colquhoun's Lacquer & Print Guard after treatment, and Edward Bowman's mention of archival inks (unfortunately with no specifics) help people who can't attend meetings, exhibitions and workshops to gain the most from distant membership and expand their understanding of the medium. I believe that most of us are predominantly right-brained people. Images are what we thrive on. In the three copies of DIGIT I have so far received I am delighted in the quantity of visual material and I feel that if there were a few more accompanying explanations you will have captured a member for life.

Anthony Healy
ARPS AFIAP
tonyhealy@ozemail.com.au
AUSTRALIA

I have had a problem with opening files in `raw` form in Photoshop 5.0 and although I followed the procedures outlined by Adobe all I could get was a thumbnail size file.

I have however now solved the problem. These images came from a Canon PowerShot Pro 70 camera and were on a compact flash discs. When I tried to bring the images into Photoshop via a card reader I got the results described above.

I now find the answer is that I have to install the Twain Driver supplied with the camera and transfer the images via a serial cable from the camera to the P.C. - a very slow and boring procedure - but the images are of excellent quality and worth the wait.

Tom Byatt LRPS

I must congratulate Barrie Thomas on his article in the January edition of DIGIT, with which I heartily and totally agree. I'm afraid therefore that I have to disagree with Sir George Pollock's reply, in particular his final comment: "..... it is an error to claim that a photograph remains "pure" even after it has been manipulated by non-photographic means....."

Consider the following (tongue in cheek) hypothesis.

Photography means drawing with light. That is, as Sir George quotes himself, "...an image made by...."light".....". Note the emphasis on the words "image made".

Therefore "pure photography", it could be argued, is limited to the exposure of sensitised material which creates the initial image. All other processes whether chemical or electronic are, in the strictest sense, non-photographic. Enlargement may use pure photography but generally it is simply a means of transferring an existing image to another medium. The statement that ".... any manipulation that uses light is photographic in nature....." does not stand up because dodging, burning and second exposures only modify the latent image and are therefore not photography in its truest sense ie. they do not create, they only adjust the density or tonal range of what has already been created. In any event there are many chemical processes which manipulate an image but do not involve light - eg toning, bleaching, intensifying, Colorvir.

But why, oh why does it matter?! If digital photography had been discovered before chemical photography, would we now be arguing that chemical photography was not "pure" photography?

To quote Barrie Thomas: "Why don't we behave as we always have and simply view the finished image and make our own assessment of its artistic merit regardless of origin?" We do not need P+ categories in exhibitions.

I am also interested in filming and in this discipline we have had many fundamental changes - from film to analogue video, and now digital video. The trend in post production work is clearly towards non-linear editing on computers, which includes manipulation. All these changes seem to have been welcomed with very little concern, even with open arms. And in the professional film world digital manipulation certainly does not preclude films from being considered for awards eg. "Titanic".

On another topic - the purpose of the Digital Group.

I agree that digital photographs should be accepted in all other groups and so the Digital Group has no real purpose from an end product point of view. The groups main purpose, in my view, therefore, is to concentrate on those areas that are of little interest to non-digital photographers. That is, keeping group members aware of, and reviewing, new hardware, software and associated techniques plus general interest accounts of members experiences in the digital arena. That is not to say that I'm not interested in seeing examples of members work, I am, but I don't believe that is the primary purpose of the Group.

Test Strip - Photoshop Plug-in

After reading Hemant Jariwala's article I downloaded the demo version of this plug-in but it doesn't do anything Photoshop can't do, in fact Image/Adjust/Variations is very similar, and it is rather expensive at \$149 (about £90) or \$129 if downloaded (£78).

Photoshop itself costs about £200 (Photoshop LE upgraded to 5.0, LE usually comes with a scanner), this plug-in therefore costs 39% to 45% of the original outlay and I'm not sure it justifies that. I have purchased several useful programs, for audio and video, from internet sources that cost around £25 to £30 which are probably more complex than Test Strip..

John Ainsworth ARPS

DIGIT

Membership of two groups sometimes brings surprising results. In DIGIT of the Digital Imaging Group an article by Sir George Pollock really made me think

His leading question 'What bothers people about DI is not that it is manipulation, but that it is manipulation by non-photographic means'. and this leads me to consider the ethics of making an audio/visual using entirely copies of photographs, sketches or cartoons made by another person, be they ancient or modern.

Of course there are often times when, to complete a study, one needs to copy something as a running part of a presentation, but to base it entirely on copies seems to me to be cheating. Of course this doesn't prevent one enjoying the result and I can recall some very funny cameos which I could see again with pleasure.

It is difficult to accept that the entire audio/visual is 'own work' when the skills of someone else is virtually the main base other than the fact that the A/V worker photographed (pinched) it. Naturally sometimes the copies are arranged with the artist or publisher, and sometimes done by joint effort; frequently acknowledgements are given, but 'Own Work' still does not seem to apply unless an entry is a joint one and an award, if appropriate, is given on that base.

Recently I was graded second place in a local competition by a photograph taken some years ago at the same time as I was shooting the same scene. I was taking a stereo shot and was using the 'paint with light' flash system. Unknown to me another chap was behind me using my work and taking the same picture, this was the winner. Actually it didn't bother one much, at my age I couldn't care less BUT.... makes one think. I wonder if A/V members have given much thought to this? Perhaps Sir George might give us his comments..

Ray Wallace Thompson
ARPS FPSA AIIPC

In the last edition of Digit, there was mention of the Copyright on photographs and I give below my experience of another copyright problem, this time with digital cameras and which may give members' food for thought.

At Jessops Photographic Show in March 1998, at the NEC, I purchased an Olympus 1400L Digital Camera with which, I must say, I am delighted.

My nearest Jessops involves approximately a 35-mite round trip and as it is situated in the middle of Oxford, I rarely am able to get there. However, a short while ago, I managed to fit a visit in and after completing my purchases asked them what it would cost me to upgrade my camera to the latest version. I was quoted their standard price for the new camera but was surprised to learn that they were unable to take my existing camera in part exchange. The salesman was very apologetic, saying that the Company would like to be able to take in used digital cameras but was unable to, not because of the camera or its type, but because of the software.

I was told that when I bought and used the camera, the software became licensed to me and as such was not transferable at the present time and until this problem was resolved the position could not change. When I asked what people did with their cameras, I was told that most people threw or gave them away.

I don't know the reason for this, but I suspect that somewhere, someone feels that they can receive additional funding for products already sold. I am not too concerned about this at the moment as I suspect the price that would have been offered would not have persuaded me to change. However the point remains that most purchasers are not aware of the position, which if it is correct, means that once they buy a camera, it cannot officially be sold with the software, which I understood to be all the software. That which is necessary to work the camera as well as the bundled third party programs. The latter, I can understand, but I find the former unacceptable.

I have written to Olympus asking for an authoritative response to confirm what is, after all, just comments from a salesman in a shop.

Nick Harris

The new DIGIT listserver

What is a listserver?

It is an easy way for members to raise issues and to publish information. Once a subscriber to the list a member will receive a copy of each and every email sent to the listserver. Whats more any email they send to the listserver will be automatically sent to all other subscribers.

If at any time there is a wish to leave then just send an unsubscribe email. The system is self regulating. Too many irrelevant or irritating emails and there will be no subscribers! Used properly it is a very efficient way to talk with the group. Together with the DIGIT web pages the listserver provides an effective communication system to complement DIGIT and the meetings.

See the back page for subscription details. The subscription confirmation email gives further instructions on how to use the system.

In addition to the DIGIT list there is a FOLIO list and an RPS list. The first is a new way to send your images to others for comment. The second is intended as a list for all RPS members. Substitute FOLIO or RPS for DIGIT in the subscribe message.

This is an experiment to assess the value and effectiveness of the system. Please give it a whirl and let us know what you think.

Bill Henley LRPS

Creating a Digital Panel in Photoshop

MENU

>New	:	Associate of the Royal Photographic Society.
>Preferences	:	to pass first time!
>Define Pattern	:	a few ideas floating around in my head - enough for a panel, I hope.
>Help	:	Distinction Workshop - I don't need that!
>Import	:	plenty of images to manipulate.
>Transform	:	images into a collection of Digital Art.
>Arrange	:	into a well presented panel.
>Adjustment Options	:	ask a few family and friends - change it all around.
>Print	:	the final panel.
>Export	:	to the RPS in Bath.
>Fill	:	The Octagon with lots of ARPS's, FRPS's and wanna be's!
>Preview	:	my panel!
>Can't Undo	:	too late now.
>Cut	:	they hated it - I failed.
>Gamut Warning	:	sadness, disappointment, annoyance, frustration, determination.
>New View	:	start again, but I do need some help - who can I ask?.
>Magic Wand	:	Barrie Thomas for advice and guidance.
>Modify	:	a few changes here.
>New	:	a new picture there
>Dodge >Sharpen >Crop >Burn >Erase >Copy >Inverse >Cut >Move >Feather >Rotate >Paste >Save	:	
>Print	:	I'm happy with that, are you happy with that?
>Export	:	to the RPS in Bath.
>Zoom In	:	my panel - here we go again.
>Hide Options	:	nowhere to hide - I'm so nervous - convinced I've failed.
>Mode	:	I think they like it?.....YES, I've got it!!!!

>Save As : **John Gray ARPS**
john.gray@dial.pipex.com
(see the colour pages)

The Digital Folio

The Digital Disk Folio is still in existence thanks to Ray Grace who has kindly agreed to run it.

He will be contacting existing members of the group and would be very pleased to hear from others who would like to participate.

The contact details are:

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8 Kirby Road, Corsham,
Wilts, SN13 9DS

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Top Gull



Planning

David Christie ARPS



Tom Bowett FRPS

The Digital Imaging Group consists of members of the Royal Photographic Society who have elected to pay an extra subscription to receive the group's journal DIGIT and to work together via meetings and circulated portfolios to promote digital imaging. Submissions for inclusion in DIGIT are very welcome. Please note that the editor will assume that all persons submitting material have ensured that they own the full copyright of all the images and text submitted, and that any legal infringements will be the responsibility of the submitter. Copyright of all the material published is reserved in all countries on behalf of the RPS and the authors. Any views expressed are not necessarily those of the Royal Photographic Society nor of the Digital Imaging Group. Web address: <http://www.digit.org.uk>

The committee:

Chairman: Mr Barrie Thomas FBIPP FRPS
Vice Chairman: Dr Eddy Sethna FRPS
Treasurer: Mr Geoffrey Carver LRPS
Secretary: Mrs Glenys Taylor ARPS
Editor DIGIT: Mr Bill Henley LRPS
Regional co-ordinator: Mr Bob Rowe ARPS
Folio secretary: Mr Ray Grace LRPS

Mr John Long ARPS
Dr Barry Senior ARPS
Mr David Coombes ARPS



Digital Imaging Group

To join the **DIGIT** emailing list just send an email to :

requests@lists.wycliffecollege.com

with the message:

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**Lecture by the
Chairman of the
Digital Imaging Group**

**Barrie Thomas
FRPS FBIPP MFIAP**

**Viewing of the Digital
Imaging Exhibition**

**Saturday 3rd July 1999
3pm**

**in the Sunley Theatre
The Octagon, Bath**

**Tickets: £3.00 members
£5.50 non members
Available at the door**

Space may be limited

**National
Digital Imaging Day**

**on Sunday
10th October 1999
at the Benn Hall in Rugby**

**A one day event in this
spacious venue with
trade stands
and demonstrations**

**A spectacular day which
you must book in your
diary now!**

More details to follow.

**Subscribe to the Listserv
and
Watch the web pages!**

<p>Lecture by the Chairman of the Digital Imaging Group</p> <p>Barrie Thomas FRPS FBIPP MFIAP</p> <p>Viewing of the Digital Imaging Exhibition</p> <p>Saturday 3rd July 1999 3pm</p> <p>in the Sunley Theatre The Octagon, Bath</p> <p>Tickets: £3.00 members £5.50 non members Available at the door</p> <p>Space may be limited</p>	<p>National Digital Imaging Day</p> <p>on Sunday 10th October 1999 at the Benn Hall in Rugby</p> <p>A one day event in this spacious venue with trade stands and demonstrations</p> <p>A spectacular day which you must book in your diary now!</p> <p>More details to follow.</p> <p>Subscribe to the Listserv and Watch the web pages!</p>	<p>Contact details:</p> <p>Barrie Thomas FBIPP FRPS 85 Beech Gardens Rainford WA11 8EB</p> <p>01744 883541</p> <p>barrie@fotografx.demon.co.uk</p> <p>Glenys Taylor ARPS 10 Shoreditch Road Taunton Somerset TA1 3BU</p> <p>01823 323986 (tel & fax) 01823 282516</p> <p>106503,647@compuserve.com</p> <p>Bill Henley LRPS Old Manse Middleyard King's Stanley Stonehouse Gloucestershire GL10 3QD</p> <p>01453 825068</p> <p>weh@wycliffe.co.uk</p> <p>Bob Rowe ARPS 2 Fleming Drive Carlton Nottingham NG4 1FG</p> <p>0115 940 0733</p> <p>bob.rowe@btinternet.com</p>
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