DIGIT

Volunteers needed for the DIG Midlands Centre

The DIG Midlands, previously one of the Group's more successful Centres, needs both a Treasurer and an Administrator to take the bookings for events.

Are you willing to help by volunteering for one of these roles?

If so please contact the Centre Organiser Tim Pile as soon as possible and by the end of March at the latest. Tim can be contacted at tim.pile@gmail.com

If no-one volunteers for these roles the Centre will have to close.

DIG Events

16th March 2014	23 March 2014	30 March 2014
Emily Hancock FBIPP ARPS: The Business of Photography, Training, and Qualifications	Bob Moore Hon FRPS & Sue Moore FRPS	Viveca Koh ARPS: Urban Exploration to Fine Art: a Photographic Journey. From iPhoneography to Photo Illustrations: My Continuing Journey
	Ilton, Nr. Taunton, TA19 9HG	
Woosehill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3DA		Foxton Village Hall, Hardman Road, Foxton, CB22 6RN

For further information, please see Events on page 4
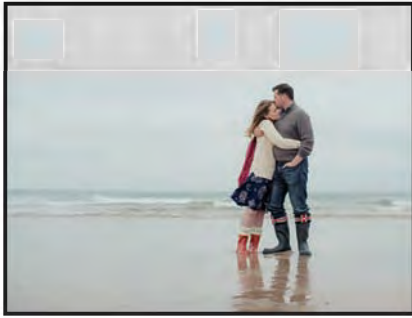
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DIGIT

NO 59: (2013 ISSUE 4)

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www.rps.org/special-interest-groups/digital-imaging

FRONT COVER IMAGE
All at Sea by Gerry Coles ARPS

CONTENTS

EVENTS

Details of all DIG events are available on the Group's website at:
http://www.rps.org/special-interest-groups/digital-imaging/events

16th March 2014
Emily Hancock FBIPP ARPS: The Business of Photography, Training, and Qualifications
Woosehill Community Hall, Emmview Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 3DA
Time 10:00AM - 3:30PM
Contact: Laurie Pate
Email: info@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk
Phone: 07785 256692
Cost: £10.00, Members' Rate: £6.00
How Emily runs her photography business in the niche equine area, provides photographic training, and how she obtained her qualifications.
About our speaker: Emily Hancock is a classical portrait and wedding photographer based in the heart of the New Forest. With over a decade of commercial experience, she has quickly become renowned for her beautiful photography and desirable fine art pieces. Her most recent equine series has been awarded the highest possible accolade of a Fellowship distinction by the British Institute of Photography and featured on the BBC.
Inspired by her childhood passion, Emily has also become one of the UK's leading equine photographers, where she has photographed many stars of the equestrian world including Olympic British dressage rider and winner of two gold medals, Charlotte Dujardin.
She is also a highly regarded photography trainer, "I enjoy my work so much and my biggest reward is passing my expertise and knowledge onto the next generation of photographers". Emily offers a variety of options when it comes to learning how to take better photographs, contact Emily to find out more.
ADVANCE BOOKING ESSENTIAL TO BE SURE OF A PLACE. Please see Tickets for Events page for more ticket details and information on Season Tickets for Thames Valley Centre events.
Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a packed lunch.
Note: the ticket price shown above against "Members' Rate" is the rate that applies to members of the Digital Imaging Group only. It does not apply to RPS members who are not DI Group members.
PARKING: There is no parking at the Community Hall itself, except for speakers and judges, those disabled or anyone bringing heavy equipment to an event. Parking is in zones A and B of the Morrisons car park, accessed via Fernlea Drive - 200 metres beyond Emmview Close, and just after the entrance to Morrisons. For those using SatNav, the postcode for Morrisons is RG41 3SW, and for Fernlea Drive it is RG41 3DR.

23 March 2014
Bob Moore Hon FRPS & Sue Moore FRPS
Ilton, Nr. Taunton, TA19 9HG
Time 10:30 - 16:00
Contact: Janet Haines ARPS
Email: janet.haines@btopenworld.com
Cost: Group Member £5.00, RPS Member £7.00, Non RPS Member £8.00
Bob & Sue Moore will be giving a Printing Skills workshop for the morning session. Bob is an acknowledged master of printing and will be showing colour and monochrome printing techniques. The afternoon it will be our usual Show and Tell of Members Prints. Doors Open 10am and the workshop starts at 10.30am. Lunch 13.00 - 14.00. Food available. TICKETS AND FOOD NEED TO BE ORDERED IN ADVANCE.

30 March 2014
Viveca Koh ARPS: Urban Exploration to Fine Art: a Photographic Journey. From iPhoneography to Photo Illustrations: My Continuing Journey
Foxton Village Hall
Hardman Road
Foxton
CB22 6RN
Time: 10:15 - 16:00
Contact: John Margetts ARPS
EmailL: events@rpseasterndigital.org.uk
Phone: 01223 700147
Cost: Group Member £5.00, RPS Member £10.00, Non RPS Member £15.00
Urban Exploration to Fine Art: a Photographic Journey
This presentation encompasses my photographic development over the past three years, which has progressed at a fairly rapid rate following an albeit slightly slower but life-long love and practise of photography. I discovered Urban Exploration in 2009, and this led to a series of visits to abandoned mental asylums and hospitals. In 2010 I was awarded a Licentiateship Distinction, and in June 2011 was successful in attaining an Associateship Distinction following a unanimous vote from the judges. Since then my work has moved towards a very artistic and painterly style, which is why I now refer to what I do as Fine Art Photography. This presentation is not so much about attaining Distinctions from the RPS, although I do touch on the process briefly during the talk, but more about how I have developed in terms of style and maturity of vision over the past three years. There will be plenty of photographs, tales of Urban Exploration and the attendant thrills and spills that are a part of this activity, and even something which may or may not be a ghost!
From iPhoneography to Photo Illustrations: My Continuing Journey
My second presentation follows on from my first, in which I will discuss my use of an iPhone to take photographs. The use of camera phones is on the rise, as the quality of cameras integrated into these devices improves exponentially, and this happened to coincide with my quest to find a new way to express myself from a photographic perspective. During this time I experimented with the phone camera, almost to the exclusion of my DSLR, and shot many photographs in the square format that I have always loved but using lo-fi/creative camera apps. This led up to the separate challenge of illustrating a book of poetry and prose entitled 'Star Blossom', in which my images become more abstract and in some cases a little surreal, utilising multiple layers, textures and double exposures, whilst using the written words as inspiration. The second half of the talk will feature all 51 images from the book and I will describe their inspiration and method of creation.
About Viveca Koh ARPS: I am a self-taught Fine Art photographer, with a special fascination for small details, for lost, abandoned, poignant and generally broken objects, and also for darkness contrasting with light, both in a physical and emotional sense. Many of my illustrative images simply evolve as I am working on them - I start off with a quite straightforward idea of what I want to achieve but am always willing to venture wherever the photograph wants me to go, as I overlay multiple images together or add textures, scanned documents as new layers, and subtle shading. Two photographs may blend together in a way that I could not have previously imagined, and this is one of the things that I find so exciting and all-consuming when I work, to produce a final image that perhaps is a little bit different, that invokes emotion in the viewer and makes them question their sense of the world as they know it. I am a member of the RPS Visual Art Group and Digital Imaging Group, Honorary Secretary of the former and in 2014 became joint Editor of the Visual Art Group magazine. To view my web site and find more of my work please go to http://vivecakohphotography.photoshelter.com/

THE WAY I SEE IT

When he first started photography thirty years ago, Gerry Coles was labelled as 'creative' by members of his camera club. With the advent of digital photography he realised the potential that was now open to amateur photographers with a creative mind. Since then, he has been using this new opportunity to full advantage, as he shows in his article.

When I first joined Duston Camera Club thirty years ago, like most keen amateur photographers at that time, I was producing black and white prints in the darkroom. Within a short time, I was labelled by other members in the club as 'creative', although I had no idea what that meant! It was true that I tried various techniques to make my pictures look different, so I guess the label was correct. Some of the things I attempted included tearing the edges of the print, moving the paper under the enlarger during exposure and adding colour and tone to a print using watercolour paint in an airbrush, all the time trying to create a look that was different.

Moving forward several years to 2007 and my first digital SLR, I don't think many photographers could believe the speed at which digital photography had progressed, and the quality of the prints that could be achieved with an inkjet printer. I certainly couldn't, and was converted overnight. For the first couple of months I was happy just to produce A3 straight prints, that is until I dabbled in Photoshop and realised the potential that was open to amateur photographers with a creative mind.

I have always been interested in the theatre, the technical side I hasten to add, and have designed and built several stage sets over the years. It was whilst photographing one of the set models I had built that I wondered whether, instead of building a model, I could put the various elements together in Photoshop and use photographs, rather than going to the trouble of building a model, to show the director and cast how the set would look when it was built. It didn't

Going Home

work, as the director wanted the model so he could move the scenery around and explain to the cast how the finished set worked. The experiment wasn't a complete waste of time though, as it made me question whether I could build a photograph like I built a stage set.

My first conscious attempt at this was 'Going Home'. The floor was taken in Whitby, the backdrop was taken in London on the banks of the river Thames; it was an accident, the camera was on auto focus but, as sometimes

happens, I pressed the shutter as the auto focus was hunting. Although it is totally out of focus, it gives me just the impression of a tree in front of a building and maybe the blue area on the right-hand side somewhere for the cast, who were taken at a living history event at Kelmarsh, to walk into. I guess and hope that different people will have different interpretations of what they are seeing and what is happening in the photograph. If that is the case, then I consider that the picture works. Another effect used in the theatre is a gauze which is hung at the front of the stage and forms a barrier between the stage and the audience. It adds mystery and depth depending on how the scene is lit; the nearest thing I have found in Photoshop is a layer of

noise. So as I said, this was my first conscious attempt at producing a photograph using my experience in the theatre of designing and building sets. My inspiration for a picture usually comes from the photograph I take of the main subject or subjects whom I am using as the focal point in the picture. I then find a floor to suit and build a background which I feel suits the subject, 'Gothic Charm' is an example of this approach. In many of my pictures, but not all, the backgrounds are taken out of focus so that they suggest a location rather than being 'real'. I find that taking the photograph out of focus produces a different effect to softening a sharp image in Photoshop afterwards. Some of my subjects are posed as is the

case in 'Urban Glory', 'Life is but a Dream' and 'Puppet in the Rain'. That way I can start to think of ideas at the taking stage. In the example of 'Puppet in the Rain', the costume that Juliet was wearing suggested to me the idea of puppets, and, as Juliet is a trained dancer, no sooner had I suggested the idea than she offered several poses with that theme in mind. There is no doubt that people who are used to performing make the best models for the sort of photography I enjoy. Then adding a layer of a photograph of rain on a window just seemed to give the finished picture an additional element. Although obviously unreal, I think it gives the picture more impact.

My other approach is to photograph

Gothic Charm

Urban Glory

Puppet in the Rain

Life is but a Dream

Rainman

Passing By

All at Sea

people without them being aware, as in 'Rainman', 'Passing By', 'All at Sea' and 'Going Home' (page 5). Sometimes this works but obviously is less predictable. Often, if the situation when I take the picture is a little odd, I find the picture works better. I'm not sure if that is because of the effect it had on me at the taking stage or whether it does actually follow through to the finished image. This was the case in 'Rainman', as the gentleman had the umbrella up but it wasn't raining. Does that make a difference to the finished image? I guess it does. Had it been raining I may not have taken the picture in the first place and as it wasn't and the sun was shining the lighting is far better on him than it would have been.

Several people have commented that my pictures are simple and fairly minimal in content and again this goes back to my experience in the theatre, my set designs were similar, as the more complicated I made the design the more I had to build!

Most of my images have an element of blur, either to show movement or

in the case of 'All at Sea' I have softened the whole image using a layer of Gaussian Blur, which I feel adds to the emotion of the picture. Not all judges appreciate the use of blur and noise and that is understandable as most photographers strive for pin sharp, noise-free images.

An interesting point in relation to judging is in the case of 'Rainman', it tends to do well

in exhibitions where a judge makes a quick decision. At club competitions, however, where judges are invited to make comments, they usually get round to questioning why the floor isn't wet! I have found that if something doesn't look quite right in a picture, such as the dry floor, it can actually add to the initial impact. 'In Dark Places' works in

In Dark Places

GERRY COLES ARPS
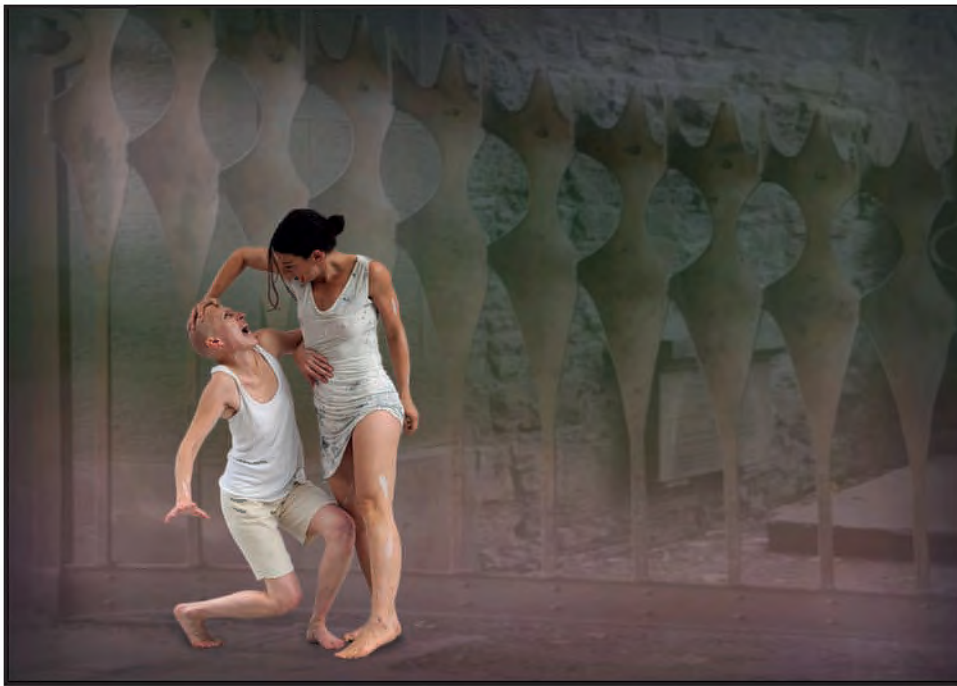
Beyond the Gate

my opinion because the wall looks strange, both in design and colour and the reason for this is the 'wall' is actually the curved underside of a canal bridge that has been transformed in Photoshop, which has affected the shape of the bricks, and the colour is caused by ground water seeping through from above. 'Urban Glory' (page 7) is probably the most realistic of my pictures here, but it is actually made up of five individual pictures, I often wonder how real I should try to make a picture look, as it almost lacks the creative look that I strive to achieve in my pictures.

2013 was the first time I have been to the Edinburgh Festival and I found it a great opportunity to take photographs of performers to include in my images. 'Beyond the Gate' and 'Singing in the Rain' are the first two pictures I have produced from this event. My approach was to take a large number of pictures of the performers and then the inspiration for an idea will come from their pose and expression.

So the theatre has had a big influence on my photography, probably sub-consciously until recent years. In many ways, I suppose the stage is just like a large photograph, especially in relation to composite images, where we can control the background, what we put where, who we include in our pictures, how we light it and the atmosphere we choose to create.

You can see more of my photography on my website at: www.gerrycolesphotography.com

Singing in the Rain

Figure 1: The RAW Image

Figure 2: Preset Applied to Figure 1

DEVELOP PRESETS FOR ADOBE LIGHTROOM

Ria Mishaal is a professional wedding photographer who deals with many images on a daily basis. She uses presets in her workflow, because they allow her to edit the files quickly whilst maintaining her own distinctive style. In her article, she explains how to make and use presets in Adobe Lightroom.

Adobe Lightroom allows you to create Develop presets. Presets allow you to save and apply multiple adjustment settings at the click of a button.

Introduction

Getting a consistent look and feel to your images is really important for an artistic photographer. When using film, you choose a specific film for different circumstances to give you the look you want, and get the film processed at a lab that uses a specific formula. If you shoot in digital format, you have access to an extensive array of editing tools at the click of a button in programs such as Adobe Photoshop Lightroom.

It is easy to spend hours experimenting with these adjustment tools, and if the edit you particularly prefer involves many tweaks, it could be very time consuming to replicate on every image you edit. Luckily, you can save your adjustment settings as 'presets' which you can apply to individual images or batches of images. This gives you an overall starting point from which you can make minor adjustments to finish your images.

As a wedding photographer who deals with many images on a daily basis, using presets has allowed me to edit files quickly, while maintaining my own editing style and consistency within, and across, shoots.

There are many presets available to download from the Internet, both for free and for purchase, but why not make your own?

How to make a Preset

To make your own preset, the best place to start is with an image you love. You

can either take a newly imported image, making adjustments until you have created the feel you want, or access an image you have previously edited to perfection.

Lightroom Adjustment Settings

Lightroom 5 has very sophisticated adjustment options, from the basic exposure, contrast and tone curves to radial and graduated filters (Figure 3). It is important to understand what each of these adjustments does so that you can get the most from them.

- The Basic Panel, Tone Curve and HSL/Colour/B&W panels allow you to manipulate the light and colour balance within your image.

- The Split Toning panel adjusts the hue and saturation of the highlights and shadows in your image. This allows you to tone monochrome images or apply particular effects to colour images.

- In the Detail panel you can adjust the sharpness and apply noise reduction to your image.

- The Lens Correction panel allows you to make corrections to distortion, vignette and chromatic aberration caused by the lens you used to take your image.

- The Effects panel allows you to add a post crop vignette to your image and add a film grain effect.

- The Camera calibration panel allows you to apply camera profiles which match

your camera manufacturer's software profiles, to get your image closer to what you see on the back of your camera. You can also purchase profiles to emulate film stock, which I will go into in more detail at the end of this article.

Figures 4 and 5 show typical basic adjustments on import and after adjustment.

Saving Your Preset

Once you have made the adjustments you would like to save, it is easy to create a preset. In the left hand column in the Lightroom Develop module, you will see the Presets panel. To the right on the Presets title, there is a '+' button (Figure 6). Clicking on this will open a dialogue box, giving you the option to choose which adjustments you would like to include or exclude from your preset (Figure 7). Remember that if you have made no adjustments to a parameter, and you save that within your preset, it will reset any other image to this 'zero' setting. I find it most effective to check only the options in the preset that you have given positive or negative adjustments to (Figure 8). Be aware that radial and graduated filters will be applied in exactly the same place as within the saved preset. For this reason, personally, I exclude these from my presets and apply later to individual images as needed (and sync between images if there are a number which require this same treatment).

Make sure you choose a name for your preset that will help you remember what the outcome of applying your preset is. Then all you need to do is hit the save button. Once you have added a Preset to the Presets panel it will remain there until you delete it and it will be visible in all catalogues you open on the same computer.

Update Your Preset

As you continue to work with presets, you might find you want to adjust settings or add extra adjustments, and so it is useful to be able to update pre-saved presets. To do so, just right click on the title of your preset in the Preset panel and a dialogue box will appear (Figuire 11). Select all of the options you want saving in your updated preset (not just the ones you have made new changes to).

Organise Your Presets

You can create as many presets as you like with as few or as many adjustments as you like. I have presets for colour toning and different editing effects, and also simple presets to apply sharpening and noise reduction to images that had certain camera settings, which I identify using the Metadata view. Having created a number of presets, it is useful to be able to keep
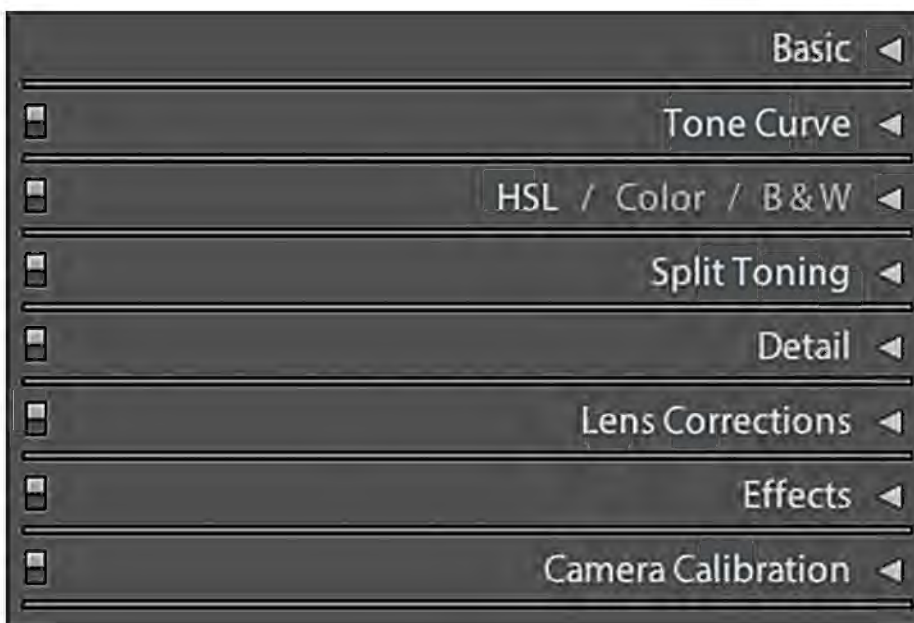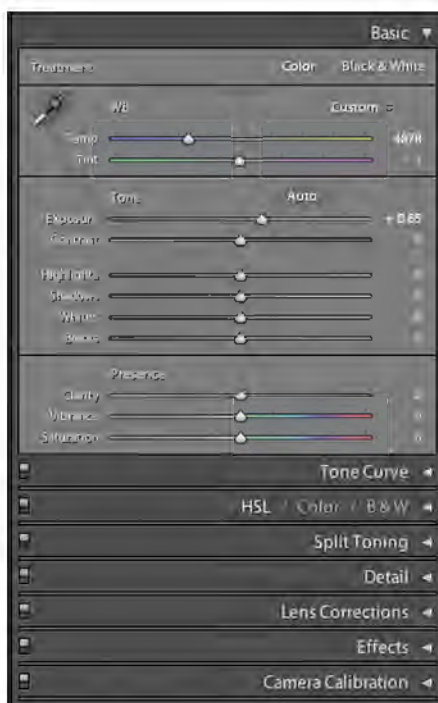

Figure 3: Lightroom Adjustment Panel

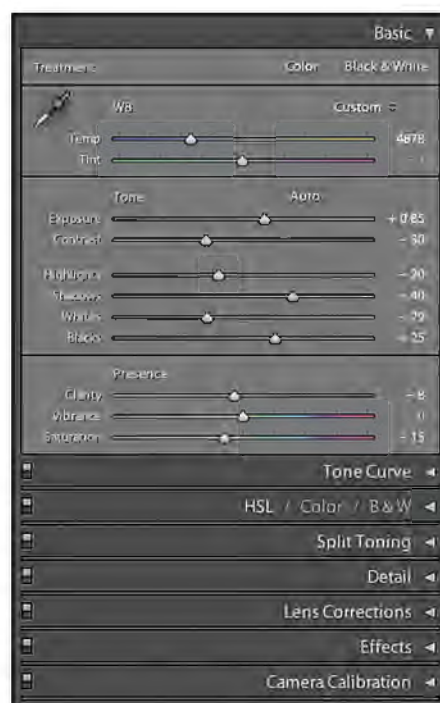
Figure 4: Basic Adjustments on Import

Figure 5: Basic Adjustments after Changes

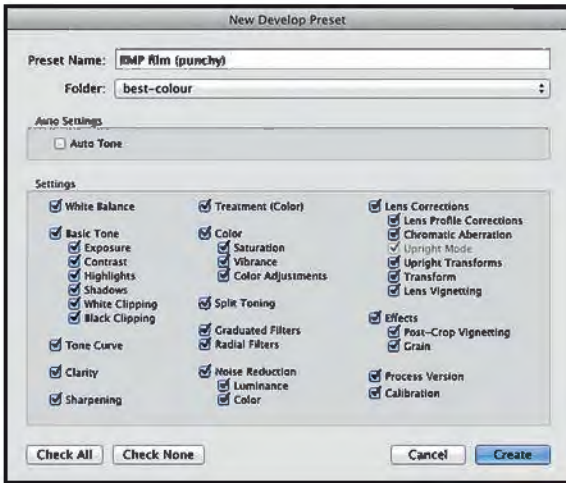Figure 7: -New Preset Dialogue with Check All

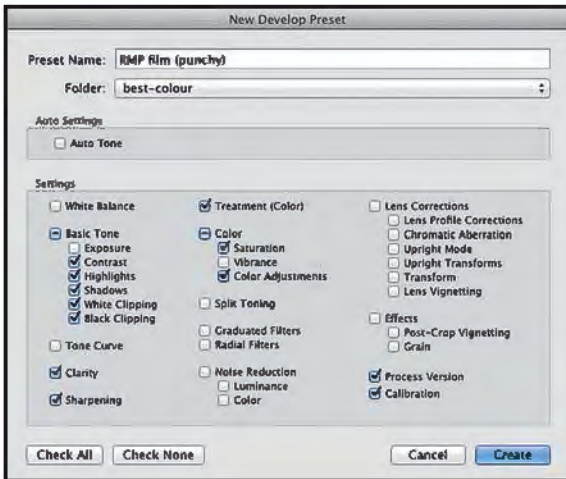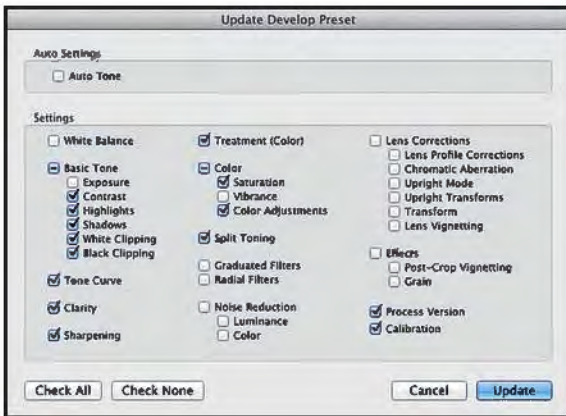Figure 8: New Preset Dialogue with Options Selected

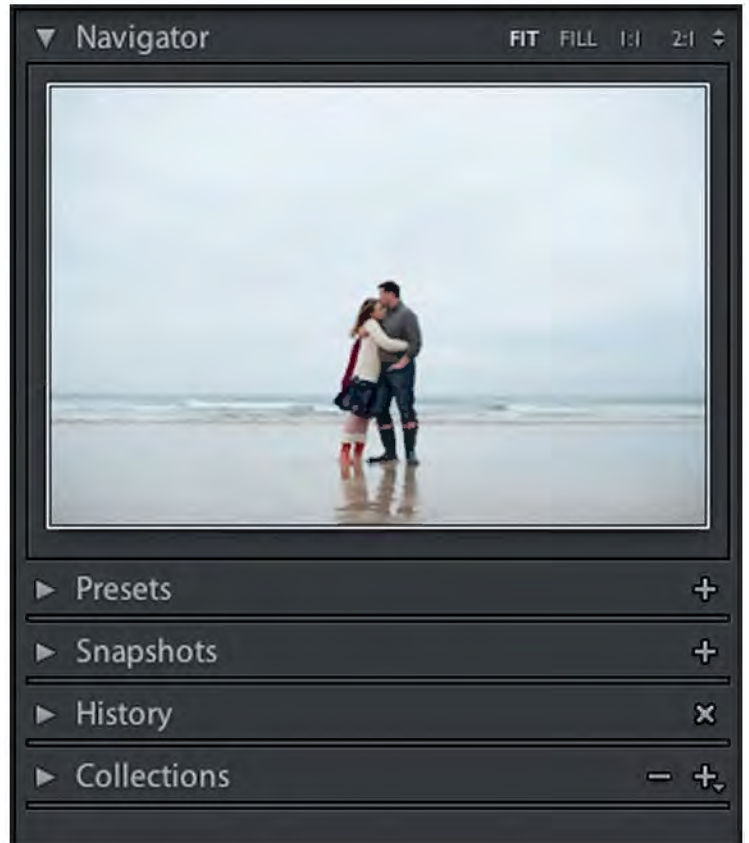Figure 11: Preset Update Dialogue Box

Figure 6: Lightroom Preset Panel and '+' Button Location for Creating a Preset

Figure 9: RAW Image

Figure 10: Preset Applied to RAW Image (Changes made in One Click)

them organised. You can create folders to store different presets in very simply by right clicking anywhere over the Presets panel and choosing the option 'New Folder'

Preview and Applying Your Preset

You can easily preview how any preset will affect your image by rolling your cursor over the preset name and looking at the way the image is displayed in the navigation panel on the right hand side. Clicking on the preset name will apply it to your image in an instant.

You can also apply your preset on import, using the dropdown option on the right hand side settings panel in the dialogue box. This is very helpful to apply presets to batches of files on import from your memory card.

Figure 12: Bouquet, Ria's Custom Colour Preset

Figure 13: Bouquet,VSCO bought preset emulating Fuji 160C film

Figure 14: Bouquet, Ria's custom black and white preset (manually toned, not pure black and white. Compare with the VSCO black and white preset) which isn't toned

Figure 15: Bouquet, VSCO bought preset emulating Ilford HP5 black and white film

Delete a Preset

You can delete any custom presets you have made by right clicking on the preset name and choosing 'delete' from the options that appear. Be aware that you should not press the delete key on your keyboard, as this will instead delete the selected photograph.

Exporting and importing presets

Importing and exporting presets is important if you want to share custom presets you have made between computers or if you want to use presets others have developed.

To export a preset, all you need to do is right click on the preset name and choose 'export' and type a name for the template file and save it.

To import a preset file, first select the folder in the preset panel in which you would like you preset to appear, and right click and select 'import'. Navigate to where your preset template is stored, and double click it to import.

Available premade presets

If you are interested in using premade presets to 'develop' your digital images, or to use as a starting point for further editing, there are a wide range available on the internet. Free preset templates can be obtained from sites such as http://www.presetsheaven.com.

One of the most notable supplies of presets that emulate original film stocks is the Visual Supply Co (VSCO). You can purchase sets of presets and camera profiles from http:/vsco.co/film that range from those that emulate slide, instant, classic and modern film stocks. These I have found particularly interesting from the point of view of the camera profiles, which give you a completely different starting point from the camera manufacturer's profiles.

Conclusion

Creating and using presets in Lightroom's Develop module can be a great part of the digital photographer's workflow, supporting consistency in a time saving manner, promoting the photographers artistic style, or purely enabling experimentation more quickly. It is a very valuable and simple tool to master, and well worth getting to know.

Figure 16: Bouquet, The RAW Image

You can see more of Ria's photography on her website at: www.riamishaal.com

Figure 17: Cat, The RAW Image

Figure 18: Cat, Ria's custom colour preset (same as for bouquet if you want to compare)

Figure 19: Ria's custom black and white preset (same as for bouquet if you want to compare)

Pelicans

MY PHOTOGRAPHY

Palli Gajree is a long standing member of the Digital Imaging Group and has been a member of the RPS for nearly 60 years. His career has been both very successful and varied and has covered a range of photographic genres, especially portrait and wildlife photography. Here, he discusses his experiences and photographic interests.

I was born and brought up in Kenya, my parents having migrated from India way back in the mid-1920s. My interest in photography began at the age of 15, when I saved enough pocket money to invest in a Kodak 127 folding camera, just after the Second World War. My enthusiasm for portraiture developed, and in 1951 I added a twin-lens Rolleiflex to my equipment. Relatives, friends and anyone else who could be persuaded were posing in front of my new toy. Two years later, in 1953, this interest in portraiture took a new turn when I travelled to the United Kingdom to do a two-year full-time course in photography at the Manchester College

of Technology (now known as the Manchester Metropolitan University). I passed the Final Examination with distinction and was awarded a College Prize for excellence. I joined the RPS in 1954 while still a student at the Manchester College of Technology. After the completion of studies, I turned to London and joined the West-End portrait studio with the well-known photographer, the late Walter Bird, FIBP, FRPS. He encouraged me to continue my photographic studies part-time at the Regent Street Polytechnic (now the University of Westminster), so I enrolled for night classes there one evening a week. Two years' experience gained from

this studio proved most beneficial, and any success I achieved in portrait work can be attributed largely to this great master of portrait photography. Through Walter Bird and the Regent Street Polytechnic I was privileged to meet a number of eminent photographers of the day and I look back with fond memories on this period in London, a fascinating and exciting time.

Bird himself was a keen Salon exhibitor, which was to provide even further incentive in competing with other exhibitors around the world. My first exhibition success came in 1957 when one of my portraits taken at Walter Bird Studios was accepted and shown at the

Adjusting the Lines

Walter Bird FIBP, FRPS

The Red Truck

Carved Steps

Ancient Door and Pattern

Cabana Reflections

London Salon of Photography. The same portrait was subsequently selected and reproduced in The British Journal Photographic Almanac 1958 as well as Photograms of the Year 1958.

In 1958 I returned to Nairobi to set up my own portrait and commercial studio with some degree of success. To be a successful portraitist one has to be very much aware of the importance of recording the human personality, coupled with rules of composition, lighting, background and so forth.

A couple of years later, a job offer as a senior cameraman emerged from the Kenya Government Information Services, an offer too good to refuse. This gave me good exposure to various other branches of photography such as Press, Photojournalism, Architectural, Industrial, Wildlife, and Landscape Photography. Then, prior to Kenya gaining Independence in 1963, I was appointed as Head of the Photographic Section with the Kenya Government Information Services. I recall that when Jomo Kenyatta became President of Kenya I was asked to take the official portrait, in colour, for circulation world-wide.

The biggest surprise of my life came in 1964 when my wife, Shashi, gave me a birthday present of a Hasselblad 500C complete with 150mm and 250mm lenses, magazines and prism finder. This was to be a major breakthrough in doing wildlife studies in colour and black-and-white. From then on, most of our weekends and annual holidays were to be spent around the National Parks and Game Reserves of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, an experience and thrill which is still cherished today.

In 1972, having made a momentous decision, we moved to Australia for permanent residence and settled in Melbourne. I joined Swinburne Institute of Technology (now Swinburne University) in 1973, and retired from the full-time lecturing position in Photography some 22 years later.

I found teaching immensely enjoyable and stimulating. The students brought challenging ideas to be solved photographically, and it is very gratifying to see a number of them go on to establish successful photographic businesses, some on the international scene.

My membership of the RPS has been a most important part of my life. After joining The Society in 1954, I gained my ARPS in Portraiture in 1956 and an FRPS in 1975 with black-and-white prints of African wildlife. Then in 1990 I was awarded an Honorary FRPS, "for promoting photography over many years, particularly in Kenya and Australia, as an exhibitor, judge and teacher". My work is represented in the RPS Permanent Collection as well as in the collections of several other international photographic societies. Exhibiting and lecturing, both locally and internationally, have been a major photographic interest for me and I've been a judge at numerous National and International exhibitions. My interest in international photography has led me to being an active member of several of the leading photographic societies around the world and, over the years, I have gained various skill and service honours from these Societies. I have also been awarded the highest skill and service honours of the International Federation of Photographic Art (MFIAP and Hon EFIAP), the first and, so far, the only Australian to receive this recognition. In 1989, I was awarded my most treasured award to date. That was the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for "Services to Photography".

Impressionism - Venice
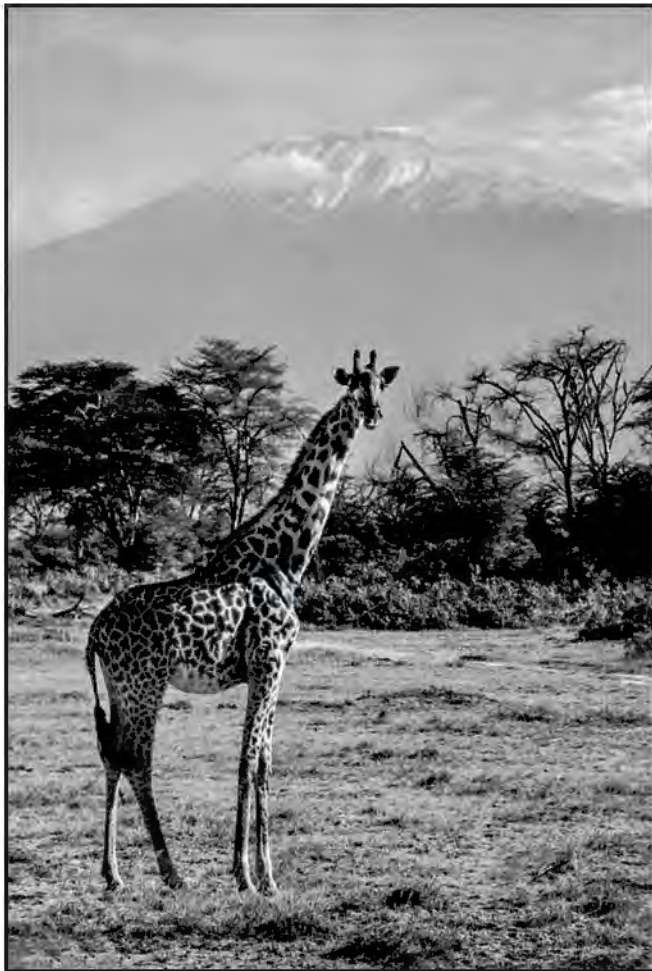
Giraffe Under Kilimanjaro

Gum Trees in Infra-red

For some years now I have been involved with digital photography, taking on the challenges of Photoshop and Lightroom. My interest was sparked by a lecture at a conference in Tasmania in 1996, by a well-known photographer from Melbourne on 'Digital Photography'. The work he had on display was a real eye-opener. It wasn't difficult to gauge from his talk that it was only a matter of time before digital photography took over and played a major role in our everyday lives.

I bought my first digital camera - a Canon PowerShot G2 as well as a PC and

Charging Tusker

Inkjet Printer. At the time Photoshop 6 was popular and that was installed on the computer.

Over the years I have learnt a great deal about digital photography. I now use a Canon 5D Mark III, and shoot images in RAW exclusively.

It is indeed a big learning curve but, by belonging to some of the Digital Groups, both local and overseas, things should become a little less complex in today's technological era.

I have maintained my exhibiting interests by frequently entering overseas International as well as local Digital sections. My latest interest has been converting a digital camera to take infrared images, a new challenge which I'm enjoying immensely.

Looking back over my many years in photography, I've enjoyed greatly the opportunities I've had to make contact with international photographers and thus develop an ability to assess constructively a wide range of photographic disciplines. And above all, I value the long-lasting friendships formed with other photographers, some going back for forty or fifty years. What a pleasure and a privilege it has all been.

RAINBOW COLOURS FROM PHOTOSHOP

Figure 2 Fountain with Colours

In the (good?) old days when we produced images as transparencies or used colour negative film there was a technique involving 'tricolour' filters to produce interesting colours in moving objects. The process involved setting your camera on a tripod and taking three images of the same scene on one frame of colour film (though not all cameras would allow this). For each of the three superimposed images a different filter was used – red, green or blue. In the final image, if nothing was moving, the colours combined to give a true full colour result. However, if anything moved between the shots then the colours did not register and moving objects ended up as coloured shapes against a true colour background. The technique worked for cars and people moving along a street but was particularly effective for shots of fountains where the moving droplets of water registered as rainbow colours against the full colour scene.

Photoshop allows this to be done without all the messing about with filters and indeed without the use of a tripod for precise registration – though a tripod is preferred. Here is the method: -

- Take three images of your scene – say a fountain (see Figure 1) – using the same exposure and with as little camera movement between exposures as possible. Preferably use a tripod.

- Import and open the three images and then select the first one and open the Channel Mixer (Image>Adjustments>Channel Mixer). Select the red output channel and set red 100% with blue and green 0% (this is usually the opening default). Change the output channel to blue and set blue/red/green all to 0%. Change the output channel to green and again set blue/red green to 0%. Your image will now be a strong red.

- Keep the red image open and now select image two to work on. Follow the same procedure but this time set the green channel to 100% and the others to 0%. Repeat for the 3rd image , this time keeping the blue channel at 100% with the others at 0%

- You should now have three images of the scene, one in red, one in blue and one in green (these are the RGB components of the final image).

- Save all the images (the next bit won't work until this has been done) but keep all three images open.

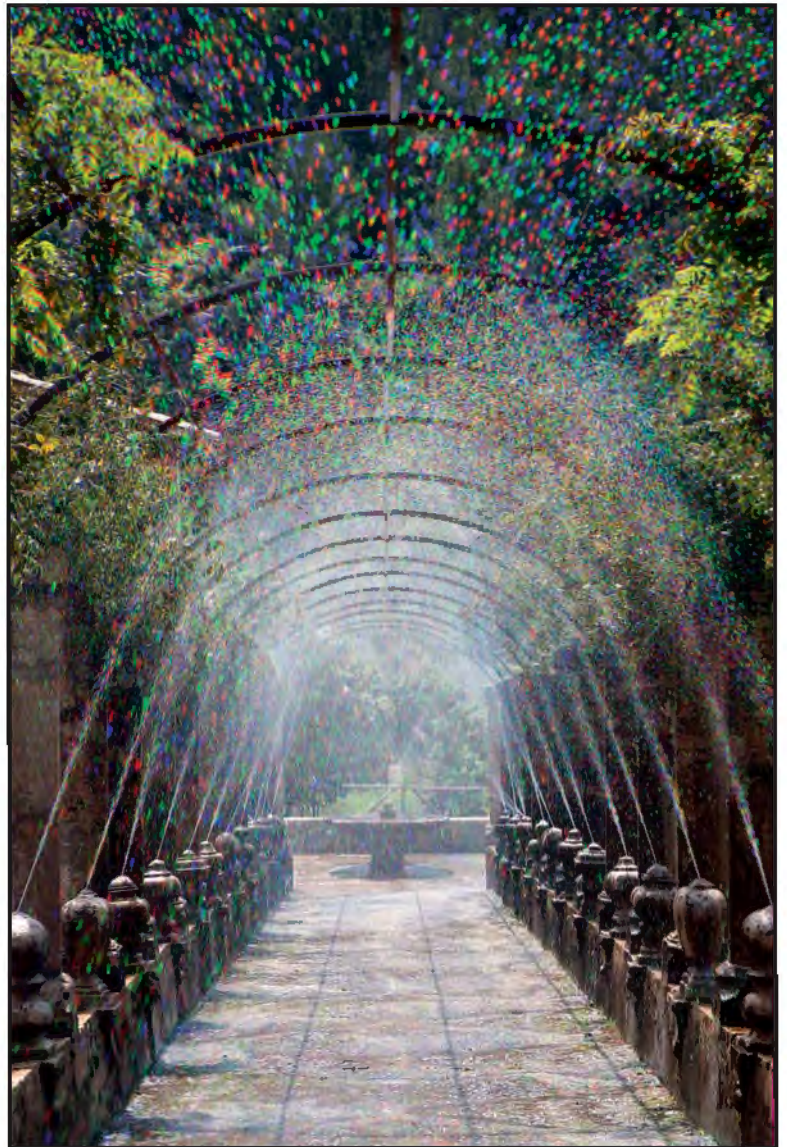- Go to File>Scripts>Load files into stack and in the drop down menu select 'open files' The three images will now be loaded into one file in three layers.

- Select all three layers and go to Edit>Auto Align. This is not really necessary if you used a tripod but is essential if you didn't. This takes care of any slight movement of the camera between exposures.

- Crop out any mis-alignments. Then select the top layer and from the drop down menu 'Screen' as the blend mode. Repeat for the second layer. You should now have a full colour image with any moving objects showing up as blue, red, green, or a combination – see Figure 2. You may not win any awards but the results can be interesting and intriguing, especially if the viewer has no idea how it was achieved!

Figure 1 Fountain

THE DIGIT CHALLENGE

This time we have five images from DIG members who explain how they were created. I hope you'll find them interesting and that it gives you helpful techniques to use in your own photography.

Moondance

Moondance by Carole Lewis ARPS:
Most of my pictures in recent years have been 'straight' landscapes so I enjoyed having a bit of fun with this image. The inspiration came during a Digital Imaging Group Portraits, Fashion and Nude workshop. The model's angular fashion poses looked like dancing and so the idea began. While she was posing for me, I asked her to raise her arms (to give the feeling of the joy and celebration of dancing). I took a number of shots of her, three of which are used in the final image.

I started with the background for my image, which came from the Mesquite Sand Dunes in Death Valley, California, taken just before sunset as a dust storm approached.

Next, I removed the model from the background of each of the three images, put them onto the sand dunes background and to imply movement I transformed two of them to make them smaller as if she was progressing along a path. So I needed a path, which was conveniently found in an image from Corfe Castle. This was also added to the sand dunes image. The background layer was flipped horizontally so that the contours of the sand were in the same direction as the dance along the path.

I wanted something to balance the left hand side of the image and thought of the moon – don't ask me why! This moon image was one of a series taken in a motel car park in Florida during a total eclipse of the moon. The other guests at the motel gave me strange looks as I stood there in the dark with my camera on a tripod. I positioned the moon in the corner of the developing image and the addition of the moon gave me the title, 'Moondance'.

When all the elements were gathered together in the image file, it needed a few adjustments, each of which was done on a separate layer so it could be tweaked later. The path layer was transformed in the distance to follow the contour of the dunes. The shadow of the model was created in each case by making a copy of the model, filling it with black, flipping it vertically and reducing the opacity considerably.

A blur layer was added to a copy of the sand layer with a gradient on a layer mask to give the effect of recession into the distance. The moon had a copy layer filled with a warm colour in Color blending mode to match the background colour.

A lighting effect was added over the sand to give the impression that the moon was lighting up the landscape. All the original images were shot on my Canon EOS 50D, apart from the moon image on my EOS 10D back in 2004. My normal workflow is always to shoot in RAW, expose to the right in camera to retain shadow detail and then import into Aperture on my MAC to recover

Mesquite Sand Dunes

Model

the highlight detail before editing in Photoshop using Guy Gowan's actions to produce the best quality.

Corfe Castle

Moon

DAVID EAVES ARPS DPAGB

Plate of Plums

Plate of Plums by David Eaves ARPS DPAGB: The 'pre-visualisation' for this print was to show a colourful bowl of fruit in a painterly manner with a minimum of distractions; that is, the fruit would be isolated on a plain plate against a white background. We have a plum tree in our garden and this was the source of the fruit. I chose plums with as few blemishes as possible and arranged them on a white plate for the initial photograph. This was done in our conservatory which in late afternoon has no direct sun and the translucent roof panels give an even light very suitable for copying or making record photographs. The white plate was placed on a large piece of thin white card which was curved round behind the plate to provide a white background. This technique obviates the usual hard line where a vertical background meets the horizontal plane of a foreground. The image was overexposed slightly to ensure the background was registered as almost pure white with full detail on the fruit. After opening in Photoshop (CS6) the tones were further adjusted slightly in levels and one or two small blemishes were cloned out of the plums. The image was then saved as a psd file (see The Original Image).

The second stage was to give the image an impressionist or painterly feel. I used Corel Painter for this although there are a number of other techniques which can change a photograph to look more like a painting (such as texture montages, or use of one or more of Photoshop's 'art' filters, or use of the Topaz 'simplify' plug in). Corel Painter is a programme written for and used mainly by artists and painters but there is one significant feature which can be used to great effect by photographers – the 'cloning' technique. Cloning in Corel Painter is quite different to the clone tool of Photoshop. The latter is used to remove and/or replace unwanted picture elements whereas in Corel Painter cloning refers to the production of a blank 'canvas' linked to the original image. Cloning brushes can then be used to 'paint' on the blank canvas with imagery and colours taken from the original source but reproduced in a wide variety of painting styles. Corel Painter is a comprehensive and powerful programme and this is reflected in its cost – Painter 12 is currently £136 to £220 from various Amazon based retailers. There is a Painter Essentials version available for substantially less (around £20 for Painter Essentials 4) which looks as though it will do a similar job with fewer facilities. If I were starting again with Painter this is the version I would buy but I have no direct experience of the cut down programme. There is a related technique which can be done entirely within Photoshop which I will mention later.

The actual process of using Corel Painter is rather complex to describe in a short article – anyone seriously interested in the possibilities should take a look at Martin Addison's comprehensive book 'Painter 12 for Photographers' – but briefly the method comprises: -

- Save the starting image in psd format

The Original Image

(or tiff or jpeg if desired - Painter will open all these). If you have a slow computer, consider reducing the file size before saving as some of the brushes in Painter take a long time to render large files and since extreme sharpness is not required, up-sizing at the end is not a significant problem.

- Open the image in Painter.
- Make a 'clone' of the image. In Painter 8 (which I use) the process is to go to File>clone which produces a second image linked to the first. Then select all and then delete to produce a blank canvas. In later versions of Painter this process has been streamlined to one step – 'quick clone'.
- Go to the brushes palette and select the desired cloning brush, or in the colour palette click on the clone symbol. (For the plums image I used the 'wet soft acrylic 30' brush with the clone symbol selected in the colour palette). At this point you may consider incorporating a texture and Painter has a number of choices here.
- Select a low opacity (less than 10%)

and begin painting on the blank canvas. A graphics pad is a 'must' if you are serious about using Painter but a mouse can be used to get some idea of the process. Use a large brush size to start and then reduce the size to render greater detail. Painter allows you to use a translucent mask with a faint copy of the original image (Tracing Paper) and this is useful as a starting guide. As the image forms this can be dispensed with.

- Gradually build up the image until you are happy with it and then save.
- I normally import the image back into Photoshop to resize, add borders, or perhaps bring back additional detail from the original image. For 'Plate of Plums' I opened the 'painted' image in Photoshop and made a rough selection around the plate of plums, inverted the selection and then applied a large feather. The selected area was filled with white to produce a white vignette, ensuring all details around the subject were eliminated. The canvas was expanded somewhat (with the

background colour set to white) to position the subject in the bottom right third. The final touch was to add a thin line as a border to define the subject space using a colour taken from the plums.

The final result was 'Plate of Plums'. There is a poor equivalent to Painter in Photoshop which is to use the 'Art History' and/or the 'History' brush. Open the starting image, select all and fill with white. In the History Palette tick the box on the left of the first action (open image). Select a brush and brush style and paint on the white 'canvas' using a low opacity. The original image will be reproduced either exactly (using the 'History' brush) or with painterly strokes (using the 'Art History' brush). There are lots of variants in the brush palette to try but I have not had great success with any of these and prefer to use 'Painter'.

A Juicy Problem

A Juicy Problem by Jeffery Bartlett OBE ARPS: For some time I was fascinated by the clean lines and elegant design of the fruit juicer, almost looking like some giant insect, which gave rise to imagining it on a larger than life scale. Therefore the final picture was very clear in my mind before I considered how to photograph it. The starting point was to take 3 separate pictures: the juicer, the lady with the lemon and the glass. (See Figures 1, 2 and 3). Separate because each was to be used on a different scale. Obviously the directional lighting had to be the same in each case. All were taken against a plain white background so that the item could be selected in Photoshop and the background removed. The lighting was tungsten but to the right of the set-up there was a window with daylight coming through – this gave the pleasing hints of blue in the highlights on the juicer. In the case of the lady, the shadow had to be added afterwards as there was not room to include it in the original picture.

A new layer in Photoshop was needed to form the background of the final picture which I did not want to be plain white. On a white base the gradient tool was used to produce graduated blue at the top and graduated grey at the bottom (See Figure 4). This formed the base layer. Above this I brought across images of the juicer, the lady and the glass, each with a clear background. Some experimentation was needed to adjust the size of each image before bringing across to the assembly layers.

I ended with 4 layers therefore, which were combined to form the final image. This just left some adjustment of positions within each layer and balancing of the brightness before flattening the layers ready for printing the final image.

Figure 1: Juicer

Figure 2: Lady with the Lemon
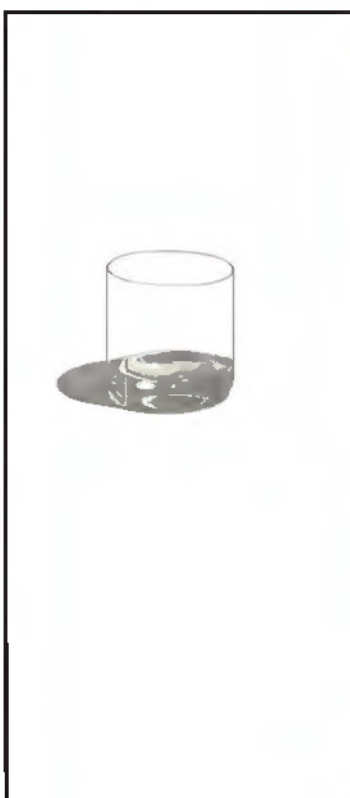
Figure 3: Glass

Figure 4: Background

The Final Image: Poppy Seedheads 4

Poppy Seed Heads by Paula Davies FRPS: Poppy Seed Heads is an image which works best printed on an art paper. Permajet's Portrait White works well. As the picture has a painterly look, I have given the print a torn edge, by tearing against a serrated ruler, before mounting. For the basic photograph (Poppy Seedheads 1) the seed heads were arranged on some garden fleece which in turn was placed on the base of a copy stand. The photograph was taken indoors with the arrangement lit by natural daylight from a window. A reflector was used to bounce light back onto the arrangement.

Using Photoshop CS6, I added an image file of some rusty metal (Poppy Seedheads 2) changing the layer to Overlay blend mode at an opacity of 66%. This resulted in an image which was too bright and too orange (Poppy Seedheads 3) so a black and white adjustment layer was then added at an opacity of 43% to tone down the brightness and colour.

The final image (Poppy Seedheads 4) was cropped to a square format and a soft white vignette added before printing.

Poppy Seedheads 1

Poppy Seedheads 2

Poppy Seedheads 3

I Love Rain, Final Image

I Love Rain by Peter Stickler ARPS: This is made up of more than one image. The principal image, Figure 1, is of a lady walking in the park. It was shot at ISO 3200 because the light was so poor. I adjusted the image after taking the original NEF file into Photoshop. The most important of these was the reduction of the clarity slider.

Figure 2 shows a shot I took inside a shopping precinct in Tenerife, showing water running down a piece of glass. The image was lightened using levels and flattened before saving it as a psd file. This file will act as a displacement map and must be saved as a flattened psd file or it will not work.

With my image of the lady open, I then clicked Filter > Distort > Displace. I located the displacement map and clicked OK. It may be necessary to repeat this procedure more than once to get the right amount of displacement. The result is Figure 3.

The image was then copied and a sepia tone was applied. This is done with Photo filter, drop down to Sepia then click OK. The image was then flattened to produce Figure 4.

With the image in Figure 4 open, press Ctrl A (Mac, Cmd A) to select all, then Ctrl C (Mac, Cmd C) to copy. Go to image in Figure 3, then press Ctrl V (Mac, Cmd V). This pastes the sepia image on top of the colour image.

The next step is to create a layer mask, Figure 5, and expose part of the colour image which sits below the sepia image.

The final image can now be flattened and saved.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4
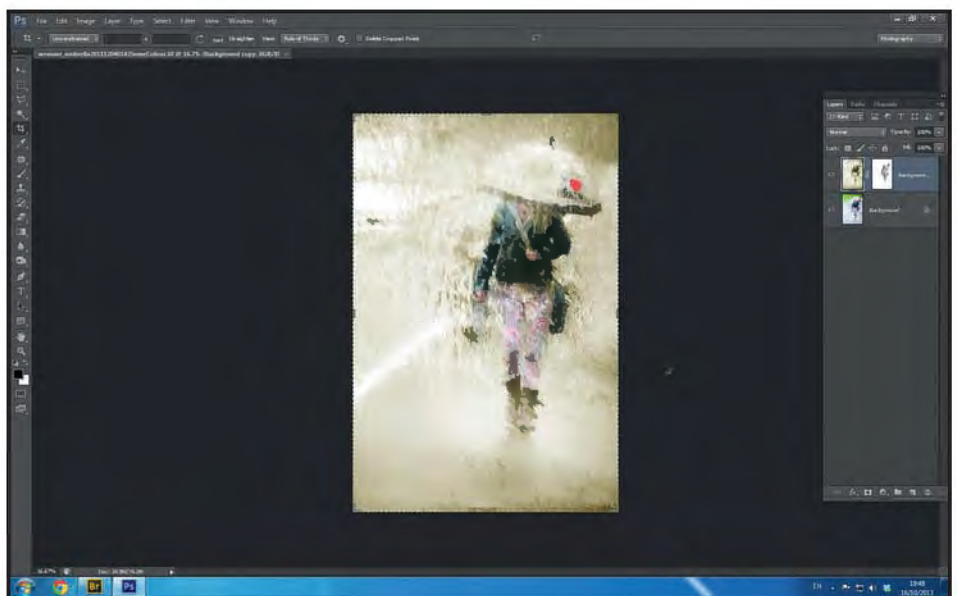
Figure 5

IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

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