

# TRAVEL LOG

The Journal of the RPS Travel Group  
Issue 88 / Winter 2022



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## Travel Log



### The Journal of the RPS Travel Group

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## A note from the Editorial Team

There have been some changes to the Travel Log Editorial Team since our Summer edition. John Riley, our past editor, has taken the sad decision to stand down permanently. Patricia Mackey, who had been acting editor for the last edition, has agreed to continue as editor with the help of the rest of the team. Patricia, Dimitra and John Minter would like to record their thanks to John Riley for handing us a journal that is so well regarded by Travel Group members.

Having a Travel Log Editorial Team has been a great way of sharing the work that it takes to produce the Journal.

Our aim is to produce two copies a year. Of course this is really a *Journal by the members for the members*. Its content depends on members suggesting articles they could contribute. We also welcome members' suggestions of other photographers whose images we could include. And we greatly value all offers of help in sourcing articles. If you feel you would like to join our small but effective team please e-mail editortravel@rps.org.

For this edition we have tried to include a variety of content. We are grateful to the members who responded to our request for content ideas. We have also listened to some feedback from members asking for more examples of people who have been awarded travel distinctions. Of particular interest were panels that were based close to home. Possibly a reflection of our limited travel opportunities over the past few years.

Thank you to everyone from our UK and international Travel Group members who contributed. As always, please think about potential Travel Log content as you plan your future travels.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season and hopefully see you at the Spring Travel Group event in May 2023.

Regards from the  
Travel Log Editorial Team  
Winter 2022



Cover photo by  
DENNIS ANGUIGE FRPS  
*Lotus silk dyeing on Lake Inle,  
Myanmar*



## A note from our Chair

It's now nearly the end of October and I find that really hard to believe. We've probably had three Prime Ministers since last we produced a Travel Log and we've lost the Queen who served this country so selflessly for so many years.

Birmingham hosted the Commonwealth Games, the Conservative Party Conference and - for me the most enjoyable and successful of all - our very own 'On the Road Again!', the Travel Group's first face-to-face event since Salford in 2019. From the responses I have seen to the survey and from individual emails I know that 100% of those who attended would come again and would encourage you to do the same. We saw some inspiring photography from Group members, some amazing Travel photography from members of the RPS AV Group, enjoyed a few pleasant meals and walks together and generally got to know each other. About half of those who came hadn't attended any other events with the Group, but all said they felt very much at home and were looking forward to the next such gathering.

I can tell you now that this will be in Bristol from 12-14 May 2023 and will continue our consideration of a Sense of Place. You'll find details later in this edition of Travel Log and I hope you will put the dates in your diary now and plan to be there.

As you read through this edition of Travel Log you might like to think about how many countries and nationalities the team has managed to involve. That excites me and I look forward to seeing the international possibilities of the Travel Group develop with your help.

One area where we would really value your input and greater involvement is the Travel Image of the Month Competition. You just need to email your entry to our Competition Secretary - no need for anything other than email. All the details can be found at <https://rps.org/groups/travel/> and following the appropriate link to the current month.

Continue to enjoy - and to photograph - whatever place(s) you are in.

Kathryn Phillips ARPS  
Chair RPS Travel Group  
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## In this issue ...

**4** Discovering Slovenia  
Mike Longhurst FRPS

**12** Walking the Camino de Santiago  
Harry Roth

**20** River of Gold Porto to Salamanca  
Jim Buckley LRPS

**26** Discovering Jordan  
Patricia Mackey LRPS

**32** *RPS Distinctions*  
Hazel Frost FRPS

**34** My journey with the RPS  
Saurbh Bhattacharya ARPS

**40** Photography after my ARPS Distinction  
Andrew Albert Flannigan ARPS

**49** *Travel Trip Photos*  
Iceland and the Camargue  
Member's Gallery

**54** An audio visual enthusiast's eye on  
Travel photography  
Alistair Taylor  
ARPS, DPAGB/AV, AV-EFIAP

**62** They sold my seat to a dog!  
Rob Morgan ARPS

**68** Have camera will travel  
Sheila Haycox  
ARPS, MPAGB/AV, EFIAP

**76** Durga Pooja - the highlights of  
West Bengal  
Ashok Viswanathan

# Discovering Slovenia



Mike Longhurst FRPS

Slovenia is one of those places that most people can't quite place on the map, so not on many people's lists to visit, or to photograph, which is a pity.

I went there on business several years ago and always wanted to return, so with our much-delayed trip to Moscow and St Petersburg finally kiboshed by Mr Putin and a nice credit sitting with a tour company, we thought we'd give it a go. As ever with tours, the photography had to take second place to rubbernecking and generally enjoying the visit, but I gathered enough for one of our Blurb book family albums.





Ptuj and Drava River

Slovenia was the first part of the old Yugoslavia to opt out thirty years ago and was always more affluent and less communised than the rest of the federation. In fact Slovenians had managed to maintain their identity despite years of rule as part of the Hapsburg empire as well.

Quite simply, the main attractions are the capital, Ljubljana, itself, Lake Bled, an iconic view of which is probably the country's best-known scene, Piran on the coast and one of the world's longest cave systems, Postojna. Add to that, the unique Predjama Castle, built into a giant cleft in a cliff face and the famous Lipizzaner stud farm and show horses, and you have more than enough to fill a memory card or two.



Predjama Castle



Stari Trg Street, Ljubljana



Piran backstreet



Preseren Square, Ljubljana

The centre of Ljubljana is a wonderful mixture of architectural styles, some international and some entirely their own, centred on the “three bridges” area beneath the castle, where people gather to eat and drink and take boat trips along the river. If quaint is your thing, then Stari St, which becomes Mestni St below the castle offers some medieval views and a complete contrast to the modernity on the opposite side of the river.



The Castle, Ljubljana



Ljubljanica River





Bled Castle, Lake Bled

Lake Bled is a wonderfully photogenic location, with the island in the middle and church surrounded by mountains, a castle overlooking it all and tourist boats being rowed back and forth. Worth being there earlier or later in the day than we were able to for best light, but hard to take a bad shot there.



Island in Lake Bled

Piran sticks out into the sea like a beak and is also dominated by a church above a circular main square, which was originally the old Roman port. Look for fishing boat shots and lots of wonderful little back alleys, as well as plenty of excellent fish restaurants.

The Postojna caves are amazing, but given that you can't take a tripod, are going to leave the photographer a bit frustrated. A little train takes you 2km into the caves and you walk another 1.5 or so and the caverns are massive, but, since there is relatively little iron or copper in the rocks, rather lacking in colour.



Postojna Caves



Lipizzaner Mares

Predjama Castle was the most interesting of several we visited in the country and I'd recommend it for its absolute uniqueness, perched high up a cliff face. Some other towns like Ptuj and Maribor also have a lot to recommend them. Maribor is home to the oldest vine in the world and Ptuj is an old Roman settlement with relics of that era. If you are interested in dressage, then a visit to the Lipizzaner stud farm could be interesting. You can see a show and visit the stallions' stables there.

Overall we were pleased we made it to Slovenia, a lovely little country with some surprises.







Castrojeriz Castle

In spring this year, I set off to walk the Camino Frances from St Jean Pied de Port in France to Santiago in Western Spain, a distance of 800km. Traditionally a religious pilgrimage, approximately 350,000 people walk the Camino de Santiago every year. The Camino Frances is a very well-marked path that traverses the Pyrenees and then crosses the whole width of northern Spain.

As a non-religious person, I chose to do the walk because I saw it in the Martin Sheen film 'The Way' and I thought it looked beautiful and that it would provide plenty of photographic opportunities across a diverse and ever-changing landscape.

Through my research, I also discovered that by staying in hostels and being frugal, the Camino could be completed relatively inexpensively at around 30 Euros per day and this was also a deciding factor. After the two-year pandemic-enforced travel hiatus I, like many people, had a burning desire to escape and see somewhere new. On a more personal note, I had a feeling that one chapter of my life was ending, I was transitioning from my thirties into my forties, and I really wanted to challenge myself physically and have a big adventure while I could still consider myself a 'young man'.

With some annual leave that I had carried over from the previous year, I was able to secure 34 days off work which meant that, if I could avoid mishap and injury, I would have enough time to complete the whole 800km route.

In terms of my photographic equipment, I took with me my SonyA7iii mirrorless camera with 24-105mm F4 lens, my DJI Air2s drone and for the video vlog a DJI Pocket 2 camera. This amount of gear did add quite a considerable amount of weight to what I was carrying - I lost track of the number of concerned and well-meaning people who approached me telling me that I was carrying too much and that I should send something home! - but I knew that I wouldn't get many opportunities to go on a journey like this so I carried the gear anyway and actually I don't think it had a detrimental effect on my walking ability or pace at all.

I ended up with several images that I'm very pleased with, so it was definitely worth carrying all of the gear.



# Walking the Camino de Santiago

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
Harry Roth



Burgos

I really wanted to document my trip as best I could for myself and also hopefully to, inspire my young nieces and nephews to go off and have their own adventure one day.

As such, I decided to keep a daily YouTube vlog and also take still images as and when I was inspired to do so. I chose to go down the YouTube route because watching other travel vlogs about the Camino proved to be very helpful to me in my preparation as well as inspirational. I also felt that the majority of people who had made vlogs on the platform tended to sugarcoat their experience and only show the good side of the Camino, whereas I knew that walking 800km in 34 days would be challenging with plenty of ups and downs (literally and figuratively) and I really wanted to depict my experience truthfully

As expected there were days when I loved every moment of the walk and there were also days where I hated it and I couldn't face walking another kilometre but when I look back on the Camino as a whole, I'm so grateful for it and I do feel like it had a profound effect on me. I think we are far too sedentary as a civilisation and while I certainly did ache and hurt for the first ten days, after that I had firmly gotten used to it and walking 25km per day didn't feel arduous at all. I found that my body was capable of being worked much harder than I could have ever imagined. To a varying degree, I think that's probably the case for the majority of us - we just need to get out of our comfort zones and push ourselves. I also found the Camino to be an incredibly mindful experience - quite often surrounded by nature and only the sound of birdsong or the wind blowing across the landscape - the only thing to think about is what to eat that day and where to sleep.

Navarette Church













Castrojeriz

O Cebreiro





Gaudi Palace



Gaudi Museum, Leon

There's a lot to worry about these days in life and I found that unplugging from my daily routine and normality was extremely beneficial for my mental health. It has left me with the firm belief that all of us, if our bodies permit us, should take a couple of weeks away from our everyday reality and just walk. Of course, I also lost a little excess weight too. Because of my time constraints and having a set date when I had to return to work, I did complete the Camino quickly but I don't want that to put people off. Many others walk it at their own pace and take as long as they need.

There's enough infrastructure in place along the route to ensure that there's always a place to rest your head. If you get the opportunity, I would encourage everyone to go for a prolonged walk with their camera, it'll do you the world of good and I guarantee that there will be plenty of photographic opportunities along the way.



Santiago Cathedral





# River of Gold Porto to Salamanca

PHOTOGRAPHY & WORDS:  
JIM BUCKLEY LRPS

Gliding serenely along the Douro, soaking up the sunshine, terraced vines and sipping a white port with tonic – and taking the odd snap – had long been on our travel wish list. No expedition camping for us! In 2019 we booked for the following year but, as with so many people's travel plans, Covid intervened to cancel the cruise. Three years later it felt safe enough to try again and we joined our Viking cruise in Porto in June.

I've often studied the Distinctions application advice for Travel: "*Applications ... should express the feeling of a time and place, and portray a land, its people or culture. The theme could, for instance, relate to a journey, to aspects of a particular place – landscapes, seascapes or architecture of a region, to an event or activity carried out in a place, or to people making up a community.*"

Travel and photography are perfect complements for me and I've read those wise words many times – although, as you can see, I have not yet managed that substantial step up to the next grade. But I do refer to them to help with putting together a group of photographs to show to family and friends after a trip, usually with a slideshow using Apple's iMovie or Boinx's FotoMagico, or making a photobook through Blurb or Photobox. The slideshows are uploaded to YouTube or Vimeo and friends anywhere in the world can watch them. But best to keep them under ten minutes! Books are perhaps more accessible for people to page-turn at their own pace.

For my own photography the Travel Distinctions advice has helped me find ways to convey the essence of a place in my slide shows and books. Rather than a series of individual photographs (which might well stand on their own but which say little themselves about the place) I look for the theme mentioned in the guidance.



There needs to be some connection between the photographs – and this is of course particularly relevant when making a slideshow - so that there is a flow and development to the story.

Sometimes the essence can be captured with a panorama like the one below of the gorgeous river front of Porto. Seven portrait format images were stitched together in Lightroom. Walking the streets of Porto presents a rather more mixed view with a number of dilapidated buildings which used to host wine storage and sales.



To capture the essence and convey the character of the place both detail and people are essential. So I used close ups of buildings, windows and small carvings in churches, and even abandoned buildings in the vineyards. Shooting these objects usually presents little difficulty since there's usually time to consider the best camera settings, viewpoint, composition and lighting but since these were shot from a moving boat there was usually just one opportunity to get it right.

People can be a very different matter and there's a fine line between intrusive photography – which we wouldn't enjoy if practised on ourselves – and a gentle view of local life. Having recently swapped my heavy DSLR for a lighter mirrorless compact with both an electronic viewfinder and a tilting rear screen, I have discovered that the screen really can be useful in unobtrusively capturing people without obviously waving a large camera at them. Tilting up the rear LCD screen whilst holding the camera at waist level or tilting it down and using a higher camera position allows the capture of an image without disturbing people and drawing attention to oneself. And modern sensors are so good that long lenses aren't needed: you can crop to just the centre of the frame where your subjects are. Not exactly Henri Cartier Bresson of course but then not all of us have that confidence and presence to pull off street photography with such panache.



Rising in northern Spain, the Douro flows west through Portugal. Surprisingly, it turned out to be narrow and treacherous in the upper reaches with gorges and rapids. Traditionally the Port wine was shipped down the river in barrels aboard Barco Rabelo in what by all accounts was a dangerous voyage. The barrels were left with some air in them so they would float if disaster struck the boat: the sailors were considered less valuable! Those traditional vessels are now taking tourists on sight-seeing trips on the river.





Today the banks have been blasted away and several deep and intimidating locks allow passage through enormous hydroelectric barrages.

There are no really major towns along the Douro but many wine estates with famous names, often British. Mateus Palace is one name that will be familiar to those of a certain vintage from the 60s and 70s. Curiously, the famous rosé wine acquired its name simply by buying a licence to use the Palace's name and picture on the readily identifiable bottle which was based on a water flask carried by Portuguese soldiers in the first world war. The baroque palace has a richly appointed interior, lovely gardens and a beautifully reflective body of water in front of its pinnacled facade.

Every square centimetre of the steep slopes of the river is covered in terraces of vines or rows of almond and olive trees. Mostly still worked by hand, the rugged terrain and steep terraces must make for back-breaking toil when harvesting the grapes to make not just the fortified Port for which the region is renowned but a range of sparkling and still wines.

As we cruised further east up the river towards Spain navigation became limited and we took to the road to cross the border to see Salamanca, The Golden City with its glowing sandstone cathedral and 13th century university. The cathedral is in fact two conjoined buildings after the original building proved to be too small for the population and a much larger space for worship was built over a couple of hundred years from 1513. Photographing the splendid roof was made easier by the tilting screen on my camera.



The adjoining old cathedral with its faded wall paintings is in contrast to the grandeur of the newer Gothic-Baroque building. Storks nest on spires and bell towers which have to be carefully monitored to ensure that these large, heavy birds don't cause damage to the fabric.





Nine terraces break the staircase, decorated with the typical blue azulejo tiles. Appropriately the central altar piece has a breast-feeding Madonna requested from the Pope by the townsfolk.

Returning to the Douro from Salamanca we sailed to Lamego where we descended (preferable to ascending on knees as pilgrim still do in the summer heat!) the 686 steps of the grand double staircase from the small hilltop Sanctuary of our Lady of Remedies – specifically female remedies we were told.





Leaving the ship to climb above the river was both hair-raising, with narrow unfenced roads and severe hairpin bends, and breathtaking, with some stunning views across vineyards and olive groves. In one small village I found this decaying port barrel on an equally decaying cart. It almost seemed that it might have been placed there as a prop for passing photographers. I felt that a black and white conversion would work best.

Overall it was the peace and relaxation of the unhurried progression along the river with views of elegant estate mansions set amongst the almond trees, olives and vines that we will treasure from this trip.









# Discovering Jordan

While pondering the RPS definition of 'Travel Photography'

Patricia Mackey LRPS

Using a recent trip to Jordan in the Middle East, Patricia Mackey uses the photographs she took to develop her understanding of the RPS definition of 'Travel Photography'.

I have loved both travel and photography for as long as I can remember. I love the excitement of planning a trip and thinking about what new things I am going to experience. I spend hours pouring over images that other people have taken to get inspiration. I repeatedly change my mind about the camera equipment I plan on taking. I don't want to bring something I won't use; but even worse I don't want to leave out a lens that would have captured the perfect shot.

It is only since joining the RPS Travel Group that I have started to consider whether the photos I take while travelling fit with the RPS definition of 'Travel photography', or whether they are more suited to one of the other RPS photography genres. I confess that I am slightly perplexed.

What makes an image a 'travel' photograph as opposed to being classified as portraiture, landscape, street, wildlife or documentary?

In September 2021 I achieved my LRPS and started to consider whether I should work on an A panel. As a member of the Travel Group I am drawn towards this genre. But, despite reading the definition of each photographic genre I have struggled to understand whether my past images taken while travelling actually fit with the RPS definition of travel photography.

I have listened to discussions of the travel genre at Travel Group's Share and Chat events. I have also read some thoughts put forward in previous editions of Travel Log. Therefore, I suspect I am not alone in needing more clarity about what 'sense of place' means within the genre of travel photography.

## RPS Distinction Definition of **Travel Photography**

Photography that communicates a **sense of place**



Keeper of the Donkeys, Petra

The distinction definition of travel photography is that of photography that conveys a 'sense of place'. When I looked up the term 'sense of place' I found lots of geographical and human anthropological explanations. It is a term that is used in different ways. It can be the relationship between people and their spacial surroundings. I have also seen it used to describe the characteristics that make a place special.

I have a background in environmental science and climate change. For the past 20 years I have worked in the field of sustainable development. It is the balance of economic, social and environmental well-being, and the interaction between these, which provide countries and locations with unique characteristics. Therefore, it must be these that help contribute to 'sense of place'. Within an individual or group of travel images I suspect that it is possible to focus more closely on one of these aspects of well-being. I would then suggest that it is the photographer's decisions about composition that dictate what the viewer of images understands about the location, its environment, economic prosperity and social structures. The photographer chooses the 'sense of place' they want to convey to the viewer.



*A busy day carrying tourists, Petra*



*Waiting at the Monastery, Petra*



*Remnants of a Roman street, Jerash*



*The Roman Theatre, Amman*



*The ancient ruins, Jerash*



*The many steps of Amman*

In March 2022, with 'sense of place' firmly at the forefront of my mind I boarded a flight to Amman, in Jordan. On the flight I thought about how this new-found interest in understanding 'sense of place' would influence my photography.

My first opportunity to take photos was on a visit to Jerash. Often referred to as the 'Pompeii of Asia' this is one of Jordan's major tourist attractions. There were many creative photo opportunities at this location but I wondered whether it is not an accurate representation to show 'sense of place' as it is touristy, not about life now?

Are the images captured in the modern city of Amman more authentic representations of the RPS travel photography definition? Or the one where filming at the Citadel was taking place as this shows people interacting within their surroundings?

I was on a group trip to Jordan and while this provides a safe and easy way to see the country within a restricted timescale, group travel is not without its challenges. I often found myself slowly distancing myself from the group and blocking out the tour guide's history lesson so I could better absorb my surroundings. I managed to spend a full day in Petra by myself, away from the rest of the group. This gave me more time to consider composition and wait for photographic opportunities. On my own I had time to notice how the local Bedouins interacted with each other and with their animals and how they blended into a landscape they were only moved out of in the 1980s.



*Filming at the Citadel in Amman with city in the background*

My trip gave me time to consider that perhaps trying to create images accurately portraying the feel of the country to someone who wasn't there, means that you really need a variety of imagery. Perhaps it is appropriate to consider that travel photography is really a combination of genres. I say this because I believe that my photos of people, economic opportunities, environments and wildlife all contributed to conveying the sense of Jordan I experienced. However, I concluded that while travelling it doesn't matter if images fit a definition, as long as they are the images you want to capture to remember the experience.

As mentioned earlier, the theory of sustainable development states the sustainability of people and the planet are dependent on social, economic and environmental well-being. How well-being varies between countries and areas has a huge impact on the sense of place of a location. To convey a sense of place, and produce an accurate representation of a destination, I feel that there is a need to show this through multiple photographic genres.

Not all the photos I have included with this article necessarily fit the RPS Travel photography definition. But they are all travel photographs and they convey the story I want to remember. My trip gave me lots of images that will forever remind me of the feelings, sites and culture that I experienced. I have collated the best of my images into a photo book which I think provides a sense of place of the aspects of Jordan that I experienced.

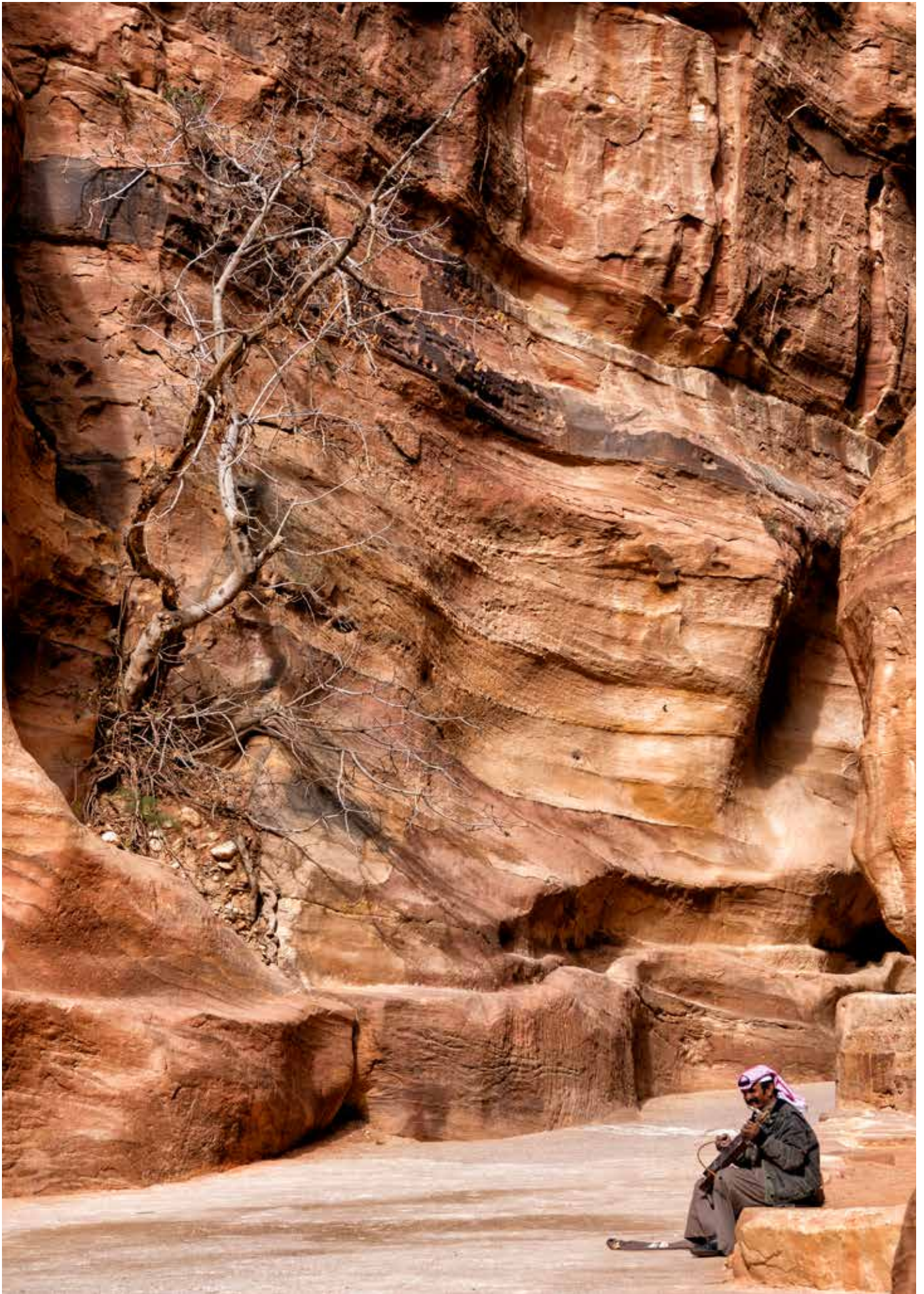


*Tourist watching , Petra*

I have really enjoyed putting this issue of Travel Log together. As you will see from the next few articles we have focused on RPS travel genre distinctions. Since travelling to Jordan and writing this article, the authors of the other articles have provided me with clarity on 'sense of place', what is needed for a panel of travel images and that all-important Statement of Intent. I hope that readers of Travel Log will also find this collection of submissions useful.



*Sunset near Wadi Musa*



*Local musician in the Siq, Petra*

# RPS Travel Distinctions

Reflecting on the distinctions available with the travel genre.



**Hazel Frost FRPS, Chair of the RPS Associate and Fellowship Panels provides some insight into how applicants should approach the genre of travel photography to develop a successful panel.**

'Travel' as defined by the Travel Panel of the RPS, is a body of work which communicates a "sense of place". The website gives full details about aspects that may be considered to fulfil this and as such the concept can be broad. It can reflect a place close to home or further away, and many will now look at their own country or environment to communicate that story of place over 15/20 images.

When looking at a body of work we are considering all the individual images and the work as a whole. Each image is an opportunity to illustrate a different facet of that place or culture and the whole allows the viewer to come away with a greater understanding. The statement of intent lays out the aims and objectives and the panel members will listen carefully to your words to ensure that the images fit the description as set out.

At both the Associate level and even more so at Fellowship we are looking for images that are defining you as a photographer. We are looking for your own visual input. It is important to understand the culture or the country, the light and how it can enhance an image. Perhaps look to using more challenging light especially in areas where the light is harsh and full of contrast. Look to take images that are individual by means of composition and approach so that an image is different from that which someone else would take. This can be difficult in a short trip to a new destination, so planning beforehand and time are paramount. Being familiar with a place is essential to show us that understanding, and sometime repeated visits at different times can be a help. Travelling with a group can have a lot of positives but equally can be hard as one is being constrained then by someone else who has ideas of where to go and what to take. For this reason, photographic organised group trips can sometimes only go part way to building up that individual understanding and body of work. Often a body of work will evolve with time and repeated visits during which one builds up a knowledge and understanding of what one wishes to show. Time and passion are two important elements and will show in the photography.

It is also important if people are being photographed, to try and show engagement, for example between groups of people or someone doing something. Wait for the decisive moments and consider speaking to

people, engaging with them first. Show an interest in them as a person before picking up a camera and then wait until that moment. Images where people are posed or smiling at you as a photographer will overall be less successful. Direct eye contact needs to be for a reason. Look to avoid too many head and shoulder portraits - a Travel panel needs to show more of the environment. Composition and placement of subjects within the frame is also important- often distractions can intrude especially with crowds or at festivals- look where the subject is and try and bring that out by use of position in the frame or the lighting. Look at the edges and where the image has been cropped.

The panel needs to have that balance of diversity in image selection but also to be cohesive and look like the body of work from one photographer. This can be achieved in the presentation plan, use of colours/tones and lighting. Each image is an opportunity for a story so avoid repetition to aid diversity.

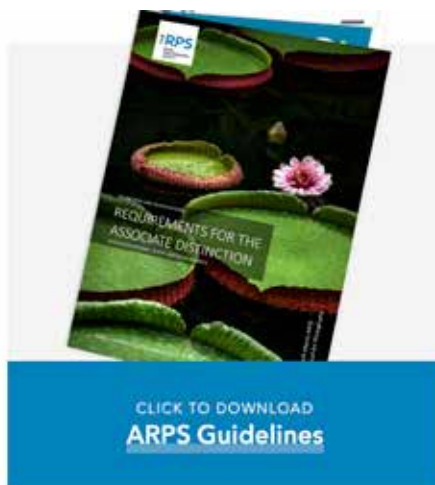
A travel panel does not need to include people to be successful and every image does not have to have a person. If the landscape or seascape is important to that sense of a place or the buildings are typical aspects, then they can obviously be included or used - for example a panel about Iceland may concentrate on showing the landscape but within that we have to be sure of where the place is. Intimate details of landscape, buildings, costumes, or portraits are overall less likely to be successful in defining a place.

There are differences in a Travel panel and a Documentary one in terms of genre. For travel we are looking for that sense of place or journey. Documentary however needs to have a very clear visual narrative much as one would read a short story using imagery. There can be similarities, but this will then be important in how the statement is worded.

The most important thing is not to rush, to take time and build up a project. Look to the statement to define the aims before taking the images rather than the other way around and remember that it is important to show your individuality and skill as a photographer – within limits rules can be broken but they need to have a reason and often that will define the distinctive approach.



Resources to help you with your distinction are available on the RPS website [www.rps.org/qualifications/](http://www.rps.org/qualifications/) In addition to guidance documents there are also example submissions and videos that will help guide you on your journey.



The Associate distinction requires applicants to submit a body of work/project consisting of 15 images and a written Statement of Intent and a Presentation Layout. The images must be of a high standard.

#### **Associate Criteria**

- A Statement of Intent that defines the purpose of the work, identifying its aims and objectives.
- A cohesive body of work that depicts and communicates the aims and objectives set out in the Statement of Intent.
- A body of work that communicates an individual's vision and understanding.
- A high level of technical ability using techniques and photographic practices appropriate to the subject.
- An appropriate and high level of understanding of craft and artistic presentation.
- The Associate distinction is split into various specialist areas, which we refer to as genres. Many of the genres have additional specific criteria. It is important to read through the Associate Guidelines and the Genre Definitions documents for further information.

The Fellowship distinction requires applicants to submit a body of work/project consisting of 20 or 21 images and a written Statement of Intent and a Presentation Layout. Submissions are open to everyone.

#### **Fellowship Criteria**

- A submission that demonstrates a distinctive body of work.
- A Statement of Intent that defines the purpose of the work, identifying its aims and objectives.
- A cohesive body of work that depicts and communicates the aims and objectives set out in the Statement of intent.
- A body of work that communicates an individual's vision and understanding.
- The highest level of technical ability using techniques and photographic practices appropriate to the subject.
- An appropriate and high level of understanding of craft and artistic presentation.

## **RPS Photobook Genre**

Within each of the Associate and Fellowship genres photos can be submitted as prints, digital images or within a photobook. Photobooks now also form their own specific genre.

From Licentiate to Fellowship, from Natural History to Fine Art applicants have for a long time been able to use a book as a means of presentation, but in this genre the photography-led photobook is the genre itself. All elements will be considered that make up your photobook submission, from the images to the colour of the text. What form of photobook you present is under your creative control.

All forms of photobook are acceptable, including hard or soft cover photobooks, zines, handmade or concertina books. A minimum of 2 copies and a maximum of 8 copies are required to be submitted, however for handmade photobooks 1 copy is acceptable. There is no maximum number of images but you must include a minimum of 15 images for an Associate distinction and 20 images for a Fellowship distinction.

It is really important to read the guidance that is available on the RPS website [www.rps.org/media/wqpcy5h2/dg007-photobooks.pdf](http://www.rps.org/media/wqpcy5h2/dg007-photobooks.pdf). We look forward to hearing more about the use of Travel images in Photobooks from Stewart Wall, Chair of the Photobook Assessment Panel on May 13th (see page 48).

# My journey with the RPS



BY  
Saurabh Bhattacharya ARPS  
September 2020, Travel  
Kolkata, INDIA

In September 2020, Saurabh achieved his ARPS with a digital submission within the RPS Travel distinctions genre. He shares his successful panel with Travel Log readers and outlined his journey. The tips he shares at the end of this article, before readers see his collated panel, will resonate with those who have been on their own journey as well as being useful for those who are just setting off.

**M**y journey started in 2019, when I saw the ARPS badge & prestigious certificate in my friend's home. I became motivated, fixed my target, and decided to achieve it in the next year. I started visiting the RPS website on a regular basis to study distinction criteria, definition of different genres and the application process.

Among all the genres, I found Travel is the most interesting one and suitable for me. I am travelling to different Himalayan ranges for more than ten years so a lot of photographs were available with me that time. I shared my proposed panel through the RPS website for preliminary advice. Few weeks later, I got exhaustive feedback from a panel expert (it was Dr Hazel Mason, came to know her later).

I realised first time the difference between the documentation versus photographer's input, the actual concept of time and place. I discarded the whole panel and started thinking differently.

During my last ten year's travel to Himalayas, I took many photographs which cover religious aspects and regular life of villagers. However, it was not easy to connect those two different parts in a coherent panel. During my last trek in 2019, I took few photographs only to make up those gaps.

I made some initial correction to prepare my revised panel.

In March 2020, lockdown declared worldwide. In pandemic period, RPS has started series of webinars online. I have seen those webinars as much as possible which helped me to develop an idea about RPS standard. One-to-one advice was a great learning to me.

During lockdown, all printing houses near me were closed, so I decided to go for digital section (IFS). Computer calibration was also a big challenge. After giving lot of efforts and taking challenges, finally the wow moment came. On September 10th, at 4:37 pm (IST), Mr Ben informed me that I am now eligible to write ARPS after my name.

## Statement of Intent

*My intent was to capture lifestyles of people living in Himalayan villages. Buddhist monasteries play a very vital role in the development of people in those areas. Many boys are sent to a monastery to gain some basic education without draining family resources. They stay there for up to fifteen years. Girls and the remaining boys start to do household work from a young age. Life in the Himalayas is characterised by simplicity. The people are unaffected by the trappings of modern civilization. The mountainous environments are normally very harsh, and lifestyles are dependent upon livestock. Villagers work hard for the very survival of their families. Communities have different costumes, religions, and cuisines although Buddhism predominates. In spite of this diversity, they live together peacefully.*

Submitted photographs were captured between 2010 to 2019, during my study on lifestyles of village people, living in different regions of greater Himalaya.



Sequence image 1



Sequence image 2



Sequence image 3



Sequence image 4



Sequence image 5



Sequence image 6



Sequence image 8



Sequence image 9



Sequence image 10



Sequence image 11



Sequence image 12



Sequence image 13



Sequence image 14



Sequence image 15

### **My favourite photograph in the panel**

I took this photograph in a remote Himalayan village at Arunachal Pradesh. Drama of light and shade, moods of the children and their involvement with their activity attracted me. Before taking this photograph, I stood there for a long time “to make myself invisible”.



Sequence image 7

### **My favourite Photograph which I have rejected finally**

My proposed first image in my panel was taken inside a monastery. I took it in very low light condition with my old, cropped sensor camera. I used open aperture with high ISO. As a result, the final output became noisy with shallow depth of field. I tried to improve it by post processing several times, used software like Topaz & Nik. However, I finally removed it after one-to-one panel review.



## A Few tips which I have realised through my journey

1. There is no alternative to hard work. There is no short cut way to achieve quality. RPS will never compromise on quality.
2. Genre definition and submission examples given in RPS website to be studied thoroughly. It is a learning process, so enough seriousness is required throughout the process.
3. Before starting work, statement of intent must be drafted. It will guide one – what to do and thus help for proper planning.
4. Along with the main subject, we should always observe whether there is any distracting element in the background.
5. Always use third eye while taking photograph.
6. Before submission of any panel, one should see previously successful panels as many as possible to understand the expected standard and panel balancing.
7. One-to-one panel review, distinction talks, and road shows are very much effective.
8. Finally, we must follow the advice from RPS: Do it first time or do it differently. Conventional work and repetition are not rewarding most of the times.



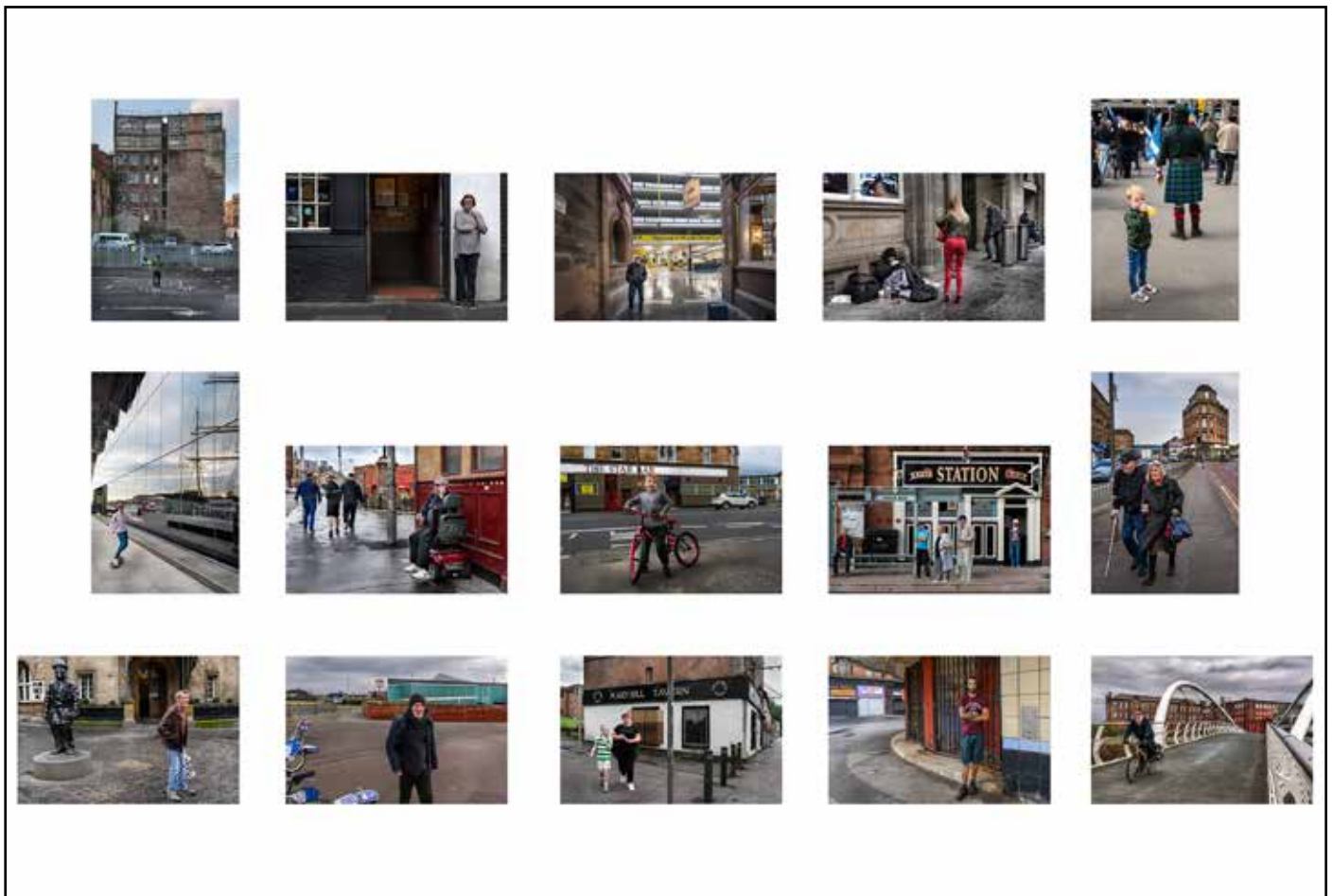
Saurabh's digital sequence plan  
(September 2020)



# Photography after my ARPS Distinction

Andrew Albert Flannigan ARPS

In March 2020, Andrew Flannigan was awarded associate membership of the Royal Photographic Society following the successful submission of his Travel genre panel with images from Glasgow. Andrew tells Travel Log how he has continued to take photos on the same theme as his statement of intent and the impact Covid-19 has had on these images.



Andrew's successful ARPS Travel Panel Hanging Plan

## Statement of intent

The visitor to Glasgow may well experience a city transformed from the image it gained in the latter half of the last century.

The appearance perhaps of a more polished people in a more polished environment.

However, step back a few blocks from the city centre and the underbelly of Glasgow emerges, retaining its grit, decay and dereliction.

Among this I wanted to capture the Glaswegians who continue to weave their daily life through the city, evoking a sense that some things will never change.



I was awarded my Associate membership in March 2020, luckily getting a panel to RPS House between COVID lock downs. My photographic journey of Glasgow started three years earlier, but it was not until I developed my statement of intent that I was able to focus, edit (and have it critically edited through numerous advisory days) and eventually build a panel of 15 images that worked well together.

It became very clear to me that this journey would continue after completing the panel and I have no plans to stop although periodically swapping genres keeps my photographic vision fresh. In the gap between completing my panel and the award I could see that my own style was developing as well as my approach.



The image below was taken in Possilpark. Despite in 2018 it being ranked as the number one most deprived community in the UK, there is a strong community spirit.





I was intuitively using the camera more in portrait mode to capture the skyline architecture. My inspiration is days which are wet or dull which reinforce the grit. I was finding myself desaturating and dropping the colour temperature a few notches. An increasing proportion of images were coming from a smaller radius of the city predominantly south of the city centre, running from the River Clyde to Govanhill.



The images on this two-page spread are Govanhill, claimed as the most multicultural square mile in Scotland, with more than 30 languages spoken and a large Roma community. I lived here 40 years ago and it has really not changed, yet. This is generally as far as I walk from the city.



The images on this two-page spread are taken on the A77 which runs from the City Centre to Govanhill.





The attraction of Glasgow is the grit, the rough edges, but also the contrast that exists in a city changes and continually renews itself. Many areas of Glasgow have similarities to cities in the US. The grid style layout now attracts the production of Hollywood blockbusters. South of the city centre is a blend of industrial units, rail bridges, traditional apartments, often bordered by wasteland.

My photographic inspiration is Raymond Depardon's book Glasgow, ISBN-10 :2021303624 that was photographed in the 1980. I can still go to some of the places he photographed and I am back in the 1980s.

## Advisory Day

The Travel Group is hosting an Advisory Day for Associate and Fellowship on **12th May 2023** at RPS House in Bristol

**THE RPS**  
ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

ASSOCIATE

FELLOWSHIP

### What is an Advisory Day?

Everyone can get advice on their body of work before applying for the Distinction or attend as an observer to learn about the Distinctions process and see examples of successful panels for Travel. Anyone considering submitting work for a Distinction is strongly recommended to take advantage of these days. A day devoted to the Travel genre is rare!

### What you will get from the day?

You will see a wide variety of different prospective panels as well as some successful panels. You will hear comments from the Assessor and have a chance to ask questions. There will be information on what makes a good submission, what to avoid and, most importantly, how to plan your project.

**Travel- Photography which communicates a sense of place.**

### Advisor

Hazel Frost FRPS,  
Chair of the Travel Distinctions Panel

Cost for advice on a panel: £15(A) /20(F)  
Observers: Travel Group members - **free**  
All others £5

Queries: Contact [travel@rps.org](mailto:travel@rps.org)



13-14 May 2023 // Bristol

Travel Group Weekend

## A sense of place - some different perspectives

featuring

**Paul Sanders**

The work Paul has done over recent years has been significant in recognising the role of photography in helping us to appreciate what is around us. The concepts he promotes can be applied wherever we are.

and

**Stewart Wall**

Stewart is Chair of the Photobooks Distinctions Panel and will share his ideas about developing a concept and producing a photobook for a travel based project that delivers a sense of place.

As well as speaking, both Paul and Stewart have agreed to lead **workshops** for limited numbers of participants.

Also, for the entire month of May, outside RPS House the **Travel Photographer of the Year Exhibition** will be on display.

Our own **Travel Image of the Year** entries will be shown during the weekend and the winner announced. This year's judge is Janey Devine FRPS.

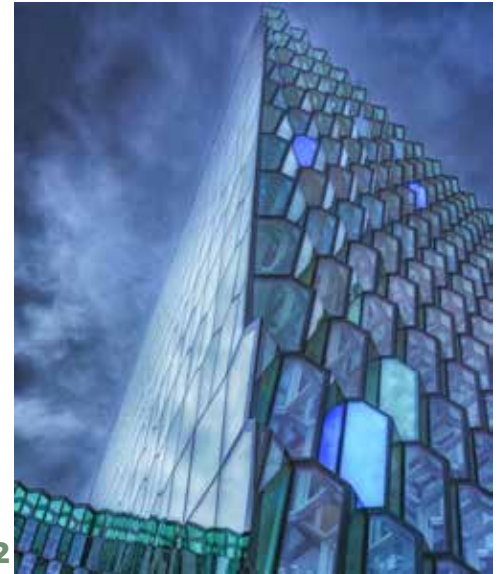
Do plan to join us for these and other events that are being planned for that weekend.



# RPS Travel Group Members' Gallery from recent Travel Trips

## Iceland

Organised by Paul Sansome



**THIS PAGE IMAGES FROM TOP LEFT**  
1-John Clare;  
2- David Mooney;  
3- Jeremy Fraser-Mitchell;  
and 4-David Mooney



5



6



7



8

OPPOSITE PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM: 5- Sue Hutton; 6- Paul Sansome; 7- Kath Phillips; and 8- Elizabeth Roberts

THIS PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM: 9- Jean Evans;10- Stephen Roberts; 11- Margaret Hocking; and 12- Jeremy Fraser-Mitchell



9

10



11



12



# The Camargue, France

Organised by Keith Pointon ARPS  
Create Away Photographic Workshops



1



2



3



4



5

OPPOSITE PAGE: 1- Janice Clark; 2- John Speller; 3- Sandie Cox; and 4- Keith Pointon

THIS PAGE: 5- Liz Bugg; 6- Liz Bugg; 7- Janice Clark; and 8- Sandie Cox



6



7



8

# An audio visual enthusiast's eye on Travel Photography

*Alastair Taylor ARPS, DPAGB/AV, AV-EFIAP*



**Alastair is a member of the RPS Audio Visual (AV) Group and is the editor of AV-News, the group's journal. At the Travel Group's 'On the Road Again' event in October, he shared a presentation of Travel AV productions showcasing how the medium is a great way of sharing Travel photography.**

**In this parallel article he gives us some background thoughts and inspiration about his approach to AV production. He also shares some links and information to get you started in the wonderful world of AV.**

**W**e all know a good travel image when we see it and you don't have to look very far to find some tremendous examples.

The work presented by members of the RPS Travel Group is excellent and we would all be proud to have the images presented in Travel Log as our own. If you are anything like me, you will spend much of your travels looking for that one image which captures the true spirit of the place you are visiting. They are few and far between but when we manage it, what a fantastic feeling.

Let us turn the clock back fifty years, when 'somewhere exotic' started the other side of the English Channel. The clocks alter and the nights get dark. Friends and relatives would entertain us with a slide show of their travels. 36 slides taken on a roll of Kodachrome 64. Images of the local with his donkey in sunny Spain, chateaux on the Loire in France, or perhaps, if it was extra exotic, the rural byways of Greece. All very enjoyable with the usual fun of "back to front" slides and other humorous moments. How far we have come in our travels!

Back in the 1960's, a few keen enthusiasts took these slide shows to a new level and as technology improved, the opportunity to have two or more slide projectors and the creation of dissolving images linked to music and a voice sound track became a great way of showing off images from your travels.

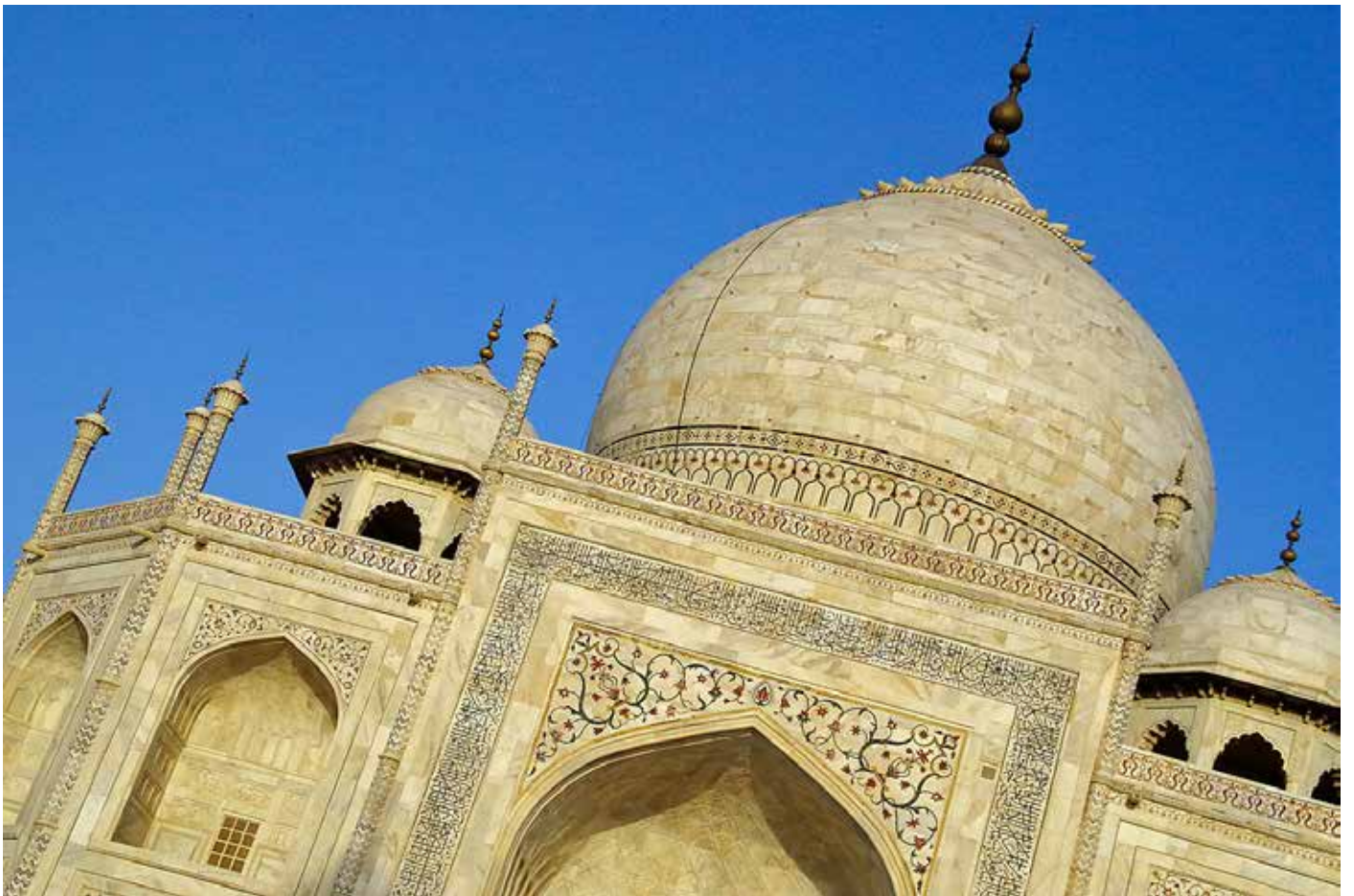
The RPS Audio Visual (AV) group was formed over fifty years ago and AV productions showcasing the travels of its members has become a popular part of the wide body of work. Attend your average AV festival, and you will be transported around the world. Recently, Dark Tourism has become an interesting feature.

AV can feel daunting to those who haven't given it a go. The technical requirements of putting together a balanced soundscape of music, voice and sound effects is something which many photographers find challenging. Preparing the images in a way which tells the story and creates seamless image transitions is another challenge although these days, image processing and presentational software is a standard feature on many computers. In this article, I will give an insight into the minimum technical requirements and hopefully that will encourage a few travel photographers to give AV a go. You will be made very welcome by the AV community. You might even join the RPS AV Group!

Before you start thinking about the technical requirements, you need to have thought about your story. What is the message you want to share? How will you tell the story in such a way that it doesn't come over as a regurgitation of the guide book. Reading out the guide book word for word is a definite no go area in the world of AV.

I am very lucky to have travelled a great deal, both for work and pleasure. As I travel, I will always be mindful of the opportunity to produce an AV to showcase my travels and like anyone, I will have read the guidebook and thought about the story I want to tell. My photography will reflect that. I do think that AV photographers think differently and will often be seen collecting an interesting array of images, close ups, people, wider scenes, etc. on the basis that they will all help in telling the story.

However, there are occasions when I visit a place with no particular plan in mind and for this article, I will write about a place which didn't seem to have any AV potential at all.



## The story of "That Picture"

It was in 2014 that we visited India. We had never been very keen to go there for all of the obvious reasons around poverty, risk of sickness, etc. An old friend was seconded to Delhi for two years and we took the opportunity to visit – drawn as much as anything by the prospect of seeing India through the eyes of an "expat" rather than a tourist. We did manage to fit in the standard "Golden Triangle" tour and it was truly amazing. Towards the end of the trip, we had the opportunity to take a short trip from Delhi to Agra. The opportunity to visit the Taj Mahal was one we just could not resist.

I was blown away by the Taj Mahal. There are places you visit which simply transcend photography and no single image can really capture it. For me, the Taj Mahal is one of those places. I was left thinking that there was no way a single photograph could capture the true spirit of the place. I carried on and took several hundred pictures, all of the usual stereotypical views, but more than anything, it was the other tourists who caught my eye. You could see from the expression on their faces that they were as blown away by the place as I was.

Reviewing the images when I got home left me thinking that perhaps there was a story to be told, maybe not about the Taj Mahal so much as the spirit of the place and its impact upon the people who visit.

At around the same time, the film "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" was released and I was very taken by the dreaminess it portrayed and somehow it capture my own feelings about India. I was especially drawn by the score written by Thomas Newman. Film scores work well in AV productions so anything from John Barry, John Williams, Hans Zimmer and the like are always worth considering – be careful though, anything too popular and the audience may start singing along or associate the music with something else.

All of this got me thinking about how I might tell the story of the Taj Mahal in a dreamy way so I started to write a script. My scripts are very much from the heart and I enjoy writing them. I wanted to portray the emotional connection with the place and give a little of myself. As I wrote about the Taj Mahal and my feelings about it, I managed to tell its story through a series of questions.





That famous image of Princess Diana at the Taj Mahal was one which really struck me and I thought it important to include it. (An aspect of AV production is the use of third party and archival images – they are an important part of telling the story and some use is encouraged. There are of course issues around copyright and crediting authors although the “creative comms licence” does make this a little simpler) In the AV production, I say:

*“And then there is that picture ... That so famous image of that princess sat in front of that palace of love - an image recaptured and retold. Everyone, including me, wanting something of the spirit of that picture in their own. Yet how duped we were. The “Queen of Hearts” seated in front of the mausoleum built by Shah Jahan as a tribute to his princess – so unaware that she would have her own – and so soon. So alone, and it appears, so unloved. We never realised. The irony of that picture makes this place even more special”*

I have included the whole of my script. This took a lot of refinement. A good AV script will leave the audience with some initial intrigue as to what the production is about and go on to leave a question at the end. As you read the script, it will become evident to you that I use the term “That Picture” a great deal (20 times to be precise). It seemed obvious to me that this should be the name of the AV Production. I think this works well and in some respects, the question around “That Picture” could relate to anything – particularly the image of Princess Diana. I will leave you to be the judge of that.

My final words ask the big question

*“There was something about the Taj Mahal that could not be captured in that picture. Something beyond photography, beyond ephemera. And there’s the puzzle. How is it that that picture, something so permanent, does not capture the true spirit of this place? It is beyond that single image.”*

Looking back at these words, I think they capture the challenge of travel photography. Coming up with that one image that makes a huge statement is very difficult, so why not do it with a series of images and a story. In “That Picture” there are around 60 images. As individual photographs they are sufficient but none of them would really stand up on their own. However, when viewed together, with the music and words, they do work as an overall production.

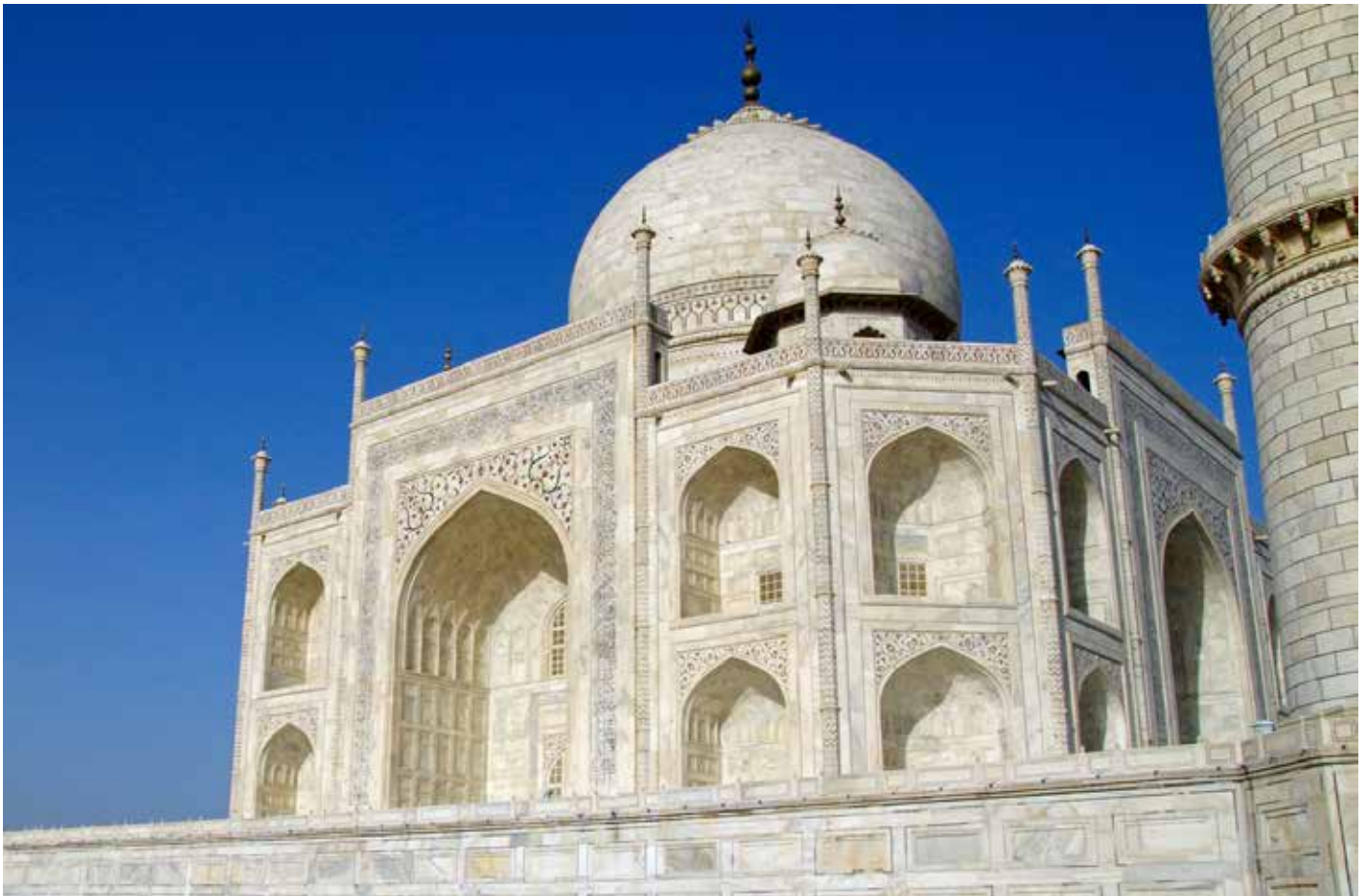
I hope you like it.

**Have a look here**

<https://vimeo.com/556622377>

**or click on the QR Code**





## That Picture – The Full Script

*They come here in their hundreds and thousands. All looking to capture that one image, that memory, that picture. Every one jockeying for position. Some just sitting and absorbing the scene. Others wanting their image captured in this iconic place.*

*Most, along with me, are looking for that picture. That one picture which captures our memory. That picture to share and cherish.*

*So what is it we are trying to picture? Perhaps some wildlife ... maybe some flowers ...or just the overall scene – all captured in that picture. So where is that picture?*

*You have probably guessed by now ... it's the Taj Mahal ...a wonder of the world, and one of the most famous, and probably the most photographed. It is a captivating place. A place of wonder and awe.*

*How do you capture a place like this in that picture? The love and torment of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan who commissioned its construction. How he must have loved his third wife Mumtaz so much that he was moved to build this perfect mausoleum - it is said that her death so crushed the Emperor that all his hair and beard were turned snow white within just a few months.*

*How do you capture in that picture the location above the river? How the Emperor planned to build a second Taj in black marble on the other side but the feud and war with his sons interrupted his plans. How did Shah Jahan feel when he overlooked his perfect monument from his prison cell in the nearby Agra fort? We can only imagine.*

*How do you capture the process of construction? The 22,000 labourers, painters, stonecutters, gardeners, and embroidery artists? The 100 elephants used to transport building materials. The 22 years it took to complete this finest example of Mughal architecture, a style that is a blend of Persian, Indian and Turkish.*

*The Taj Mahal is an integrated structure that contains gardens, gateways, inns and a mosque.*

*How do you capture this in a single picture?*

*And then there is the geometry of this place. The four sides of the Taj Mahal are perfectly identical creating an astonishing mirror image. The surrounding pillars tilt outwards so that in the event of an earthquake they will fall away from the tomb. The full height is 561 feet.*

*How did those architects, some 400 year ago, achieve something so perfect?*

*But if there is one single thing to capture in that picture it is the changing light. The Taj Mahal appears pink in the morning, white in the day and changes its colour to golden at dusk. Glowing in the moon light, it is the symbol of true love. It never stands still. It is truly beguiling.*

*And then there is that picture ... That so famous image of that princess sat in front of that palace of love - an image recaptured and retold.*

*Everyone, including me, wanting something of the spirit of that picture in their own.*

*Yet how duped we were. The "Queen of Hearts" seated in front of the mausoleum built by Shah Jahan as a tribute to his princess – so unaware that she would have her own – and so soon. So alone, and it appears, so unloved. We never realised.*

*The irony of that picture makes this place even more special.*

*The Taj Mahal is so familiar to us all. We have all seen the pictures. "No need to visit" some might say. But I was beguiled. How come? What was it?*

*There was something about the Taj Mahal that could not be captured in that picture. Something beyond photography, beyond ephemera.*

*And there's the puzzle. How is it that that picture, something so permanent does not capture the true spirit of this place? It is beyond that single image.*

*There are few places I have been that have affected me as much. The same goes of the rest of India. It truly is an assault on the senses.*



## Technical Information

Essential information and links to get you started in the world of AV Productions

### 1. Image Editing

It is expedient to spend some time editing your images before you put them into an AV Production. Here are some essential considerations:

- Always use the same aspect ratio throughout your production. There is nothing worse than a mix of horizontal and vertical formats. Typically the ratios used are 3:4, 2:3 and 16:9 (HD). There is no point in using a bigger image size as the quality is generally limited by the data projector or monitor you are using. In the case of 16:9 go for 1920x1080 pixels. This way you will turn a RAW file of 30 MB or so into something nearer 1.5MB. This will take up less computer resource.
- When cropping your images, be very aware of keeping horizons in the same place for a succession of images. Mountains landscapes can be very challenging in this respect. Look for nice transitions. You can make use of symmetry to give very effective transition, or third images as we call them.
- A shallow depth of field can be very handy, You can use these out-of-focus areas as places where a new image can be introduced. Working from left to right and back to the left to tell a story can work well.
- No need for borders and shadow masks. Your image is on the screen for only a few seconds. Do clone out things if you need to. It is often a good idea to forget everything you know about the presentation of single images.

Before and After (see below). The picture was captured in fading light. F9, 1/100 of a second at ISO 1600 so at the edge of camera performance. For the AV, there was some minor cropping to achieve a 2:3 ratio, the wires were removed in Photoshop and a few adjustments made to the brightness and contrast, plus a little sharpening. Worth the effort I think.



**Before**



**After**

### 2. Sound and Music

This can feel like alien territory for many photographers and does need some thought. Don't be put off. A good starting point is to look at some of the information available from the RPS AV Group at <https://rps.org/groups/audio-visual/making-an-av-sequence/> and at <https://rps.org/groups/audio-visual/links-and-resources/> where there are all sorts of guides. You will also find umpteen instructional videos on YouTube as well. A few important points to remember are:

- In its simplest form, an AV Production might be some travel images set to some music. Imagine for example, the theme from Out of Africa by John Barry to some images from the savannas of the African sub continent. It is a great way of getting started in AV. We call it Photo Harmony
- Music can be sourced from various places. Downloading an MP3 from a popular music streaming site, ripping a track from a CD or perhaps even composing your own. Anything goes. Sound effects can be sourced from the like of <https://freesound.org/> or <https://freesfx.co.uk/> - you might even record your own.
- Voice-overs can be a bit tricky. You can of course find a freelance voice artist at somewhere like <https://www.fiverr.com/>. These are excellent but you might prefer to record your own commentary in order that you can portray the emotion needed. You could spend thousands on a top quality broadcast quality microphone or considerably less on a plug-n USB microphone. Your smart phone will have an excellent microphone and allows you to record a decent quality voice-over or sound effect. You would be amazed.

### 3. Putting it all Together

- Mixing all of this together into a soundscape is the biggest challenge. Many video editing programs which come with your computer will allow you to mix a soundtrack. If you fancy a vertical learning curve look at the excellent Davinci Resolve at <https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/uk/products/davinciresolve> - there is a free version. Another free program for editing sound is Audacity available at <https://www.audacityteam.org/> I use the Adobe program called Audition which is superb. You might have it as part of your editing suite.
- An area of concern for many is the issue of copyright. There is royalty free music at sites such as <https://incompetech.com/music/royalty-free/> and these are worth visiting. The <https://www.theiac.org.uk/iac/copyright/copyright-clearance-scheme.html> is the place to go for full details and most AV producers will be members of the IAC in order to have the relevant licences.

Most computers will come with a simple video editing platform and if all you want to do is to put a sequence of still images together to some background music without the need for investing in a dedicated program then this is worth a try. You will end up with an MP4 file which you can upload to a file sharing site such as YouTube or Vimeo.

However, the “go to” programme which most AV producers use is called PTE AV Studio which is available from WnSoft at <https://www.wnsoft.com/en/pte-av-studio/> . It is available for both PC and Mac and a free trial version is available. It is well worth giving it a try.

PTE AV Studio is a very intuitive programme and allows you to put a series of images to a sound track. It has the facility for mixing a sound track as well. The transition between images can be adjusted to create anything from very slow dissolves through to snappy page turns and the like. The world is your oyster and you need to avoid the temptation to use all of the tricks available

The image below is a screen grab from PTE AV Studio and you will see the image timeline linked to the soundscape which comprises various elements. Look carefully and you will see how the author has adjusted the sound levels to create the desired effect.

Again, it is good to look at the RPS AV Group at <https://rps.org/groups/audio-visual/making-an-av-sequence/> and at <https://rps.org/groups/audio-visual/links-and-resources/> where there are all sorts of guides on PTE AV Studio. It even has its own Facebook page where users will assist others in answering some of the technical questions.

**To access content contained within the hyper-links of this article, please manually type them into your browser or refer to the digital copy of Travel Log on the Travel Group’s section of the RPS website.**



# They Sold My Seat to a Dog!

PHOTOGRAPHY & WORDS:  
Rob Morgan ARPS



**OSLO** There are many aspects of Norwegian life and culture that are noteworthy for the foreign visitor. Firstly, everything seems to cost about 50% more than anywhere else. My Norwegian friends summarise this as “In Norway there’s a tax on anything fun”. As their taxes appear to be high, I can only conclude that Norwegians spend a lot of time having fun. Being a clever nation, its people are always looking for how to have fun and amuse themselves in ways the government can’t tax. This includes putting foreign tourists in odd situations and observing their reactions.

And what better place to start than with air travel. Because the distances up and down Norway are significant and the roads are circuitous and trains don’t go everywhere, a lot of travel is by air. The Norwegians started their air travel-based self-amusement by building the world’s longest airport terminal, at Gardermoen outside Oslo. It may not be as vast as Dubai or Dallas, but it does involve the world’s longest airport walks: your international flight parks at one end and your bags are at the other end – after the world’s longest wait at the luggage carousel. In between, you can experience the world’s longest passport delays. I got into the spirit by doing this on about the year’s longest day.

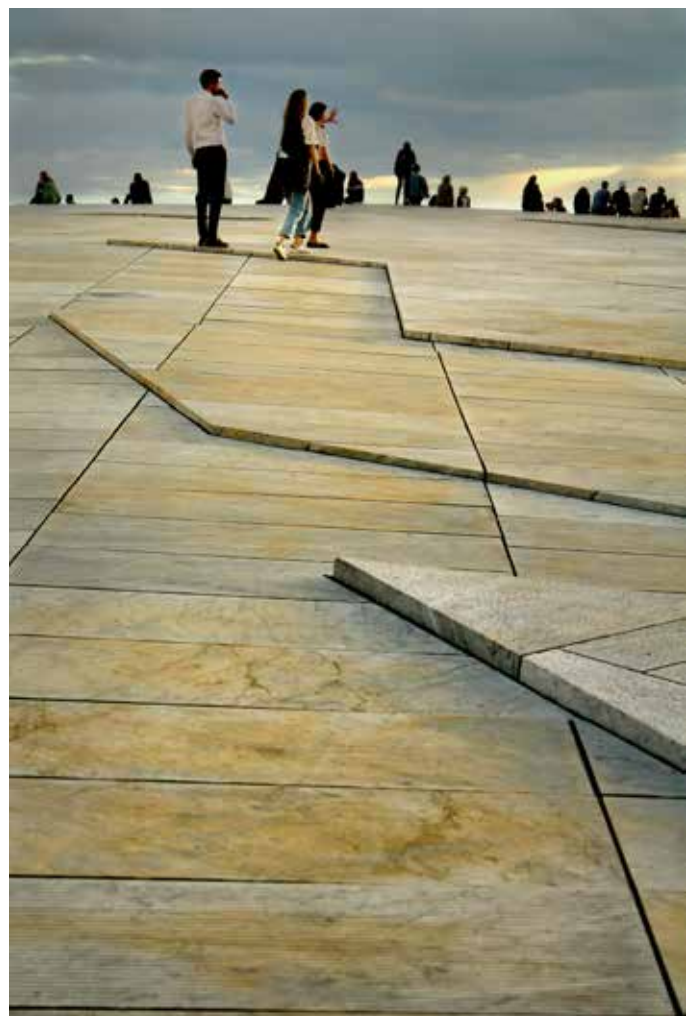
But that was just the start. Having spent three days in Oslo, it was time to venture back to Gardermoen for a short flight to Kristiansand (so named in a moment of ancient whimsy because the king’s name was Kristian and there is a lot of sand there). This city should not be confused with the other one called Kristiansund, named at about the same time and located on an inlet/sound/sund. You can see how the Norwegians invent their own fun, in ways that can’t be taxed.

Anyway, where was I? Yes, Gardermoen. I had noticed a couple of dogs on leads being taken by passengers through security. Very odd, I thought: the small yappy types – as were their dogs. Unlike in Australia where airline staff attend each gate and attempt to explain any delays (by making actual announcements), in Norway this work has been outsourced to some other company that operates on the Simon and Garfunkel principle (Sounds of Silence). Then you get on a plane by scanning your boarding pass. This opens a little automatic gate – or it doesn’t. Ah, what we have to look forward to in years to come! So I boarded the plane, and because I’d paid Norwegian Airlines a few pesos extra, I could choose my seat and I decided (months before) to sit in a window seat, 1F. After I was welcomed onto the plane I found there was a man already sitting in my seat. He had a black flokati rug around his feet. As I was explaining to him that I had a ticket for that seat, the rug put its head up to see what the discussion was all about.

They’d sold my seat to a dog!



Left: What a Scream at Munch, Oslo  
Opposite page - clockwise from top left: OSLO -  
Barcode District; Ensjø Metro Station; Sunset on the  
Opera House Roof; National Museum Stairs





Above: Prehistoric Demolition, Oslo

Opposite page Left: Scary Fish at Kristiansand Fish Market; Right: Gate to Boat to Island, Kristiansand

One of the aircrew then came and explained that they'd put this man in 1F because he had his dog with him. (Neither the man nor his dog had any vision impairment and the dog clearly needed more assistance from the man than vice versa). Then of course I became the problem, because I wanted another seat. I didn't comment to the aircrew that seeing this was Row 1, shouldn't the dog be placed in the overhead locker for take off and landing? I now see that this was a missed opportunity to respond to that zany Norwegian humour of allowing dogs on planes.

My trip to Norway was not all fun like that – most of the time I enjoyed myself. There is a new Edvard Munch museum in Oslo, simply called Munch. It's pronounced Moonk, which really gets in the way of musings about having my lunch at Munch. The museum celebrates the works of this prolific Norwegian painter, who is best known for his painting 'The Scream'.

Nearby is the Oslo Opera House, with its intriguing design that lets people walk up its sloping roof, to reach outdoor concerts or simply to wander around, picnic, admire the view or explore elements like what I call the Braille Wall. So many photo opportunities. Then there is a clothing brand in Norway (also to be seen elsewhere in Scandinavia), called 'CHANGE lingerie'. This is not only good advice, but is also another example of how Norwegians have fun in ways their government cannot tax.

**KRISTIANSAND** I first met my Norwegian friends when we all went up Mt Kilimanjaro in 2005. They grew up in Kristiansand and, as well as now having a family, they have a 'summer house' on an island opposite the city. For their friends who arrive by plane, they provide a unique airport transfer service, which they call 'Gate to Boat'. Nikolai met me at the airport, then we walked 200 m to his boat for the trip to their holiday house. The weather was not so good, but the experience was impossible to beat.





A short time after we arrived I could hear a distant thump-thump sound that could only be the amplified bass from pop music. Nikolai thought it might be from a party boat, anchored nearby in the poor weather.

My general intolerance to noise when quiet is required was well known to Nikolai and Anne since Kilimanjaro. I did find it necessary on two nights up the mountain to ask the guides to be quiet, as the rest of us – who were not guides and were not catching up with our mates – were trying to get some sleep. My final words to the guides on the topic have become legend: “NO. MORE. NOISE!” So Nikolai was a little concerned when he found out that the current racket was coming from a music festival close to central Kristiansand. The good folk of Kristiansand possibly weren’t hearing it, as the concert site was on the coast, behind a hill. Thanks to the sound-reflecting quality of the hill, the ‘music’ was possibly only being heard by people like us, on islands 2 km away. Better yet, this was a two day festival, so after a few hours sleep they’d be doing it again tomorrow afternoon and evening. And I was only visiting for two nights! However, I did explain to Nikolai that it was actually OK and would be something I’d get used to and it wouldn’t keep me awake at night, because since 2005 – and unlike their neighbours in Sweden – I had achieved ‘heard immunity’.

The island on which their holiday house is located has an interesting history. Nikolai’s great-grandfather bought the island and another nearby one and his family farmed on it. Farming has long since ceased, but the foundations of the old farm buildings, plus extensive dry-stone walling built across the farm are still there, creating some beautiful scenes. The holiday house is not on inherited land: Nikolai’s great grandfather made his money, then lost it all and had to sell the islands. Most of the island, including the old farm, is now national park.

The highlight of the trip was the eighth general meeting of the Kilimanjaro Walking Club (Est. 2005). We have met on three continents, with plans to add a new continent next year. Official meeting wear (at least for part of each meeting) is the T-shirts we bought from local Tanzanian children once we got down from the mountain. This meeting was at an excellent restaurant ‘Smag og Behag’ (literally Taste and Pleasure), located in the gymnasium building of the former Kongens Gate school in Kristiansand. The building is reminiscent of an old high-ceilinged church. And their wine cellar is amazing – both in scale and contents. We were offered a tour. Some regular diners have a few special bottles put aside in the cellar. Nikolai recognised the name attached to a few of the bottles in that section – it was his plumber! The more different things we see, the more we realise how much is the same across the world.



Above: Mmmm - Lunch or a Metro Trip, Copenhagen  
Left from top to bottom: COPENHAGEN - Crash Test Dummy; F Troop at Amalienborg; Glyptotek Museum Corridor



**COPENHAGEN** After my brief travels in Norway I had three nights spare, so I flew to Copenhagen. The school holidays were approaching and aircraft engineers in Scandinavia had decided this would be a good time to annoy everyone by refusing to do various maintenance jobs. That just added to the fun of Gardermoen airport. Luckily we were only two hours late departing. My bag aged considerably more than me from the experience and by the time it appeared at Copenhagen the handle refused to extend. But it was my lucky day, as an airport employee with more brute force, dexterity and patience than me managed to free it. With various additions of gaffer tape it survived the rest of my trip.

But my airport woes were not yet over: my return flight to Oslo got cancelled, as the stocks of fencing wire and sealing wax at Norwegian Airlines had declined. This was a connecting flight to my homebound flight, so I ended up flying back to Oslo airport a day early. Yes, this meant I had only one full day and two nights in Copenhagen.



Danish Students at Nyhavn, Copenhagen

What to do on Day 1, when Day 2 will evaporate? I did walk around and see several tourist attractions, as did many local school children who were happy to practise their English (Who wouldn't be if your native tongue had silent 'd's? and your capital city is pronounced like a dog from Havana ('Cuban Houn'(d)). The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek private gallery of sculpture and other works of art, housed in an old building with a plant-filled atrium, was a treat.

As I was travelling alone this time, I had time to reflect on all those previous times I'd travelled alone before meeting my wife, and ask myself what is the most difficult aspect of travelling by yourself. Having no one to talk with? No, I find I can talk to myself endlessly. Dining alone? Ditto. Falling over in the shower and no one hearing me? Of course not – I can do that at home.

No, as I was reminded in my Copenhagen hotel, the most difficult aspect of travelling alone is to get the breakfast waiting staff to NOT clear away your table while you've gone to get more coffee or food. I've tried leaving my serviette neatly on my seat, but not enough waiting staff have been drug up proper to spot that one. Next I tried leaving the serviette roughly placed on my seat. Gone! I've concluded there are a lot of people who don't know the difference between tidy and untidy.

One option, not available everywhere, is to put the dirty plate to one side, then spell NO in toothpicks next to my unfinished coffee. It's (theoretically) even easier in countries where the word is NI or NY. Not so easy in Russia; impossible in China. But, alas, the waiting staff look at it and think some coffee-crazed kid has been playing with the toothpicks again. They whisk the coffee and crockery away, straighten any toothpicks bent to make the Y and put them all back in the holder.

Even in hotels where the evening staff are too busy nattering to clean up tables, the morning staff are hired on the basis of efficiency: clean it up and move 'em out.

I've gone to great lengths to avoid this travel problem. I've married at least twice (to the best of my knowledge), but sometimes my wife is unable to travel with me and the ghosts of breakfasts past return to haunt me.

# Have camera, Will travel

PHOTOGRAPHY & WORDS:  
Sheila Haycox ARPS MPAGB/AV, EFIAP



When I got interested in using my camera more creatively rather than just taking snaps of the family I was only interested in capturing landscapes and concentrated on the UK, my favourite places being Scotland, Outer Hebrides, Northumberland and Yorkshire. These were much visited places and areas that I will never get tired of and would go back again and again as there is so much to see and photograph, especially Harris and Lewis, it's a magical place.

It didn't stop there though; this was the start of my travels and in the late 90's I really went to town. Since then I have managed to visit more than 45 countries, which isn't that many by today's standards.

I then went with a friend to China in 1998. Unfortunately, I only have slides of the visit and not that many, however I was hooked on "culture", the way people live elsewhere in the world is so interesting. I then took the plunge and went to India on a photographic trip, again, only slides. A place I really enjoyed with its bright colours, the highlight being the Pushkar Camel Fair which was marvellous.

When I got my first digital camera there was no stopping me, I took a trip to Slovenia and liked it so much I made many return visits at different times of the year. A beautiful place, especially the mountains and rivers. My adventures have been very varied since 1998 and my style of photography has changed considerably, I still took landscapes but now it's the people, their homes, buildings, countryside, in fact anything that caught my eye. It was all the little details that fascinated me.





Clockwise from top left: Pedn Vounder, Cornwall; Crown Mines, Cornwall, St Primoz, Slovenia; Yorkshire Dawn, Hawes, Yorkshire ; Longships Lighthouse, Cornwall  
Opposite page top to bottom: Great Wall of China, China; Tiananmen Memorial, Beijing, China, School Children, India



Playing Cards, Morocco

I have travelled to France, Australia, and America, but it's places like Morocco, Cuba, and Asia that I find so fascinating, the lifestyle, colours and friendliness have given me so many opportunities to photograph something different.

Such a different culture to the UK and although poverty is prevalent the people's spirits did not seem to diminish.



In the desert, Morocco



Chefchaouan Morocco



Sahara Desert, Morocco

Morocco was a fascinating country, very vibrant and noisy and a trip to the desert sleeping under the stars was an experience not to be forgotten.

Cuba was a surprise learning about how they live, the people seem to get a lot of help from the government and schooling for the children is important.

Although not into nature photography I took the opportunity to travel to Chobe River in Botswana and a trip to Costa Rica. Being able to photograph all the different creatures in their natural environment was amazing and although I got some stunning shots I still gravitate towards other countries where I can capture the lifestyles of the people though I can never resist a landscape.



Mojitos, Cuba



Underground Station Paris



Moulin Rouge, Paris



Playing Footie in Cuba





Green Crown Brilliant, Costa Rica



Crocodile and Egret, Botswana



Green Pit Viper, Costa Rica



Elephants, Botswana



The Apostles, Australia



It was the Asian countries that I enjoyed the most; Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar and although Myanmar is in turmoil yet again the people's spirits do not seem to have diminished, in fact they were very friendly and helpful.

To summarise; travel has given me the opportunity to publish coffee table books illustrating the countries I have visited. I have produced quite a few as I feel the family are more likely to keep them rather than all the digital images on my computer.

I have also made use of many images to produce stories in the form of audio visuals and tend to create a "family member's adventure" as the basis to a storyline.



I have even used my photography to print material to make quilted wall hangings.

Travelling with a camera has certainly given me a wealth of opportunities to make my own lifestyle so different.

However, age is showing its difficulties and has curtailed my travelling, which has turned full circle; I started with the UK, made the most of being able to travel abroad for the last 20 years and it's now back to making the most of the UK countryside and towns.

<http://www.sheilahaycoxphotography.com/>





Opposite page top to bottom:  
Making Pots, Myanmar; Young Boy, Asia;  
Visiting Buddha, Myanmar

This page anti-clockwise from the top:  
Praying Monk, Myanmar;  
Going to Market, Cambodia;  
Morning Wash, Cambodia; and  
Dyeing Cloth, Lake Inlay, Myanmar



# Durga Pooja – the highlight of West Bengal



PHOTOGRAPHY & WORDS:  
Ashok Viswanathan

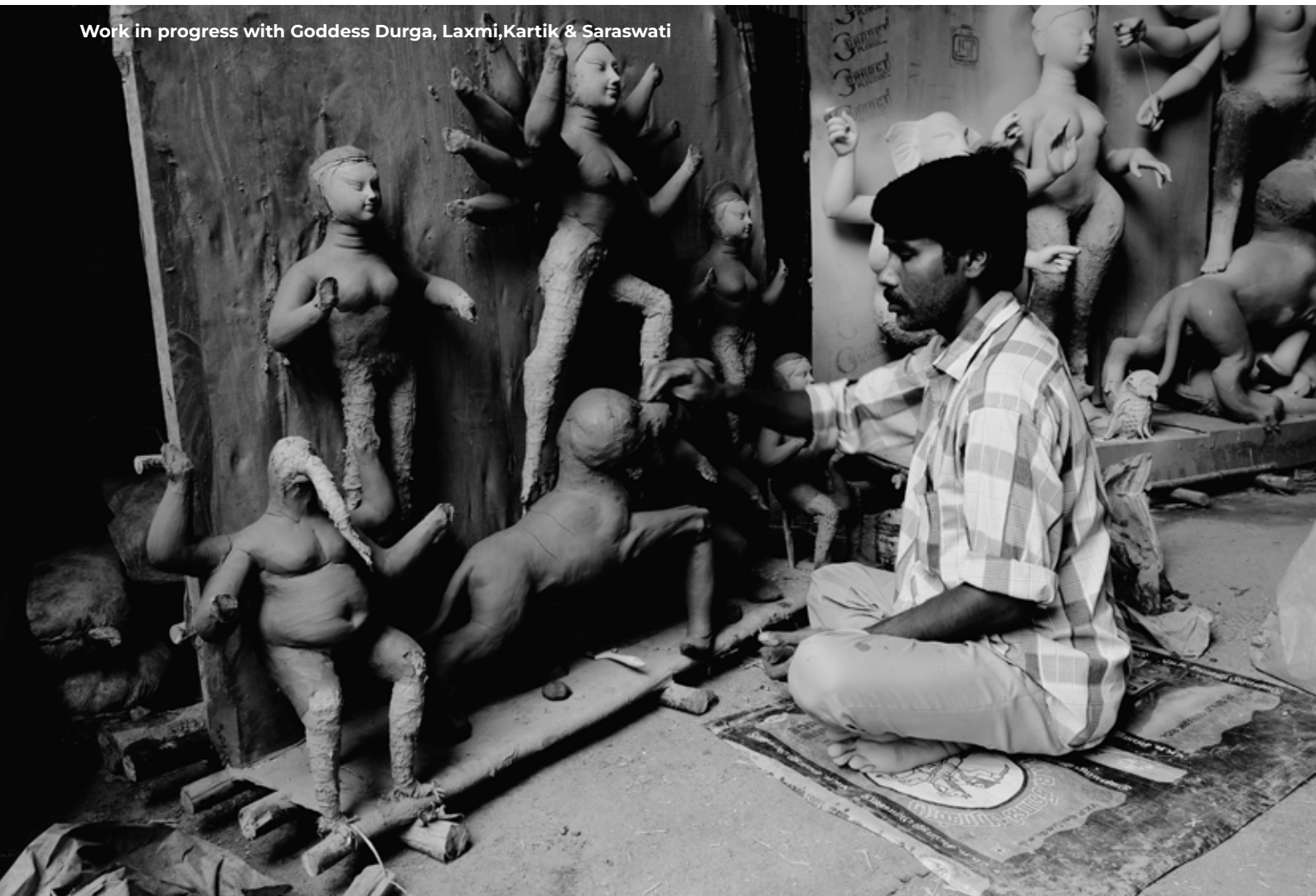
Durga Pooja is an annual Indian festival in the month of October and celebrated mainly in the Eastern India state of West Bengal. It's a ten-day festival celebrated at home and in public places with a stage and decorations that can be found in residential localities, public squares and roadsides.. The celebrations include prayer, family visits, giving of gifts, feasting and finally processions.

The festival marks the victory of Goddess Durga over evil and partly a harvest festival demonstrating power over life and creation. The primary focus is on Goddess Durga but also includes other Hindu deities such as Ganesha, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartikeya. On the tenth day the idol is taken in procession and immersed in a river or lake.



Goddess Durga

Work in progress with Goddess Durga, Laxmi, Kartik & Saraswati





Goddess Durga work in progress

Durga Pooja is recorded as far back as the 14th century and history says royalty and wealthy families sponsored Durga Pooja festivals from the 16th century. The occasion is not just religious but also a social occasion for families to meet. During the festival, life in the city comes to a stop. Offices are closed and the roads are filled with Durga celebrations. It's a major festival in Eastern India. For a street photographer, such occasions offer unlimited opportunities to make images.

**Left: Goddess Saraswati with Kali in the background**  
**Bottom: Evil Asura with the snake ready to paint**





Goddess Durga with evil Asura & lion



**Godess Durga ready for sale**



Goddess Kali



Goddess Durga with the first layer of paint

Making the idols is a long process requiring skill and patience over many months in the summer before they can be ready for the Durga Pooja in October. The making starts with a prayer to Ganesha. These idols are made from clay, carefully shaped with large idols being built on a platform of bamboo or wood. The base is clay and the idol is then built up with straw, and using moulds with jute. The heads, hands and fingers are made separately and attached to the main body.

Once dry, the idols are painted in bright colours, dressed and decorated.

Living in Chennai, in South India, we do not see major Durga Pooja celebrations. However this year a group of artisans from Bengal arrived and started making Durga idols in an old shed in the heart of the city. They eat, sleep and work in the shed for months until the idols are ready to be sold and then they move on to another part of India.



Lion with Asura





Goddess Durga with Goddess lakshmi & Kartik



Goddess Saraswati

Clearly these idols were intended for the small Bengali resident population of Chennai. It was not long before word got around and the visitors started seeing a few photographers arrive to record the process. Notwithstanding the language problem, with the visitors speaking Bengali and the South Indians speaking Tamil, the photographers were made welcome.

All images are made in available light with increased ISO to 800-1600 and slow shutter speed in order to capture the atmosphere of the place.

The clay idols having no colour were processed to monochrome while the almost finished idols are best viewed in colour. These images are shot on a Fuji XE3 with 50~140mm and the standard 18~55mm lens with files processed in Affinity photo.

Its my hope that next year I can be in Kolkata during the Durga Pooja celebrations to do some street photography and document the immersion. That is an event in itself.



Goddess Kali

# RPS Travel Group Trips 2023

## Provence Lavender and Luberon Villages

29 June - 5 July 2023

Organised for the RPS Travel Group by  
Create-Away Photographic Workshops

Join the Travel Group as they travel through the lavender fields of Provence.

Sweeping through the valleys, lined with purple velvet, and splashed with yellow sunflowers. Overlooked by picturesque honey-coloured villages, perched high on the hillsides. Vibrant colours and stunning scenery, little wonder that so many artists came to the region to paint.

The tour is a private trip, designed for photographers of all levels.

The tour cost is £2529 (6 nights) for the photo experience.

For more information  
Contact Keith Pointon  
Temple Cottage, Whitcott Keysett, Craven Arms,  
Shropshire, SY7 8QE  
Email bagpoint@aol.com

## Vietnam 'Terraces of Gold'

22 September - 5 October 2023

Organised for the RPS Travel Group by  
Paul Sansome Photography

A small group tour to maximise individual photographer's opportunities and support from Paul. The group is limited to just six people.

Paul says:

*'In 2014, I discovered a fascinating, sometimes beautiful place. I spent four days seeing no English speaking tourists. I saw potentially one of the best landscapes for photography that I have ever seen and I saw shy, traditional people who can be so photogenic; I had discovered the mountains of Northern Vietnam. This itinerary builds on six previous tours to this area.'*

The cost is between £2750 and £3050 depending on the number of travellers.

There is a single room supplement of £390.

For more information  
Email Richard Lewis [traveltrips@rps.org](mailto:traveltrips@rps.org)



# The RPS Travel Group and YOU

'Nothing for you without you' is an appropriate saying for how Travel Log is collated and how the voluntary Travel Group Committee try to plan for our members. There are a number of ways you can contribute to the RPS Travel Group by understanding and participating in the diverse selection of communications and activities organised by the RPS Travel Group Committee.

The best place to find out what is happening is by visiting the Travel Group's section on the RPS website [rps.org/groups/travel/](https://rps.org/groups/travel/) We also communicate with our members via e-news, Share and Chat, Facebook, Travel Log and by e-mail. We have also recommenced in-person trips, photo walks and weekends.

## Connect Online

### e-news

e-news is e-mailed to members every other month to keep Travel Group members up-to-date with members' achievements and activities.



If you have information to be shared please e-mail [travelweb@rps.org](mailto:travelweb@rps.org)

### Join our Facebook Community

All members have access to the Travel Group Facebook page and are encouraged to take part in lively discussions. Information on upcoming events and competition reminders are also posted here.



[www.facebook.com/groups/RPSTr](https://www.facebook.com/groups/RPSTr)

### Share and Chat

These are live online informal gatherings to enable members to connect and share their experiences and inspire each other.

Members sharing images of favourite locations, often off the beaten track, is a popular feature as well as updates on what's happening in the Travel Group and what members would like to happen. These sessions depend very much on Group member involvement.

Please keep an eye on your e-mail, Facebook and the RPS website for the 2023 dates for Share and Chat. These are via Zoom and start at 14:30 (UK Time).

If you can offer an item, please contact Richard Lewis by e-mailing [traveltrips@rps.org](mailto:traveltrips@rps.org)

## Meet In-person

### On the Road Again

Pre-covid, Travel Group meet ups were a regular twice yearly occurrence, with additional day trips also taking place.

Our first large in-person meeting took place in Birmingham 15-16 October 2022. The next is planned for 12-14 May 2023.

These provide Travel Group members with the opportunity to meet fellow travel photographers as well as being informative and good fun!

Below are some images from our On the Road Again event.



Photos courtesy of John Speller and Justin Cliff

# Inspire & Be Inspired



Photo credit SUE Hutton  
Monthly Winner July 2022

## Monthly Travel Image Competition

Travel Group members have the opportunity to enter their travel photography images into our monthly competition. Submissions are of a single favourite photograph that you feel defines a sense of place.

There are no restrictions on the age of the photograph you submit, but it must not have previously been submitted into an RPS competition. The submitted JPEG image can be any height but it **MUST** be 580px wide and 72dpi.

The closing date for submissions is the last day of each month before they are judged and a winner chosen. The winning shot will be added to the Travel Image of the Month page on the website, with the overall monthly winners competing to be the Group's annual 'Best of the Best' winner. All entries and the winning monthly image can be viewed on [rps.org/groups/travel/](https://rps.org/groups/travel/)

Submit your entries to [travelcompetitions@rps.org](mailto:travelcompetitions@rps.org)

## Forthcoming events

Events are advertised on the website, e-news, Facebook and via specific broadcasts from the Travel Group. Registration for our July speaker is not available from the website.

12th May 2023 - An Advisory Day specifically for Travel Distinctions at RPS House, Bristol. If you are planning to submit and 'A' or 'F' panel in the next year, this advisory day will give you time to 'tweak' your submission before the Autumn Assessment Days, so get preparing now!

13-14th May 2023 - A Sense of Place - some new perspectives. The Travel Group's next face-to-face gathering takes place in Bristol with Paul Sanders and Stewart Wall as speakers and workshop leaders. We look forward to building on the success of 'On the Road Again!'

May 2023 - Throughout May, the Travel Photographer of the Year Exhibition will be in place outside RPS House and be available for those attending the Advisory Day and the Spring Meeting.

Find out about upcoming events [rps.org/groups/travel/future-travel-group-events/](https://rps.org/groups/travel/future-travel-group-events/)



## Recent events from the RPS Travel Group on YouTube

Past events run by the RPS Travel Group can be accessed via the Travel Group's section of the RPS website. Click on the link and access a variety of content that can be viewed on YouTube. This helps our members, who live across various timezones, benefit from these events at a time that suits them.

<https://rps.org/groups/travel/recent-travel-group-events/fdgsdgdgdf>



## Travel Log

Travel Log is a much valued publication of the Travel Group. The magazine provides one way in which we are able to reflect our members' interests and showcase our travel photography and be inspired by other people's interpretation of the genre.

If you have a story to tell, images to share or the perfect cover photo please contact the Editor. There is no set format and we are happy to work with you to help tell your story or write about your images.

Our main requirements for images that we print is that their **resolution MUST be 300DPI** at the size we use them. **A cover image MUST be 300DPI plus slightly more than 3508px high x 2480px wide to ensure high quality printing.**

E-mail article suggestions and potential cover images to [editortravel@rps.org](mailto:editortravel@rps.org)