

Issue 127

# Digital SLR Photography

## LANDSCAPE MASTERCLASS

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# 40<sup>+</sup>

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WELCOME TO THE JUNE 2017 issue of *Digital SLR Photography*. We're a nation of landscape lovers and it's obvious why – our country is blessed with lovely landscapes! Whether you're in the remotest areas of Scotland, Wales or Cornwall, or in the heart of England, you're never too far away from stunning scenery to photograph. Whether it's rolling countryside or rugged coastlines, everyone has their favourite types and often a particular hotspot they'll return to season after season and year after year. For regular contributor and landscape professional Mark Bauer, Dorset represents the pinnacle of UK locations and the focus of his photo guide book, *Photographing Dorset*. Find out what makes Dorset such a resource for great photography in our major interview starting on page 92. As always, we've packed as wide a range of techniques, subjects and photo inspiration into the issue as possible. From using filters (page 32) to fluffy bunny photography (page 40) to portrait basics (page 62), there is plenty to keep you busy this month. We hope you'll take on board our expert advice and make this the month to take your photography and editing skills to the next level. Enjoy the latest issue, create some amazing images and see you next month. All the best!

*Daniel Lezano* Editor



## Join a growing community

OVER 650,000 FOLLOWERS AND GROWING! Get online and interact with the experts at *Digital SLR Photography*. You can follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/digitalslrphoto](http://facebook.com/digitalslrphoto)), tweet us on Twitter (@digitalslrphoto), join us on Flickr ([flickr.com/groups/digitalslrphoto](http://flickr.com/groups/digitalslrphoto)) or email us ([enquiries@dslrphotomag.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@dslrphotomag.co.uk)) to keep up to date with all that's going on in photography.



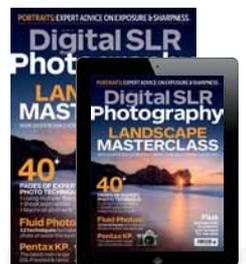
## ON THIS MONTH'S COVER...

We may only be a small nation but we are blessed with landscape locations that are the envy of the world. In our main interview (p92), landscape pro Mark Bauer reveals why Dorset is his favourite region in the UK. Our cover image by Mark shows Durdle Door, with the rising sun framed within its arch.



## SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

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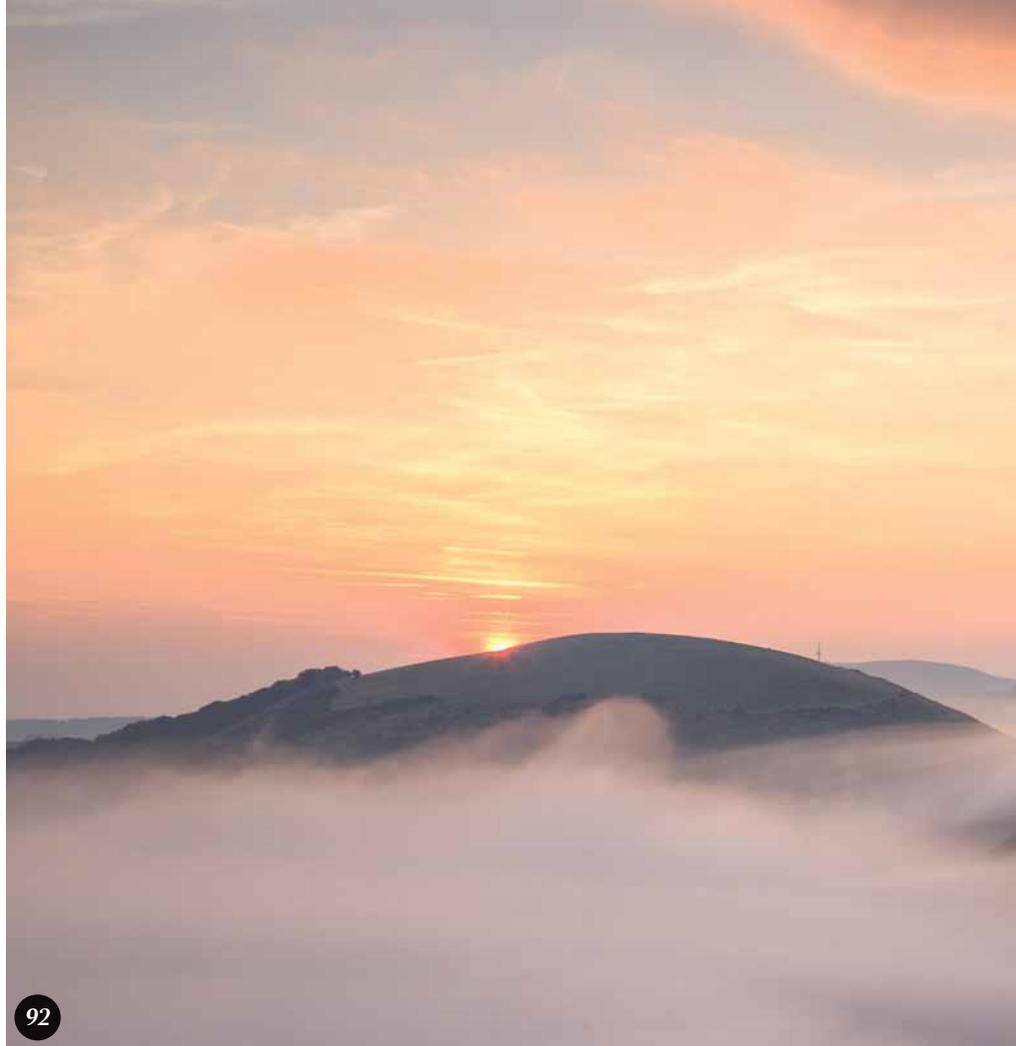
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## CONTRIBUTING THIS MONTH:



### **Daniel Lezano**

With over 30 years' experience as an enthusiast SLR photographer and 20 years on photo magazines, editor Lezano is as passionate as ever about photography, in particular portraits.



### **Caroline Schmidt**

With extensive experience as a magazine journalist, contributing editor Caroline is passionate about photography and delivering an inspiring magazine each month.



### **Jordan Butters**

With a finger on the pulse of all things photography, Jordan's our social media master, features guru and a talented pro photographer. [jordanbutters.co.uk](http://jordanbutters.co.uk)



### **Ross Hoddinott OUTDOOR**

He's not only an award-winning nature photographer, a leading expert in landscape and wildlife photography, he's a top tutor, too. [rosshoddinott.co.uk](http://rosshoddinott.co.uk)



### **Mark Bauer LANDSCAPES**

One of the UK's leading landscape photographers and a celebrated author, Mark enjoys photographing the south west of England. [markbauerphotography.com](http://markbauerphotography.com)



### **Ben Hall WILDLIFE**

A renowned wildlife photographer, author and tutor, Ben applies his expert knowledge to help improve your wildlife photography skills. [benhallphoto.com](http://benhallphoto.com)



### **Helen Dixon LANDSCAPES**

Helen is living the dream, having given up a full-time job to live in Cornwall and become a professional landscape photographer. [helendixonphotography.co.uk](http://helendixonphotography.co.uk)



### **Lee Frost LANDSCAPES**

A long-standing regular contributor, Lee is a fountain of knowledge when it comes to shooting landscapes and delivering expert tutorials. [leafrost.co.uk](http://leafrost.co.uk)



### **Paul Ward PORTRAITS**

A pro photographer, Paul is an expert on lighting. He specialises in studio and location portraits, as well as commercial photography. [paulwardphotography.com](http://paulwardphotography.com)



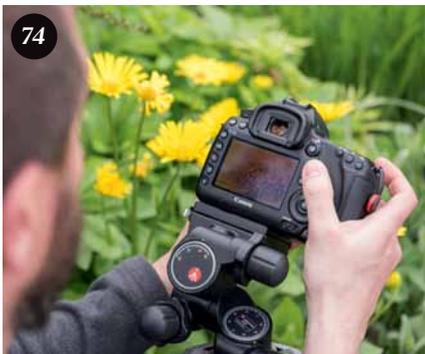
### **Richard Hopkins TESTS**

With over 30 years' experience testing cameras on photography magazines, Richard's one of the UK's leading technical experts on photo kit, from studioflash to lenses.



### **James Abbott PORTRAITS**

James is an award-winning editorial, advertising and commercial photographer, specialising in portrait and landscape photography. [jamesaphoto.co.uk](http://jamesaphoto.co.uk)



## Gear: Tested & Rated

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Editor Lezano tries out a new Tamron telephoto zoom, and we put a selection of photo goodies to the test



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# Portfolio

## *Rocks In Peace*

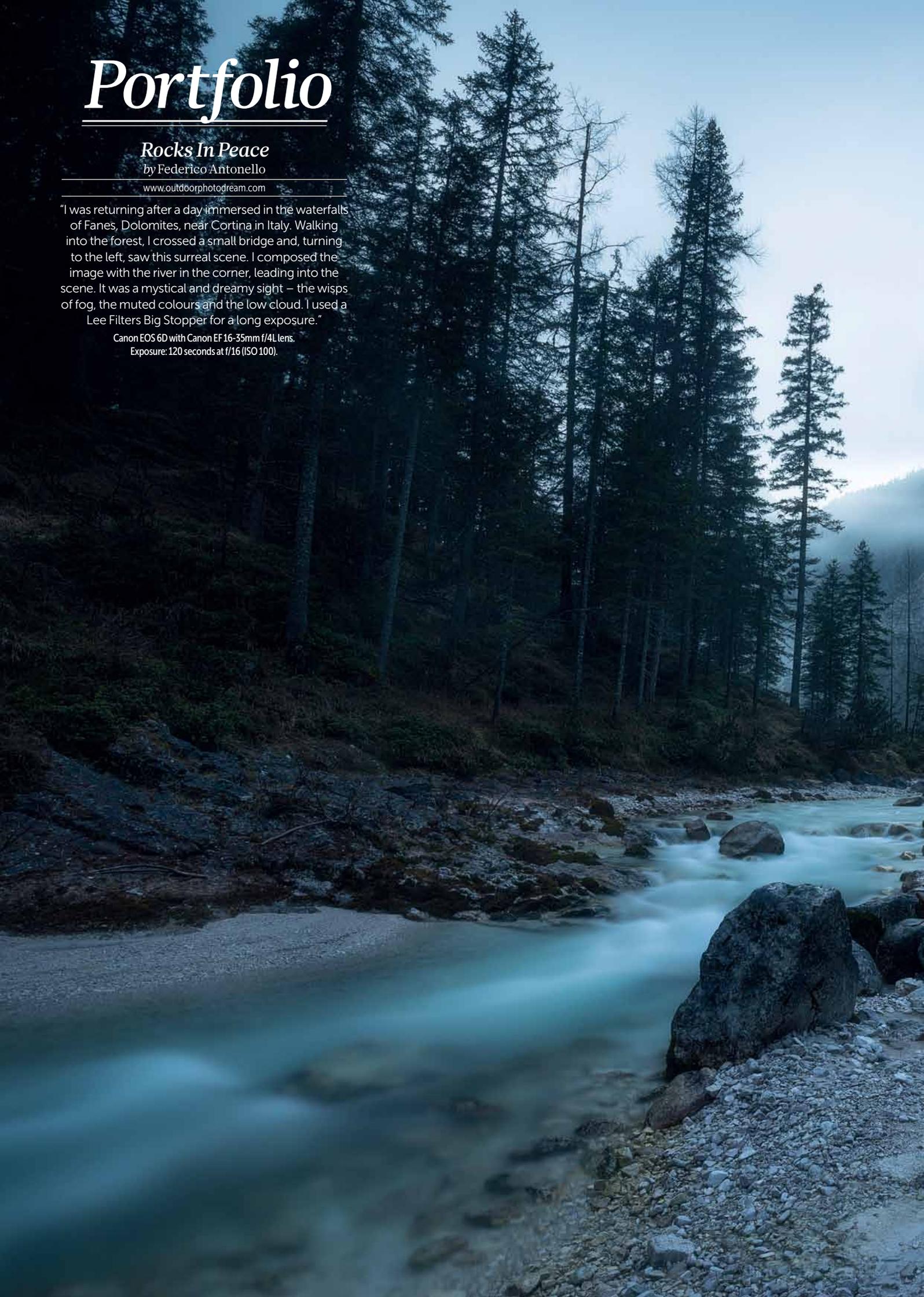
by Federico Antonello

[www.outdoorphotodream.com](http://www.outdoorphotodream.com)

"I was returning after a day immersed in the waterfalls of Fanes, Dolomites, near Cortina in Italy. Walking into the forest, I crossed a small bridge and, turning to the left, saw this surreal scene. I composed the image with the river in the corner, leading into the scene. It was a mystical and dreamy sight – the wisps of fog, the muted colours and the low cloud. I used a Lee Filters Big Stopper for a long exposure."

Canon EOS 6D with Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L lens.

Exposure: 120 seconds at f/16 (ISO 100).









### ***The Wild Grapes*** by Ivan Ustinov

[500px.com/ivan\\_warhammer](http://500px.com/ivan_warhammer)

(Above) "We shot this portrait at the end of summer. On this day, I remember that the sun was diffused by light cloud, which helped greatly as the light was soft and hard shadows were non-existent. The backdrop was a wall of vibrant green grapevines – I chose this as I know it would make for a great contrast with the model's red hair and freckles."

Canon EOS 5D Mk II with Helios 40-2 85mm f/1.5 lens. Exposure: 1/200sec at f/2 (ISO 100).

### ***Lidia Monochrome*** by Ivan Ustinov

(Centre right) "This classical portrait of my model, Lidia, was taken in the controlled environment of a photography studio. I used a simple one-light beauty set-up to create this emotional image, with a flash in a softbox placed above Lidia's head, and a reflector from below to fill the shadows. The image was converted into black & white in Photoshop."

Canon EOS 5D Mk III with Canon EF 50mm f/1.2L lens. Exposure: 1/160sec at f/2.8 (ISO 50).



### ***The Sight Of Lidia*** by Ivan Ustinov

(Bottom right) "This particular image was shot out on a balcony at the beginning of August using only natural light. Although it was a sunny day, I positioned Lidia in open shade out on the balcony, so as to avoid harsh shadows and highlights. I love the emotion in her eyes. I enhanced the image in Photoshop by retouching and adding a subtle texture."

Canon EOS 5D Mk III with Canon EF 135 mm f/2L lens. Exposure: 1/400sec at f/2.8 (ISO 400).

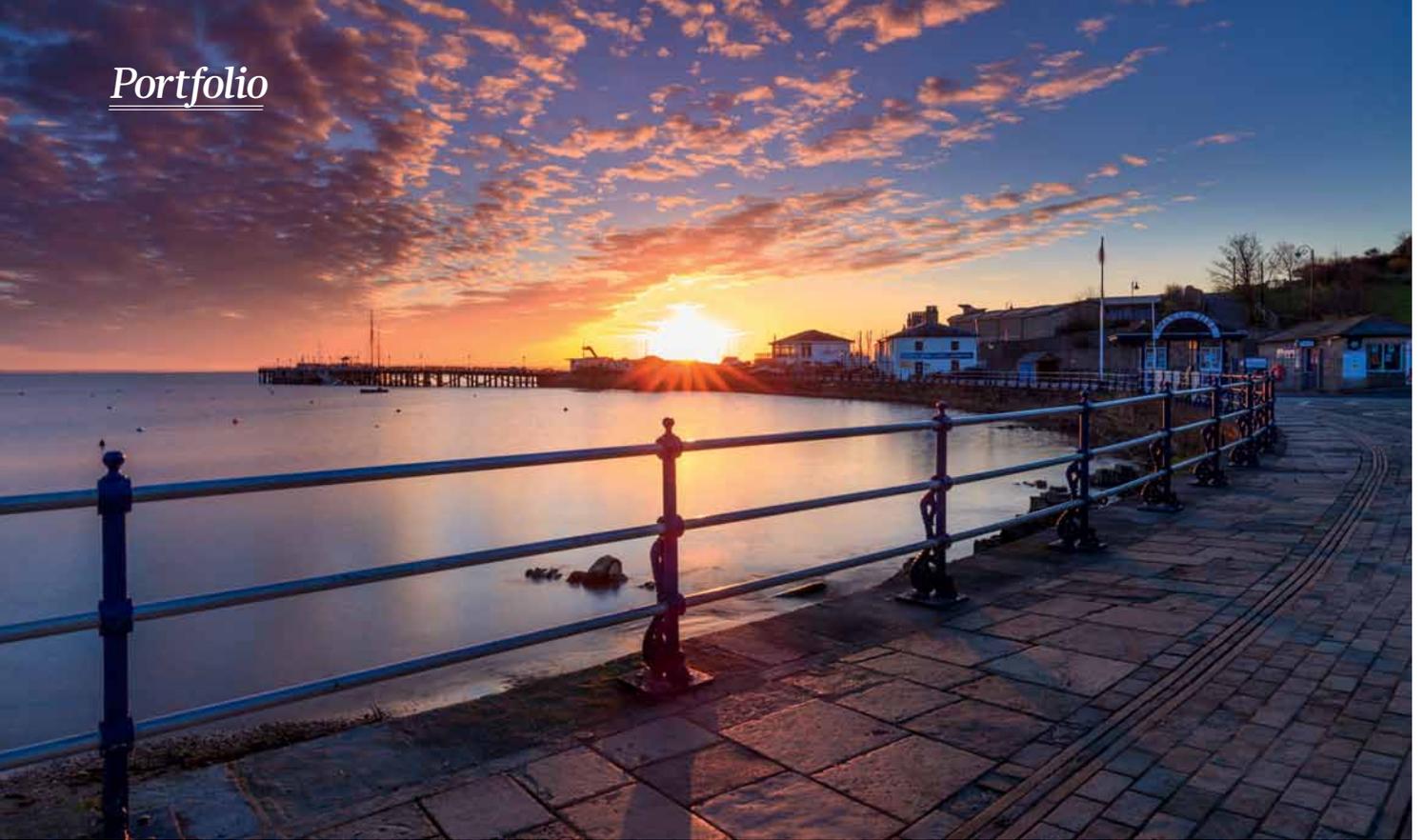


### ***The Red Carpet*** by Mevludin Sejmenovic

[www.mevludinsejmenovic.com](http://www.mevludinsejmenovic.com)

(Left) "Taken during a walk through Iliđža alley in Sarajevo. Walking along the path covered with leaves reminded me of a red carpet, while the sound of the leaves underfoot made me think of an audience on either side. In processing I illustrated this symbolism by creatively adjusting the colours."

Nikon D610 with Nikkor AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8G ED lens. Exposure: 1/20sec at f/11 (ISO 200).



## *Towards Swanage Pier* by Andrew Ray

[www.andrewrayphotography.com](http://www.andrewrayphotography.com)

(Above) "The first light of day, as captured from Swanage promenade on Dorset's beautiful Jurassic Coast. Swanage's restored Victorian seaside pier can be seen in the distance. A Lee Filters 0.9ND hard grad was used to balance the scene, while a 1.2ND filter used to extend the exposure."

Canon EOS 5D Mark II with EF 16-35mm f/4L IS lens. Exposure: Two seconds at f/13 (ISO 50).

## *Misty Sunrise* by Andrew Ray

(Right) "The inky silhouette of trees on the northern slopes of Mogshade Hill, in the New Forest National Park. This was captured during sunrise on a misty morning in mid-April, with the low-lying mist appearing to create layers in the landscape. A Lee Filters 0.6ND hard grad was used to hold back the exposure on the sky."

Canon EOS 5D Mark II with EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM lens. Exposure: 1/10sec at f/13 (ISO 100).



## *Portland Lighthouse* by Andrew Ray

(Below right) "Another fantastic Dorset coastal location – this is Portland Bill lighthouse on the Isle of Portland. This image was captured approximately 40 minutes after sunset in late April, using a long exposure to blur the movement in the water. A Lee Filters 0.9ND hard-edged grad filter balances the land and sky – no ND filter was needed this time."

Canon EOS 5D Mark II with EF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM lens. Exposure: 30 seconds at f/11 (ISO 100).

## *Towards The Clavell Tower* by Andrew Ray

(Opposite) "The Clavell Tower on Dorset's Jurassic Coast, captured from Kimmeridge Bay. A slow shutter speed was utilised to blur the movement of the water around the foreground rocks. A B+W polarising filter helped to control the reflections in the water, while a Lee 0.6ND grad held back the sky and a Lee 1.2ND filter drew out the exposure."

Canon EOS 5D Mark II with EF 16-35mm f/4L IS USM lens. Exposure: One second at f/13 (ISO 100).



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### *Place – Saint – Henri* by Sebastian Schneider

[500px.com/s-w-s](http://500px.com/s-w-s)

(Above) "This image is part of a series of underground images I've taken. To avoid the crowd I was out early on a Sunday morning. This shot still required some waiting around, as it was my last stop of the day and the metro was starting to get busy. But this gave me time to try different compositions."

Nikon D3300 with Nikkor AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 lens. Exposure: 1/60sec at f/8 (ISO 400).

### *Kontrollturm* by Sebastian Schneider

(Centre right) "A long exposure of the 48-storey La Tour de la Bourse in Montreal, Quebec. I'd had a lot of encounters with security guards on previous attempts, so I tried my luck on a Sunday. It worked, and I had all the time needed for several long exposures of this impressive building. I used a ten-stop ND filter and a tripod and processed the shot in Lightroom."

Nikon D3300 with Nikkor AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6. Exposure: 61 seconds at f/18 (ISO 100).



### *Evobot* by Sebastian Schneider

(Bottom right) "I discovered this futuristic apartment while walking around Montreal. Trees obscured much of the building's front, but after zooming in, I was happy with the composition. The image was slightly overexposed so didn't receive much attention at first, but I rediscovered it months later. After some editing it became one of my favourites."

Nikon D3300 with AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 lens. Exposure: 30 seconds at f/29 (ISO 100).



### *The Definition Of Scale* by Roman Konigshofer

[roman.koenigshofer.net](http://roman.koenigshofer.net)

(Left) "On a climbing adventure in Nepal, we did the 5,368m Cho La Pass and arrived exhausted in a little village called Dzonglha. It's an amazing place to stare at the most beautiful mountain of all: Ama Dablam. It's so huge it's hard to comprehend, so I asked my girlfriend to quickly stand in the frame for a sense of scale before the light disappeared."

Sony A7R II with Sony FE 70-200mm f/4 lens. Exposure: 1/640sec at f/8 (ISO 200).

# Snapshots

YOUR MONTHLY PHOTO DIGEST

PHOTO  
SURVEY

# BRITAIN'S BEST VIEWS

DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE VIEW? FIND OUT WHICH VISTAS PROVED MOST POPULAR AS BRITS VOTED FOR THEIR TOP UK LANDSCAPE IN A NEW SURVEY

N.MRTGH/SHUTTERSTOCK



**T**HERE'S NO DISPUTING that we enjoy some truly fantastic landscape views here in the UK. In fact, in terms of diversity, there's not many other parts of the world that can touch what we have in such a reasonably confined area. The United Kingdom has long been attracting landscape photographers from around the world to its shores in search of impressive imagery. But have you ever considered which scene is your all-time favourite UK landscape?

To mark the launch of the Samsung Galaxy S8 smartphone, Samsung has conducted a survey of the British people to see which of our great nation's views ranked highest amongst its occupants. It was a hotly-debated topic, with vistas from dramatic coastlines to mountain peaks, quaint chocolate-box country villages and inner-city sights all being put forward.

When the votes were counted, it was the Snowdonia mountain range in north Wales that came out top of the polls – more specifically, those surveyed voted for the stunning view of Llyn Llydaw lake from the summit of Snowdon itself as the best view in the UK. It's not one that can be enjoyed by the less mobile amongst us, or those with a fear of heights, with the summit itself being some 1,085m (3,560ft) above sea level!

The top picks weren't all snowy peaks and mountain ranges – 42% of the 2,500 Brits polled thought that the most quintessential ingredient for a classic British view was rolling countryside, followed by rugged coastlines (21%), country villages (20%), historic landmarks (15%) and churches, cathedrals and architecture (15%).

Of the top ten views, three were in Scotland, including the view of Three Sisters mountains in Glencoe Valley, which came in second place, the view from Dores beach at Loch Ness in sixth place and the view from Conic Hill overlooking the beautiful Loch Lomond in Dunbartonshire in tenth place. Top English locations included Stonehenge, St Ives Bay in Cornwall, Cheddar Gorge in Somerset and Buttermere in the Lake District. It wasn't all rural scenics, however with the view of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament



**Clockwise from above:** Samsung constructed a seven metre replica of the new phone to frame some of the views; the lone tree on Buttermere; Westminster Bridge was one of the few inner-city views; the instantly-recognisable Stonehenge came third; the top pick – the view from the top of Snowdon, Wales.

from Westminster Bridge in central London coming in eighth place.

So what does all of this have to do with photography? Well, as much as 'proper' camera-toting photographers might not agree with the idea, smartphones with their increasingly impressive cameras, sensors and processing ability have attracted a whole new generation of image aficionados towards landscape photography, many of which get the photography bug, and go on to learn how to use a digital SLR or mirrorless model. In fact, the survey revealed that, of the images snapped on smartphones and uploaded to social media, 42% were of a cracking view or vista, 10% were of friends and family, 6% were food and drink and, perhaps surprisingly, just 5% were a dreaded selfie. It just goes to show that even the non-photographers amongst us are landscape lovers here in the UK!

To celebrate its findings, Samsung has now commissioned Landscape Photographer of the Year Matthew Cattell, who we interviewed back in February's issue (*Digital SLR Photography*, Issue 123), to shoot a series of images of the top voted locations using only a new Samsung Galaxy S8. Samsung is also touring some of the top views with a huge seven-metre wide scale model of the new phone and framing the landscape within, which could make for some interesting compositions!



DANIEL KAY/SHUTTERSTOCK

## THE 20 GREATEST BRITISH VIEWS

- 1) Snowdonia, Wales – Llyn Llydaw from Snowdon summit
- 2) Three Sisters mountains – Glencoe Valley, Scotland
- 3) Stonehenge – Wiltshire, England
- 4) St Ives Bay – Cornwall, England
- 5) Cheddar Gorge – Somerset, England
- 6) Loch Ness, Scotland – from Dores, Highland, Scotland
- 7) Buttermere – Lake District, England
- 8) Parliament & Big Ben – from Westminster Bridge, London, England
- 9) Giant's Causeway – County Antrim, Northern Ireland
- 10) Loch Lomond – from Conic Hill, Dunbartonshire, Scotland
- 11) Ben Nevis – Lochaber, Scotland
- 12) Edinburgh – from Arthur's Seat, Scotland
- 13) Peak District – from Stanage Edge, Derbyshire, England
- 14) Brecon Beacons – from the summit, Wales
- 15) Durdle Door – Dorset, England
- 16) Spires of Oxford – Oxfordshire, England
- 17) Bamburgh Castle – Bamburgh, Northumberland, England
- 18) Seven Sisters – Sussex, England
- 19) Bournemouth pier & beach – Hampshire, England
- 20) Kings College – from the River Cam, Cambridge, England

MATTHEW CATELL/SAMSUNG GALAXY S8





MATTHEW CASTELL/SAMSUNG GALAXY S8

# Shooting for the stars

NASA'S INCREDIBLE ONE-BILLION DOLLAR SPACE PROBE BEAMS BACK FULL-SIZE RAW FILES FROM JUPITER THAT YOU CAN EDIT FOR YOURSELF – FOR FREE!

**H**OW FAR WOULD you go for a great image? Whatever your answer, it's safe to say that NASA's Juno probe has all terrestrial efforts beaten at this point. Launched in August 2011 from Cape Canaveral in Florida, and costing a staggering USD\$1 billion to build, Juno has travelled some 415-million miles over the past five years and has finally started beaming back images of Jupiter's poles – the first of their kind ever recorded. The probe orbits the great gas giant in an arc formation once every two months, approximately.

A closer orbit would expose Juno to excessive radiation and possibly damage the craft's sensitive equipment. Juno boasts a unique wide-angle camera, called JunoCam, designed to capture a unique polar perspective of the largest planet in our solar system. The camera's inclusion on the craft is to encourage public participation and share the excitement of space exploration.

What's more, images captured by the probe are beamed back to Earth in black & white Raw format, and are freely available for anyone to download, edit and share on NASA's dedicated Juno website. In fact, NASA encourages cropping, colour enhancing and collating in the name of creativity. NASA is also calling for amateur astronomers to share their telescopic images of Jupiter taken from Earth too as they could be used to shape the future of the Juno mission.

STEVE HARTMAN

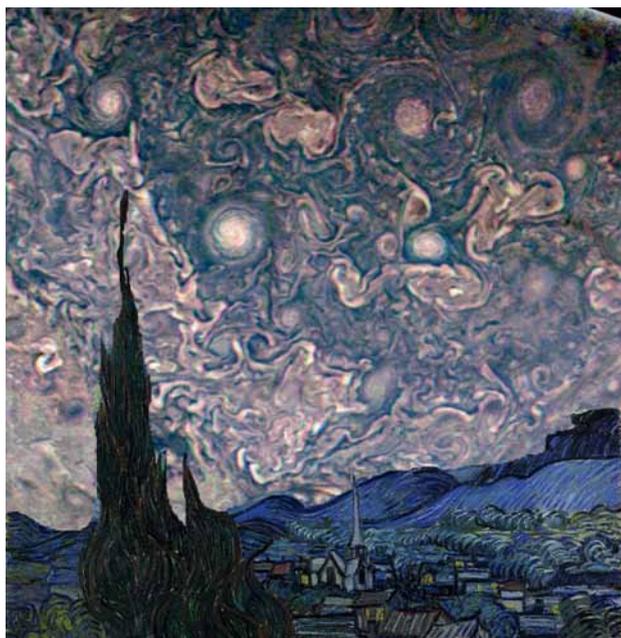


NASA/SWIRI/NSSS



**Above:** This edited image contains a CGI renderings of the craft itself. **Left:** One of the unedited Raw files that's recently been beamed 415-million miles back to Earth.

Since the craft began sending back the Raw files, amateur astronomers and enthusiast photographers around the world have edited, coloured and shared their interpretations of the images. The pictures show the swirling clouds of gas, violent storms and curious auroras that make up the planet's atmosphere. There are even some light-hearted edits cropping up, showing the planet as part of a Leonardo Da Vinci painting, or featuring the Millennium Falcon! If you fancy having a go at editing the Raw files for yourself, you can download them for free at [http://bit.do/DSLR\\_juno](http://bit.do/DSLR_juno).



AMELIA CAROLINA SPARAVIGNA



NASA/SWIRI/NSSS/SHAWN HANDRAN



MATT ROSE



GERMARIO ROBLES

**BLAST OFF!**  
One of the last images of Juno  
as it blasted off from Earth on  
its 415-million mile journey.



NASA/BILL INGALLS



NASA/JPL-CALTECH/SWRI/MSSS/ROMAN TACHENKO



SYNTHETRIX



ARDEUR



2ND PLACE SCOTTISH WILDLIFE BEHAVIOUR: IAIN LEACH

© IAIN LEACH / SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2016

## SCOTTISH PRIDE

WINNING IMAGES FROM SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD HIGHLIGHT PLENTY OF PHOTO POTENTIAL UP NORTH

**I**F YOU'VE EVER ventured north with your camera then this won't come as a revelation, but Scotland boasts some truly incredible opportunities for amazing images. Whether you've set out to capture rugged terrain, coastal views, vast mountain ranges or even some exciting wildlife, Scotland can offer it all, and plenty more.

Why are we telling you this? Well because the winners of the 2016 Scottish Nature Photography Awards have been announced, and we've got the winning and commended images to share with you! The SNPA is now in its seventh year, and attracts entries from amateur and professional photographers alike from all over the world (as long as the images were taken in Scotland!). Photographers vie for accolades across ten categories, as well as a prestigious award for overall Scottish Nature Photographer of the Year.

This year's winner was chosen by the judges as Gordon Rae, for his image 'Undercover Osprey', which also topped the Scottish Wildlife Portrait category. Gordon's image shows a juvenile Osprey in a lake in the Highlands. Gordon commented: "My winning image came by chance one morning when the light was in my favour really early on. This juvenile bird returning to the Highlands for the first time was having a real problem lifting clear of the water with such a huge fish and had sat back down to regain his composure. I had taken images in the past almost like this but never just quite right, so to find this one in the camera, well you can just imagine the smile on my face."

Gordon's fantastic image was in good company, with the roster of winning shots forming a formidable collection, and one that paints a wonderful picture of outdoor photography in Scotland. The winning images will now go on a tour of Scotland, starting in July. They'll also form a photo book alongside the shortlisted entries, which is due to be published in the summer. For more information on the award, visit the SNPA website at: [www.scottishnaturephotographyawards.com](http://www.scottishnaturephotographyawards.com)

Feeling inspired, we'll leave you with a selection of our favourites from this year's SNPA while we plan a road trip north of the border!



1ST PLACE ENVIRONMENTAL: ALAN JOHNSTONE

© ALAN JOHNSTONE / SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2016



1ST PLACE SEA & COAST: STEPHEN CROSSAN

© STEPHEN CROSSAN / SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2016



**1ST PLACE SCOTTISH LANDSCAPE: PAUL WEBSTER**

© PAUL WEBSTER / SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2016



**3RD PLACE URBAN GREENSPACE: JONATHAN CRUICKSHANK**

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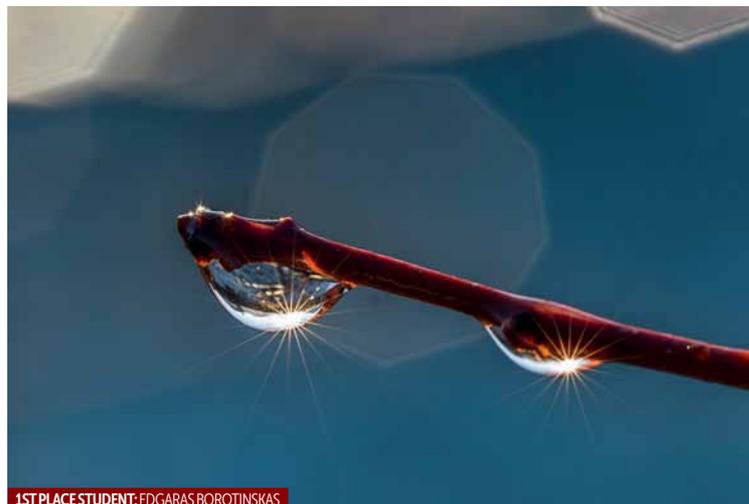
**2ND PLACE STUDENT: MEGAN-BRIDGET MAHER-MCCRISTAL**

© MEGAN-BRIDGET MAHER-MCCRISTAL / SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2016



**SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR: GORDON RAE**

© GORDON RAE / SCOTTISH NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2016



**1ST PLACE STUDENT: EDGARAS BOROTINSKAS**

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## Evening Descends

By **Maciek Gornisiewicz**

[flic.kr/ps/HGBLR](https://www.flickr.com/photos/HGBLR/)

This colourful sunset caught our eye this month, with the dark, jagged rocks contrasting with the calm and vibrant reflections in the water. The scene was expertly captured by Maciek on the Fleurieu Peninsula in South Australia. Using a Lee Filters four-stop ND soft grad and a NISI polarising filter, Maciek blended two exposures to achieve the final result – one exposure was taken for the overall scene, and a second to expose the shadow detail in the foreground rocks. Lovely image Maciek, and great technique in tricky conditions!

Canon EOS 5D MkIV with EF 16-35mm f/4L  
Exposure: Four seconds at f/11 (ISO 200)

## WHAT WE'VE BEEN WATCHING

LOOKING FOR VISUAL INSPIRATION? HERE'S WHAT THE *DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY* TEAM HAS BEEN WATCHING THIS MONTH...



### ▶ HOW TO SHOOT PORTRAITS OUTSIDE OF YOUR CULTURE

By **Sean Tucker**

Photographer and vlogger Sean Tucker takes an enviable trip to the beautiful Namibia to capture portraits of the Himba People, whilst sharing his expert knowledge along the way. Not only do you get an insight into Sean's journey, as well as the gear he uses, but most usefully he also shares his advice on how to connect with subjects outside of your own culture in order to get the best possible results. Using a combination of natural light and strobes, Sean's portraits are intimate and beautifully executed. [http://bit.do/DSLR\\_1271](http://bit.do/DSLR_1271)



### ▶ BLENDING MODES EXPLAINED

By **Photoshop Training Channel**

It's not the most rock-and-roll subject in photography, but this informational video on understanding Photoshop's different blend modes is probably the most useful and straightforward explanation that we've seen so far of what can be a confusing topic. If you don't know your Overlay from your Soft Light, or the difference between Multiply and Screen and how they can be used when editing your images, then we'd recommend sitting down for a few minutes and taking notes. You never know, you might just learn something new today... [http://bit.do/DSLR\\_1272](http://bit.do/DSLR_1272)



### ▶ HOW TO WIN PHOTOGRAPHY CONTESTS WITH THE 'POP' PRINCIPLE

By **COOPH**

Professional action sports photographer and two-time Red Bull Illume winner Lorenz Holder teams up with COOPH to bring you the 'POP' principle to help your chances of winning a big photography competition for yourself. The premise is simple – Plan, Organise and Position. Holder explains the method behind how he approached his winning shot from the 2016 Red Bull Illume contest and shares valuable advice on how you can replicate his success, no matter what subject or genre you prefer to shoot. [http://bit.do/DSLR\\_1273](http://bit.do/DSLR_1273)



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Image editing reimaged...



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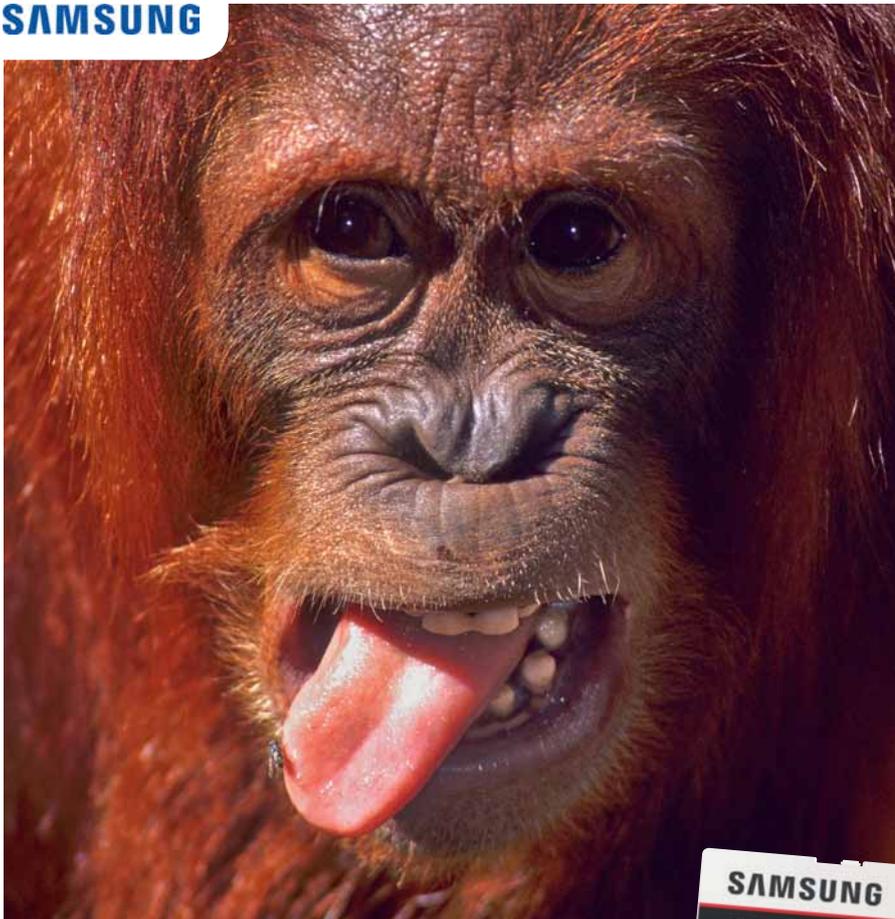
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**CLIPS** **Clips**

Price: Free / Platform: iOS

When Apple releases a new photo/video-based app, it's usually worth checking out. Clips is a photo, video and audio effects editor that makes it easy to combine all three elements into video clips that you can save, send to friends, or upload to social media. In fact, it makes somewhat complex editing tasks, which a few years ago required some unique skills, a total doddle! As you'd expect from Apple, the user-interface is slick and easy to get to grips with, and you can choose all manner of filters, stickers and effects to apply. One of the most intriguing features is user voice recognition, which uses spoken word to fill out captions, speech bubbles and titles. It works reasonably well if you speak clearly, but does occasionally get things wrong, which can be amusing and sometimes frustrating. The app's not much use for what we'd call 'proper' photography, but when it comes to Snapchatting, Instagram and Facebook Stories and WhatsApp Statuses, these short, fun videos and slideshows seem to be gaining momentum in the weird and wacky newfangled world of social media.

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### Quick Edit

#### ONE FINGER ACTION

We love shortcuts when it comes to image editing – anything that speeds up processing and gets you away from the computer and back behind your camera can only be a good thing, right? Here's a nice trick for Lightroom users – when using the Adjustment Brush, Spot Removal or Red Eye Correction tools, did you know that you can adjust the brush size and feather with a single finger on your mouse? If you're using a mouse with a centre scroll wheel simply roll it back and forth when using any of these tools to quickly adjust the brush or tool Size. If you want to change the Feather of the tool, just hold down the Shift key and repeat. For Apple users using a Magic Mouse (with no scroll wheel), simply trace your finger left, right, up or down to adjust the Size in the same way, or hold Shift, as above, to adjust the Feather. You're welcome!





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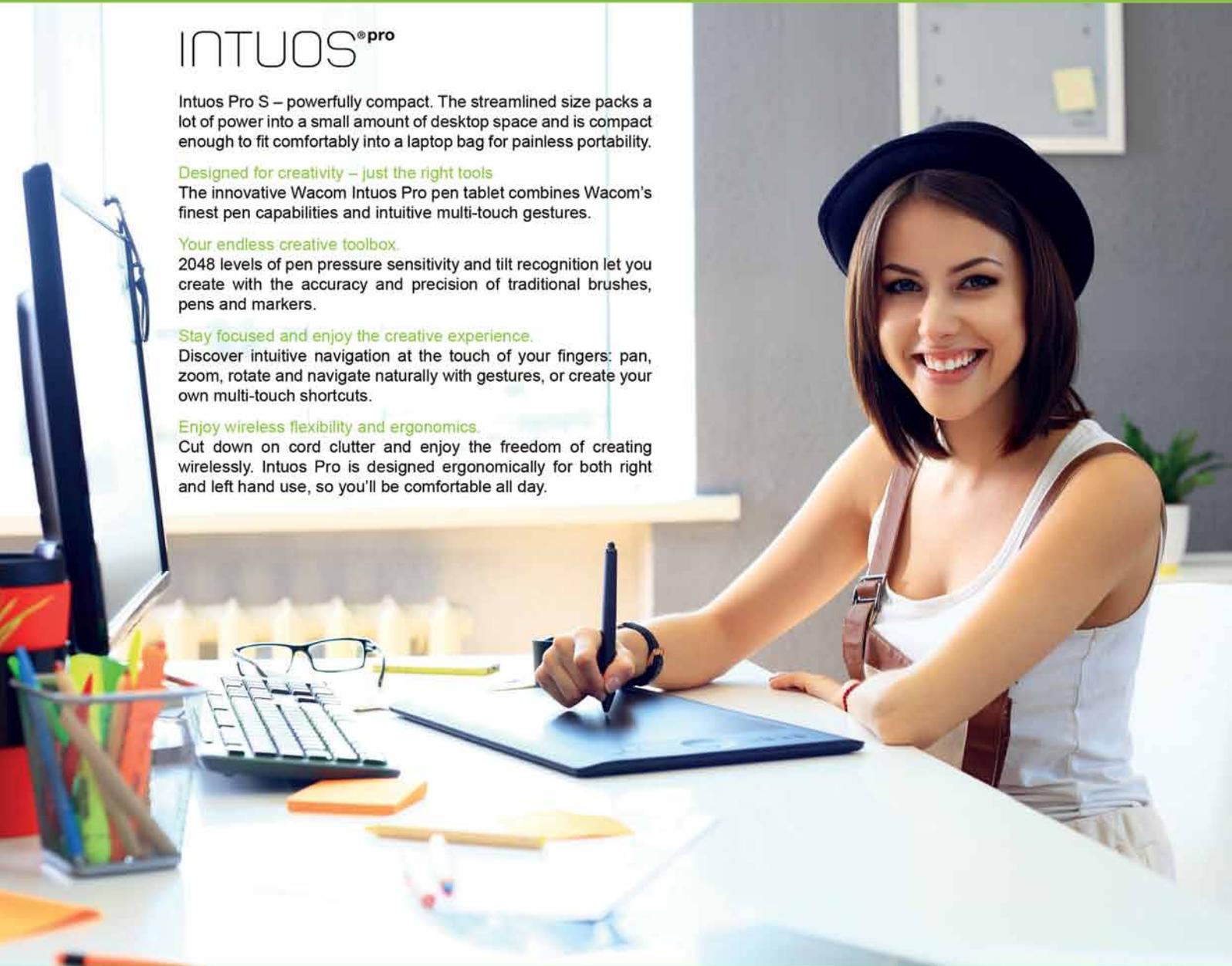
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**AWARD  
RESULTS**

**3RD PLACE: MARCIO CABRAL – CERRADO SUNSET**  
MARCIO CABRAL/IGPOTY

# MONO MASTERS

TOP NATURE AND LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHERS RECOGNISED AS THE INTERNATIONAL GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION DITCHES COLOUR IN ITS LATEST PHOTO PROJECT

**T**HERE'S A LOT more to black & white photography than lowering the saturation during post-processing. Subjects and scenes stripped of colour, are made up purely of light, shadow and tones in between – it's said that you need to learn to 'see' in black & white before you can truly master monochrome.

Black & white photography has long been the go-to approach for many portrait, fine-art and architectural photographers, but one genre that tends to be less often practiced within is gardens and nature. To the contrary, these are often colourful and vibrant places! Perhaps that's why the winning images from the latest International Garden Photographer of the Year Competition are so mesmerising – there's not a drop of saturated colour to be seen. Launched in February this year, the Black & White competition attracted a strong selection of entrants from around the globe – as far afield as China, Brazil and New Zealand.

The winning image was taken closer to home, however. American photographer Michael Hudson captured his picture of an ancient oak tree at the entrance to the Tŷ Canol Woods in Pembrokeshire, Wales using an infrared-converted Canon EOS 5D Mk II and 16-35mm f/2.8L lens. The competition judges commented: "[Michael's] image perfectly captures the brief and portrays the classic venerable oak in a modern, alluring yet still authoritative manner." For his artistic efforts, Michael will receive a £500 cash prize, and his image will be published in the IGPOTY 11 book as well as featuring at international IGPOTY exhibitions.

The IGPOTY is run in association with Kew Botanical Gardens. If you're feeling inspired to enter for yourself, then there are still two Photo Project categories to run in Competition 11: close-up nature experts should try their hand at the Macro Art project, which is open for entries until 30 June 2017, while still-life specialists will be pleased to hear that there's an aptly-named Still Life project that opens on 1 July and runs until 31 August. For more information, and to see the winners of all of the competitions so far, visit: [igpoty.com](http://igpoty.com)



**1ST PLACE: MICHAEL HUDSON – ANCIENT OAK TREE**  
MICHAEL HUDSON/IGPOTY



**2ND PLACE: LOTTE GRONKJAR – TWICE THE SAME**  
LOTTE GRONKJAR/IGPOTY

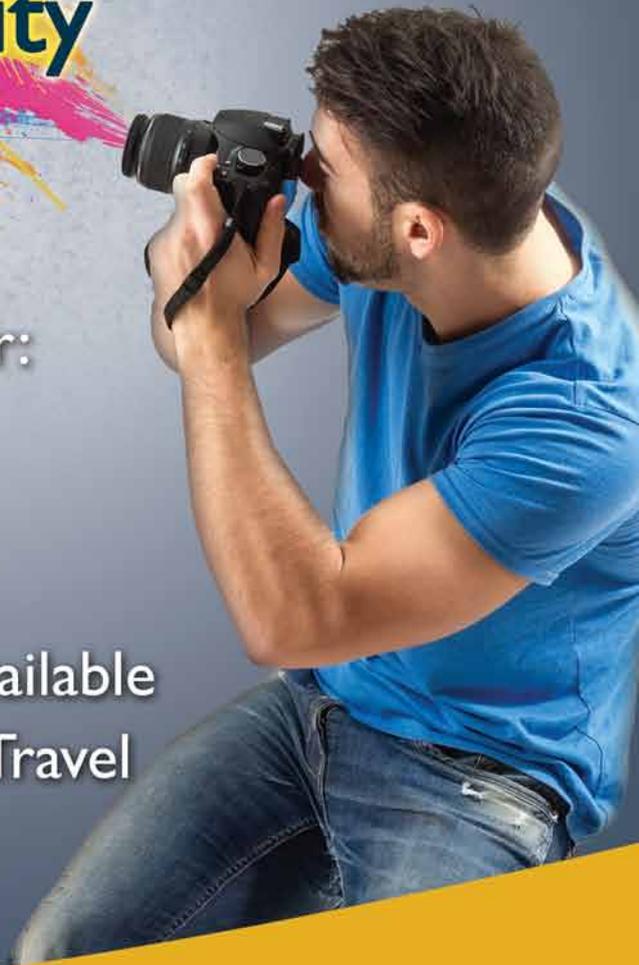
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# PHOTO SKILLS

IDEAS & ADVICE FOR BETTER PHOTOS



**p32:** HOW TO NOT GET FLUSTERED WITH FILTERS



**p36:** GET CREATIVE WITH CLOSE-UP BUBBLES



**p40:** WE'RE HOPPING MAD FOR RASCALLY RABBITS



**p44:** TRY A NEW PORTRAIT PERSPECTIVE TODAY!

## EDITING SKILLS



**p48:** EDIT YOUR TOP-DOWN PORTRAIT IN MINUTES



**p50:** PREPARE TO SHARE YOUR IMAGES ONLINE



**p52:** PROTECT YOUR WORK WITH A WATERMARK



# USING MULTIPLE LANDSCAPE FILTERS

STACKING MULTIPLE FILTERS AT THE SAME TIME FOR CREATIVE EFFECT CAN BECOME CONFUSING. JORDAN BUTTERS SHOWS YOU HIS METHOD OF KEEPING TRACK OF ADJUSTMENTS AND FILTRATION...

CAMERA: NIKON D750 / LENS: AF-S 24-70MM F/2.8G / FILTERS: LEE FILTERS 100MM SYSTEM, LEE GRADS, HELIOPAN 105MM CPL, LEE BIG STOPPER

**A**S WITH MANY skills, photography is all about practice. The more you practise something, the more muscle memory takes over and the more natural the process becomes. This applies to everything from knowing what focal length to use, the right settings for certain light and situations, down to finding the best composition for a scene. Even with all the practice in the world, even the top pros almost always have to tweak, adjust and fine tune each of these elements before pressing the shutter – rarely does anyone get the shot they want in one take.

One area of landscape photography that regularly causes problems is using

## EXTREME ND FILTER CHECKLIST

- ✓ An extreme ND is always the last filter you fit
- ✓ Always use a tripod
- ✓ Use a locking remote release
- ✓ Focus first, then switch to manual focus
- ✓ Use Bulb mode
- ✓ Fit the filter in the slot closest to the lens
- ✓ Cover the eyepiece during exposure
- ✓ Time the exposure

filters or, more specifically, using multiple different types of filter together at the same time. There are so many things to remember for each type of filter that you can't just pop them all on at once and try and work it out in one go – there's simply

too many variables to address – you'll end up all over the shop! By taking a logical approach and working with the filters one-by-one, it's much easier to arrive at the desired end result with your sanity still intact! This is especially true when using 'extreme' ND filters, as I have here. The fact that you can't see through the filter means that adding an extreme ND is always the final step in the process, regardless of how many other filters you're using. Furthermore, with exposure times running into several minutes, you'll want to make sure you've got everything else right before pressing the shutter, or you will have to do it all over again!



**1 STARTING POINT** My original shot is remarkably dull. It's an interesting location but the conditions aren't ideal. Still, if I could remove the glare from the water, even out the exposure, and extend the exposure time, I think it could work. In order to do all of these things I'm going to need to use multiple filters, and apply them in a logical order so as not to get myself in a muddle. I'm using a Lee Filters 100mm system, which allows for stacking multiple filters in a single holder.



**2 ADD A POLARISER** My first step is to add a circular polariser to cut through the reflections and glare on the water's surface. Fitting a 105mm Heliopan CPL, and looking through the viewfinder, I rotate the polariser until the desired effect appears. There's not much direct light, but the polariser still makes the water much clearer, and cuts around two stops of light, taking my exposure time from 1/30sec to 1/4sec, and smoothing out the waves slightly. It's a good start.



**3 BALANCE THE EXPOSURE** With the sea looking better, the next step is to even out the exposure between the foreground and sky. I meter from both the foreground and sky and note there's a two stop difference. Sliding a two-stop ND grad filter into the filter holder, and carefully lining it up with the horizon, I take another test shot, however I really want the sky to be a little more dramatic. I swap the two-stop ND grad for a three-stop filter and the results are far more to my liking.



**4 USING AN EXTREME ND** With the balance of the exposure better, it's time to add an extreme ND filter to lengthen the exposure. I'm using a Lee Big Stopper (ten-stop ND) – these should always be used in the rear-most filter slot (closest to the lens) to prevent light leaks. Slide the filter in and cover the eyepiece – some cameras come with an eyepiece shutter, but a lens cloth draped over the camera does the job. Switch to manual focus to stop the camera from refocusing.

## FILTERS DO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

The final shot is a world away from where I started and, by taking my time, I got here without any confusion!

Exposure: 30 seconds at f/11 (ISO 100)



**5 TIMING THE EXPOSURE** Calculating ND exposures can be confusing, but smartphone apps make it easy – I recommend the Lee Filters Stopper app (free on Apple and Android). My 'normal' exposure (after polariser and ND grad) was 1/3sec, so dialling this into the Stopper app tells me I need a final exposure of five minutes and 20 seconds. I set the camera to Bulb mode, attach a remote release and, using the Stopper stopwatch, start my exposure, keeping an eye on the timer.

**6 CHECK THE RESULTS** When the time is up, I carefully unlock the remote to end the exposure. Checking the preview LCD and histogram, the image is a bit dark – this could be down to the light changing during the exposure or my ND filter being slightly more 'dense' than exactly ten stops. Regardless, by checking the histogram I know the highlights are preserved and the exposure is close enough to be able to adjust the Raw file slightly during processing.



# BUBBLE ART

IF YOU FANCY FLEXING YOUR CREATIVE MACRO MUSCLES, THEN GRAB YOUR CLOSE-UP LENS, SOME OIL AND A GLASS OF WATER – JORDAN BUTTERS HAS A QUICK AND EASY TECHNIQUE FOR YOU TO TRY...

**M**ACRO PHOTOGRAPHY IS fantastic fun. It's one of those disciplines that really slows you down and requires you to be exact and meticulous in your approach – if you're not then getting good results is very tricky. It's also an appealing hobby as it's something that can be practised anywhere, at any time, using everyday household items – so what's your excuse? Not owning a 1:1 macro lens is the only valid one I can think of, and that's easily remedied for not much outlay by scouring online auctions for a bargain, or picking up

CAMERA: NIKON D750 / LENS: AF-S 60MM F/2.8G

cheap extension tubes, a reversing ring, or close-up filter – you needn't break the bank.

Here's a quick and easy macro favourite to try next time you're feeling creative. In terms of apparatus you'll need your camera, a tripod and your chosen close-up optic. You'll also need a container for the liquid, some olive oil and washing-up liquid as well as something to add the oil to the water with – a chopstick, toothpick or syringe is ideal.

Finally, you'll need some colourful objects to act as a backdrop. I'm presuming you're using natural light but if not then you won't get far without a flash or lamp either.

You need to put a bit of distance between the surface of the water and your background to render the background diffused and completely out of focus. Using a glass coffee table to support your receptacle is the easiest way to do this, but if you don't have one then you can improvise using a piece of reinforced glass, as I have, or by propping a flat Pyrex dish up between two supporting objects.



**1 CHOOSE A BACKDROP** Grab a selection of colourful items you can use as a backdrop. I like using small squares of brightly coloured paper for this technique, as they can be easily shuffled and mixed around to change the colour palette. Lay out your backdrop on the floor in a well-lit area – we want the background to receive the light, but not necessarily the bubbles. Direct sunlight works perfectly, but if it's a dull day you can always use a lamp or flash to light the background.



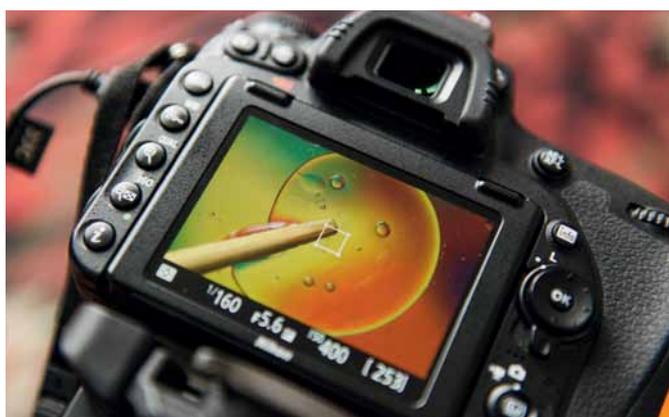
**2 FOR HANDS THAT DO DISHES** Fill a glass container with water and place it on the glass surface. Here's a top tip – put a couple of drops of washing-up liquid into the water, but don't stir or agitate it, just let it sink to the bottom. The washing-up liquid stops the oil flattening out on the water's surface and gives us the lovely separated bubbles we want. If your oil bubbles are joining up or are too flat later on you can always add more washing-up liquid as you shoot.



**3 FOCUS CAREFULLY** Attach a macro lens or close-up optic to your camera and attach it on a tripod so that the lens's focal plane is parallel to the water's surface – if not you'll only have some of the bubbles in focus. Carefully place a drop or two of oil into the water, switch the lens to manual focus and use the bubbles as a guide to focus manually. Use LiveView and zoom in to check focus too – misfocusing will be very obvious with macro photography.



**4 CAMERA SETTINGS** Select aperture-priority mode. Aperture setting is down to personal choice, and available light. A mid-aperture between  $f/5$  and  $f/8$  renders the background nice and soft whilst keeping the bubbles sharp, whereas  $f/11$ - $f/15$  doesn't give as pleasing bokeh but is more forgiving in terms of focusing. If you're not sure, try a range of  $f$ /stops. Attach a remote release and use your choice, then release a few drops of water onto the surface and start shooting.



**5 MANIPULATE THE BUBBLES** You're not at the mercy of where the bubbles settle. If you're using a chopstick or toothpick you can pull the bubbles into position – I find a mixture of large and small bubbles with some negative space is best. If the bubbles are joining up and becoming too large you can always agitate the water a bit to break them up. Shuffle the coloured background around too to try different colours – contrasting colours tend to work well.



**6 FLAG THE LIGHT** Depending on the light in your room, and your choice of container, you may find that you get bright reflections and highlights around the edges of the bubbles, which can lower the contrast of your image somewhat. The solution is simple – flag the light from hitting the bubbles (but not the background). My solution is to wrap a piece of the coloured paper around the glass to block the direct light. The difference it makes is quite noticeable, as you can see!



**FOREVER BLOWING BUBBLES!**

In processing, crop and rotate the image as desired, and then add some contrast, clarity and saturation.

Exposure: 1/320sec at f/5 (ISO 100)



# SHOOTING RABBITS

CAROLINE SCHMIDT SHOWS YOU WHY YOU DON'T NEED TO BE A WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER TO CAPTURE SPRING ANIMALS, EVERY BUNNY SHOULD HAVE A GO. SO, COME ON, HOP TO IT!

---

CAMERA: NIKON D7200 / LENS: AF-S 200-500MM F/5.6E ED VR

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**W**HEN APRIL ROLLS around it not only means the arrival of warmer weather and beautiful golden light at more reasonable hours, but we start seeing new life everywhere. Lambs, calves and lots of little cottontail rabbits. There's so much activity to keep wildlife photographers busy, but it's also arguably the easiest time of year for unseasoned nature photographers to stretch their lenses for practice. There's no shortage of subjects and you don't have to go far to find them: local woodlands, parks and public farms, for instance – plus you have the added cute factor of baby animals, which almost always make an appealing picture. It will take patience, time and probably a number of attempts to get the shots you want, but with perseverance you should get some lovely images.

Wild bunny rabbits are fairly easy to predict in terms of movement, location and behaviour – as long as you avoid sudden movements and sounds you stand a good chance. Baby cottontail rabbits are quite small during the spring months, which means you're going to need a lot of pulling power to fill the frame given that you're not able to be able to get very close. And, even if you do manage to get within a few metres without startling them off, your lens might restrict you – for instance the Nikon AF-S 200-500mm I'm using has a minimum focusing distance of 2.2 metres. To help maximise your reach use a cropped-sensor camera and, if you've not got a long enough telephoto lens, try adding teleconverters too.



**2 DISTANCE** You need to be stealthy, so if you've all the camouflage gear of a wildlife photographer then use it – if you've not, it's still not impossible to get photographs. Rabbits can hear and smell you a mile off, so you're best approaching low and slow while they're distracted feeding. A 500mm lens is the minimum I'd recommend for adequately filling the frame with these small animals, so invest in a teleconverter if you've not got the reach.



**4 EXPOSURE** With such a long lens and low-lying subjects, you'll have no choice but to lie on the ground to support your gear or to use a beanbag. While rabbits are quite stationary, at 500mm you'll need at least 1/500sec to eliminate camera shake. Pair a fast shutter speed with a mid-aperture of f/5.6, centre-weighted metering and a little positive exposure compensation to balance the backlighting, and you're looking at needing a high ISO rating too.



**1 SCOUT A LOCATION** Finding rabbits is easy with a little know-how: they love cover and hiding places, which is why you'll spot many by wooded areas. Open spaces with lush grass for feeding on and edged by brambles, woods and hawthorn trees is the ideal location to find bunnies, and will also give you the best chance of capturing them away from the woodland and more easily backlit. Grafham Waters in Cambridgeshire is one such place, so I headed there for this shoot.



**3 LIGHTING** Rabbits tend to come out of their burrows to feed early morning and an hour or so before sunset, so head to your location and look for areas that are backlit by the sun and may make a good stomping ground for the rabbits. Avoid areas where trees may cause shadows and don't be tempted to photograph them in shaded areas, the images will usually look dull. Backlighting will highlight their wispy hairs and whiskers, so it's well worth the extra effort.



**5 FOCUSING** Set your camera to shoot on continuous so you can fire a burst of frames to improve your chance of getting the right shot. As you'll be lying on the ground, grass will be the first thing your lens wants to focus on, so use single-point AF to pinpoint the subject. Use the ultra-sensitive central AF point, which is useful when focusing on low contrast subjects, to lock focus and recompose. If the rabbits are active, consider switching to AF-C for more dynamic autofocus.



**ABUNNY'S NOT JUST FOR EASTER!**  
By waiting with finger poised on the shutter for a rabbit to look up from the grass, you can get some golden shots.

Exposure: 1/640sec at f/5.6 (ISO 1250)



# HAIR WE GO!

TRY TAKING A NEW PERSPECTIVE WITH YOUR PORTRAITS BY SHOOTING OVERHEAD. CAROLINE SCHMIDT SHOWS YOU HOW TO CAPTURE STRIKING IMAGES USING HAIR AS A BACKDROP

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CAMERA: NIKON D800 / LENS: NIKKOR 50MM F/1.4G

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**L**ACKING CLEAN BUT interesting backdrops for your portraits? No problem. Long, flowing hair, especially auburn, can make a beautiful backdrop. By laying your subject down on a soft surface of a complementary colour, like grass, and spreading their hair out to act as your backdrop, you can create a vivid image full of interest. Ideally, your subject will have long hair, like my model Emily, but if not we'll show you later how to easily extend the hair to make the most of what you do have. Turn to page 48, too, to find out how to enhance your portrait and fill in any gaps in the background.



**1 SET-UP** You'll need a camera and portrait lens – a 50mm is perfect – secured with a neck strap as you'll be hanging over the top of your model and we don't want any accidents. People with red hair and blue eyes are especially sensitive to the light, so you'll want an overcast day and to place them in an area of shade, like under a tree, to reduce squinting and to keep the lighting soft and even. Make sure they're comfortable too – it can get cold lying on the ground.



**2 EXPOSURE** Set your camera to aperture-priority mode and start by spot metering off your model's cheek to get a basic exposure reading. While this did give me a perfectly adequate exposure, I prefer to have the background a deeper tone of red, so I dialed in  $-0.5EV$  compensation, which did the trick. I knew that I'd have to brighten the skin tone slightly in post-production, but the image was much closer to the result that I wanted in-camera.



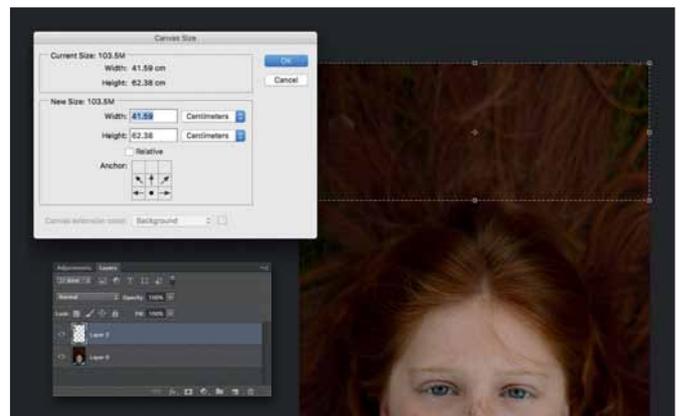
**3 DEPTH-OF-FIELD** With focusing set to single-point AF, I'd suggest using back-button focusing/AF-ON button to focus and recompose for flexibility. It's tempting to use the aperture wide open at  $f/1.4$  or  $f/1.8$  as both eyes are on the same plane of focus, but opt for  $f/2.8$  to  $f/4$  depending on your distance from the subject so that the nose is soft but not blurry. Play around with distances from the subject and apertures until you find your sweet spot.



**4 POSE** It's easy to shoot an unflattering photo of someone lying down; even the slimmest of people can end up with double chins. To avoid this, ask the model to move their head down but to stick their chin out – the tiniest of movements make a big difference. Acknowledge that they'll feel awkward but it will translate well on camera. You'll then need to angle yourself to shoot down the length of their face slightly, rather than parallel to their face, to lengthen it.



**5 SPREAD THE HAIR** How you spread the hair can make a massive difference to your end result. You need to be deliberate in how you spray the hair out not just behind the model but to the sides, too. Fill the background with it and even drape some around their neck to enhance the flow of the picture. Experiment with crops and poses too: centre them in the frame, place their face in the bottom third or have them look to the side in a horizontal crop.



**6 EXTEND THE HAIR** If you're happy with your shot, but you need to tweak your cropping in Photoshop and find you've not enough hair to fill the frame – there's a simple fix. Open the image and extend the canvas in length (*Image>Canvas Size>[add new dimensions]>OK*). You can now use the *Marquee* tool with *Feather* at *0px* to select the area that you want to extend (avoiding the actual head), then use the *Move* tool to drag it up to fill the blank canvas.

**HAIR-RAISING EXPERIENCE!**

To find out how I edited this final image, turn to page 48 for an editing tutorial that enriches colours and contrast.

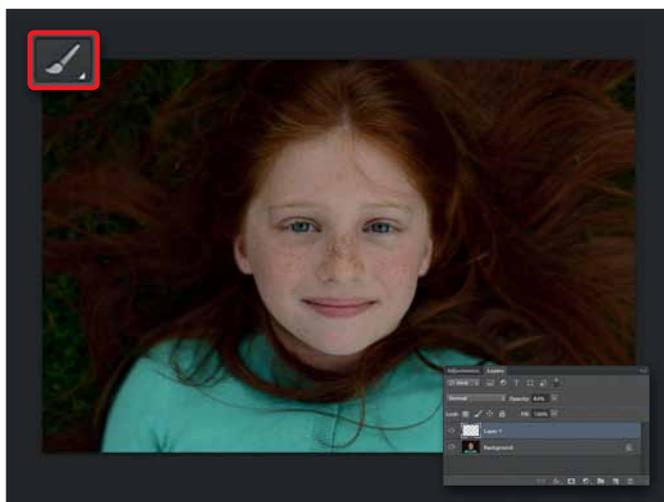
Exposure: 1/2500sec at f/2.8 (ISO 400)



# Extending hair

FIND OUT HOW TO GIVE YOUR PORTRAIT THE FINISHING TOUCHES IT DESERVES AS CAROLINE SCHMIDT SHOWS YOU HOW TO EDIT FOR ENHANCING NATURAL BEAUTY

**I**F YOU'VE GIVEN our last *Photo Skills* a try but feel your Raw in-camera portrait lacks punch, here I'll show you how to replicate the look of the final image by following a few simple steps. Red heads are incredibly photogenic, especially those with freckles, so you want to try and bring out their vivid colours and striking details. If, like me, you also underexposed the image slightly for depth, you'll need to know how to control the exposure post-capture. You may also want to fill in any sparse background space, if their hair isn't long enough or spread out correctly, and that's what I'll show you how to do here...



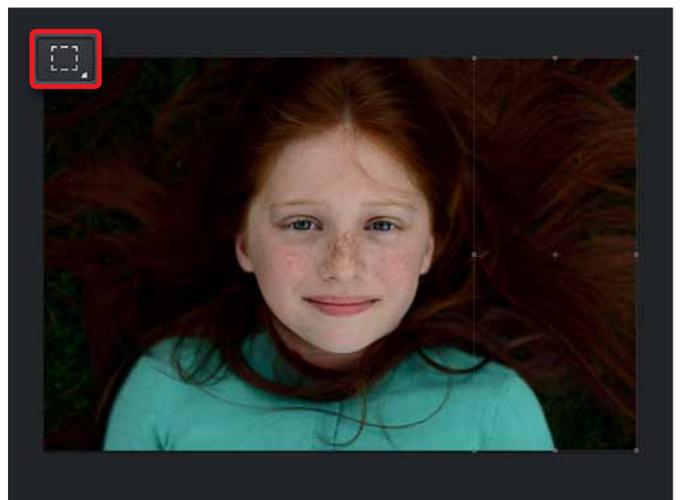
**1 RETOUCH** As there's not much light to fill in any shadows, there's a little under-eye shadowing that could benefit from being filled in to brighten the complexion. To do this, create a new layer (*Layer>New*), select the *Brush* tool and sample the skin tone next to the edge of the eye by pressing the *alt* key. Draw the *Opacity* slider down to *20%* and brush over the area. You want a subtle result that retains visible texture.



**2 ADD DEPTH** To increase contrast and desaturate the skin tone, bringing out Emily's striking freckles without oversaturating the image, apply a *Black & White* adjustment layer from the *Adjustments* button at bottom of the Layers palette. Change the layer's Blend Mode to *Soft Light* and reduce the layer's *Opacity* slider down to *30-50%*, or until you reach your desired result.



**3 BRIGHTEN AND SATURATE** Using multiple Adjustment Layers and their Layer Masks, you can selectively brighten and darken areas of your image to increase contrast. For instance, use a *Hue/Saturation* layer to add a touch of saturation to the image, masking off the skin, then apply a *Levels* adjustment layer to focus on the highlights in the hair and face, and a *Curves* adjustment layer to increase overall contrast.



**4 FLIP THE HAIR** The hair on the left-hand side of the frame is a little sparse. To fill it out, merge the edited layers together by selecting them all and pressing *alt, cmd, shift* and *E* to merge to a new image layer. Take the *Marquee* tool with the *Feather* set to *0px* and select the area you want to duplicate, in this case it's the hair on the right. Click *Edit>Copy* and paste to a new layer, then drag it to the opposite side.

#### HAIR EXTENSIONS

Selectively editing the skin tone, hair and highlights can give an otherwise flat portrait instant impact.



**5 BLEND THE HAIR** With the new hair in place, use the *Move* tool to resize as necessary. Add a Layer Mask to the new hair layer, then using the *Brush* tool set to Black and with a low opacity, work over the new hair to reveal some of the main image below, concentrating on blending the straight edges from the selection. This will be much more forgiving if you've shot the image wide open and the hair is blurry.



**6 ADJUST HAIR COLOUR** To add some 'oomph' to the red hair, add a *Curves* adjustment layer and select the *Green* channel from the drop-down menu. Move the *Shadows* slightly right to shift the histogram and insert a touch of magenta. This gives a boost to the auburn hair but also the skin tones, so you may need to use the *Brush* tool with a soft edge and Black paint to reduce the effect on the skin.

# How to prepare your images for web

WANT YOUR IMAGES TO LOOK THEIR BEST ONLINE, WORK WELL WITH SEARCH ENGINES AND LOAD QUICKLY? THEN YOU NEED TO PREPARE ACCORDINGLY

**W**HEN WE'RE PREPARING our images for print it's relatively simple – we want them sized at the best possible resolution so that they print in glorious high quality. Preparing images for the web is different, however, as we also have to contend with file sizes, SEO (search engine optimisation) and image resolutions.

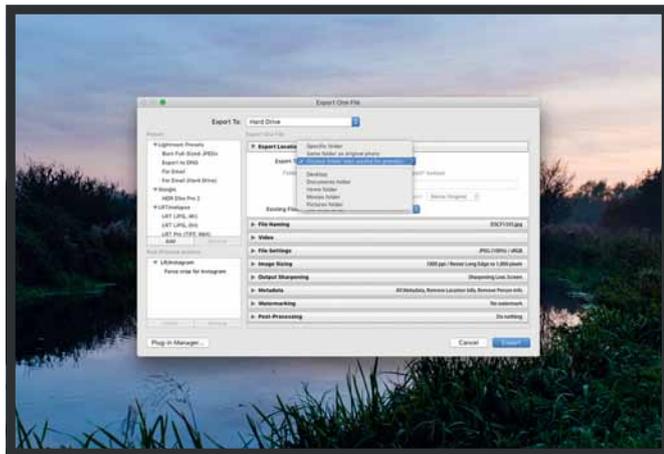
Before preparing your images for web, it's worth reading up on the website/s that you plan to upload to – they'll often provide

guidelines for the optimal resolutions to use, which gives you parameters to work within.

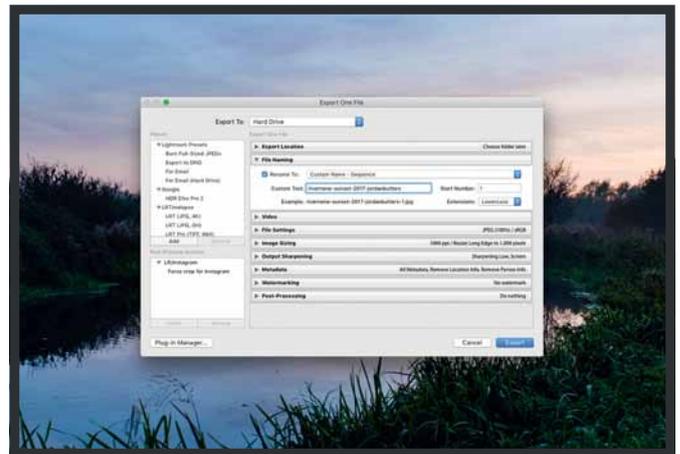
As we're concentrating on optimising your images for exporting to the web in Adobe Lightroom, we'll assume that you've already imported and edited your images and have reached the final stage when it's time to optimise them for web and export them. In the Library module, select all of the images that you wish to export, then right-click on one of them and select *Export>Export...*

## COLOUR SPACES

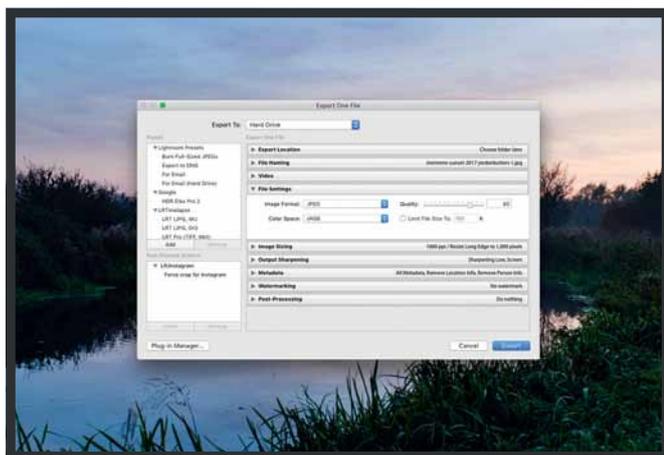
Selecting the right colour space for your images is very important, as there's a surprising amount of disparity between AdobeRGB, ProPhoto RGB and sRGB, the three most common colour spaces. There's a simple rule when exporting for online use – always select sRGB as it's the colour space that most web browsers have adopted. If you select another colour space then the image will be converted to sRGB and the conversion will most likely spoil the image completely!



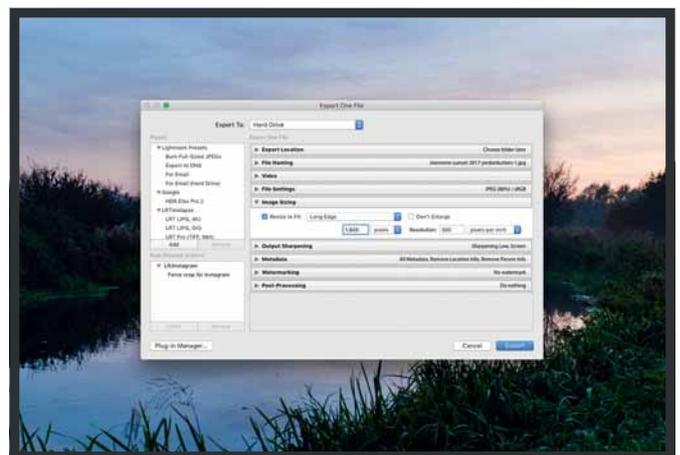
**1 LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION** In the Export window you'll see some presets, but they aren't ideal for web, so let's create our own. Starting at the top, your first port of call should be *Export Location* – this is where you tell Lightroom where on your computer to save the files. As we're aiming to create our own preset, we recommend selecting *Choose folder later* from the list. Lightroom will then ask where you wish to save the files each time you export a fresh batch.



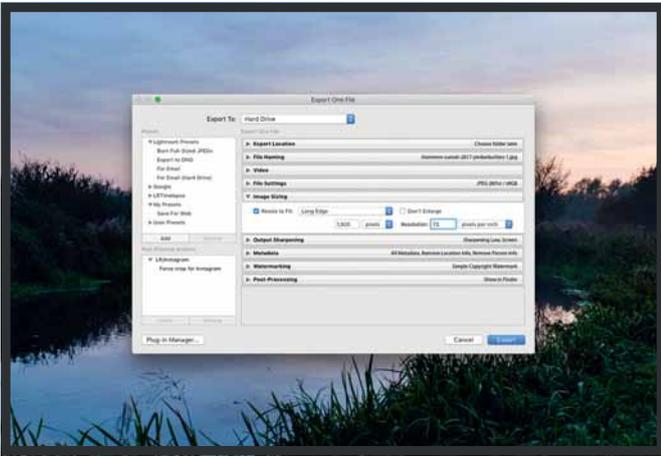
**2 WHAT'S IN A NAME?** Default filenames aren't very useful for web – search engines like Google use filenames to index your website, so it's best to use the *Custom Names - Sequence* option to choose filenames that are relevant. For example, 'DSC\_4773.jpg' won't help on search engines, whereas 'lake-district-ross-hoddinott-1.jpg' tells search engines exactly what's in the image. Including the date or year is also a good idea, as it helps identify the files on your own system too.



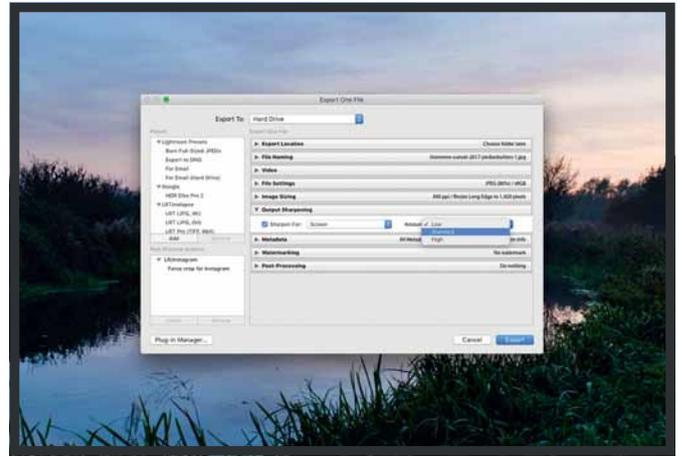
**3 QUALITY CONTROL** Under *File Settings*, set *Image Format* to *JPEG* and *Color Space* to *sRGB* (see panel, top). For *Quality*, at web sizes, it's difficult to tell the difference between an image exported at 75 and 100, but there's a huge reduction in file size between the two. Setting *Quality* to around *80* strikes a nice balance. Alternatively, you can enable *Limit File Size* – Lightroom then considers the image size and sets the quality accordingly to keep the image under a certain size.



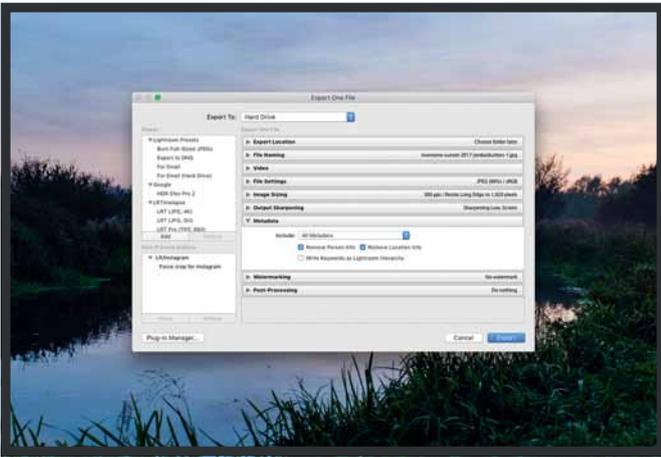
**4 SIZE MATTERS** The *Image Sizing* parameters depend on the website that your images are to be displayed on, so check first – you should always export your files at the maximum resolution that they are likely to be viewed at – you don't want the website increasing the resolution and spoiling quality. The easiest way to set size is using the *Longest Edge* option – simply tell Lightroom how many pixels you want the longest edge to measure and it works out the rest for you.



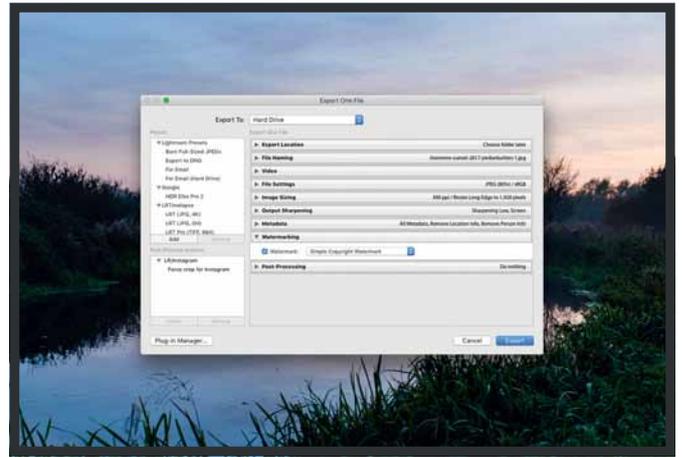
**5 MYTH BUSTING** There's a myth out there that you should set your images to 72ppi (pixels per inch) for web use. However, contrary to popular belief, this does absolutely nothing when exporting for web. Screens and monitors only work in image height and width, so you can leave the **Resolution** option set to whatever it's currently on as ppi only matters for print. Don't believe us? Export the same image at 7ppi and then at 700ppi – the file size and quality will be exactly the same.



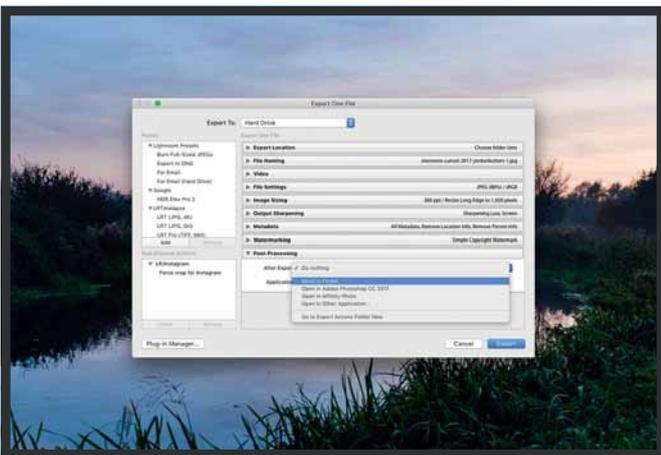
**6 SHARPEN UP** We covered sharpening in detail last issue (Issue 126, May 2017) and, as explained, output sharpening is dependent on the media that the images are going to be viewed on. As we're preparing for web, select **Screen** from the **Sharpen For** menu. The next part is personal preference – many people leave the **Amount** set to **Standard**, although you could set it to Low and sharpen more manually in the Develop module prior to exporting for added control, if you wish.



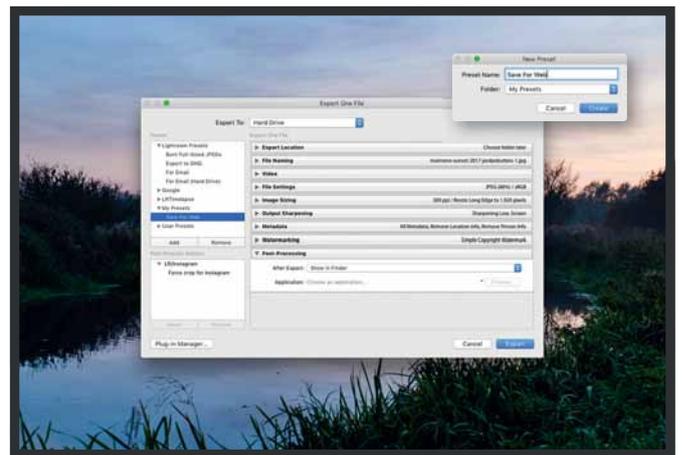
**7 EMBEDDED INFO** In the **Metadata** section you can choose whether or not you want the metadata embedded in the file or not, or just some of it. If you choose to include all of the metadata then people can see what camera, lens and settings you used, as well as who took it. Alternatively you can choose to include only copyright or contact info, or nothing at all – it's up to you. We'd recommend ticking **Remove Person Info** and **Remove Location Info** below, for privacy reasons.



**8 MAKE YOUR MARK** Next you can choose to add a watermark from within Lightroom. This can be a default **Simple Copyright Watermark**, as chosen from the drop-down menu, which reads the Copyright information from the file's metadata and displays it in the bottom corner in plain text form. Alternatively you can choose to create a custom watermark text or graphic using Lightroom's watermark creator by selecting **Edit Watermarks...** from the menu.



**9 WHAT NEXT?** Finally, it's time to tell Lightroom what to do after you press Export. Do you want to see the files in the folder on your computer? Or open them in another software program automatically? The latter can come in handy if you want to use Photoshop or another program to make some last-minute tweaks, or add a watermark (see p52 for more on this). If there's no additional editing and you don't need to use the images straight away, then select **Do Nothing**.



**10 UNTIL NEXT TIME** You're all done, but don't click on Export just yet – we want to save these settings as a preset ready for next time. On the left under the **Preset** window click on the **Add** button. Give your preset a name such as 'Save For Web', and then click **Create**. It'll now appear under **User Presets** in the Preset window, which is where you'll also find it next time you go to export. One click and it's ready to go, you just need to choose a filename and you're ready. Easy!

# Adding a watermark

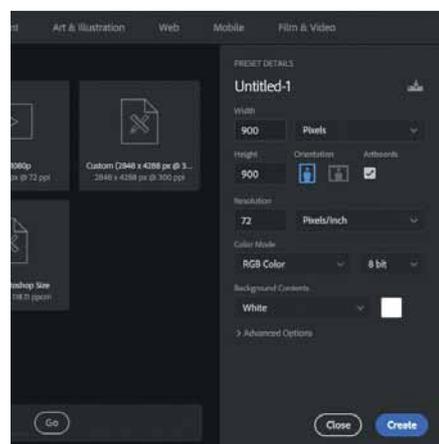
THAT IMAGE HAS YOUR NAME ALL OVER IT – LITERALLY! JORDAN BUTTERS SHOWS YOU HOW TO QUICKLY AND EASILY PROTECT YOUR IMAGES AGAINST ONLINE THEFT

**T**HE WORLDWIDE WEB is a large and ruthless place for any photographer wishing to get their work noticed. You might want maximum coverage for your creations to be discovered, yet you don't want people to start using your images willy-nilly without proper remuneration or recognition. Watermarking is a relatively simple and

straightforward way to go about protecting your images, however a bad watermark can ruin a good image, so you have to strike the balance between protecting your property and allowing your images to be enjoyed. The quickest and most effective way to watermark images in Photoshop is by creating a custom brush. Here's how you go about doing it...



JORDAN BUTTERS



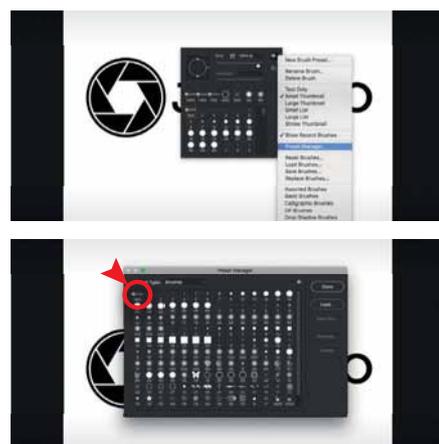
**1 A BLANK CANVAS** We need to create our watermark first. In Photoshop, go to **File>New** to create a new document – this will be the canvas for our logo or text. Set the image size to **1000x1000 pixels**. Single colour watermarks always work best with any image, whether colour or black & white, so set the **Background Contents** to **White** and then click **Create**. Your canvas will load.



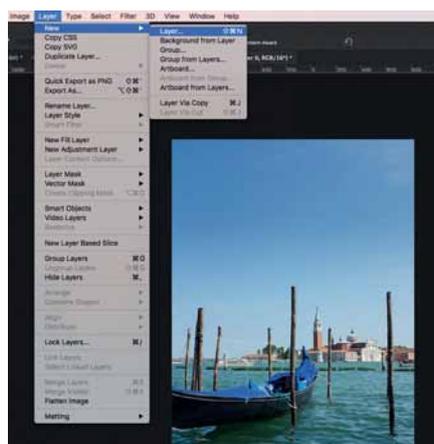
**2 CREATE YOUR WATERMARK** Go ahead and create your watermark on your blank canvas, using black as your main colour. This can be text, or a logo, or both if you wish. I've used a simple aperture shape clip-art that I found for free online, and then added the wording alongside it. It won't win any design awards, but it'll work for this tutorial! Once you're done, go to **Layer>Flatten Image**.



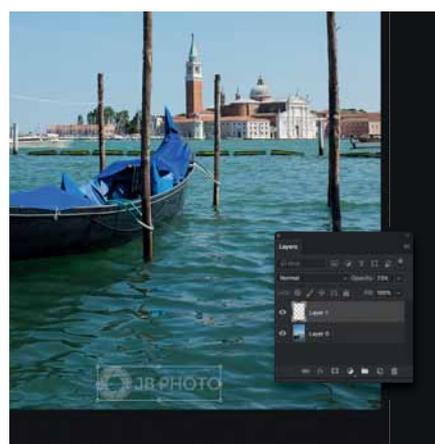
**3 SAVE THE PRESET** Next, go to **Edit>Define Brush Preset** and, in the box that appears, give your logo a name and click **OK**. Once done, press the **B** key, or select the **Brush Tool**, and you'll see that your watermark is now outlined and ready to use as a brush – just click once to apply it anywhere on your image. Treat it like any brush shape – you can change its size, colour or opacity as normal.



**4 MAKE IT EASIER TO FIND** By default your watermark brush will be placed at the end of your brush collection. To make it easier to find, select the **Brush Tool** and **right-click** on your image. Then click on the cog in the top right and choose **Preset Manager...** Find your logo and drag it to the front of your brushes before clicking on **Done**. It'll always be the first brush in the collection from then on.



**5 PUT IT INTO PRACTICE** It's time to give your new watermark a test run. Open up one of your photographs and then go to **Layer>New>Layer**. Select the **Brush Tool** and **right-click** on your image to choose your logo brush, if it's not loaded already. Set the size of your logo using the **[** and **]** keys, choose the colour that you want and simply click once on your image to place your watermark.



**6 ADJUST AS NEEDED** Because we placed your watermark on a new layer, you can then reposition the watermark by pressing the **V** key (Move tool), change its opacity by changing the **Opacity** in the Layers palette, or use the **Transform tool** (**cmd + T** on Mac, **ctrl + T** on Windows) to resize or rotate it. That's all there is to it – your logo is saved as a brush ready to reuse over and over again.

**HANDS OFF!**

Lower the opacity of your watermark to allow people to enjoy the image, whilst making it difficult to clone out.



**OLYMPUS**

# TAKING A SHOT AT SAVING THE WORLD

AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHER JASPER WILKINS SHARES HIS PASSION FOR OUR PLANET AND HOW OLYMPUS AND HIS PHOTOGRAPHY ARE TAKING ACTION FOR CHANGE

**W**E ALL KNOW at least a little about the causes and effects of global warming, our carbon footprint and its rippling results on communities around the world. But while most of us watch from a distance, listen to the news and do baby steps to making our lives 'greener', few of us actually take action to make impactful change. What can one person do when the problems are so huge? Well, Olympus ambassador Jasper Wilkins is set to show us. Olympus and Jasper have joined forces to show exactly what positive benefits one person's photography can have on communities and conservation.

"The environment is vital to our very existence, yet we are destroying it at an alarming rate," exclaims Jasper. "Having seen the diverse natural beauty this world has to offer, and developing an understanding of what humans are doing to the environment, I find it hard now not to try and visually communicate the reality of the situation," he adds. Since documenting homelessness with his first camera aged 15, Jasper has known the impact of photography and has used his Olympus OM-D cameras as tools to document and share these harsh truths online, in books and magazines.

It was Jasper's first trip to document Ethiopian culture in 2013 that changed his perception of the world and focused his work. His collection of black & white photographs based around water access were published countless times in magazines and online, not to forget winning him the Olympus Student Photography award.

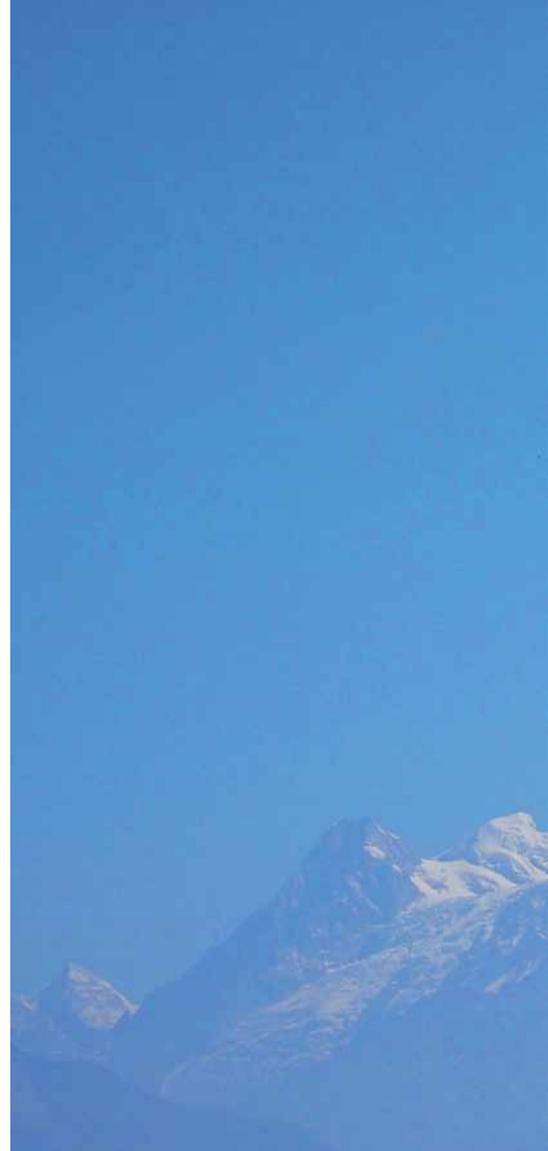
Since then, the now 23-year-old photojournalist has dedicated his career

to documenting environmental and humanitarian issues across Japan, Ethiopia, America and Thailand, as well as covering events and rallies at-home in the UK.

His most recent work has taken him to the epicentre of Nepal's 2015 earthquake, Gorkha, where he's working in the Namjung community with Raleigh and International Citizen Service to create livelihood opportunities for those devastated by the disaster. "I'm working on a project to promote the importance of the environment, focusing on the stories of the people affected by the earthquake. I'm hoping the images will develop into a book and exhibition, and eventually lead to me doing similar work in the Tuvalu Islands, the Amazon and Thailand," he explains.

Jasper uses the Olympus OM-D E-M1 II to document different cultures and, while he's had great success with the OM-D E-M1 over the years, he considers the E-M1 Mark II a superb and welcomed upgrade. "I love using Olympus kit: it's lightweight, user-friendly and has great durability – not to forget impressive image quality. While trying to capture 'decisive moments', I need an easily accessible interface with solid manual controls and a camera that offers a high frame-per-second shooting rate – the OM-D E-M1 II does all that."

The Olympus OM-D E-M1 II features a blazing dual quad-core processor capable of capturing 60fps in burst mode, impressive 4K/UHD video, one of the market's most advanced autofocus systems with 121 AF points, and a five-axis body-integral image stabilisation, which Jaspers adds proves to be invaluable when shooting in low light.



**“THE ENVIRONMENT IS VITAL TO OUR VERY EXISTENCE, YET WE ARE DESTROYING IT AT AN ALARMING RATE”**

## Jasper Wilkins



At 23 years old, Jasper has found his calling and making a global impact worthy of someone twice his age. After winning the Olympus Student Photography

competition in 2013, Jasper became an Olympus ambassador in 2016 and is now travelling the world documenting cultures, instigating environmental change and using his photography as a voice for the people. He studied photography at college in Birmingham, before moving to London to study a Media and Cultural Studies degree at London College of Communication. It's this grounding that armed him with the passion and skills to take on internships and commissions that have dedicated him to environmental and humanitarian issues. He has worked across Japan, Nepal, Ethiopia, America and Thailand, as well as alongside universities and colleges conducting presentations and events. His work has been widely published online and in print, as well as the subject of several exhibitions.





Jasper uses his OM-D E-M1 II paired with the M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 25mm f/1.2 PRO lens for detailed portraits and the M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 12-100mm f/4 IS Pro as his all-purpose lens. The weather-sealed 12-100mm f/4 offers fast and quiet AF as well as a superb two-axis image stabilisation system, making it perfect for discreet portraits as well as handheld landscapes and filming, all of which Jasper has to do well. It's the perfect versatile documentary lens and Jasper's go-to piece of kit for most situations.

One of Jasper's largest projects started at the end of 2016 and aims to offer creatives such as photographers, filmmakers and illustrators a platform to share important stories about environmental sustainability.

With collaborators from Saudi Arabia, Tuvalu Islands, England, Canada, America, Estonia and India already involved, the hopes for this new global organisation, called *In Focus*, is to align with organisations such as the United Nations, Ecosia and National Geographic. "Without photography or film, we wouldn't connect with stories around the world, or connect viewers with the causes to instigate change," says Jasper. "Visual communication is a powerful tool for sharing inspiring stories of hope and beauty from around the world and to promote the importance of environmental conservation. We live on such a diverse planet, I hope we start protecting it." For more of Jasper's work, visit: [www.jasperwilkins.com](http://www.jasperwilkins.com) Learn more about In Focus at: [www.infocus.org](http://www.infocus.org)

## Olympus OM-DE-M1 Mark II



### JOIN THE REVOLUTION!

The Olympus OM-DE-M1 Mark II sets a new benchmark for handling, innovation and performance. It's the perfect choice for photographers of all levels who require the ultimate in speed, versatility and quality. Whether you're a dedicated enthusiast happy to brave the weather in search of elusive wildlife, or a seasoned pro testing their skills against fast-moving action, the Olympus OM-DE-M1 Mark II is ready to take on any challenge. Features such as an AF system boasting 121 hyper-sensitive cross-type sensors and the incredible ability to shoot at 60 frames-per-second means the Olympus is ideally equipped for tough shooting situations. Based around the Micro Four Thirds system, the weatherproof body is far more compact than DSLRs and weighs only 500 grams, making it ideal for travel. Plus, its 20.4-megapixel sensor delivers still images and 4K video boasting incredible levels of detail. It's a camera for the future available today, so if you want the best, check it out! [www.olympus.co.uk](http://www.olympus.co.uk)

# Expert Critique

WANT YOUR SHOTS CRITIQUED BY THE DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERTS? TURN TO PAGE 61 TO FIND OUT HOW TO SUBMIT IMAGES



## THE BRIDGE

by Jose Antonio Cordoba

Canon EOS 5D Mk III with EF 85mm f/1.2L II USM lens.  
Exposure: 1/320sec at f/1.4 (ISO 200).

**What we think:** Jose submitted a few images to *Expert Critique* but this was our favourite one. This has been shot using soft, natural light only, and the results are great. The model's pose and position is relaxed and natural, and she stands out nicely against the surroundings. We do feel that the composition could possibly be improved slightly – by turning the camera to the left Jose would have excluded the dark area past the wooden support on the right, and allowed a bit more breathing space to the left of the frame, with the model positioned on the right-hand third. Also, we'd be tempted to dull down the highlight in the background slightly, although this is personal taste. A great portrait Jose and nicely exposed!

CROPPED



JOSE ANTONIO CORDOBA



## ON TRACK

by Matt Hancock

Canon EOS 7D Mk II with EF 300mm f/2.8L IS II USM lens.  
Exposure: 1/640sec at f/5.6 (ISO 100).

**What we think:** Nothing can prepare you for the speed that F1 cars approach and corner at, and Matt's done a great job of focusing and choosing a shutter speed to sharply capture the car whilst nicely rendering motion in the wheels. The camera tilt adds dynamism, and the striped curbing is a good lead-in line. Less tilt might have worked better though, as the lead-in line would be stronger entering the frame in the bottom-left corner.



### Why it works

- 1) Good use of lead-in line
- 2) Great focusing and shutter speed
- 3) Camera tilt adds dynamism

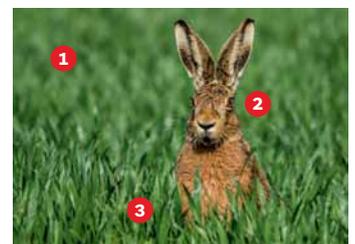


## BROWN HARE

by Adrian Stillwell

Canon EOS 7D Mk II with EF 400mm f/5.6L USM lens.  
Exposure: 1/1600sec at f/8 (ISO 500).

**What we think:** Photographing skittish wildlife is no mean feat, and Adrian has nailed it! The telephoto focal length has compressed perspective, but by stopping down to f/8 Adrian has rendered a nice depth-of-field and utilised his lens's sweet spot for optimal sharpness. Raising the ISO keeps the shutter speed nice and fast too. The framing is good and timing and focus are spot on – all in all there's not much we'd change here!



### Why it works

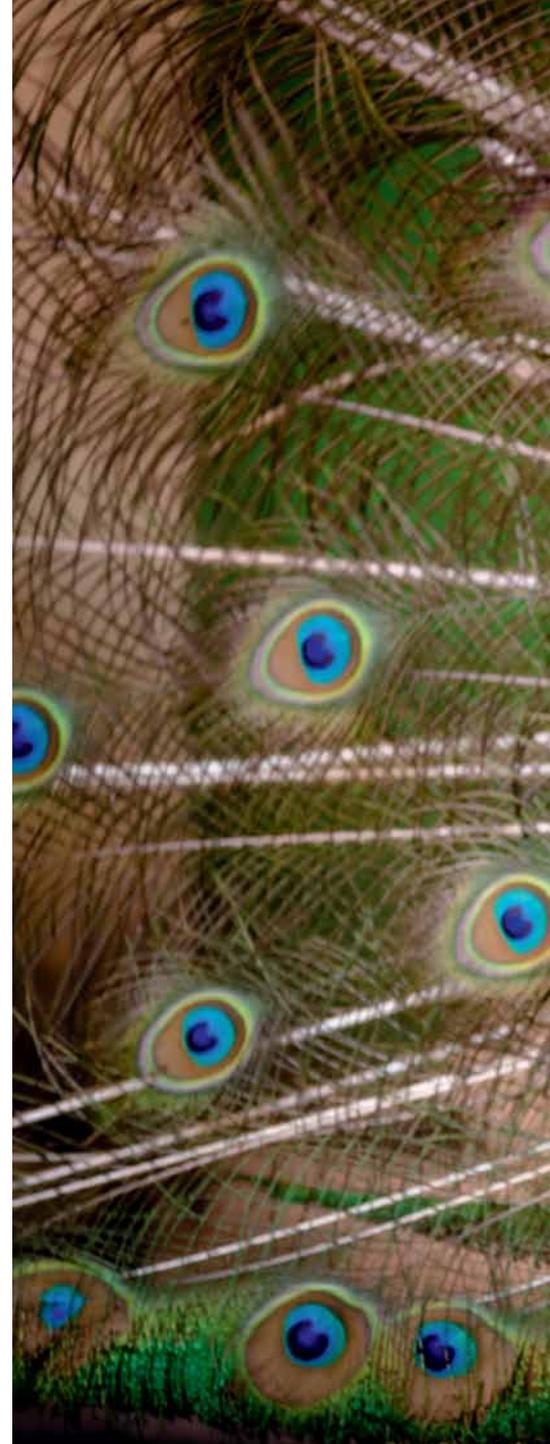
- 1) Diffused backdrop
- 2) Sharp focusing and good timing
- 3) Good depth-of-field

## PORTRAIT EXPERT

Caroline Schmidt



"I love everything about this portrait: the styling, the tonal warmth and the editing. The model looks relaxed in her pose, if somewhat serious, and the lines of the walkway are very strong compositionally. One of my niggles, however, is I want to shift her feet to the left. I know the image has been composed this way to include the length of the front leg as a lead-in line, but it places the model's face arguably too central and creates an area of dense darkness, which is distracting. I want to lock on to the model's face but I find my eye pulled to the bottom-left corner and then to the bright light in the background, which I'd also consider toning down. Alternatively, I may have even been tempted to extend the glow by introducing a subtle touch of flare or selectively lightening the background just to blend the transition from light to the dark as right now it's stark."



## ⬆️ LIGHT BRINGS JOY

by Paul Robinson

Canon EOS 5D Mk II with EF100mm f/2.8L Macro USM lens.  
Exposure: 1/160sec at f/2.8 (ISO 100).

**What we think:** If you're up to speed with our *Beginner's Guide to Studio Portraits* over the past two issues then you'll know just how effective and versatile a single-light set-up can be. Paul's opted for a dramatic side-lighting in this portrait, which is verging on a Rembrandt lighting style – see the small tell-tale triangle of light under the model's left eye? The only danger with using one light to the side is that the deep shadows can get a bit 'lost' against the dark background. A reflector or subtle fill light would help create a bit of separation. Good job Paul!

### Why it works

- 1) Classic one-light studio set-up
- 2) Black & white conversion suits subject
- 3) Clean solid backdrop suits style



## ⬆️ PAVO REAL

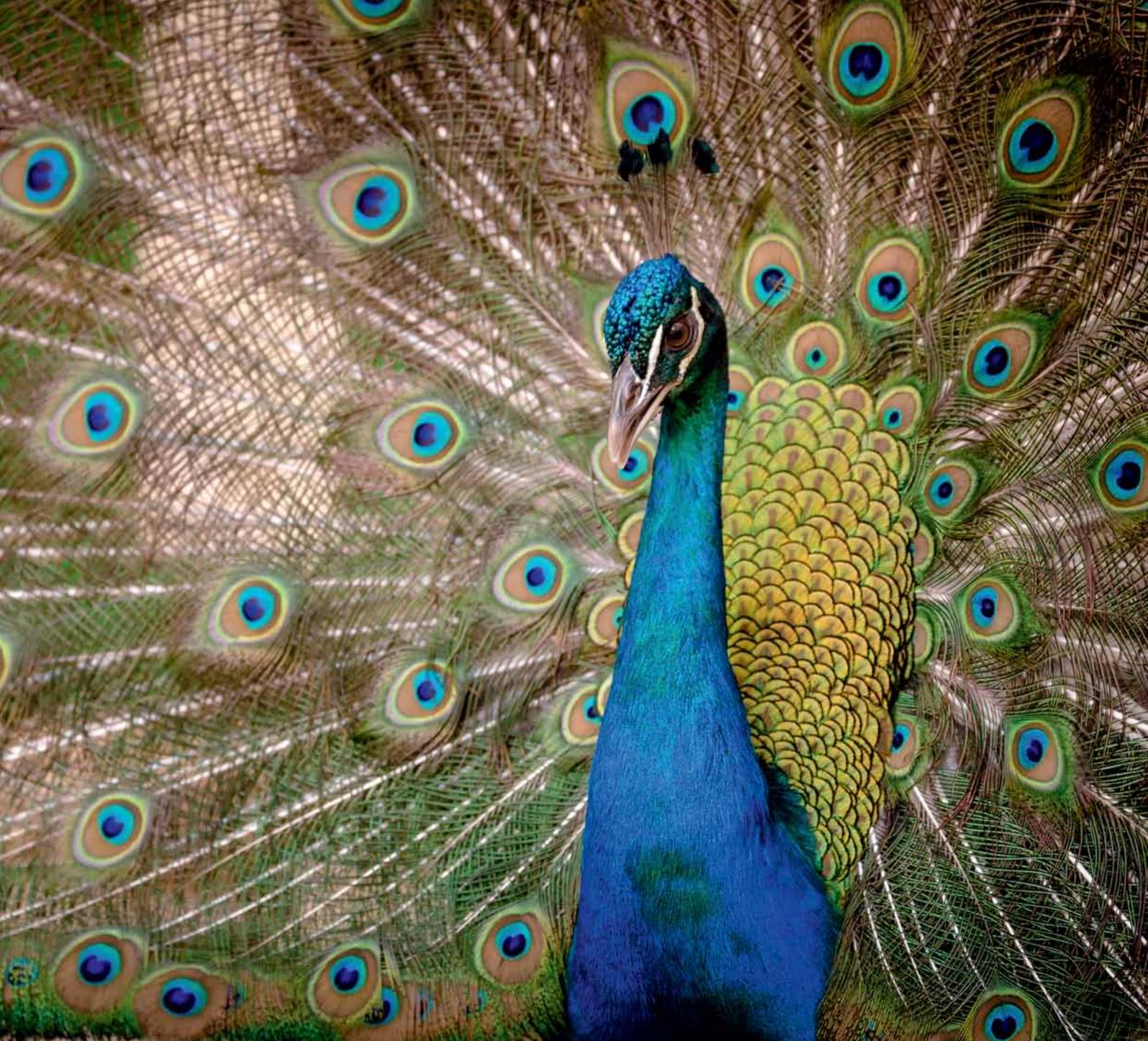
by Hooman Ziya

Canon EOS 6D with Canon EF70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM.  
Exposure: 1/60sec at f/5 (ISO 800).

**What we think:** We love the frame-filling nature of this image, and the peacock's display gives your eye plenty to explore. Composing the shot so that the bird is looking 'into' the frame from the right-hand third was a good choice and balances the composition well too. As with Adrian's image on the previous page, Hooman has upped his camera's ISO to keep the shutter speed in check, although he has done well to capture such a sharp photograph at 1/60sec!

### Why it works

- ✓ A frame-filling nature portrait
- ✓ Nice framing and balance
- ✓ Good technique



EDITED



HOOMAN ZIVA

### **WILDLIFE EXPERT** *Ben Hall*



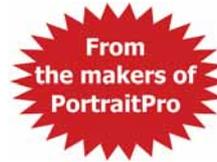
"Peacocks are undoubtedly one of the most photogenic birds, and Hooman has done well to capture this individual in all its splendour. The most critical part of a portrait shot, no matter the species, is nearly always the eye, and here it looks pin-sharp. The lighting is soft and even, helping to reveal plenty of plumage detail. The composition is effective, with the eye resting on the upper right third, but I feel this image would also work with a central composition, especially if the bird was looking straight down the lens. This would suit the symmetrical nature of the subject. A smaller aperture such as f/8 or f/11 would have also helped to bring the tail feathers into sharper focus. There looks to be a slight yellow cast so I've edited a version myself (left) – I've decreased the colour temperature in Lightroom. As the tail feathers are slightly soft, I softened them further using the Clarity slider to emphasise the bird's head. Overall, this is a lovely shot of a stunning bird."



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**✉ POST:** Burn your high-res images as JPEGs onto a CD/DVD, including a 'mugshot', and produce a contact sheet with location and technical details. Put it all in an envelope with a covering letter, including the submission form below and post to: *Digital SLR Photography*, PO BOX 1327, Stamford, Lincs PE2 2PT. Enclose an SAE if you'd like them returned.

### Digital SLR Photography contact form

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Workshop



Portfolio



Expert Critique



General

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### Checklist

- ✓ If submitting images by post, remember to include your 'mugshot' and contact details (name, address, email and daytime number).
- ✓ Please don't send us high-res images by email: resize your shots to 1,000 pixels along the longest edge and if we see something we like, we'll request the high-res file from you!
- ✓ Emails exceeding 8MB total size might not arrive, so split your submission down into two or more emails to ensure they get through.
- ✓ Please don't send us your entire portfolio – as you may appreciate we receive a lot of submissions and aren't able to look through hundreds of images – narrow the selection down and pick your best shots only.

For a full set of picture guidelines, or to ask any questions, please email [enquiries@dslrphotomag.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@dslrphotomag.co.uk)



# PORTRAIT BASICS

FOLLOWING ON FROM LAST MONTH'S *BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PORTRAIT COMPOSITION*, WE LOOK AT THE KEY TECHNIQUES YOU NEED TO KNOW TO ENSURE THAT EVERY PORTRAIT YOU TAKE IS AS SHARP AS POSSIBLE AND PERFECTLY EXPOSED

Words DANIEL LEZANO / Images: CAROLINE SCHMIDT & DANIEL LEZANO

**C**LARITY IS AT the heart of a great portrait image and to ensure your results are as clean and crisp as possible, you need to have full control of how you focus and expose the scene.

The great news is that your camera is rammed full of modes and functions designed to handle the most challenging of situations, so you quite literally have everything you need in your grasp to capture perfect results. However having the modes at your disposal and knowing which to set are two very different things. By learning which settings to select and when to use them, you'll be able to handle a variety of challenges and know exactly what to do to prevent simple mistakes from ruining your shots.

You'd be forgiven for thinking that the static nature of portraiture means that focusing and exposure should be a straightforward matter that your camera can handle on its own. While this is true some of the time, there are others where things aren't so clear cut. For instance, when your subject is partially obscured, you need to set up the camera to avoid it focusing on the wrong thing. When the scene is overly dark or light in tone, leaving the metering system to work things out for itself can spell trouble. And of course, as well as selecting the correct exposure, you'll want to choose the combination of shutter speed and aperture that gives the most aesthetically pleasing results. We'll cover all these topics and more in this guide.

# FOCUSING ON PORTRAITS

BY SIMPLIFYING THE SET-UP OF YOUR CAMERA'S MULTI-POINT AF SYSTEM, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WORK FASTER AND ACHIEVE A HIGHER RATE OF FOCUSING SUCCESS

**Y**OUR CAMERA'S MULTI-POINT AF system is a highly-sophisticated series of sensors and modules designed to provide you with fast and accurate focusing for a wide range of subjects and shooting situations. As you'll likely already know, you can set it to have all points active, choose a single point or have small groups of AF points active, with the autofocus locking

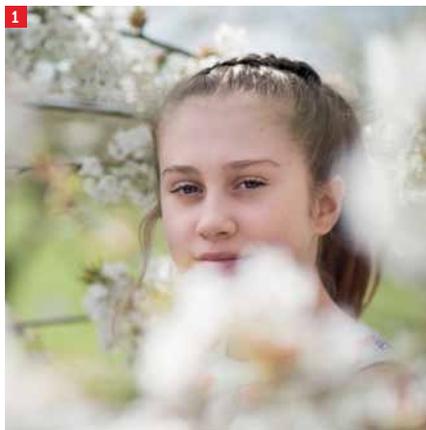
once initial focus is achieved or continuously adjusting focus to track subject movement. With so much choice, it's easy to get confused as to how best to set up your AF, but for portraiture, often having the simplest possible set-up is best. This section of the guide informs you how to set up your AF system to give the most precise focusing for when capturing stationary portraits.

## COMMON SITUATIONS THAT CAUSE FOCUSING PROBLEMS

**1) OBSTRUCTIONS:** If your subject is behind objects, such as trees or railings, then this will confuse the multi-point AF system, which may lock on to the obstruction. In these situations, focus via a single AF point. We provide an example of handling this problem over the page.

**2) LOW-LIGHT:** Most DSLRs use phase-detect AF, which uses two or more image sensors to establish whether the image is in focus. Mirrorless models, on the other hand, use contrast-detect AF, which is reliant on there being sufficient contrast to focus on. Both systems need light to operate, so in low light it may be better to focus manually.

**3) SHOOTING FROM AN ANGLE:** When shooting from a low or high angle, parts of the body or objects in the scene may be closer to the camera, leading to incorrect focusing. In these situations, use single-point AF and focus on the eye, or switch to manual focusing.



## BACK-BUTTON FOCUSING

As you'll see later in the guide when we cover AE-Lock, you can set the camera to focus and meter independently, which is useful in particular shooting situations. Some cameras have an AF-L (AF-Lock) or AF-On button on the rear for this purpose (hence the term back-button focusing), while with others, you can set a customisable function button to do this for you. You can use the AF-L/AF-On button rather than the shutter button with both methods (A and B) described on the right. If you prefer, you can use the AE-Lock button to lock the exposure, then use the shutter button to lock focus.



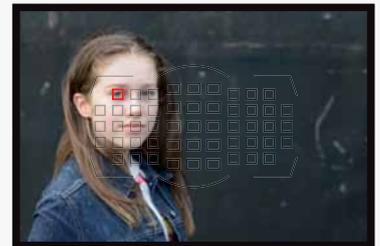
## SETTING UP AF FOR PORTRAITS

There are two key settings you need to select to ensure the AF system is optimised for portraits. These cover the AF point coverage and the behaviour of the AF once locked on the subject.



**1) SELECT SINGLE-POINT AF:** Use multi-point AF and you run the risk of the AF focusing on the wrong area. You want the subject's eyes to be as sharp as possible, so select a single AF sensor via the AF point selection button. Use the single AF point to focus on one of the subject's eyes, using one of these two methods:

**A) Use the central AF point, focus & recompose:** With most cameras, the central AF system is the most precise, using the more sensitive cross-type sensor, as opposed to a line sensor, making it the best option to use. This is especially true when shooting in low light, when the extra sensitivity can make a difference. With this method, you focus on the eye by pressing the shutter button halfway, recompose, then shoot.



**B) Select the AF point over one of the eyes:** If you plan on shooting several frames without shifting the position of the camera or subject, then select the AF sensor over one of the subject's eyes to save you having to recompose between frames. Take care to ensure you always have the AF point placed over the eye. This isn't the best option if you regularly shift your position or switch the camera's from upright to landscape format.



**2) Select single-shot AF:** Your camera's AF system has three main focusing modes, which control how the AF behaves after it initially locks focus. You want to select single-shot/one-shot AF, usually designated as AF-S, S-AF or similar. Doing so ensures that the focus doesn't shift once you've locked focus on the subject's eye, even if you recompose the frame. You do need to be careful as if you or the subject move after you focus and before you fire the shutter, then you risk an unsharp result.



### SWITCH TO SINGLE-POINT AF!

Subjects wearing a peaked cap or hat are often photographed out of focus as the multi-point AF locks onto the headwear protruding in front of the face. The easiest solution is to switch to single-point AF and focus on one of the subject's eyes. It's worth using a reflector in these situations too, to remove shade caused by the peak.

**Inset above:** Multi-point AF focuses on the hat's peak.  
**Main:** Single-point AF ensures perfect focus on the face, while a white reflector gives much needed light.

# HOW TO CONTROL SHARPNESS IN PORTRAITS

FOCUSING SKILLS AREN'T THE ONLY FACTOR THAT HAVE A MAJOR SAY IN THE SHARPNESS OF YOUR PORTRAIT IMAGES



## DEPTH-OF-FIELD

While your camera's focusing system decides where the exact point of sharp focus will fall in the scene, the zone of sharp focus within the scene is decided by the amount of depth-of-field that's applied to the image. This is determined by a number of factors, including the focal length of your lens, but the main way to affect the amount of depth-of-field is through your choice of aperture. Choose a wide aperture like  $f/2.8$  and the image has a very shallow depth-of-field, allowing the subject to stand out from its surroundings. Select a small aperture like  $f/16$  and a large area behind and in front of your subject will also appear sharp in the image – ideal for environmental portraits.

Portrait photographers love to shoot at wide apertures as the resulting shallow depth-of-field helps emphasise the subject in the scene. While you can achieve a good effect with most lenses, if you regularly shoot portraits we'd suggest investing in a lens with an aperture of  $f/1.8$  or faster for truly shallow depth-of-field. Full-frame or APS-C users should consider investing in the 50mm  $f/1.8$ , an affordable lens capable of delivering very sharp results.

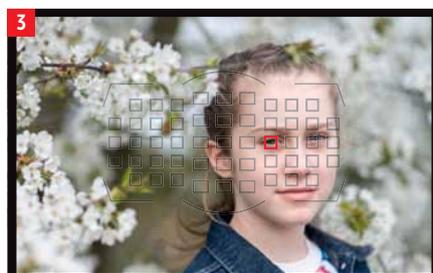
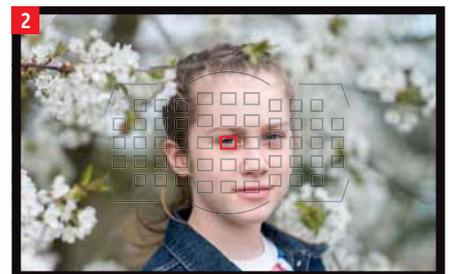
To show how apertures affect depth-of-field, we captured the same scene at a range of  $f$ /stops. When you're shooting on location, try a range of apertures and compare the effect to see which you prefer.

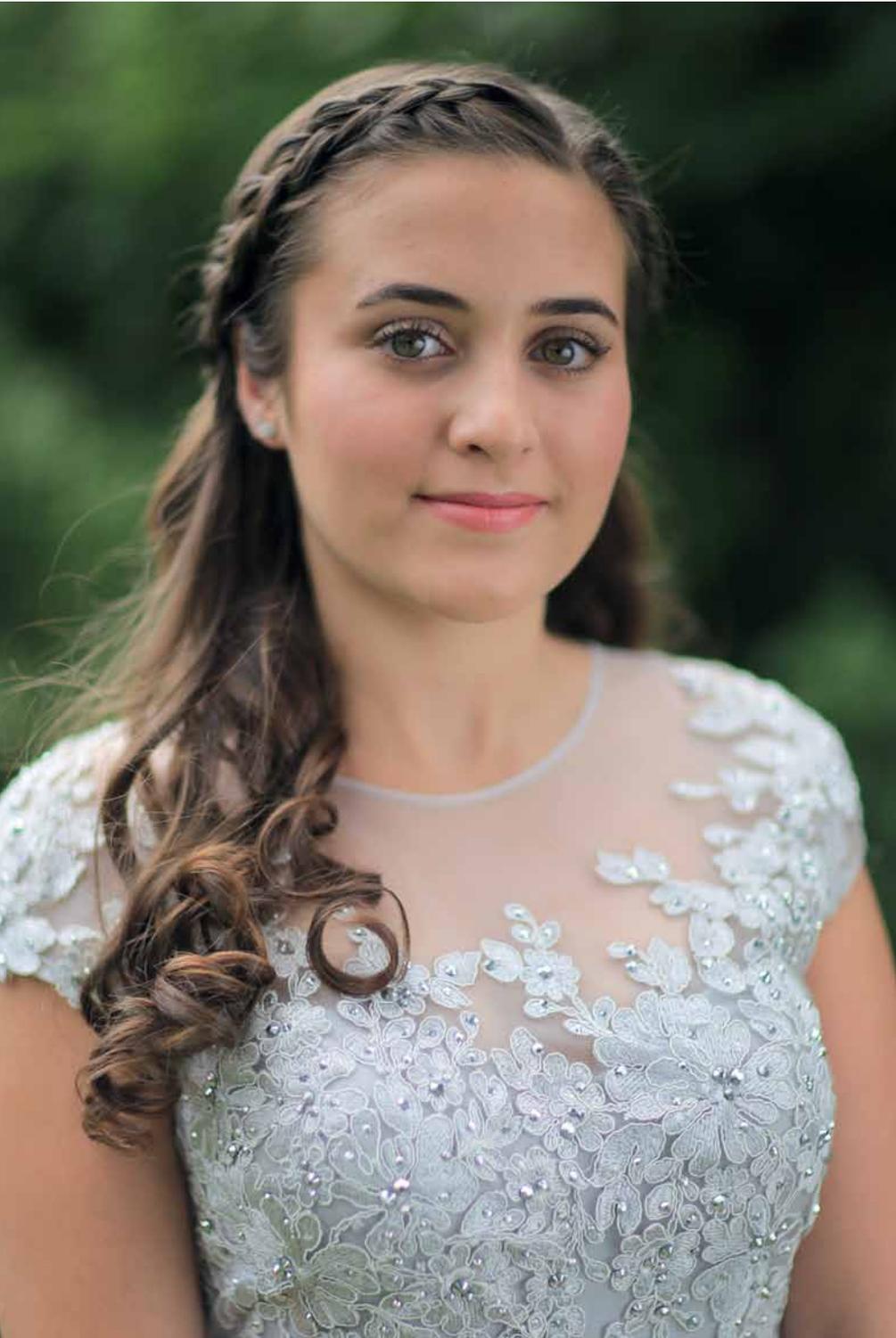


## FOCUS THROUGH OBSTRUCTIONS

While your subject is most likely the closest thing to your camera, there are situations when you may place them behind objects to add visual appeal and depth. Leave your camera to its own devices and the AF might focus on whatever is in the foreground, but take appropriate action and you can ensure you focus on exactly where you want...

- 1) With the camera set to multi-point AF, the focusing points lock on to the nearest object in the frame. In this case it's blossom-filled branches in front of our subject. Due to shallow depth-of-field, her face is very blurred. You've two easy ways in which you can avoid this problem.
- 2) You could switch to using the central AF point, focus on one of the subject's eyes by pressing the shutter button halfway, then recompose before fully depressing the shutter button.
- 3) Alternatively, select the AF point over one of the eyes and take the shot.
- 4) The result is a sharp portrait, with blossom acting as an attractive backdrop.





### TAKE CARE AT MAX APERTURE!

With extremely shallow depth-of-field allowing for very attractive portraits, it's no surprise that ultra-fast f/1.4 or f/1.2 lenses are a popular choice of optic with dedicated portrait photographers. While the results from shooting at these fast apertures can be stunning, you do need to take great care to ensure excellent sharpness. Not only must your focusing be critical, you need to take great care that neither yourself or your subject moves between the moment you focus and the shutter firing. As depth-of-field at these apertures can be measured in millimetres, you risk the subject being out of focus even if you only lean slightly between focusing and shooting. We'd recommend you compose the scene as you want it to appear in the final image, select the AF point falling over the eye and take the shot. Doing this, rather than using the central point and re-framing the shot, minimises any risk of a change in camera-to-subject distance between the focusing and shooting stages.



**Insets above:** Focusing with the central AF point on the eye, recomposing and then firing results in a slightly unsharp image at f/1.2. **Main:** Composing the shot, then selecting the AF point over the eye, ensures a perfectly-focused image.

### AVOID CAMERA SHAKE

With camera systems offering features like image stabilisation and excellent image quality at high ISO ratings, you should be able to minimise the risk of blur resulting from camera shake. The easiest method is, whenever possible, to set a shutter speed that's the reciprocal of the lens in use. So when shooting with a 50mm lens, set 1/50sec or faster, at 200mm use 1/200sec or faster and so on. Using the stabiliser too should remove any risk.

SHAKE AT 1/40SEC (85MM LENS)



SHARP AT 1/100SEC (85MM LENS)



# MAIN EXPOSURE OPTIONS TO USE FOR PORTRAITS

YOUR CAMERA HAS A MULTITUDE OF FUNCTIONS, MODES AND OPTIONS THAT ARE GEARED TOWARDS HELPING PRODUCE PERFECT EXPOSURES. WE COVER THE MAIN OPTIONS TO CONSIDER USING WHEN YOU'RE SHOOTING PORTRAITS

**Y**OU COULD BE forgiven for wondering why your camera has been packed with so many metering options and overrides, seeing as it gets the exposure correct most of the time. Well, the fact remains that no exposure system is perfect and there are scenarios and conditions in which under- or overexposure is likely to happen. Pre-empting these situations and knowing what to do if your camera's metering system struggles to give a correct exposure, as well as deciding what settings or exposure aids are best, are some of the factors we're looking at here.

You'll most likely be using aperture-priority mode, as this is the most popular

choice of exposure mode for portraits, as it allows you to easily control depth-of-field. Some advanced photographers prefer to use manual mode, taking full control of the exposure by adjusting shutter speeds, apertures and the ISO rating. But, unless you've a wealth of experience in handling difficult situations, or you're using exposure aids like a light meter or grey card (both covered later), we'd suggest you start off by using aperture-priority mode. Not only will this mode allow you to control depth-of-field with ease, but it will also mean you can quickly access the relevant metering patterns and overrides that you need to ensure perfect exposures every time.

## EXPOSURE AIDS



● **GREY CARD:** Available for £10 or less, these low-cost exposure aids, printed at 18% grey, provide a basic but reliable way of taking an accurate meter reading, regardless of the conditions. Lastolite produces the collapsible EzyBalance, for around £25, which is more robust and is well worth a try. [www.manfrotto.co.uk](http://www.manfrotto.co.uk)



● **LIGHT METER:** Many photographers still use a light meter to calculate exposure. While not as popular as they once were, they offer a reliable and fast way of taking accurate readings in all lighting conditions. We rate the £150 Sekonic L-308B II as the best value light meter on the market. [www.sekonic.com](http://www.sekonic.com)



● **REFLECTOR:** The humble silver/white reflector is always worth keeping close to hand for portraits. They're ideal for bouncing light back on your subject and are particularly useful when your subject is backlit. A 105cm 5-in-1 reflector costs around £25 while more pricey grip-types are great when shooting solo.



● **EXPODISC 2.0:** This translucent disc is placed over the front of the lens and is used to provide accurate White Balance and exposure readings. It's available in 77mm (£38) and 82mm (£40) filter sizes – if your lens has a smaller filter size you can take a reading by simply holding it in place. [www.expodisc.com](http://www.expodisc.com)

## METERING PATTERNS



**MULTI-ZONE:** Whether you use Nikon's Matrix, Canon's Evaluative or another brand's multi-zone pattern, they all work in a similar way – dividing the image frame into several segments, evaluating the exposure in each, then using these readings, along with a database of thousands of stored images, to establish the correct exposure.



**SPOT/PARTIAL:** These selective modes take the exposure reading from a small area of the frame – spot is more precise, with a metering zone of between 2-5%, while partial has a larger zone of around 7-9%. They're ideal for use in difficult lighting conditions – you just need to take care and ensure you take the spot/partial reading from a mid-tone.



**CENTRE-WEIGHTED AVERAGE:** The oldest and most basic of metering patterns, centre-weighted takes an average reading across the whole image frame but weighted towards the central area. It can be influenced by larger areas of light or dark, so unless experienced, you're better off sticking to multi-zone metering as your default option.

## KEY EXPOSURE OVERRIDES



**EXPOSURE COMPENSATION:** You should get used to using this simple yet brilliant facility as soon as you can. It offers a fast and easy way to make adjustments to your exposure and is the most useful override option. Turn to page 72 for more info.



**AE-LOCK:** This facility allows you to lock exposure independently of autofocus, as well as be used with spot metering to take a reading from a small area of the frame. We provide a small tutorial on using AE-Lock on page 73.

## 18% GREY: THE AVERAGE TONE

It's worth refreshing your memory about how cameras assess the tones in a scene when calculating the exposure. Every metering system works on the basis that the average of all the tones in a scene equates to a mid-tone of 18% grey. This proves to be remarkably accurate for most scenes, but it isn't perfect, hence the need for cameras to have exposure overrides to ensure correct results in trickier shooting conditions.

## COMMON SITUATIONS THAT CAN MESS WITH YOUR METERING



IVASH/STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

● **BACKLIT SCENES:** Stand your subject outdoors on a bright day with the sun behind them and your camera is likely to underexpose the subject due to the brighter background fooling the metering. AE-Lock, exposure compensation or an exposure aid will all help here.



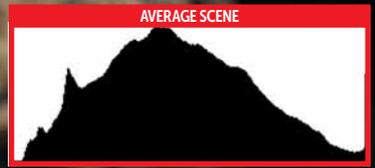
BOYAN/SHUTTERSTOCK

● **DARKER THAN AVERAGE SCENE:** Darker subjects or backgrounds cause the camera to overexpose the scene unless you take preventative measures, including using negative exposure compensation or taking a spot reading from a mid-tone. Turn to page 70 for more.



ANINA NAHABED/SHUTTERSTOCK

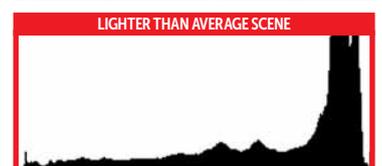
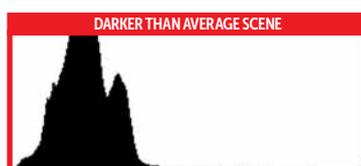
● **LIGHTER THAN AVERAGE SCENE:** Capture a subject wearing light-coloured clothes against a light backdrop and the camera's multi-zone metering pattern will most likely underexpose the whole scene. Applying positive exposure compensation is the quickest solution.



## USING THE HISTOGRAM

When assessing exposure, most photographers review the images on the camera's LCD monitor to determine if it's over or underexposed. While this is a popular method, it's not the most accurate, as you're at the mercy of the brightness and calibration of the screen. A better method is to view the image's histogram on the screen, and use this to assess the spread of tones in the image file. This method is more accurate, as long as you're aware of how a histogram displays its results. Here's the key histogram facts you need to know.

A histogram is a visual aid that shows the distribution of tones in an image, from the darkest shadows (far left) to the brightest highlights (far right). Ideally, you want all the tones to fall within these two extremes, with the peaks (representing areas with the most tones in the image) to fall in the central area. For an average scene, histograms skewed to the left depict an underexposed image, while one skewed to the right reveals overexposure. However, bear in mind that a correctly exposed scene where the tones are mainly dark will have peaks towards the left, while overly light scenes will have peaks to the right. We've provided three typical examples of histograms here.



# STANDARD WAYS TO METER FOR PORTRAITS

THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS TO CORRECTLY EXPOSE YOUR PORTRAITS. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR METHODS

**L**ET'S BE HONEST, with your camera's multi-zone metering being so reliable, you would be forgiven for taking shot after shot without checking your exposure. It's so easy to forget that your camera can sometimes get it wrong and requires a helping hand, but the sad truth is that no metering pattern is infallible.

Thankfully there are a number of methods that you can use to ensure you avoid exposure error and we cover the main ones here. As well as using only the camera's facilities, we show how a couple of popular exposure aids can help establish the correct exposure. All can be relied upon to give good results, so give them a go and choose one that best suit your way of working.

As you'll find from talking to different photographers, from beginners to advanced enthusiasts, everyone has their preferences. Some prefer the speed and simplicity of taking and reviewing a few test shots before making any necessary exposure adjustments, while others prefer to spend slightly longer to calculate the precise exposure before starting to shoot.

When using the shoot and review method, you can use any exposure mode, although we recommend aperture-priority mode. When using exposure aids, like a light meter or grey card, you'll need to set the camera to manual mode so that you can shoot at the suggested exposure settings. Don't worry, it's easier than you might think!

## PRO TIP

### USING MANUAL MODE

If you've never used manual mode before, there's no reason to feel intimidated. Set M on your mode dial, then use the input dial to change the aperture or shutter speed. With some cameras, like many of the Canon EOS models, you need to press the exposure compensation button to allow the aperture to be changed. You'll note the indicator on the exposure scale changing position as you alter the settings. If the camera is aimed at a grey card, the indicator should rest on zero. If you're setting the exposure after taking a meter reading, ignore the indicator setting.

## REVIEWING THE HISTOGRAM

When reviewing the image on the LCD monitor, and also using the histogram as a guide to exposure, you must bear in mind the tonal characteristics of the scene you've shot. In the example of this page, the image has virtually no highlights, only a small amount of mid-tone (our subject's face) and an extensive area of dark tones (the wooden garage doors). Therefore, if correctly exposed, the histogram should be weighted to the left, as the majority of tones are in this shadow area, with a peak in the middle region that represents the subject's face.



## POPULAR EXPOSURE METHODS

### MULTI-ZONE METERING

We've set up a simple portrait shoot to reveal how metering systems can be fooled into exposure error and the different methods that can be used to give a correct result. We asked our subject Indi to wear very dark clothes and placed him in front of large, dark brown garage doors.

● **THE RESULT:** We take a shot with the camera set to aperture-priority mode and multi-zone metering. The overly dark tones of the scene cause the camera to set too slow a shutter speed, resulting in Indi's face being grossly overexposed. Let's look at the three most popular ways to overcome this problem.



### 1) REVIEW LCD THEN RESHOOT

This method is the most popular choice with amateur photographers and is used by many pros too, mainly because it's fast and doesn't require any additional kit. After taking the shot, review the image/histogram on the LCD monitor and make a judgement call on how much exposure compensation to apply (in this case -1/2EV). Take another frame and check the result.

● **PROS & CONS:** This method is fast and easy and there is no need to use any exposure aids. However, the brightness of the LCD monitor can lead to some inaccuracy when reviewing the images.



**EXPOSED TO PERFECTION**  
Understanding how metering systems interpret different scenes can help to ensure you capture perfect exposures every time.



## 2) GREY CARD & SPOT METERING

Ask your subject to hold the grey card near their face and angled towards you. Set your camera to manual and select your desired aperture. Now change the shutter speed until the indicator in the exposure scale is aligned with the zero. If the shutter speed is slow and risks causing shake, increase the ISO rating, allowing a faster shutter speed to be set.

● **PROS & CONS:** This method gives very accurate results and a decent grey card only costs around £10. The downside is that it takes a little time to use this option, so it's not ideal when you need to work quickly.



## 3) USE A LIGHT METER

This is the most involved method but is one favoured by many professionals. With the meter set to the same ISO rating as the camera, hold it close to your subject's face, with the white dome facing the camera, and press the meter's button to take a reading. With the camera in manual mode, set the meter's indicated reading on the camera and take a shot – the exposure should be perfect.

● **PROS & CONS:** This is a reliable and accurate method but requires the additional expense for a light meter. Not using the meter correctly can lead to incorrect exposure so novices must take extra care.



### USING EXPOSURE COMPENSATION



The exposure compensation (EC) facility is one of your camera's most important features, so learning how to use it is a key skill to master to help ensure you can quickly handle scenes that lead to poor exposures. Depending on your camera, this facility is accessed via a button designated with a +/- symbol, or a dial on the top-plate or rear of your camera. Most models allow you to make changes of up to three or five stops in 1/3-stop or 1/2-stop increments.

Understanding how to use this facility is simple. Applying a positive value increases the exposure while setting a negative value decreases it. So, if your image is too dark,

you should apply positive EC, while if it's too light, you should set negative compensation.

The actual value you need to apply varies from scene to scene and, with experience, you'll soon be able to work out the amount you need to set. The histogram is a useful aid with this too. If you're unsure, we'd recommend applying a full stop, check the result, make any further changes as required then take and review your shot.

Exposure compensation lets you apply changes with minimal delay and if you're shooting in aperture-priority mode, alters the shutter speed, leaving the aperture (and depth-of-field) unaffected.



**1** This is a tricky scene for the multi-zone meter to handle – the subject is placed against a large dark area, while the passageway features bright highlights. The multi-zone meter doesn't do too bad a job, but the subject has recorded slightly underexposed.

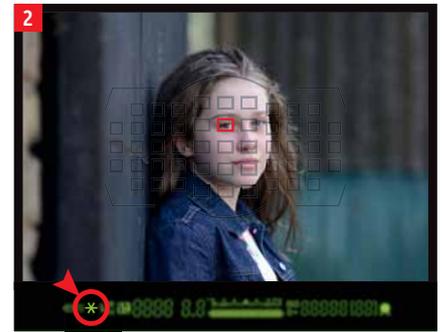
**2** The exposure error isn't massive, so I apply positive compensation of two-thirds of a stop and review the result. This time, the image is slightly too light, with lost detail in the subject's face, so the exposure requires another slight tweak to give a better result.

**3** I reduce the positive exposure compensation to one third of a stop and try again. This time the result is far better, with the subject's face looking perfectly exposed. If you've never used exposure compensation, give it a try – you won't believe how fast and easy it is to use.



## USING AE-LOCK

We can see on the left how useful the exposure compensation (EC) facility is when used with multi-zone metering, but another option is to use Auto Exposure-Lock, or AE-Lock. This facility is one of the most under used exposure overrides and is normally used to take a precise reading from an area of mid-tone in a scene that is overly light or dark, or one where the subject is placed in a difficult lighting situation. It's particularly useful when you want to take an exposure reading from a different area/subject to where you're focusing. With some cameras, when activating AE-Lock, the camera takes a spot meter reading from the central area automatically, while with others it uses the selected metering pattern. To avoid any risk of exposure error, we suggest selecting the spot pattern so that you can place the mid-tone area in the central area of the frame and take the AE-Lock reading from it. This example deals with taking an AE-Lock from the subject's face, before framing the portrait for the final composition.



**1** In this scene, our subject Mya is in a scene of mainly dark tones. A shot taken using multi-zone metering gives an overexposed result, so we need to apply some form of exposure override to correct this.

**2** So that we're able to take a reading from Mya's face, we switch the metering to spot. With this selected, we place the central area over her face and press the AE-Lock button to take a reading from her skin tones, then press the shutter button halfway to focus on her eye.

**3** With the AF and exposure locked, we can now compose the image and fire the shutter to take the shot. With most cameras, the exposure remains locked until the camera goes to sleep, allowing several frames to be fired at the same 'locked' exposure.

**3**



# GARDEN CLOSE-UPS

THE GARDEN IS HOME TO A RICH TAPESTRY OF CLOSE-UP SUBJECTS – VIBRANT BLOOMS, INTERESTING TEXTURES, EXQUISITE DETAILS AND COUNTLESS BUGS AND BEASTIES. BUT, HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE FRAME-FILLING SHOTS OF SUCH SMALL OBJECTS? WE SET READER IAN PAIN THE CHALLENGE TO CAPTURE THREE GREAT GARDEN CLOSE-UPS, USING THREE DIFFERENT ACCESSORIES. WITH CLOSE-UP GURU ROSS HODDINOTT ACCOMPANYING HIM, LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT HOW HE DID...

**R**EGARDLESS OF WHERE you live, you're never far from a photogenic garden. You may not need to travel any further than your own backyard to photograph great garden close-ups. If you don't have a garden, or lack green fingers, visit a local park, public garden or stately home. Visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk) and [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk) for an idea of what's nearby.

Throughout spring and summer, gardens are ablaze with colour, buzzing with life, and full of interesting and varied subjects. Flowers are the most obvious subjects. Beds brimming with examples of all shapes and sizes make great shots, particularly in close-up when you can highlight a subject's beauty and achieve maximum impact.

Of course, colourful and interesting blooms are not the only subjects in gardens. From spring through early autumn, gardens are alive with butterflies, bees, ladybirds, snails and other interesting little critters. All potentially make great subjects, particularly if you can capture them in context with their colourful environment. Also look for texture, detail, shape and form. For example, try to reveal the texture of tree bark or highlight the veining of a leaf. Get down on your hands and knees and take a good, close look at foliage, stems, petals, grasses, buds and blossom – you will be surprised at what you discover. Ordinary things can look extraordinary with a close-focusing lens.

But don't you need a costly, specialist macro lens to shoot close-ups? Not necessarily. It is true that a dedicated macro lens is best for the job – being optimised for close focus, offering a life-size reproduction ratio of 1:1, and providing a larger camera-to-subject working distance. However, there are cheaper alternatives if you wish to

## OUR EXPERT: *Ross Hoddinott*



Ross is one of the UK's best-known outdoor photographers and author of *Digital Macro & Close-up Photography*. He is a multi-award winner in Wildlife Photographer of the Year and International Garden Photographer of the Year. [www.rosshoddinott.co.uk](http://www.rosshoddinott.co.uk)

**Ross's kit:** Nikon D810, 200mm micro, 105mm micro, Laowa 15mm, Wimberley Plamp, Lastolite reflector, Manfrotto LEDs, Gitzo Systematic & Manfrotto head, F-stop SUHKA.

achieve frame-filling garden close-ups. The best budget option is a close-up filter, which screws onto the front of a standard lens and allows it to focus nearer – in effect, working like a magnifying glass. You can buy these for under £10 and they are great value. Opt for a +3 or +4 dioptre. While they degrade image quality slightly – most noticeably toward the periphery of the frame – they are capable of excellent results and provide a cut-price introduction to shooting close-ups. Auto extension tubes are another good budget buy. These are hollow tubes that fit between the camera and lens to reduce the minimum focusing distance. As they are constructed without any optical components, they do not affect image quality. Although manual tubes are available and are cheaper, they disable the camera's automatic focusing and metering. They are available in different degrees of extension – the wider the tube, the more they extend the lens, producing a higher level of magnification. The only major drawback of using close-up filters and extension tubes is that they don't provide a

## OUR READER: *Ian Pain*



Ian is a Database Administrator working in Exeter, Devon. A keen photographer for several years, Ian's passion lies in landscape photography, but he's also developed a growing interest for shooting close-ups. Fact: he's also a well-practised master at producing a nice home brew!

**Ian's kit:** Canon EOS 5D Mk III, Canon EF 17-40mm f/4L, Canon EF 50mm f/1.8, Gitzo GT2532S Systematic & Manfrotto 410 head.

large working distance from the subject. In other words, you have to get very close to subjects to take frame-filling shots. While this might not be practical for wildlife, it is rarely an issue when shooting inanimate objects, like flowers, fungi and foliage.

Garden close-ups is a fun and highly accessible subject, which is why we thought it would be perfect for this month's challenge. However, to add a little more spice, we decided to ask reader Ian Pain to capture three garden close-ups using three different close-up accessories.

For the first he would only possess a close-up filter, for the second he would use an extension tube, and for the third he could finally get his hands on a dedicated macro lens. By using the three different attachments, he would be able to highlight the benefits – and challenges – of each, and demonstrate that you don't necessarily need a big budget to capture great close-ups... well that is what we hope!

Let's find out how Ian got on during his day visiting RHS Rosemoor, near Great Torrington in Devon, with Ross at his side.





#### TIME FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP

Ian gets to grips with the close-up filter in no time, and this image, one of the first of the day, was a favourite.

Exposure: 1/400sec at f/3.2 (ISO 100)



## CHALLENGE 1: CLOSE-UP FILTER

We arranged to meet outside of the main entrance and were first in the queue to enter the gardens at their 10am opening time. First things first, though – Ian and I made a beeline for the café to have a quick cuppa and discuss the day and challenges ahead. Living in Devon, it is no surprise Ian has a passion for landscape photography – both the stunning Devonshire coast and Dartmoor are on his doorstep. Ian has also shot a number of weddings over the years and is technically an accomplished photographer. However, with a young family plus the demands of work, Ian explained that photography has had to take a backseat over the past couple of years. Therefore, our day together would prove a welcome opportunity to dust off his Canon camera. Although overcast, it was a still day, which would make life easier – achieving pin-sharp images of windblown subjects can be tricky, if not impossible.

By his own admission, Ian is a relative newcomer to shooting close-ups. Although he's dabbled with the subject in the past, he has never really got to grips with it – which is exactly why Ian applied to take part in *The Photo Workshop*. I explained that today would be focused on garden close-ups – great images of either flowers, foliage or any natural texture we discovered while we explored the 65-acres of garden. As a reader of *Digital SLR Photography* magazine, Ian already knew exactly what would be expected of him – he would be set challenges and need to take three great images that fulfilled the brief. For each challenge he would be using a different close-up accessory. No sooner had he got accustomed to using one piece of kit, then he would have to switch to another. Aren't we kind? I explained that he would start the day using a close-up filter.

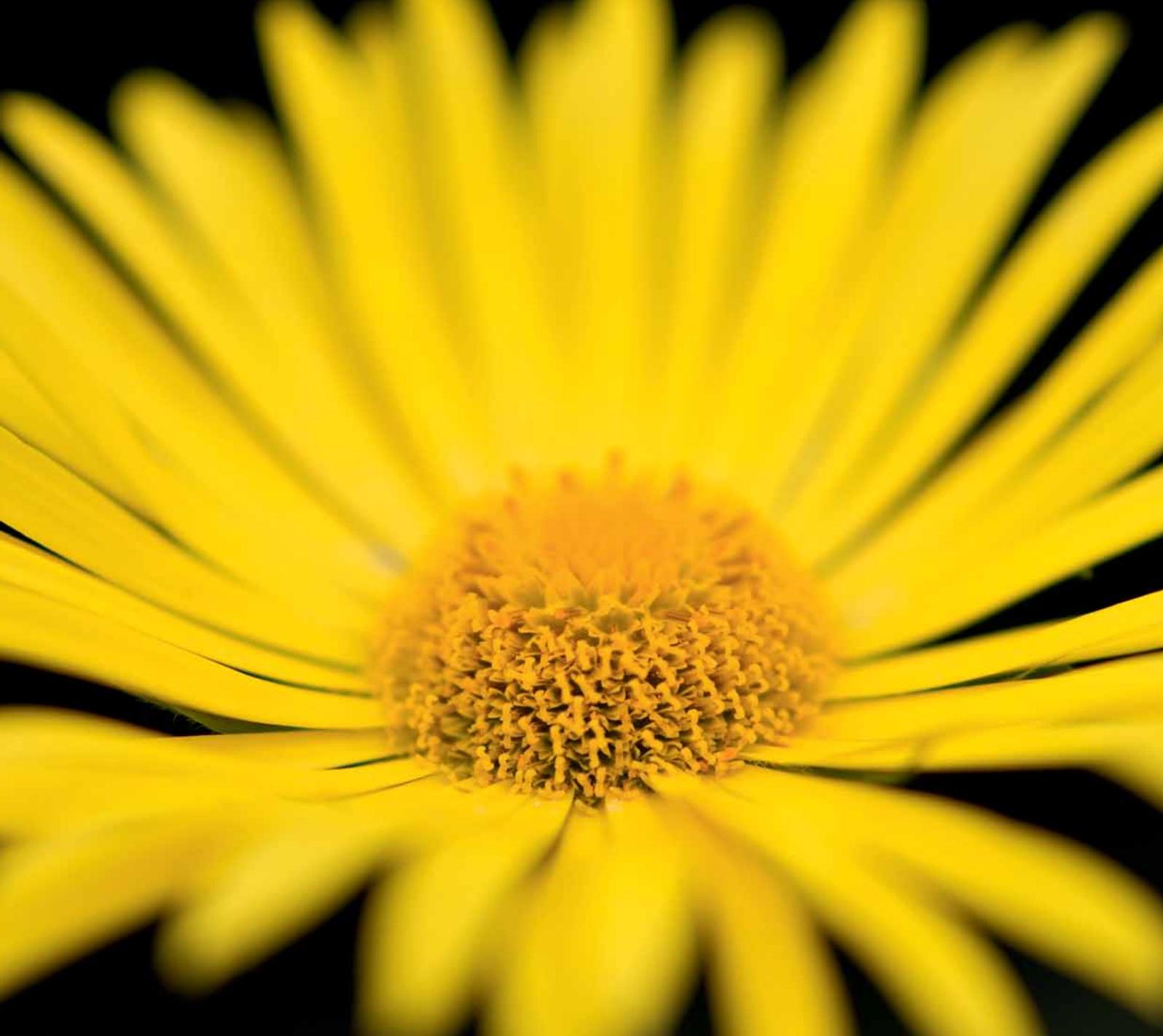
Who said shooting close-ups had to involve costly, specialist kit? For the princely sum of £6.99, you can buy a Smardy (no, I hadn't heard of them either!) close-up filter, complete with protective case and lens



cloth – and free delivery via Amazon Prime. Bargain! A +4 dioptre is a good choice, offering a useful level of magnification, more than sufficient to achieve frame-filling close-ups of larger flowers. We hadn't ventured far from the café when our eyes got drawn to a cluster of bright yellow Harpur Crewe flowers. They were in peak condition – an important consideration whenever shooting close-ups. They were tall flowers, so Ian could easily isolate them from other plants and foliage growing close-by. Using a standard 50mm lens, Ian took a few quick shots with the lens set to its



closest focusing distance in order to achieve maximum magnification. As suspected, the lens wouldn't focus close enough to capture a decent shot. Ian attached the filter – designed to reduce the lens's minimum focusing distance and magnify the subject. It allowed Ian to get physically nearer and fill the frame with just a single flower. The filter clearly made a significant difference. Ian was now able to achieve a shot with far more impact and purpose. Ian tried a few shots from directly overhead, but these looked a little flat. I suggested he lowered his shooting angle slightly to create



1) Ian uses LiveView to ensure he's focused accurately. 2) The 50mm's standard minimum focusing distance wasn't cutting it – time for the close-up filter. 3) The +4 dioptre screws onto the lens's filter thread mount in a matter of seconds.

a more three-dimensional feel. Ian adjusted the height of his tripod and re-shot. The angle proved more flattering. We then experimented with aperture choice, with an  $f$ /number of  $f/5.6$  achieving a good level of depth-of-field – being small enough to keep the point of focus (the flower's centre) in sharp focus, but wide enough to keep the zone of focus attractively shallow. One of the nice things about shooting flowers is that you have plenty of time to play and refine your set-up. We were both impressed with how the filter performed. Close-up filters tend to have a negative effect on image quality, but for this type of arty close-up, a little fall-off in quality toward the edge of the frame really isn't a major worry. The only struggle Ian had was positioning the camera so close to the subject. The working distance is small when using close-up dioptres, so you tend to inadvertently knock

### CHALLENGE 1 *Pro verdict*

"Given their low cost, it is easy to overlook the usefulness of close-up filters. They can be fiddly to use as you have to get so close to your subject. However, for garden subjects, they are very capable – as Ian ably demonstrates. His Harpur Crewe close-up is striking and the shallow depth-of-field suits the subject. Using a tripod and LiveView allows Ian to get the precision he needs. With arguably the most challenging close-up accessory mastered, Ian could look forward to the next challenge with confidence."

your subject while setting up, and this can be frustrating. Otherwise, Ian had no issues. He carried on using the filter to take photos for another hour or so, shooting other flowers we found. However, Ian's initial shots ended up being his favourite.

An unexpectedly heavy April shower forced us to retreat to the shelter of the restaurant. Time for a quick pasta and to review the images taken so far.



### Reflecting in a little light

In overcast weather, you can easily add a little extra light to your subject by using a reflector – a hand-held white, gold or silver reflective disc that you place close to your subject to bounce light onto it. The likes of Lastolite produce a range of compact and collapsible reflectors, so be sure to invest in one of these inexpensive accessories.



## CHALLENGE 2: AUTO EXTENSION TUBES

With the formal garden now filling up with visitors, we decided to walk further into the garden to escape the hoards. With the close-up filter packed away, we begin searching for new and varied subjects. We decided to take a closer look at a blossoming magnolia tree. The large pink flowers looked beautiful, but again an unaided standard lens couldn't do the subject justice. However, with 20mm of extension attached, Ian could achieve the levels of magnification he desired. For the challenge, we had a set of Kenko auto extension tubes at our disposal. You can buy a set of 36mm, 20mm and 12mm tubes, for around £100. The more extension you use, the greater the level of magnification you will achieve. However, for a larger flower like this, the medium tube sufficed. Again, this is a close-up attachment that doesn't provide a large subject-to-camera distance, so Ian had to get within 10-20cm of his subject to record a frame-filling result. Although this can restrict light, with inanimate subjects like flowers, it is not a huge drawback. While Ian worked hand-held, I encouraged him to increase his ISO rating to help maintain a workable fast shutter speed. Ian snapped away, varying his shooting angle and perspective. He commented on how even the tiniest adjustment can make such a significant difference to the shot when you work in close-up – even a few millimetres of movement this way or that can completely make or break your composition.

1) Ian takes the shot while adding a little artificial light. 2) The extension tubes sit between camera body and lens. 3) With various lengths of extension tube available, we settled on the 20mm medium length for the task at hand. 4) Backlighting highlights the leaf's veiny structure. 5) For pin-point focusing accuracy, Ian focuses manually using the LiveView's zoom.

Next, Ian noticed some lovely detail on the leaf of a tree. We held the branch steadily in place using a clamp attached to my tripod legs. Ian carefully placed his camera, this time using a tripod and positioning his camera parallel to the leaf to keep as much of the subject as possible within the lens's plane of focus for overall sharpness. Again, focusing was achieved via LiveView, and adjusted manually, rather than using autofocus, which can prove unreliable when working at higher magnification. However, with the light being so flat, results looked rather lifeless and lacked vibrancy. I decided to introduce Ian to the creative possibilities of using artificial light. With small garden subjects it is relatively easy to alter or manipulate light using flash or LED units. I explained to Ian that I typically favour reflected or LED lighting, as you can easily preview and regulate their effect before triggering the shutter. I hand-held a small LED light behind the leaf in order to create backlighting – the light completely transformed the scene, making the image far more striking and

### CHALLENGE 2 Pro verdict

"Ian captured a number of different subjects using extension tubes, achieving some very nice results. I really like Ian's backlit leaf image, though – it was undoubtedly my favourite from the sequence. I wanted him to take a variety of garden shots, not just colourful blooms. Backlighting really highlights the leaf's detail and veining. By filling the frame entirely – something made possible due to the level of extension – Ian has maximised the shot's impact. It is a beautiful, almost abstract looking close-up. Image quality is exceptionally high as using extension has no impact on picture quality."

colourful. Ian admitted that photographing such an ordinary object in a creative way opened his eyes to what could be achieved with minimal time, effort and cost.

Time for a quick slice of chocolate cake in the garden tearooms, before swapping Ian's standard 50mm for a dedicated macro as we embark on the final challenge.



**LEAF IT OUT**  
By filling the frame with the leaf's intricate details, Ian has captured a captivating close-up image.

Exposure: 1/125sec at f/11 (ISO 1250)



NO EXTENSION TUBES



WITH EXTENSION TUBES



5



1

### CHALLENGE 3: MACRO LENS

By the time we had devoured our cake it was approaching 3:30pm. The gardens shut at 6pm, so it was time to focus on our third and final challenge – using a macro lens. For this challenge, Ian used a Sigma 150mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM macro lens. Telephoto macros provide a much larger working distance, meaning you can capture close-ups from further away. They also have a narrower field-of-view, so it is easier to capture attractive, diffused backdrops. However, they are technically more challenging to use, being heavier and more cumbersome; while focusing needs to be pinpoint accurate, as they only provide a very shallow depth-of-field. A macro is the best choice for close-up enthusiasts and Sigma are renowned for their high quality and affordable range.

Rosemoor is home to an area of woodland, where we noticed there was a large carpet of anemones. These are pretty little white flowers and Ian needed no encouragement to begin exploring with his newly-acquired macro. I encouraged a low, eye-level shooting angle to create the most natural and intimate result. I mentioned how I personally like to use out-of-focus vegetation and other nearby flowers in the foreground of my flower close-ups to effectively create a frame of beautifully diffused tone to help further emphasise my chosen subject, or focal point. Ian took my guidance on board, lying prone on the ground and adopting an uncomfortable low shooting angle! Ian's tripod wouldn't allow him to set-up at ground level, so he again had to work hand-held, using his elbows to provide extra support. He had to be careful not to squash flowers while selecting his viewpoint, but the advantage of using a tele-macro meant he could shoot from further away and avoid any damage. A wide aperture helped to provide a faster shutter speed to eliminate any camera or subject motion, while also producing an attractively shallow depth-of-field – with this style of shot, you don't want to record too much detail in recognisable focus, as it can prove a distraction and it begins to



1) Ian's tripod won't allow him to go low enough, so he lays prone on the ground. 2) Ian rests on his elbows, providing good support and minimising shake. 3) Checking the results on the camera's LCD. 4) Ian soon gets to grips with the macro lens – I had a job getting it back off him! 5) Ross and Ian take a break from shooting to assess the results at the end of the day.

undermine the lovely artistic, painterly effect. When working with such a shallow depth-of-field – when the difference between a sharp and unsharp image is just a few millimetres – it is advisable to take a burst of shots to guarantee at least one pin-sharp result. It is better to accept a degree of wastage, than return home to find that none of your shots were sharp.

Ian continued looking for subjects and taking shots as we began working our way

#### MACRO MARVEL

Ian's final image is one to be proud of – a wood anemone surrounded by diffused soft focus. Great job!

Exposure: 1/640sec at f/2.8 (ISO 100)

### CHALLENGE 3 Pro verdict

"Shooting the wood anemone growing in the wood flanking the gardens was time well spent I think. I love this style of creative selective focus, when only your subject is in sharp focus – everything else is beautifully soft and diffused. The image really works in my opinion – the perspective, depth of field and level of magnification. Images like this look great yet are tricky, fiddly and time consuming to achieve. This style of close-up is only possible using a longer focal length – Ian couldn't have achieved this shot using a 50mm lens and close-up attachment. A lovely image to complete the day."

back towards the car park. His eye was now tuned into looking for interesting and suitable miniature subjects, but with the garden about to close, we had to call it a day. And what a good session we'd had. Ian's memory card was overflowing with great photographs, achieved using three very different pieces of specialist equipment. It just goes to show, whatever your budget or experience, great garden close-ups are well within your grasp.



## WORKSHOP SUMMARY: *Ian Pain*



"As a landscape photographer, I'm more accustomed to shooting the 'bigger picture', so it was really challenging thinking small and looking for the finer details. As we walked the gardens looking for subject matter, Ross gave some great pointers. At first I was very sceptical about the budget options available for close-up photography, but I was pleasantly surprised at how you can achieve amazing results regardless of which option you use. While the close-up filters and extension tubes proved to be trickier to use, and required me to get much closer to my subject compared to the macro lens, the experience wouldn't put me off from using them again. After spending the day under the excellent tutelage of Ross, I feel more confident to do more close-up photography. I learnt that when dealing with the small details, the slightest movement can change your composition dramatically and therefore it is best to explore lots of angles before moving on. If I was to choose one method, it would have to be the macro lens for ease of use and distance from your subject matter. I shall be dropping hints to the wife between now and my birthday!"



# Dive in and master **WATER**

ARGUABLY THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHICALLY VERSATILE OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS, WATER IS OVERFLOWING WITH WAYS YOU CAN USE IT TO CREATE IMAGES. STILL-LIFES, PORTRAITS, LANDSCAPES – WATER CAN FEATURE IN THEM ALL, SO TAKE INSPIRATION FROM OUR EXPERT GUIDE AND YOUR IDEAS WON'T BE IN SHORT SUPPLY

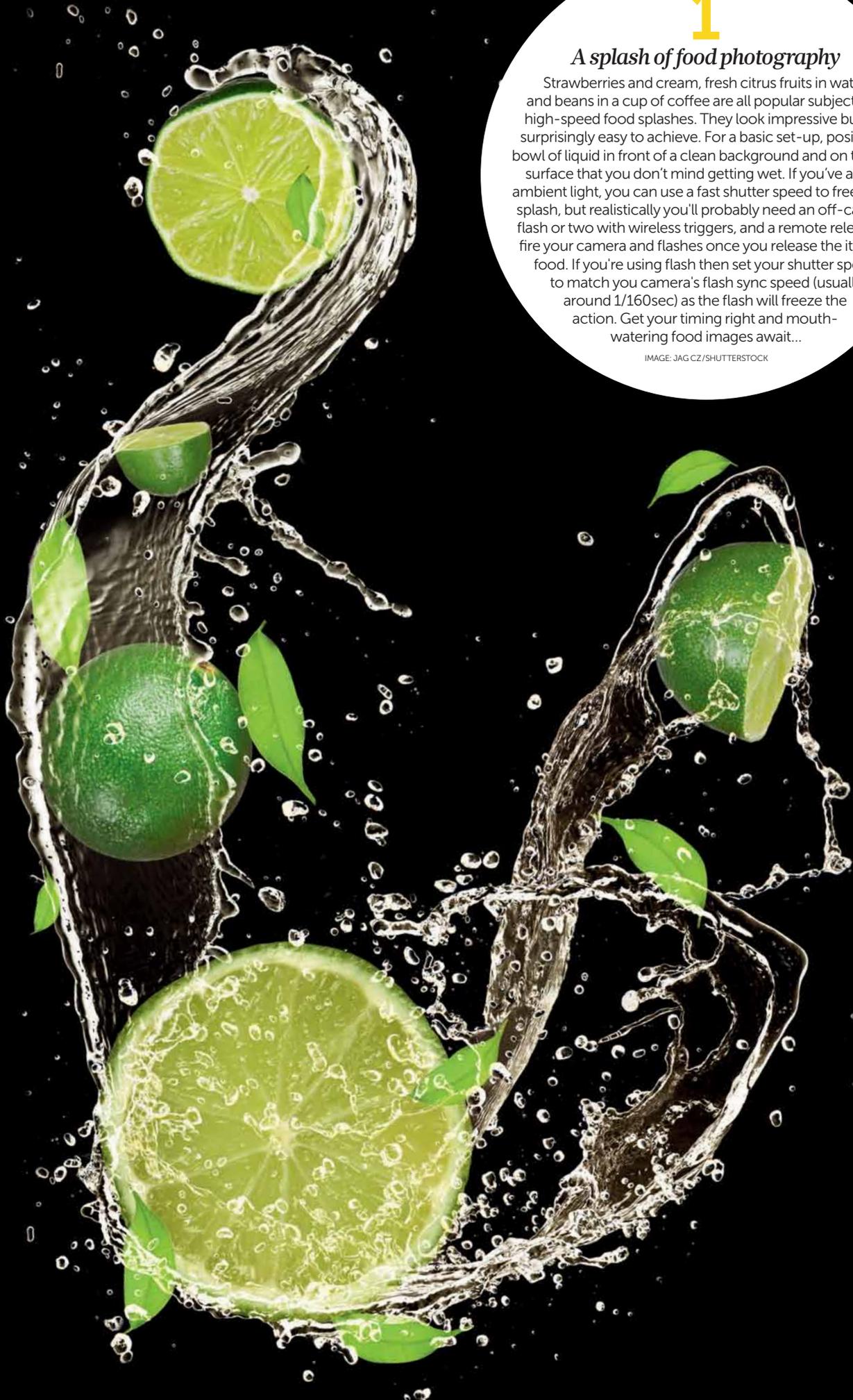
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*Words:* CAROLINE SCHMIDT & JORDAN BUTTERS

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH





# 1

## *A splash of food photography*

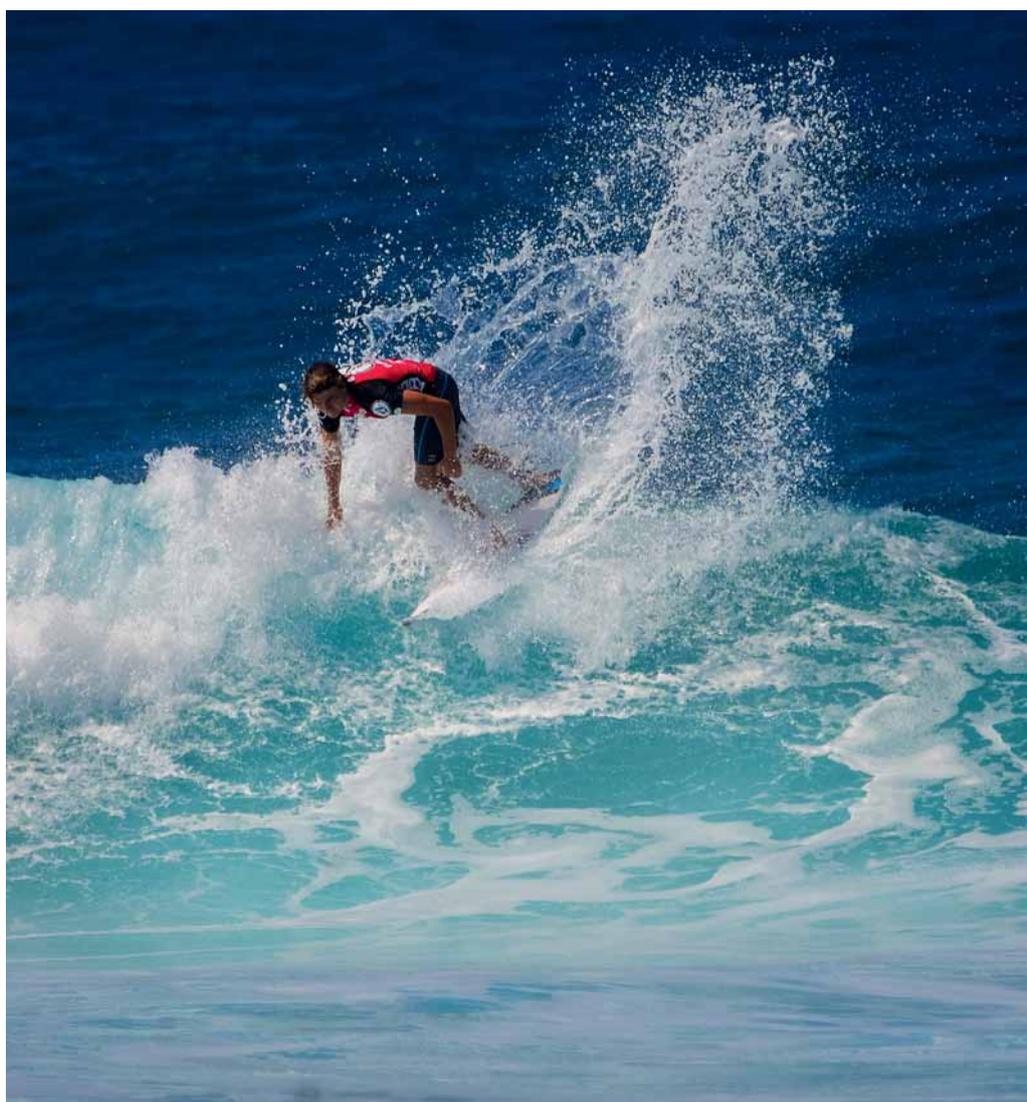
Strawberries and cream, fresh citrus fruits in water and beans in a cup of coffee are all popular subjects for high-speed food splashes. They look impressive but are surprisingly easy to achieve. For a basic set-up, position a bowl of liquid in front of a clean background and on top of a surface that you don't mind getting wet. If you've ample ambient light, you can use a fast shutter speed to freeze the splash, but realistically you'll probably need an off-camera flash or two with wireless triggers, and a remote release to fire your camera and flashes once you release the item of food. If you're using flash then set your shutter speed to match your camera's flash sync speed (usually around 1/160sec) as the flash will freeze the action. Get your timing right and mouth-watering food images await...

IMAGE: JAG CZ/SHUTTERSTOCK



**2 Reflect on landscapes** You're lake-side on a glorious still day, there's a dramatic sky and vivid colours in the landscape: what's your go-to composition? Is it to find lead-in lines, such as a jetty or rocky foreground interest to lead the eye to the far side of the lake? As well as looking at what surrounds the lake, try looking at what's inside of it, too. On a still day you will likely see a mirror-like reflection of the surrounding area on the water's surface, which you can use to bring beautiful balance to your composition. For control of the reflection, use a polarising filter to adjust the sun's glare bouncing off the water's surface. To get the best results, align yourself perpendicular to the sun and rotate the polariser's ring for the desired strength.

**3 Water sports** Whether it's surfing, wakeboarding, jet skis or something a little more extreme like cliff diving, shooting water sports can deliver some refreshingly exciting results. But first, you need to decide if you want to be in the water too, or keep nice and dry on a boat or on the shore. If it's the latter that floats your boat, then you'll need to pack a long-range lens in order to fill the frame – think 300mm-plus. If you're intent on getting wet, then you'll need a waterproof housing for your DSLR to protect it, which can get expensive, but the good housings are expensive for a reason – they keep your kit dry! Alternatively you could use a waterproof action camera, such as one of the Nikon KeyMission models, or a submersible compact such as the Nikon Coolpix AW130. To freeze the action, airborne droplets of water and all, opt for a fast shutter speed in excess of 1/1000sec, and use high-speed burst mode and continuous autofocus to track your subject.



THOMAS ASHLOCK / UNSPLASH



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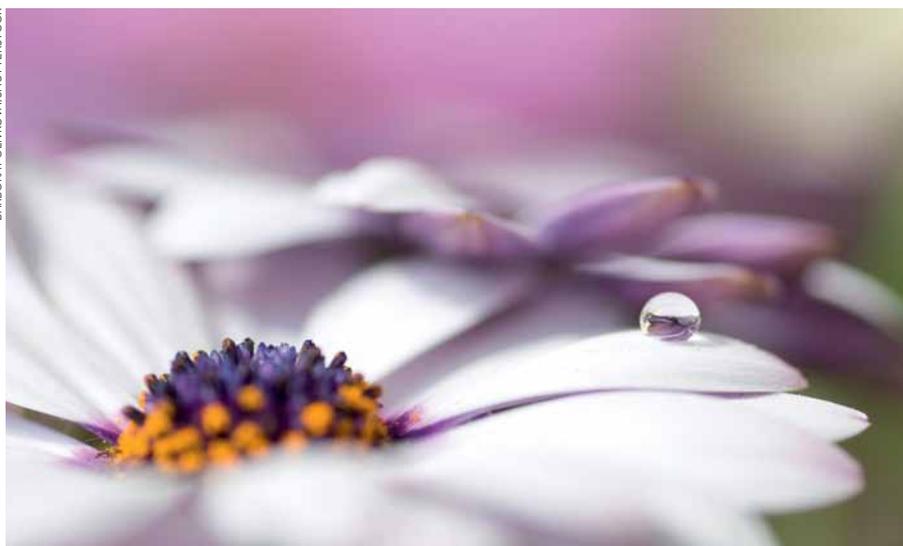
ALEXANDER KOZAK/SHUTTERSTOCK

**4 Rainy-day portraits** There's no reason the rain should dampen your photography; there are dozens of portraits you could do in the rain. For instance, grab the wellies and an umbrella for a puddle splash – opt for a white umbrella to avoid any colour casts on the subject's skin and use a shutter speed of around 1/250sec or faster to capture the splash in action. Alternatively, backlight a portrait with flash and use a wide aperture to turn the dashing rain into beautiful bokeh or keep your subject indoors and shoot a rainy window portrait, angling yourself and your camera to get rid of reflections. As it's highly likely that you'll be outside getting wet, and with no assistant to hold your umbrella, make sure your choice of lens and camera are environmentally sealed, like the Nikon D7200 and D610 (see page 90 for details), and buy yourself a rain-sleeve just in case.



JOSE LUIS CARRACOSA/SHUTTERSTOCK

**5 Droplets** Whether it's insects or blades of grass covered in morning dew, or water droplets teetering on the tips of leaves, petals and feathers, they're all attractive ways to add bokeh, depth and detail to your close-up images. You'll need a macro lens, such as the AF-S Micro-NIKKOR 105mm f/2.8G, or a standard lens with extension tubes if you're on a budget. You'll need adequate light so a macro LED or ringflash can be advantageous, otherwise position yourself by a window. If outdoors, look for backlighting to create beautiful bokeh out of surrounding dewdrops and use a reflector to illuminate the subject matter. Control your autofocus by selecting single-point AF to pinpoint and compose a single droplet as well as use a mid-aperture to retain depth-of-field. Due to their three-dimensional shape, droplets need at least f/5.6 to be in focus at close range.



BARBORA POLIKOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

# 6

## Oil and water

Apparently oil and water don't mix, but we disagree. They might be immiscible liquids, but when it comes to photography opposites can be quite attractive. Ideally you'll need a macro lens, such as the AF-S Micro-NIKKOR 60mm f/2.8G, but a standard lens such as the AF-S 50mm f/1.8 with extension tubes is a good alternative. You'll need a clear glass dish, water and some vegetable oil. If you want to add an injection of colour, try placing coloured paper under the dish and elevating the dish about a foot above to put some distance between the two. You may need to use LiveView or to manually focus as the image will be low in contrast. A tripod with a centre column that can set up in a horizontal position can help. For your lighting, use an off-camera flash or desk lamp and it's worth playing around with depth-of-field, too, for different effects. See page 36 for a full tutorial on how to do it.

IMAGE: JORDAN BUTTERS



### 7 *Abstract puddle reflections*

Post-rainfall is the perfect time for some fun pictures. Look for uneven ground, such as dips before a curb, where water gathers and look around for interesting subjects that might be reflected. Landmarks, buildings, lights and people all make good subjects. A cloudy day is ideal to reduce glare off the puddle's surface, but otherwise avoid shooting when the water is in direct sunlight to capture a blue sky. Get low to the ground to split the scene between the reflection and the subject and bring balance to the composition, or try filling the frame with the reflection, or including just a little suggestion of the actual subject that's reflected – three very different images from one potential scene. Use a wide-angle lens such as the NIKKOR AF-S 35mm f/1.8G, or NIKKOR AF-S 24-70mm f/2.8E to fill the frame, and single-point AF to focus on the puddle's reflection with a wide aperture.

**8** *Refraction* We all know about using reflections in photography, but what about refraction? It's a curious technique that can work with any transparent spherical object – a glass ball, glass of water or even a tiny water droplet. Light bends through the sphere, inverting the image behind it so, building on our droplets idea (number 5), but instead of looking to eliminate reflections in the water, place another flower behind the droplet and capture the image within it. A macro lens is essential if focusing on water droplets, but a standard lens can be used if you wanted to try placing drops of water on a sheet of glass above colourful subjects such as Skittles, or using this technique with your high-speed water-drop photography. You can also capture refracted images using just glasses of water and pieces of coloured paper, too!



# 9

## *Long exposures*

Moving water and shutter speeds go hand in hand, and there are countless ways they can work together for different effects – a favourite being misty water. The key is to use a shutter speed as slow as your DSLR will allow before it starts to blow-out the highlights, at which point you'll have to introduce a Neutral Density filter. Depending on the speed of the water's movement and the light levels, you may be able to create the effect using a shutter speed of ten to 20 seconds but if the ambient light is too bright, you'll need filtration. The Lee Filters Little Stopper and Big Stopper or HiTech Pro Stop ND10 are great for this type of effect as they extend your exposure by x600 and x1000, respectively. You'll need a solid tripod, a wide-angle lens and a remote release for this technique as the slightest movement will blur the image. It's worth noting that you'll need to manually calculate your exposure to dial in using Bulb mode and also compose your image before applying the ND filter.

IMAGE: ROSS HODDINOTT



ROSS HODDINOTT



RICHARD PETERS

**10 Waterfalls** Wispy waterfalls are beautiful but sometimes you want to capture texture too so take time to experiment with exposures and filtration – if you're in a woodland you may even find filtration isn't necessary given the lower light levels. Depending on the speed and density of the falling water, you may not need to keep the shutter speed open for very long. For a gentle waterfall try a shutter speed between one and ten seconds; 0.5 seconds to two seconds is enough for waterfalls in heavier flow. Opt for a wide-angle zoom and have a two-stop ND filter to hand to extend the exposure, if necessary. Set your camera to manual mode and select a small aperture for depth-of-field. It's worth looking for foreground interest and different angles to shoot from too to strengthen your composition, so take time to walk around the waterfall instead of shooting the obvious.

### Keep your kit dry!

Water and electronics are far from the perfect pair but Nikon has gone a long way to protecting its gear from the rain. Of course if you plan to submerge your camera or wade in the water, we'd recommend using an underwater housing, but for shooting in wet weather or on a coastline Nikon's D7200 has impressive environmental sealing, as does the D610 and D750. There's no point having a great DSLR, though, if your lens is leaky so be sure that it too is weather-resistant like the AF-S 50mm f/1.8 and 55-300mm f/4-5.6 VR. No camera or lens is completely watertight, so always take extra precautions to not expose your gear unnecessarily.



**11 Wonderful waves** The power of the ocean is immense and sometimes this can be diluted by including surrounding landscape, so use a telezoom in the region of 200mm to 600mm to get a close-up of crashing waves as they curl or peak to produce powerful abstract images. A long lens is vital for getting somewhat parallel to the curls from the shore and a fast lens will let you make the most of the golden hours. You will want to avoid cloudy days as they'll leave the water void of any colour, so aim for the early morning and evening. Shoot in continuous burst mode as every wave will behave differently and you'll improve your chances of capturing the perfect moment. Play with shutter speeds, too, as the slightest change has a huge impact. Try panning while using a slow shutter speed or a fast shutter speed to freeze the drama in mid-air below brooding clouds.



### Pro tip with Nikon

Richard Peters  
Wildlife expert



CHRIS TROCH/SHUTTERSTOCK

**12 Wildlife on water** "The way light and colour reflect off the surface of lakes and ponds can make your images look more dynamic. The key is to get close to the surface and notice how the reflections change the lower you drop. When shooting with a telephoto lens, a large aperture such as  $f/2.8$  will blur the background and help the subject pop from the frame. For this image, I was shooting from a boat on Greece's Lake Kerkini and I used a Nikon D810 with wide-angle lens (NIKKOR AF-S 18-35mm  $f/4G$ ) to include the environment. I held the camera over the edge of the boat and low to the water with one hand while directing a diffused off-camera flash in the direction of the Dalmatian Pelican with the other. Underexposure was used to emphasize the dark and moody conditions and the flash helped the pelican pop from the image. Had the surface been still, we would have had a mirror image but, in this case, the ripples in the water helped create interesting patterns in the murky water below the bird."

TheBigInterview

# Dorset Dreams

FOLLOWING THE LAUNCH OF HIS FIRST PHOTO GUIDEBOOK, *PHOTOGRAPHING DORSET*, PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER MARK BAUER TELLS JORDAN BUTTERS ALL ABOUT THE BEAUTIFUL REGION THAT HE CALLS HOME







IT'S NOT THE first time we've said it, and it won't be the last, but the UK undoubtedly plays host to some of the most beautiful, dramatic and varied landscapes anywhere in the world. From rugged rocky coastlines battered by the waves to serene valleys filled with swirling mist, snow-capped mountains that reach into the clouds and rolling hills peppered with colourful wildflowers, Great Britain truly is a landscape photographer's playground. What's more, whatever your preferred type of scenery, there is bound to be something within a few hours drive away.

If, however, you want to visit a locality that guarantees a wide variety of incredible landscapes for photography, then there are few areas that can better the south western county of Dorset. From the Jurassic Coast to Purbeck, Corfe Castle and all in between, Dorset has been fascinating landscape photographers for as long as there have been cameras. It's also a part of the world that has captured the heart and imagination of leading landscape photographer and *Digital SLR Photography* contributor Mark Bauer, and is the subject of his latest book: *Photographing Dorset*.

"I'm not from the area originally, but I first came to Dorset in 1989 before moving away and then resettling here in 1996. I was an English teacher at the time and moved here for work. It's such a beautiful area that I started photographing it in my spare time. Eventually I found myself selling images, having images published more regularly and doing more and more photography work. I cut back on teaching until I was able to make the jump to being a full-time photographer."

So, what makes Dorset such an incredible location for landscape photographers? "It



has got some of the country's most iconic locations," explains Mark. "The Jurassic Coast is world famous; you have places like Durdle Door, which is instantly recognisable and is featured in publications all the time. Head inland and there is the beautiful Corfe Castle, too, which is a stunning sight at any time but phenomenally atmospheric in the right conditions. We've got Hardy-esque rolling hills, striking woodlands and very dramatic coastlines boasting unique features such as the chalk stacks of Old Harry Rocks and the limestone ledges of Kimmeridge Bay. The landscapes in Dorset were definitely a big inspiration for me to take up photography in the first place."

*Photographing Dorset* is actually Mark's fifth book, however it's his first photo

- 1) The sun rises through Durdle Door's arch in mid-winter.
- 2) Midsummer sunrise at Knowlton Church, East Dorset.
- 3) A colourful winter sunset from the western edge of Dancing Ledge, the site of an old quarry on the Purbeck coast.

location guide, having previously published two coffee-table books as well as two technique books alongside fellow *Digital SLR Photography* contributor Ross Hoddinott. It's an idea that he's been playing with in his mind for a good few years now: "I've been photographing Dorset for a long time, and know the county really well. I'd actually thought of doing a similar book a number of years ago, but I thought there wouldn't be much of a market for it at the time so I shelved the idea. Then I saw that the publisher, fotoVUE, published a similar book on the Lake District. I contacted them to ➤➤



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“The landscapes here were definitely a big inspiration in taking up photography in the first place”

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2



3



4

see if they were interested in a Dorset book and they took me up on it. In the time since I'd originally dismissed the idea, the interest in photography has boomed and I think there is a very good market for this type of photographic location guide-style book."

As well as offering a huge amount of location inspiration, as well as stunning accompanying images, *Photographing Dorset* packs in a wealth of information for the keen landscape photographer. Mark has shared knowledge he's gained through years of photographing the county to unveil the best places to go, how to get there, when to visit and what to shoot. It's a depth of information that can only be garnered by someone living, working and breathing Dorset landscapes day-in, day-out and, if you're planning a visit to the region with your camera kit in tow, then it's the perfect guide. "To produce a book like this you need to know an area quite intimately, and that takes a long time. Having such a familiarity with the area cut down on the research that was needed for the book,

“There are locations that you have to shoot at certain times of the year to capture them in the right light, or at their best”

- 1) Cutt Mill at Sturminster Newton is usually a summer sunrise location, but can work in winter with the right composition.
- 2) The chalk stacks of Old Harry Rocks on the Purbeck coast.
- 3) The sun rising around the headland at Church Ope Cove.
- 4) Colmer's Hill makes for a great subject on a misty morning.

and I was able to use a lot of images from my library to illustrate these classic locations. But then I also had to go out, discover and shoot locations that I hadn't shot before for one reason or another, or I felt I didn't have strong enough images for. That took some time as there are certain locations that you have to shoot at certain times of the year to capture in the right light, or at their best. On and off, the book took me around a year to put together, working in bursts and in between shooting

and teaching workshops. It's not a project I'd consider taking on for any other region – the amount of research necessary to be able to provide the level of information on a region I'm not so familiar with would be impossible to fit in around other commitments"

*Photographing Dorset* provides the sort of information that Mark likes to arm himself with before setting off for a new location. Although he's keen to point out that while the book offers photographers all they'll need to make the most of these well-known photo spots, you won't find instructions for where to plonk your tripod and how to frame your images when you get there. Mark believes that photographers should always exercise their creativity and try to think outside of the boundaries of what's been shot before. "It's a tricky balance when I'm preparing to photograph a new location," he explains. "Sometimes I'll do it the old-fashioned way and drive or walk around looking for landscapes to shoot, or I'll ask photographers familiar with the area for ➤➤

advice. A little bit of 'Googling' is good too – I'll use Google Maps and apps like The Photographer's Ephemeris to see where the light will be at certain times of the year or day. I try not to get too caught up in looking at what's already been shot at a location as it can interfere with my own creativity; you can get a particular viewpoint stuck in your mind. It can be useful, however, to look at others' images to judge a location's potential to make sure that it's the kind of place you respond to well. We're all different and we all like slightly different things – you can drop a bunch of photographers in the same location and some will absolutely love it while others won't be inspired at all."

And then there are the Dorset landscape viewpoints that are so iconic that it's often hard to avoid shooting the same classic (or some would call them cliché) compositions – after all, they're popular for a reason, aren't they? Mark admits that this is sometimes the case, but it always pays to look a little bit harder for the unique: "In some places there really are only one or two ways to shoot them successfully. I think you have to accept that perhaps you're not going to find that stunning, original composition you hoped for. What you have to do is approach the picture the best way you can: these views have been captured time and time again, so you have to find something special to set your image apart, such as amazing light or a twist on composition."

Mark continues: "Often you'll get to these famous locations, however, and find that actually there's a lot more to them than the classic shots you've seen. One example is Kimmeridge Bay – you've got the iconic composition of the main ledge looking towards Clavell's Tower that people go there specifically to shoot, but actually there's so much more to see there. Around the corner there are wonderful views that you hardly ever see anyone photograph. You only find them if you go there with an open mind."

This leads Mark onto the light-hearted topic of what he calls 'collectors' in the

### Mark's Dorset Top Five

**1) Corfe Castle:** In the right conditions on a misty morning it's an amazing place. That air of mystery and romance from a ruined castle on a hilltop, surrounded by fog, is hard to beat. I've taken goodness knows how many photographs of it over the years, but I still get drawn to it.

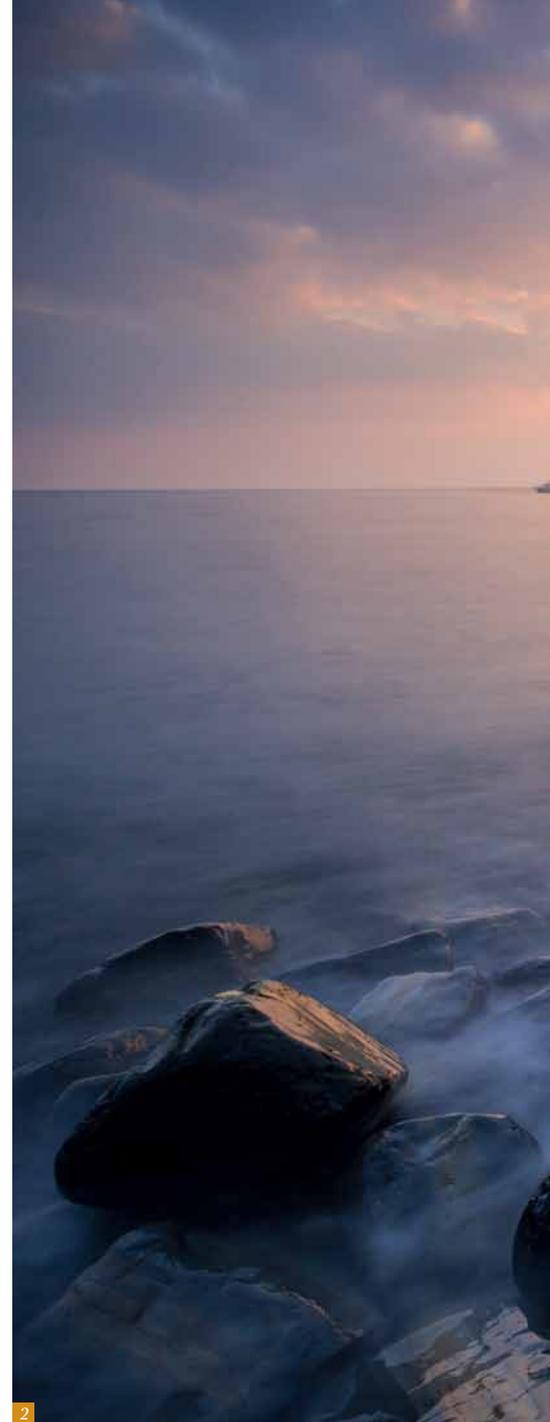
**2) Swanage:** Partly because I'm lazy and it's on my doorstep, but also because it's a fantastic place – both the old pier and the beach are great photographic subjects. There's a limited number of compositions you can get but you can always find something just a little bit different.

**3) Kimmeridge Bay:** I've been shooting Kimmeridge for about 25 years now and I'm still finding new angles. The great thing about the coast is that it's in constant change. Rocks get washed up or washed away and things get covered with sand or revealed by the tide.

**4) Hod Hill:** This is a place that's a little bit under-photographed, and if you don't get the right conditions it can be a real challenge. But if there's nice side-lighting, with a good sky or mist in the valley, it looks amazing. I visited over Christmas when we had fantastic frost and mist and I got a lot of images I was really pleased with.

**5) Winspit & Seacombe:** This pair of coves on the Purbeck coast are old quarries, and are rugged and dramatic. They're beautiful places, but one of the reasons I like them is that you don't find many photographers there. You've a very good chance of having the place to yourself, which I find enhances the experience.

book's introduction. He describes to me a rare breed of photographer that he's encountered out in the field – one that revisits well-known locations and, more specifically, exact compositions, one-by-one, and captures their own version of it: "For most photographers the 'collector' mentality is a natural stage of development. When you first get into photography you see these great shots of locations from other photographers and you do sort of use them



1) Sunset over a glorious opium poppy field near Durweston.  
2) A September sunset at Clavell's Pier, Kimmeridge. The rocks of the old stone pier have a fabulous texture when wet.  
3) The Banjo Jetty in Swanage as the sun sets in winter.

as models to go and create your own images. Hopefully people then move on to develop their own style and vision. However there seems to be a trend for a trainspotter-style of landscape photography now, too. You can tell the type when you hear them say along the lines of: 'right, I've got that shot' rather than 'I've shot that location'. It's as if they're ticking off a train they've seen. It's a strange but quite amusing approach to landscape photography I guess."

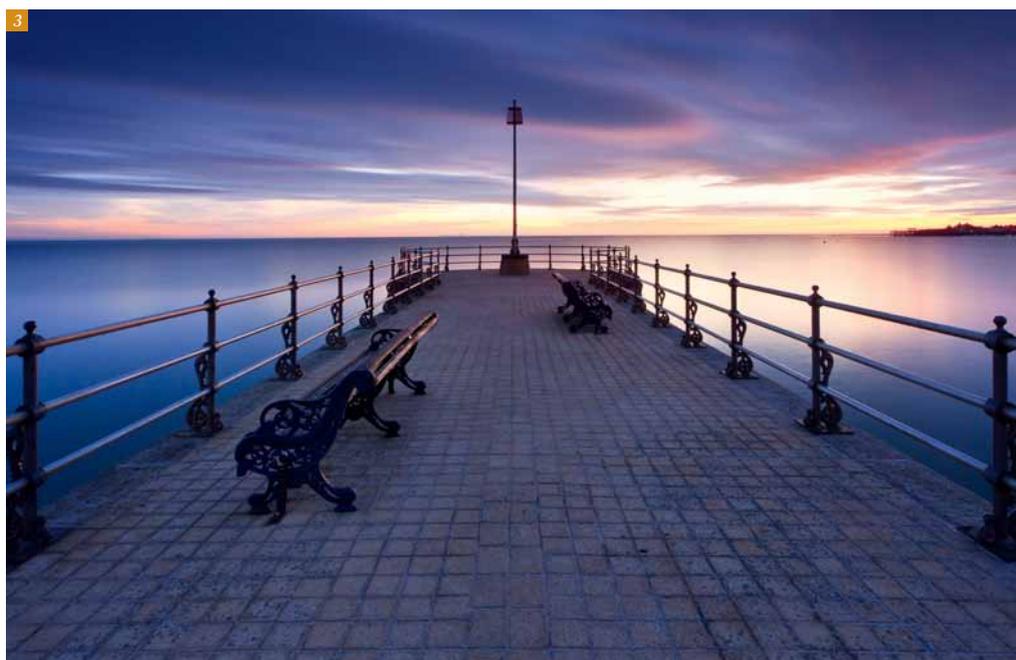
Although he's about to jump straight into another publication that he's coauthoring with Ross Hoddinott, Mark tells me that, as with the vast majority of published photographers, he doesn't really enjoy the book-writing process, but he's pleased that *Photographing Dorset* is now finished and out there. "I know a lot of people that write and I don't know any who say they're a natural writer. To be perfectly honest it is a slog for



“Often you’ll get to these famous locations, however, and find that actually there’s a lot more to them than the classic shots you’ve seen”

me,” he reveals honestly. “However there is a certain satisfaction when you put something together that reads well and that you’re pleased with. Early sales figures for the book have been encouraging too, so that’s good. Ultimately, though, I’d rather be outdoors on a hill somewhere, enjoying the fresh air. My love for landscape photography isn’t necessarily derived from nailing the final results, although that is important. I just love the process of being outside in a beautiful location, preferably by myself (although that seems to happen less frequently now with the workshops I offer), with my camera in hand. I suppose photography is my own way of interacting with the world and being able to appreciate it. That’s what really motivates me to do what I love to do.”

And with the stunning Dorset coastline on his doorstep, what better place to be? *Photographing Dorset* is available for £23.95 at [www.fotovue.com](http://www.fotovue.com). *Digital SLR Photography* readers can claim an exclusive discount of 20% using the code 'DSLR' at the website's checkout. To see more of Mark Bauer's work, visit: [www.markbauerphotography.com](http://www.markbauerphotography.com)



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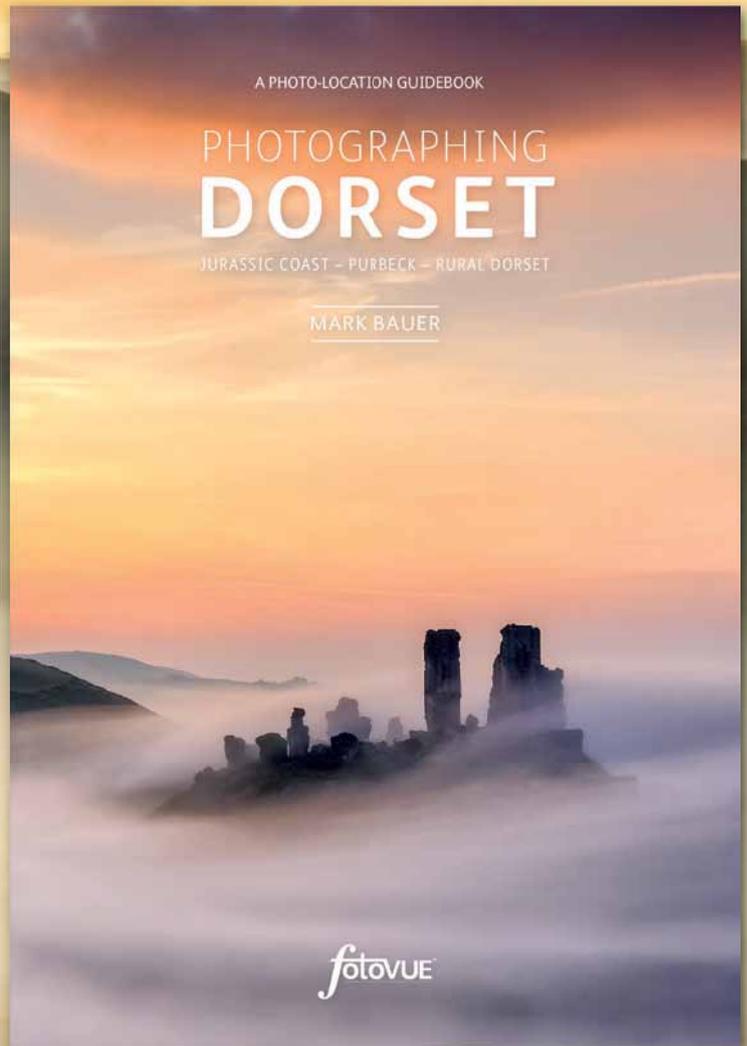
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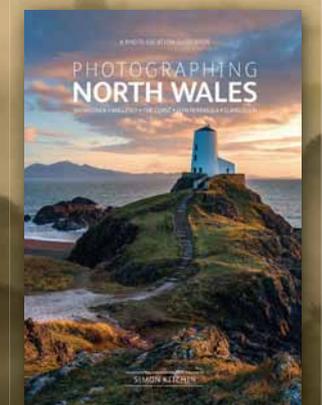
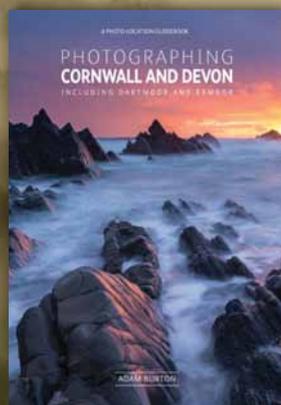
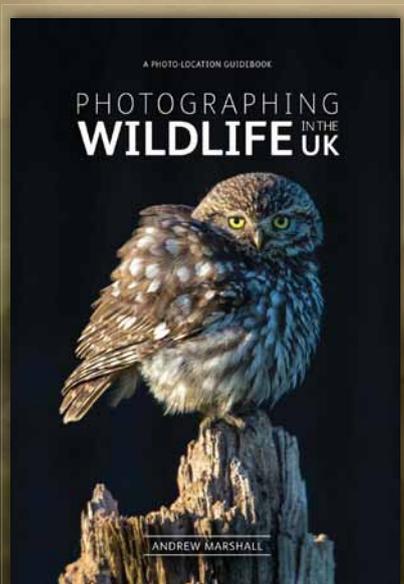
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*Plus*

**GEAR NEWS:** Nikon's latest enthusiast-level DSLR heads up this month's product launches *Page 105*

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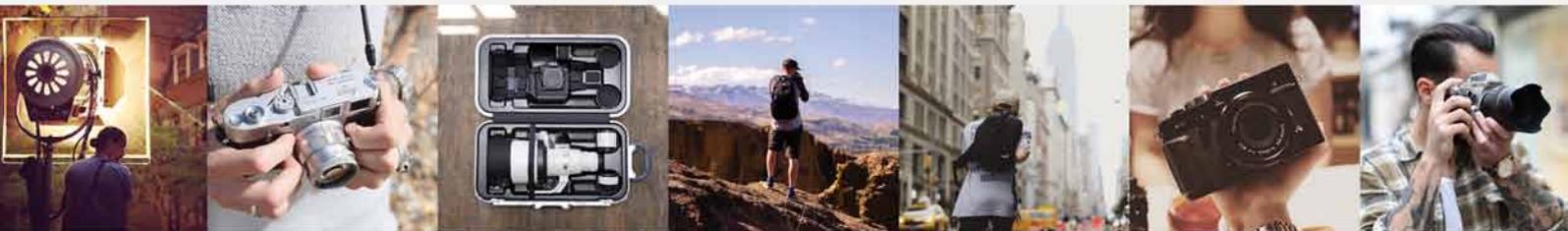


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## NIKON D7500 DUE SOON

NIKON HAS ANNOUNCED the D7500, its latest enthusiast-level DSLR. This feature-packed model is aimed at those looking for high image quality and connectivity and sports a great pedigree, with several features handed down from the highly-rated APS-C flagship, the D500. It boasts the same 20.9-megapixel APS-C (DX-format) CMOS sensor, features the powerful EXPEED 5 image processor and offers the ridiculously high maximum ISO rating of 1640000! The metering system is handed by a 180,000-pixel RGB sensor and an Advanced Scene Recognition system, while videographers can shoot movies at resolutions as high as 4K/UHD movies while benefitting from in-camera Electronic Vibration Reduction to counter the effects of unwanted camera movement. The 3.2in LCD monitor has a 922,000-dot resolution touchscreen and sits on a tilting platform, while the viewfinder provides 100% frame coverage. The built-in flash is the first on a Nikon DSLR to support radio-controlled Advanced Wireless Lighting, while the camera also offers Wi-Fi and Bluetooth. The D7500 also features the 51-point AF system that works so well on the D500 and can shoot at eight frames-per-second, making it a viable option for sports and wildlife photographers. The D7500 will be available towards the end of June and will cost £1,300 body-only, or £1,600 with 18-140mm zoom. [www.nikon.co.uk](http://www.nikon.co.uk)



## LEE FILTERS DELUXE KIT

As all dedicated outdoor photographers know, filters are an essential accessory for shooting stunning landscapes. Lee Filters, the favourite brand of enthusiasts and professionals, has announced the (£605) 100mm Deluxe filter kit. It contains five filters, as well as a filter holder that comes ready assembled with two slots and a 105mm accessory ring attached for holding a polariser.

The five filters included with the Deluxe kit are as follows: the Landscape Polariser, which adds a subtle warm tone as well as polarising the scene; the Big Stopper ten-stop ND; a 0.9ND (three-stop) hard graduated filter and the 0.6ND (two-stop) and 1.2ND (four-stop) medium graduated filters. The Deluxe kit represents an £80 saving over buying each item individually and is available now. Please note that the kit does not include an adaptor ring, which must be bought separately. [www.leefilters.com](http://www.leefilters.com)



## 'REVOLUTIONARY' A9 FROM SONY

SONY CLAIMS ITS latest full-frame professional mirrorless model, the A9, is revolutionary and 'offers a level of imaging performance that is simply unmatched by any camera ever created – mirrorless, SLR or otherwise'. It boasts the world's first full-frame stacked CMOS sensor, with a resolution of 24.2-million pixels and a BIONZ X imaging engine that can process data at up to 120x faster than previous Sony full-frame models. It can shoot at up to 20 frames-per-second with no viewfinder blackout and the buffer can handle sequences of up to 241 Raw/362 JPEG images. The autofocus system uses a staggering 693 phase-detection AF points that cover around 93% of the image frame and computes 60 AF/AE tracking calculations per second. The A9 features a vibration-free, fully-electronic anti-distortion shutter that has a silent action and top speed of 1/32000sec. If you're worried all this power will come at the cost of energy consumption, fear not, its Z battery has over twice the capacity of current models. The A9 also boasts 4K video, has a top ISO rating of 204800, dual SD slots and an Ethernet socket. If this incredible specification makes you want one, you'll need to wait until June for availability. Start saving, as it will cost around £4,500.

Coming in July is the (£2,500) FE 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 GM OSS super-telephoto zoom, which uses 22 lens elements in 16 groups and becomes the flagship of its prestigious G Master series. [www.sony.co.uk](http://www.sony.co.uk)

## IN BRIEF...

### MACRO LITE LENS FROM CANON

Canon already has a number of excellent macro optics in its range but this model, for its APS-C DSLRs, is the first with a built-in macro light. The (£400) EF-S 35mm f/2.8 Macro IS STM has two thin ringlights on the front of its barrel, which can be used individually or together and at different power settings for creative effect. The lens boasts 1:1 (life-size) magnification, a minimum focus of 30cm and an optical image stabiliser with hybrid IS. It is available this month. [www.canon.co.uk](http://www.canon.co.uk)



### NITRO HEAD

Manfrotto's Nitrotech N8 uses Nitrogen piston technology to provide the ultimate in fluid action and precise, continuous counterbalance. Ideal for videographers or wildlife/action photography, its variable fluidity function on both pan and tilt allows judder-free movement, precise control and balance with a telephoto lens or video camera and can take loads up to 8kg. [www.manfrotto.co.uk](http://www.manfrotto.co.uk)



## ROTLIGHT'S LOCATION LIGHT

Rotolight has announced details of the AEOS, a slimline bi-colour, location LED light. Weighing under 1.5kg and only 1cm thick, the energy-efficient AEOS can deliver a powerful output of 5,750 Lux (at three feet) for over three hours at full power. The design includes aluminium handles to allow users to 'work the light' and a pro ball head that gives 360° rotation and 200° tilt when mounted. AEOS features dual controls for brightness, and adjustable colours. It comes as standard with a full set of filters; two diffusion filters, a cosmetic peach skin tone diffusion to 'warm' the subject, and a magenta filter, as well as AC/DC power supply and ball head. A full range of optional accessories will also be available. No release date or price for the AEOS has been confirmed. [www.rotolight.com](http://www.rotolight.com)

# PENTAX KP

Following on from the flagship K-1, Pentax's first full-frame DSLR, comes this 24-megapixel APS-C model boasting an extensive set of features

Test: DANIEL LEZANO

## SPECIFICATIONS

Guide Price: £1,099 body-only

Image sensor: APS-C CMOS III (23.5x15.6mm)

Resolution: 24.32-megapixels

Maximum image resolution: 6016x4000 pixels

AF system: 27-point AF (25 cross-type sensors)

Metering system: 86,000-pixel RGB sensor

Metering modes: Multi-zone, spot & centre-weighted

ISO range: ISO 100-819200 plus Auto

Shutter speeds: 1/6000sec-30 seconds & Bulb

Frame rate: Seven frames-per-second

Storage: SD (SDHC/XC)

Size: 131.5x101x76mm

Weight: 703g (including battery & card)

Website: www.pentax.co.uk

**A** NUMBER OF excellent models have seen a revival for Pentax over the last couple of years. Its highly-impressive medium-format 645Z and the K-1, its first full-frame DSLR, proved that this historic camera brand still has plenty of innovation, expertise and resource at its disposal. Until the arrival of these two models, Pentax's DSLRs were based around APS-C sensors, with a line-up ranging from the budget KS-2 to the better specified K-70, and K-3 II, which this new model replaces. It's a small range compared to the likes of Canon and Nikon, but each model has proven more than good enough to compete against similarly-priced models from its key rivals.

Priced at £1,100 body-only, the KP sits at the upper end of the APS-C sector, where it faces very strong competition from several capable enthusiast-level DSLRs, including the Canon EOS 7D Mk II and Nikon D7200, as well as highly impressive mirrorless models like the Fujifilm X-T20, tested last month.

The design of the KP bears several similarities to the flagship K-1, in particular the large, protruding pentaprism and some of the controls. Its body is far more compact, similar in size to the likes of the Canon EOS 760D, which only serves to make the large pentaprism even more dominant. Pentax likes to offer something different when it comes to its products' design and the KP is no exception, being supplied with three handgrips of differing sizes. Removed and attached quickly via the supplied allen key, it's a neat way of allowing you to use whichever provides you with the best balance – small hands can select the largest grip, big hands the smallest or the average size can plump for the mid-sized grip. An optional battery



The weatherproof Pentax KP is a compact DSLR, with a large pentaprism giving it a very top-heavy look. It is supplied with a choice of three handgrips and is available in black or silver.

grip that attaches to the camera's base is also available. The camera body utilises magnesium alloy, is weatherproof and feels very tough indeed – you certainly won't feel short of confidence having to use this in rain or extreme temperatures.

The control layout takes a little getting used to. While the set-up of buttons and four-way control on the rear is relatively conventional, the top-plate is less so. The chunky exposure mode dial on the left provides easy access to an extensive range of shooting modes, while on the right top-side, another large dial offers access to custom modes, with a lever selecting standard camera mode, LiveView or video. Most cameras have one input dial, or if you're lucky two, but the KP has three, found on the top, front and rear of the camera's right side. This, along with a number of customisable buttons, ensures users can gear up the camera to work how they prefer.

The large pentaprism helps provide a very bright screen with 100% coverage and excellent 0.95x magnification. Exposure information is displayed along the bottom in large green digits and icons. The 3in LCD monitor uses a 921,000-dot screen that provides a sharp display and colourful info/menu screens. There is no touchscreen facility, but it is housed on a tilting platform.

The KP uses a new 24.32-million pixel APS-C sensor, with no anti-aliasing filter so as to maximise image sharpness. It works with the PRIME IV imaging engine to provide an ISO range that reaches a mind-blowing 819200 and while it can shoot video at Full HD, it lacks a 4K capability.



The Pentax KP, like other models in the range, sits the image sensor on a five-axis image stabilisation platform, with a claimed benefit of five stops, therefore allowing this feature to work with any lens used with the camera. The Shake Reduction (SR II) system also works with a feature called Pixel Shift resolution, which captures four images of the same scene, shifting the sensor by one pixel for each image, then combining all four together. As full colour information is obtained for each pixel, images in theory will have more accurate colour reproduction as well as more detail.

The KP's autofocus system is the same as that found in the outgoing K-3 II and uses 27 points, with 25 cross-type sensors arranged evenly in five rows of five in the central area of the frame. Along with having all AF points active or just one, users can engage a group



Exposure: 1/125sec at f/4 (ISO 200)



## A CAMERA FOR ALL SEASONS

Like many of its predecessors, the Pentax KP boasts additional protection from the elements. It features 67 seals around the control buttons, dials, covers and exterior joints, which prevent water and fine dust particles from entering the camera. This protection is extended when mounting AW (All Weather) and WR (Weather Resistant) series lenses or the weather-resistant D-BG7 battery grip to the body. The Pentax KP has also been protected against temperature extremes and is designed to work normally at temperatures as low as -10°C, although as with all cameras used in such low temperatures, battery capacity will be severely reduced, so pack a few spares in your camera bag.

## CLOSEST RIVALS

- **FUJIFILM X-T20:** We rated this last month as the best camera we've tested this year. This £800, 24-megapixel mirrorless marvel from Fuji has it all – great retro-design appeal, a wide range of features and brilliant performance.
- **SONY ALPHA 77 II:** It's been around a couple of years but this £1,000, 24.3-million pixel DSLR has plenty to offer, including fast 79-point AF, body-integral stabilisation and 12 fps drive.
- **NIKON D7200:** At £1,100 with 18-105mm zoom, this is a tempting buy, featuring a 24-megapixel APS-C sensor, Wi-Fi, dual card slots and superb 51-point AF in its arsenal.
- **CANON EOS 7D MARK II:** This weatherproof DSLR offers a 20.2-megapixel resolution, 65-point AF and dual card slots (CompactFlash and SD). It's a formidable performer, but more expensive at £1,249 body-only.

of nine for more precise multi-point AF or engage Face Detection AF.

Like other models in the range, the KP offers additional exposure modes compared to the norm, such as Sv (sensitivity value), which allows you to select the ISO, with the camera taking care of aperture and shutter speeds. The metering system, based around an 85,000-pixel sensor, gives a choice of multi-zone, spot or centre-weighted.

Other features are par for the course on a mid-range model. An integral flash can be popped up and used with a range of flash modes that can also be applied to an external unit. Wi-Fi works with Pentax's Image Sync app to allow remote control of the camera or for image browsing. Plus, as well as the mechanical shutter with a top speed of 1/6000sec, an electronic shutter with top speed of 1/24000sec is available.

The Pentax KP puts in a good all-round

performance. The multi-zone pattern is accurate, but like others struggles with backlighting, while the Auto White Balance mode, image sharpness and colour reproduction are excellent. Set to AFS, autofocus locks quickly on the subject, with little or no hunting. Continuous AF isn't as reliable, with a hit rate that doesn't match the best of its rivals. Unless you shoot wildlife or action, this shouldn't be a problem. Noise is handled brilliantly, so feel free to rack up the ISO as high as 3200 should you need to.

One negative of the Pentax KP is its battery – it uses the same D-Li109 cell used by some other Pentax models. This manages about 400 or so shots per charge, which falls short of rivals. Not such a big deal on short shoots, but for longer excursions a spare battery or a recharging point will be required.

Overall, the Pentax KP represents another strong proposition for enthusiasts.

## VERDICT

The Pentax KP has a lot to offer, with a compact body, excellent level of customisation and wide range of features. Its performance is strong too across the board, with only its continuous AF and battery life going against it. The ultra-high 819200 ISO rating is an interesting point and while the KP's noise capabilities are first-rate, we'd avoid going anywhere near as high. Well worth a look.



Handling	18/20
Ease of use	17/20
Features	18/20
Performance	18/20
Value	17/20

**Overall 88/100**

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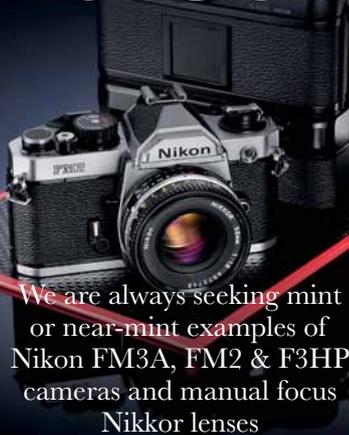


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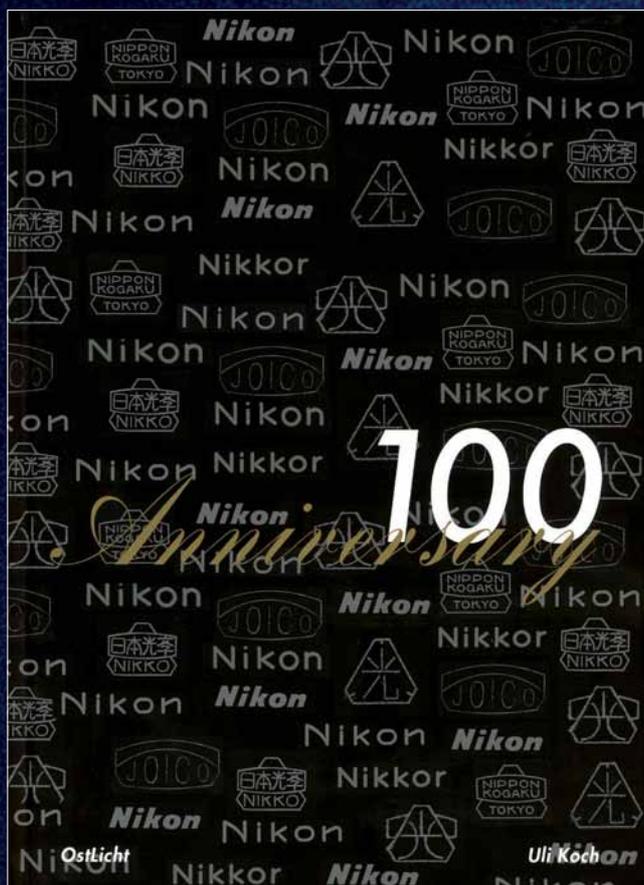
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# NIKON – 100 ANNIVERSARY

by Uli Koch



In celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Nikon Corporation in 2017, author Uli Koch, one of the world's most prominent Nikon collectors, has completed the mammoth task of writing the book **Nikon – 100th Anniversary**. This fully comprehensive volume covers the history of Nikon equipment over a period of 100 years.

As well as detailing Nikon cameras, lenses and matching accessories, this book highlights binoculars, microscopes, industrial lenses and other technical instruments spanning the period between 1917 and 2016.

This large, hardcover, fully illustrated book has 416 pages and measures 12”x 8.4” (30 x 21cm). It features approximately 1,800 images of different Nikon items of equipment all printed in colour.

The text is in English. Author Uli Koch travelled all over the world to meet collectors in order to archive and create this significant history of one of the world's most-loved camera brands. The book contains a number of exceptionally rare items that, apart from a handful of Nikon collectors, have never been seen before.

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# TAMRON SP 150-600MM F/5-6.3 DI VC USD G2

Premium super-telephoto zoom with Vibration Compensation. A versatile range of focal lengths make it ideal for wildlife & action photography



Test: DANIEL LEZANO

## SPECIFICATIONS

Guide Price: £1,340

Focal length (full-frame): 150-600mm

Focal length (Canon APS-C): 240-960mm

Focal length (Nikon/Sony APS-C): 225-900mm

Minimum focus: 2.2m

Maximum magnification ratio: 1:3.9

Filter size: 95mm

Optical construction: 21 elements in 13 groups

Angle-of-view: 16°25'-4°8'

Diaphragm blades: Nine

Minimum aperture: f/32-40

Dimensions (Diameter x Length): 108.4 x 260.2mm

Weight: 2,010 grams

Fittings: Canon EF, Nikon & Sony

Website: www.tamron.eu.uk

**W**HEN THE ULTIMATE in pulling power is required to fill the frame with a distant subject, nothing beats a telephoto lens. While prime telephotos boast the benefit of a fast maximum aperture, their exorbitant price tags mean they're the choice of pros – or enthusiasts with deep pockets. For us mere mortals, when pulling power is required, we've the choice of telephoto zooms. While most of us opt for the likes of a 70-200/300mm or more powerful 80-400mm, there are a small number of elite super-telephoto zooms like this Tamron, boasting a more extensive range and premium optics.

This zoom is the second generation of the SP 150-600mm, with the original appearing in 2013 and proving to be an excellent lens, popular in particular with wildlife photographers. This G2 version has been redesigned from scratch and claims a number of improvements, ranging from

better AF to improved stabilisation and optics, as we'll cover in more detail later.

Like all lenses covering such an extensive focal length range, the Tamron is larger and heavier than your typical telezoom. But that doesn't mean that it's cumbersome and awkward to handle. True, at 2kg it's not the sort of lens you'll want to handhold for too long, but it's reasonably compact considering its range and balances nicely.

Build quality is first rate and compares favourably against marque brands – the lens feels solid, the control switches have a positive action and the zoom and manual focusing rings are large, with a nicely-grooved rubberised finish. The zoom ring covers a wide area towards the front of the lens and is easy to find while looking through the viewfinder. It has a smooth action but I found it rather stiff to rotate – this is most likely as it's a new lens and will loosen with time. A lock button on the barrel just behind the zoom ring prevents the lens from extending accidentally.

The manual focus ring is found around halfway up the barrel and while slimmer than the zoom ring, is a good size. It has a very smooth, precise action and can be used to manually fine-tune the focus even when the lens is set to AF.

Behind the zoom ring is a focusing window that displays distance in both feet and metres. To its left are a set of function buttons. There are two for Vibration Compensation – one switches VC on and off, the other sets it to one of three options: VC1 is for normal use, VC2 for panning and

VC3, which prioritises the stabilisation of the captured images over the viewfinder. Next to these are the AF/M switch and the focus limiter, allowing you to have AF covering the whole focusing range, 2.2m to 10m, or when shooting distant subjects, from 10m to infinity. Behind these controls is located the tripod collar, which secures the lens on a support, rather than having the lens mount take the strain.

Within the feature-packed barrel, the Tamron uses 21 elements in 13 groups, which includes three Low Dispersion (LD) elements to minimise chromatic aberrations. Tamron hasn't scrimped on anti-reflection coatings either, with the SP 150-600mm boasting eBAND (Extended Bandwidth and Angular-Dependency) Coating and BBAR (Broad-Band Anti-Reflection) Coating to improve light transmission and reduce internal reflections. The front element has a Fluorine coating that is water- and oil-repellent, offering extra protection when using the lens in poor weather.

As with the original lens, an Ultrasonic Silent Drive (USD) ring-type motor takes care of autofocus, with improvements



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**Above:** The Tamron's tripod mount provides a very stable platform, which is essential when used at the longer focal lengths. A release knob allows you to switch the camera from landscape to portrait format with speed and ease.  
**Right:** The extensive range of focal lengths is reflected in the length of the Tamron. At 150mm, it measures around 26cm in length, but zoom to 600mm and it increases to around 34cm.



made to AF speed and tracking of moving subjects. With the lens aimed primarily at wildlife and action photographers, this is a particularly important enhancement.

The response of the AF system was certainly impressive in our tests, with the lens quickly locking on static subjects, while with moving subjects it did offer a good degree of tracking success. Not only is it faster than the previous version, it's quieter too.

Image quality is excellent – showing improvements over the original in every way. Sharpness is high throughout the zoom range and across the aperture range, with f/8-11 providing the sharpest results. At maximum aperture sharpness is better than expected and while at minimum f/stops diffraction has an effect, sharpness is still good. Bokeh is nicely recorded too, thanks to the use of rounded diaphragm blades.

## VERDICT

This is an excellent zoom and while more expensive than the original, justifies the price difference through improvements across all areas. A real alternative to similar marque zooms as well as the popular Sigma.



**Overall** ★★★★★



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# Case Logic Kontrast camera bag

Shoulder bag for small DSLR / mirrorless outfit / 27x20x26cm / 710 grams

Test: DANIEL LEZANO

Price: £50

Website: [www.caselogic.com](http://www.caselogic.com)

**T**HERE IS NO shortage of choices for camera storage – there's something to suit every type of photographer and all sizes of outfit. Whether you're looking for a backpack, a messenger bag or conventional shoulder bag, you'll find options available to suit every budget.

At around £50, the Kontrast from Case Logic sits at the lower end of the budgetary scale, but don't let that mislead you into thinking it's a cheaply built bag. This neatly-designed shoulder bag may be a no-frills proposition, but it is also well-made and great value.

Its cuboid shape is rigid, due to the hard plastic 'Durabase' bottom that offers protection from the elements. A green zip at the lid allows for easy access, with the large compartment split into two by a large green divider. On one side is the main



camera compartment, while the other has a subdivider to split it into two sub-sections. The bag is deep, so you can easily place a DSLR/CSC with zoom in one side, while a flashgun and 70-300mm (or similar telezoom) easily fits into the other side.

Zippered pockets are found on the front and sides of the Kontrast's exterior, with another on the inside of its lid. All can hold slim accessories such as batteries, filters and memory cards, but you need to take care with the side pockets as the zip runs vertically, risking loss of items. A large, thick carry handle on the lid affords a good grip, but ensure it is zipped closed before lifting or the bag may tip over. The shoulder strap has a thick, non-slip pad.

Build quality of the Kontrast is very good considering its price and a 25-year warranty is a statement of confidence from Case Logic. While I'm not sure how it would last over extended periods in extreme



weather, it's certainly suitable for use in general conditions. Its capacity means there is room for it to hold enough kit for a weekend's trip, but isn't so large as to allow you to overfill it and make it uncomfortable to use over long walks.

## VERDICT



If you need a budget bag to hold a camera and three or four lenses, then this simple option is well worth consideration. It has the odd design niggle and could do with an extra insert or two, but build quality is very good and there is no arguing with the price.

Overall



# Yongnuo YN360 LED light stick

Hand-held continuous LEDs / Adjustable power/ RGB colour adjustment

Test: JORDAN BUTTERS

Price: £65

Website: [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

**R**EMEMBER MY FIRST manual flashgun was a Yongnuo item – it was crude, simple and very cheap but it worked flawlessly and, you know what, I still have it and it still works to this day. Nowadays it seems like there's no end to what Yongnuo manufacture, from lighting to remote releases, flash accessories and even lenses! One product that caught my eye recently, and looked like it might be useful in automotive photography, was the YN360 hand-held LED light. Similar in application to the Westcott Ice Light, which I absolutely love using, the YN360 had one big thing in its favour – the price. At just £65 from Amazon, I couldn't resist giving it a try.

The YN360 comes in a dedicated carry bag and includes a magnetic CTO gel panel that can be used to warm up the light



source. The specification is impressive – 40 full-colour RGB SMD lamps, 160 LEDs with a colour temperature of 3200K, and 160 LEDs with a temperature of 5500K. The power can be adjusted in either small or large increments, and the colour of the LEDs can be changed too – perfect for matching the colour of the light to existing light sources, or for casting creative effects into your images. And there's a

threaded tripod mount on the base, too. The main problem that I found upon initial inspection however was that the YN360 doesn't include batteries! The description does say this, but I clearly didn't read it properly. Luckily the YN360 accepts standard Sony handycam batteries, and I happened to have a couple lying around. If you don't then you'll have to budget another £20-ish for battery and charger.

So, how is it to use? Really good actually – the YN360 is ideal for light painting, video work or portraits, and the adjustability in brightness and colour makes it a really



versatile tool. Battery life seems good too – certainly on par with the Westcott Ice Light 2 which, it's worth noting, costs in excess of £500 and doesn't include any accessories and can't change colours.

## VERDICT

A handy and versatile tool. Time will tell if the YN360's quality stands up to abuse, but for £65 I could afford to break several before I come close to alternatives. It's a shame that batteries nor charger aren't included, mind.

Overall



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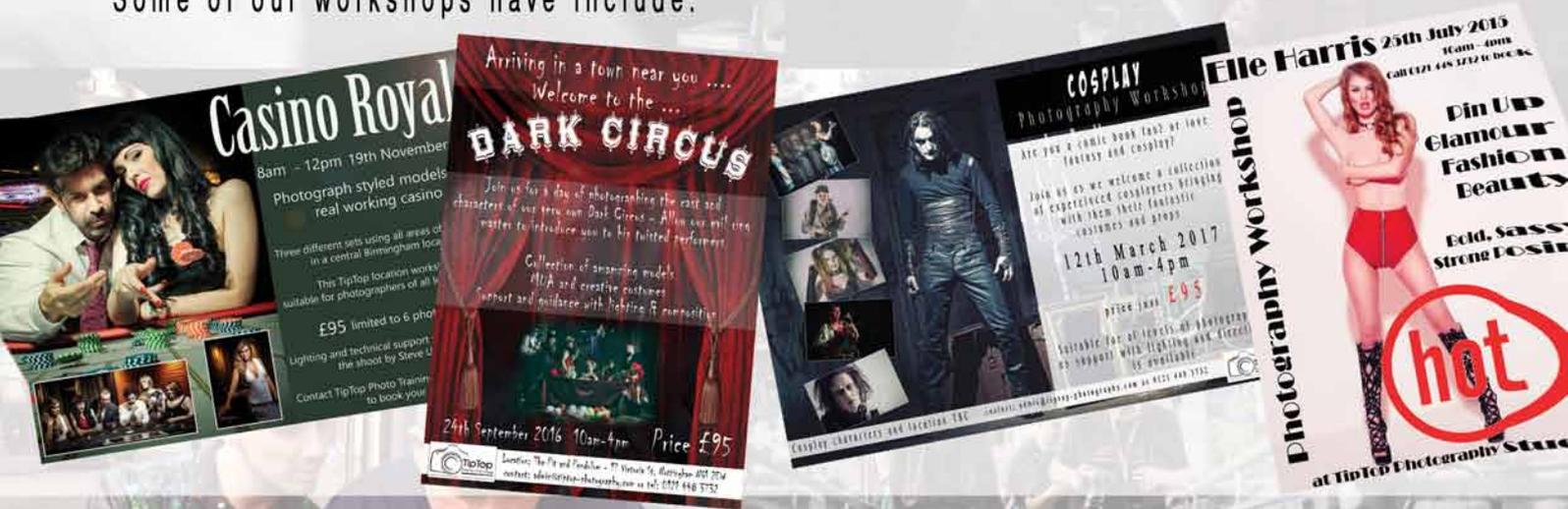
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D5600



24.2 mp  
5.0 fps

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D7100



24.1 mp  
6.0 fps

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30.4 mp  
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20.2 mp  
4.5 fps  
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24.2 mp  
6.0 fps  
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24.3 mp  
6.0 fps  
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24.3 mp  
6.5 fps  
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16.0 fps  
Full Frame

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20.1 mp  
4.2x zoom

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7.0 fps  
Full Frame

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20.8 mp  
12.0 fps  
Full Frame

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D500 Body £1759

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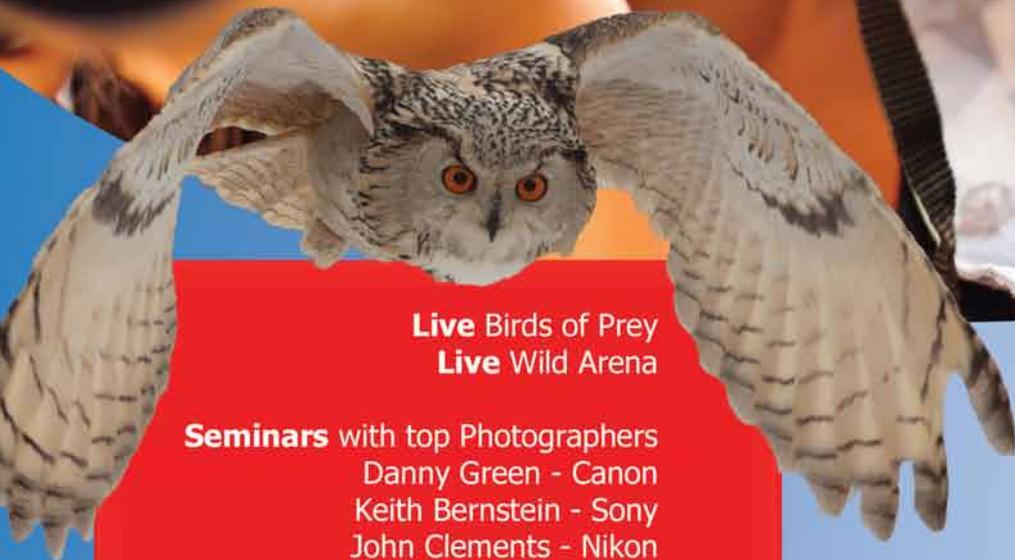
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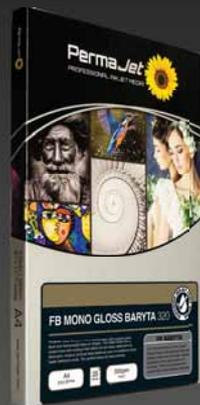


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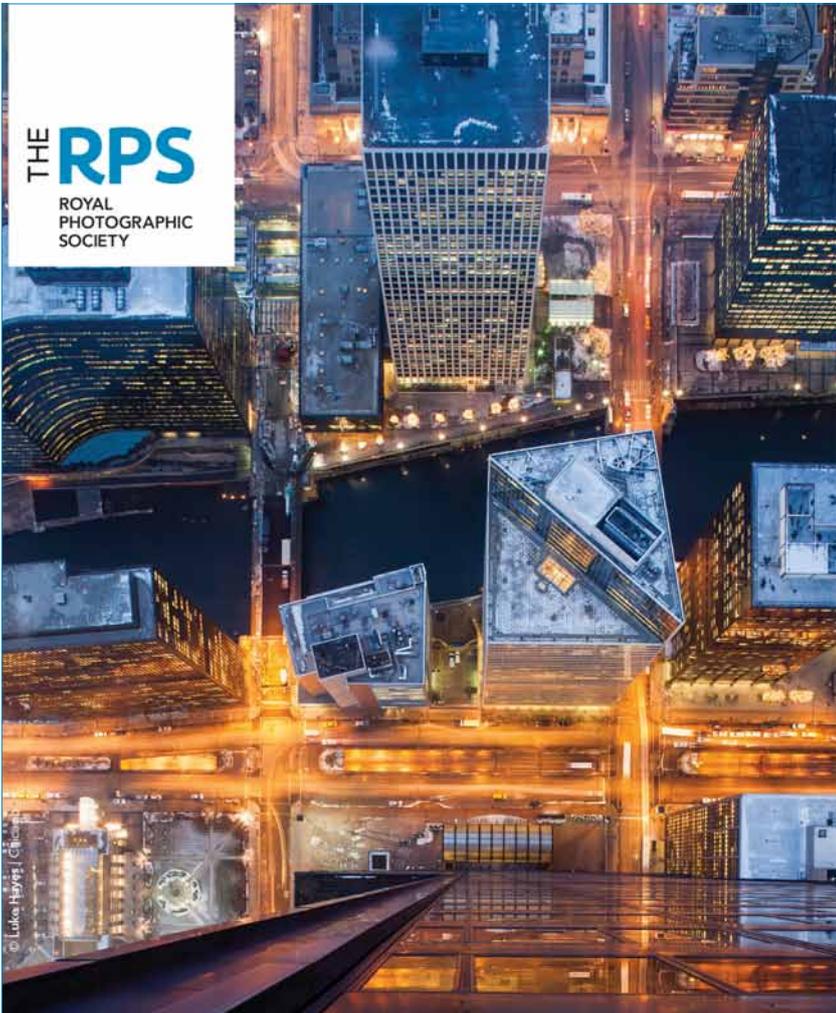
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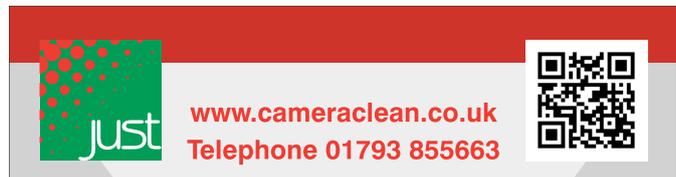
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\*Dear John and Sylvia,

Thank you so much for the 3 day landscape waterfall and Lightroom workshop. I really enjoyed it and will definitely recommend you to my friends. The One2One coaching helped me look at the countryside and be aware of the changing light. I gained a lot more confidence with Lightroom and will adapt my workflow to use it more in the future. I hope I can come and work with you again in the next 6-18months.\*

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**Cheetahs, Lions, Foxes, Birds of Prey, Cambs.** £129

May 20th; Privileged access to Cheetahs, Malayan Tigers, White Tiger & Corsac Foxes. The Cheetah & Tiger enclosures are not mowed for enhanced photographic opportunities. Private Displays by various Birds of Prey, both static & flying. Jesses hidden for static shots. Barn Owl, Eagle Owl and Red-Tailed Hawk etc.

**Amazing Bat Photos & Learn Fill-in Flash Techniques** £139

April 6th; Oxfordshire. Take amazing bat photos, plus learn how to use balanced fill-in flash on wildlife subjects in different lighting conditions. Max 4 persons. Free loan of Canon digital camera and flash if req'd.

**Big Cats at WHF, Smarden in Kent** £155

April 29th, May 13th; Up close to African Lions, Bengal + Siberian + Sumatran Tigers, Servals, Cheetahs, Pumas, Jungle Cat, Amur & Snow Leopards, Caracal, Lynx, Clouded Leopards, Fishing Cat. Large open photographer-friendly enclosures. UK's most popular photo workshop. Really special photo opportunities from just inches away. White Lion pride in a huge natural enclosure. Max 12 clients.

**Big Cats at WHF, Smarden, Kent - Specialist event 6 photographers - incl. Jaguars** £199

May 11th, 14th, 26th; Full day as above, but with additional space at each enclosure. Time is also put aside to review your photos at lunchtime. One to one tuition throughout this very special day. You will see all the animals as above and you will have more personal interaction with the cats. Now including Jaguars.

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**Birds of Prey Workshop, Bedford** £119

April 15th, 16th; Private flying displays on pre-determined flightpath helps you to focus on birds in flight. Excellent opportunities with carefully chosen backgrounds. Also static shots in outstanding natural locations. Jesses carefully hidden. This location boasts one of the largest collections of Birds of Prey in the UK. White tailed Sea Eagle, Bald Eagles, Hawks, Owls, Falcons, Kestrels, Buzzards and Long Eared Owl (new).

**Foxes, Otters, Wildcats, Badgers & more, Surrey.** £159

July 11, 12th; Inside enclosures 'til sunset. Also Owls, Snakes, Badgers, Polecats, Weasels, Stoats, Hedgehog, Harvest Mice & various Deer. 2 sessions with the foxes, sometimes only inches away from you. inside encloses with Foxes, Otters, Scottish Wildcats. Badgers GUARANTEED. No fences or wires to shoot through.

**Small Cats Workshop, Welwyn, Herts.** £109

April 24th; Privileged access to Snow Leopards, Amur Leopards, Pumas, Caracal, Leopard Cat, Lynx, Servals, Golden Cat, Jaguarundi, Cheetahs, Asian Wildcat. As featured on Animal Planet. Small groups.

**Bass Rock Gannets** £225

June 9th, June 18th, June 25th; Private boat. Exclusive use of island for just 10 photographers. 50,000 pairs of nesting gannets on one small island. 4.5 hours photography. Amazing close-ups & fantastic flight shots. Large crate of fish fed to gannets as they dive into the sea. An amazing sight that you will never forget.

**Gannets diving off Bass Rock** £99

June 14th; Fantastic new workshop. We sail round Bass Rock without landing on the island. A whole hour of throwing fish into the sea for the Gannets to catch. Amazing diving shots. 1,000 + dives. Tips & Tuition.

**Farne Islands Puffins (Over 5 hrs photography)** £89

June 10th, 17th, 24th; 20 species of birds. 50,000 puffins. Guillemots, Razorbills, Shag, Arctic Tern colony etc. You will get unbelievably close to some of the species. Get that much sought after shot of Puffins with their beaks crammed full of sand eels. Tips and Tuition. Approximately 5 hours photography.

**Pro Birds of Prey Shoot (2) with Short Eared Owl, Northumberland.** £139

June 13th, 16th; Both the falconer and the birds are different to workshop above. Venues are about 20 miles apart. We will take two of the birds down to an amazingly beautiful, little known waterfall. This will provide a unique backdrop for your subjects. The falls are surrounded by trees covered with mosses and lichens. We will photograph up to 10 different species of birds, mainly British. Maximum 8 photographers.

**Small Mammals, Insects & Reptiles in BOTH RUTLAND & NORTHUMBERLAND** £199

Rutland March 15th. Northumberland July 27th, 28th; Indoor studio set-ups ensuring professional quality photos of stunning subjects. Studio lighting set up for you. Triggers to fit your camera supplied. Cameras and lenses can be loaned without charge. Innovative set-ups to maximise your opportunities. Max 4 persons. Harvest Mice, Red Eyed Tree Frogs, Praying Mantis, Beardeed Dragon, Scorpion, Tarantula, Snakes, Lizards etc.

**Birds of Prey on Lindisfarne (Holy Island) incl. Short Eared Owl** £139

June 5th; New workshop for 2016. Photograph a Short Eared Owl in its natural habitat before continuing with selection from Eagle Owl, Long Eared Owl, Barn Owl, Buzzard, Kestrel, Little Owl, Tawny Owl using boats, Lindisfarne Castle, boat houses & fishing props as backdrops.

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