





© Brian Beaney FRPS

12th June 2011  
11:00am - 4:00pm

# Brian Beaney FRPS

## 'Beyond the moment of capture'

Foxton Village Hall, Cambridge

This is the opening event for the newly formed DIG Eastern Centre.

For full details see the EVENTS listing on Page 4 or contact John Margetts LRPS, [easterndigital@ukart.com](mailto:easterndigital@ukart.com) or 01223 700147

1st July 2011 - 29th July 2011

## 2011 Members' Exhibition

Link Centre Library Swindon, Whitehill Way, Swindon SN5 7DL

Free Entrance

Subject to Library opening times (closed all day on Monday and on Wednesday pm)

First showing of the Digital Imaging Group's Exhibition for 2011

For more information contact Alex Dufty LRPS  
[exhibition@digit.rps.org](mailto:exhibition@digit.rps.org) or 01454 778485



*Walking the Dog, Paul Radden LRPS*

*Editor's Note:* Page 38 of the Autumn 2010 DIGIT (No.47) contained an image called 'Walking the Dog'. This was attributed to Paul Radden LRPS. Unfortunately the image published was by Brian Burrows. The correct image is reproduced above. I should like to apologise to both Paul and Brian for this error. The way submitted images are titled has been changed to try to prevent such an error from reoccurring.





12



20



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# DIGIT

WINTER 2010/11 ISSUE NO 48

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## FRONT COVER IMAGE

On Faded Paper by Steven Le Prevost  
FRPS

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# EVENTS

**17th April 2011**

**DI Group Thames Valley Centre: Steve Caplin**

**Coopers Hill Community Centre, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 7QS**

Time: 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Contact: Roger Norton LRPS

Email: [centroordinator@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](mailto:centroordinator@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk)

Phone: 01628 622279

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £5.00

Booking essential - more information at [www.rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](http://www.rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk). Season Tickets for 2011 will be available. Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a pack lunch.

**21st May 2011**

**DI Group Wessex May Digital Day with Greg Duncan ARPS, and Members Work**

**Aldbourne, Wiltshire SN8 2DQ**

Time: 10:00AM - 4:00PM

Contact: Maureen Albright ARPS

Email: [maureen@maureenalbright.com](mailto:maureen@maureenalbright.com)

Phone: 07979 523309

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £8.00

Bring Digital Files to show & share or problems to discuss & solve. Bring a packed lunch, refreshments available.

Tickets ((Please note pre-booked and pre-paid) available from Rodney Deval ARPS, 28 Haywards Close, Wantage OX12 7AT, Telephone: 01235 765259. Please make cheques payable to RPS Wessex DI Group

**22nd May 2011**

**Thames Valley Centre.**

**Morning: Creative Photography, Don Byatt ARPS EFIAP MPAGB BPE4\*. A digital talk showing how to be creative in the camera and afterwards in the computer.**

**Afternoon: The Annual Projected Digital Image Competition (Judge: Don Byatt).**

**Coopers Hill Community Centre, Bracknell Berkshire, RG12 7QS**

Time: 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Contact: Roger Norton LRPS

Email: [centroordinator@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](mailto:centroordinator@rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk)

Phone: 01628 622279

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £5.00

Booking essential - more information at [www.rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk](http://www.rpsdig-thamesvalley.org.uk). Season

Tickets for 2011 will be available. Free tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day. Bring a pack lunch.

**12th June 2011**

**A Day with Brian Beaney FRPS Foxton Village Hall Cambridge**

Time: 11:00AM - 4:00PM

Contact: John Margetts LRPS

Email: [easterndigital@ukart.com](mailto:easterndigital@ukart.com)

Phone: 01223 700147

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £5.00

This is the opening event for the newly formed DIG Eastern Centre and we have chosen Brian Beaney FRPS as our first speaker. This should prove to be a really exciting day for all those photographers who are looking for a more creative way of using their images. The lecture is entitled 'Beyond the moment of capture'. Or to use Brian's own words "I try to bring back to my pictures some of the "buzz" I experienced when I took the shot. Sometimes the pleasure is just using the imagination".

A downloadable form for advance tickets may be obtained from the 'Downloads' page of the DIG Website at [www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads](http://www.rps.org/group/Digital-Imaging/downloads)

**19th June 2011**

**DIG Western Centre Regional Meeting The Merryfield Hall, Ilton, Somerset TA19 9HG**

Time: 10:00am - 4:00pm

Contact: Tony Poole ARPS

Email: [tonyfpoole@gmail.com](mailto:tonyfpoole@gmail.com)

Phone: 0117 9565399

Cost: DIG members £3.00, others £5.00

Viewing the 2011 DI Group Exhibition, together with tutorials and other help in the morning, Members' work in the afternoon.

10.00 am, for 10.30am start

**26th June 2011**

**321 International AV Gala Day - 2011 UK**

**Aldbourne Memorial Hall, Aldbourne, Wilts SN8 2DQ**

Time: 10:00AM - 5:30PM

Contact: Maureen Albright ARPS

Email: [maureen@maureenalbright.com](mailto:maureen@maureenalbright.com)

Phone: 07979 523309

Cost: £10.00, Members Rate: £8.00

The format will be the same as last year

and has been changed for the UK event. The entries will have already been judged in advance of the public Gala Show on Sunday 26th June 2011.

This will avoid any over-run, and allow time for comments from the judges as well as less 'down-time' for the audience. The Audience will also have the opportunity to judge their own favourite sequence at the Gala Day. All of the sequences have a maximum duration of 3 minutes 21 seconds, hence the title of the competition. For the 2011 competition, the entries are being judged at various locations around the world, with stages in France, Belgium, Italy, Canada, South Africa, Mauritius, Germany, Romania, Oman, Switzerland, Argentina, Australia, Portugal, Poland, and the UK at Aldbourne.

Bring along a packed lunch, refreshments available.

Tickets: (Please note pre-booked and pre-paid) available from Rodney Deval ARPS, 28 Haywards Close, Wantage OX12 7AT, Tel: 01235-765259. Please make cheques payable to RPS Wessex DI Group

**1st July 2011 - 29th July 2011**

**2011 Members' Exhibition**

**Link Centre Library Swindon, Whitehill Way, Swindon SN5 7DL**

Contact: Alex Dufty LRPS

Email: [exhibition@digit.rps.org](mailto:exhibition@digit.rps.org)

Phone: 01454 778485

Cost: Free

First showing of the Digital Imaging Group's Exhibition for 2011

**14th August 2011**

**DI Group Wessex Practical**

**Portraiture Digital Day**

**Aldbourne, Wilts SN8**

Time: 10:00am - 4:00pm TBC

Contact: Maureen Albright ARPS

Email: [maureen@maureenalbright.com](mailto:maureen@maureenalbright.com)

Phone: 01672540754

Cost: TBC

Bring along camera & a packed lunch, refreshments available. Tickets: Strictly limited numbers. Book in Advance from Maureen Albright



# FROM CLIVE HAYNES FRPS

Clive Haynes stood down as Chairman of the Digital Imaging Group at the 2011 AGM and handed over to Dr David F Cooke ARPS. He looks back on the enduring feature of his time as Chairman.

My period as Chairman of the RPS DI Group has drawn to a close and naturally this is a time to reflect upon the development of the Group during my period in office and to take a moment to consider the changes that have taken place in digital photography. I could simply occupy many paragraph inches by listing the achievements and growth of our group, as it remains that largest Specialist Interest Group in the RPS and probably the one with the broadest base of members' interests, or equally I could dwell upon the long list of colleagues without whom the Group wouldn't have the stature or be the outstanding success that it is today. For me, though, the enduring feature of my time as Chairman has been the way in which digital photography has become so embedded within the fabric of regular everyday photography that it is now accepted without question. Equipment has improved beyond our imaginings. The resolving power of the digital arrays has exceeded that of conventional camera lenses and new lenses have been designed to match the chips! We've witnessed spectacular advances with cameras built into cell-phones and constant refinement of image management programs. The possibilities are more exciting than ever. However, ask yourselves, has the quality of seeing and final imagery improved at the same rate? If we're honest, the answer has to be "no". Whilst technology constantly presents better value for money and a multitude of accessories, producing meaningful pictures is still down to human perception, communication and sheer ability. No matter how automatic or easy-to-learn something may appear to be, regrettably we continue to see the results of £1,000 worth of equipment in £100 worth of human hands. And this is where the shared experience of like-minded enthusiasts and photo-artists can be of enormous benefit. The DI Group can provide this and help is also at hand with numerous photo-societies and on-line forums. We live in an age of unparalleled communication – let's

embrace it.

I like to think that one of the functions of photography is to be interactive and to be part of a continuum of communication between subject, artist and audience. Certainly many pictures are intended to inform, to be unambiguous, scientific, accurate, and perhaps evidentially forensic. However many other images are intended to stimulate a response, indeed to initiate a dialogue, perhaps by generating curiosity, wonder, disbelief or amusement. It's this dialogue and the exchange it invites that I should like to explore for a moment. In September 2010 the RPS Journal featured the work of Albert Watson, Hon FRPS. In this piece, Albert was critical about audiences who appear unable or unwilling to enter into a discussion with the photographer. Indeed how many times have we witnessed this event ourselves? A well-respected photographer is invited to give a talk about his or her work and time is allocated for questions. Often there's an embarrassing silence. A few tentative questions emerge, frequently along the lines of 'what camera do you use? What is your preferred paper? What version of Photoshop are you running? What's your favourite lens? I'm sure you all know the sort of thing I mean. There's nothing new about this of course and from my earliest memories of lectures I recall audience members asking 'what film do you use?' In short, as a general rule, the audience would appear to be more concerned with the mechanics of picture-making than the meaning of the picture or the motivation of the photographer. Why is this so? Is it just plain laziness or lack of practice? Is it so difficult to ask about the author's motive, stimulus and artistic intention? Indeed, when I give talks, I actively encourage the audience to join in and ask questions about the pictures. I certainly keep the whole thing light-hearted and if not many questions are forthcoming I start asking the audience questions and this helps to liven things up! It's really quite a simple task to break the ice with a few well chosen queries to stimulate the audience. We should invite a greater dialogue to the benefit of all. This

extended dialogue need not only be confined to a lecture: what about the revered club competition? How often have audiences gritted their teeth and sat through a whole evening listening to a judge pontificate about why he/she likes certain pictures without adequately explaining why? Why do we do this? Why not allow a dialogue? There could be a very revealing exchange of views between the judge and audience. The process could tease out many artistic attributes about images - and why not invite the photographer to join in to further explore the work? I'm certain that the exchange would frequently enlighten everyone and an improved learning experience would result. This more informed approach and exchange may encourage the movement towards 'positive assessment' which could run alongside the traditional competition formula. One part of the present problem could be that of confidence. It's certainly very easy for the audience to sit there and be entertained. When listening to a lecturer or the opinions of a judge/assessor, it's quite natural to assume that they have the monopoly of truth. However, this is art we're dealing with and an exchange is a vital part of the experience. We should actively encourage a dialogue for the greater understanding of all. Naturally when starting out with photography it's very understandable that one accepts and learns from comments about one's work. This is part of a feedback mechanism, which if positive, will lead to the photographer gaining craft-skills, becoming more visually aware and, with development, more expressive. Eventually one can leave the natural desire simply to conform or please behind and become an individual artist with a unique perspective. Once confidence is gained, the photographer need no longer be earth-bound by conventions and compliance to so-called rules, let alone the urge to win another ornament for the shelf.



# THOUGHTS ON MY PHOTOGRAPHY



Steven Le Prevost labels himself as a creative photographer and a digital artist. His style of work has allowed him to receive many major awards at the very highest levels of national and international salons. He currently serves on the RPS Visual Art Distinctions Panel, assessing Associateship and Fellowship Applications. In his article he describes what inspires him and how he creates his images.



*Row of Bottles*

**A**s a fifteen-year-old football mad-teen I recall looking forward to a weekend away from my Guernsey home. I was heading for the big smoke, in the apparent safe hands of my two older brothers. The highlight of our adventure was to be the true home of football, White Hart Lane. Two lasting memories of that trip away will always stay with me. The first was meeting Martin Chivers, my childhood hero and getting his autograph, which was a dream come true. The second, and this should really have put me off image making for good, was leaving behind a camera in

one of those less than savoury establishments in Soho. It should be pointed out here that I had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the area in the first place. The camera in question belonged to my father and I can promise you the whole episode took some explaining when I returned home. I was eventually forgiven for losing his camera but was never allowed to forget. Some years later my interest in photography returned and even at this early stage I was not that interested in the standard record type picture, I would always look for that unusual viewpoint with a wide

angle lens or maybe go completely crazy and open the shutter whilst waving the camera at a tree or something. In the darkroom I would experiment with diffusion techniques like sandwiching scratched plastic or a piece of tissue paper in the negative carrier of the enlarger so I could produce a print with softer colours and texture. I always tried to be different and my images at local club level were being successful. Getting a print accepted in a national exhibition was a totally different thing and seemed an impossible feat. The digital revolution really did light my



fire and within just a few short years it seemed to revolutionise my photography. The film cameras and darkroom gear became redundant. Photoshop gave me creativity at the push of a button and we all seemed to marvel at the generic filters offered, but it soon became apparent that my newly made masterpiece was far from unique when you could see the effect being repeated by everyone else. It was so easy to achieve and became almost pointless. I felt as though it was not my work, more the skill of the clever programmers at Adobe. It seemed to me the way forward was to use this new software as a tool to help you achieve your needs rather than letting the software decide for you. I subscribed to 'Digital Photo Art' magazine to learn how to use Photoshop, if such a thing is possible. The magazine really encapsulated the digital approach and encouraged a more creative outlook to your images. On the photographic salon circuit I noted the names of the photographers getting awards and tried to emulate their creativity, not copy it but more, use their creative work to feed my inspiration. There seemed to be a general



*Lust in Music*



*Red Lipstick*





*On Faded Paper*



*Fairytale*

trend emerging for soft atmospheric work and this really appealed to me. Armed with a computer, Photoshop and bags of inspiration I began to look at photography with new eyes. My very vivid imagination is, I believe, the most vital element to my image making process. I began to explore many different concepts for still life images with the possibility of working towards a Royal Photographic Society Distinction being the goal in mind. The journey to Fellowship took about two years of very intensive but very rewarding work. Let's be honest it's not supposed to be easy, FRPS is the Holy Grail, the top award that very few will be lucky enough to reach.

Although still life work will always be a natural subject for me, I have made a conscious effort to explore a variety of other subjects too. It's always worth experimenting with fresh ideas, Imagination and experimentation is key to my workflow. I keep notebooks with ideas that I can explore at a later date, I look at other artists/photographers whose works influence me, and this usually inspires me. The aim is to plant the seed that sets the imagination switch to overload.

To illustrate this I was recently flying to Scotland to be part of the judging team at the Edinburgh International and took with me some previous publications of DIGIT magazine to read while travelling, I noted an idea from one of the articles that gave me an idea that is worth further investigation. This is now firmly on my list of things to do. When creating new work I am often aware that the finished print may challenge the fundamentals and boundaries of known photography. However, I must say I prefer to use this approach rather than conforming to the safe, tried and tested formula so often seen. To the uninitiated the images I produce could be perceived as being created with a few mouse clicks, the reality however is far from that. Broadly speaking my techniques are not Photoshop led, albeit the software is used to combine all the elements into the finished work. The process will usually start with that very essential spark of inspiration, I will then spend some time considering the concept, make notes on possible variations to the theme and then I can set about capturing the photographs. It's a 'hands on' approach and some form of art/craftwork is often needed to prepare for the photographic



side. In the case of a still life it may be literally to build a suitable background to fit the needs of the picture in hand. The main subject may also need adapting in some way and this work will be carried out before the camera is even considered. What I am striving to achieve in most pictures, still life or otherwise, is a distressed look or a feeling of decay where colours bleed, the viewer often questions if this is a photograph or a water colour. I try to do as much of this as possible in camera rather than via software as I find this helps me to get a feel for the overall composition. Breaking the so-called compositional rules is something I will seek actively to do on numerous images; I do seem to have a preference for placing the subject dead centre in the frame. Important elements of my pictures are the backgrounds, most of which are created by hand painting scraps of card with emulsion paint, applied very crudely with a cloth, I don't approach this with any accuracy; we are not talking good quality brushes and smooth strokes here. As you can imagine, my workshop is filled with junk that may be of use on future assignments.

One project I am working on currently is a series of people pictures, either dancers or actors dressed in Victorian clothing. I like to visit re-enactment days so I can photograph them in their costumes and they are usually only too willing to have their photograph taken. The messy backgrounds that were an issue in the days of film are no longer such a problem provided you are prepared to put in the time and effort to remove the background clutter. My preferred approach is to photograph the subjects from a distance and without any interaction between them and myself, which ensures there are no cheesy grins and provides a more natural looking result that in my opinion suits my work. With the image captured, all that remains is to find or create a new backdrop that will suit. A graphics tablet and pen along with Photoshop are used to complete the montage by combining the layers. With layer masks and blending modes this can be amazingly accurate. Overall, I tend to use only two of the Photoshop filters: Gaussian Blur and Noise. These are applied via a layer mask so I can target the effect just where I feel it is needed. As my style is quite impressionistic I am often looking to make a fairly vague or loose suggestion of an item within the



*Church Yard*



*Photograph on the Wall*





*The Way Home*

picture, a hint of a fence or a faint tree hidden in mist. I find these two filters superb for softening the sharpness and bleeding the colours to create a more atmospheric feel to the finished piece. The whole process is quite experimental and can be very time consuming; on many occasions if things don't pan out well your time can be wasted. I doubt many would refer to my work as traditional photography but that has never been my intention.

Finally, with all that arty stuff out of the way and the computer RAM tired out, the image is printed using an Epson R2880 printer. Mostly I use the wonderful textured art papers that are now available. Luckily, I am a sponsored lecturer for Fotospeed so this gives me a great opportunity to test drive some fantastic papers that really suit this style of work. The term 'lecturing', I feel, makes me sound like a bearded OAP so I prefer to refer to this as 'illustrated talks' and I really am enjoying getting out there and meeting and making friends with other photographers.



*Bottle and Tulip*



*Fish in the Sea*



*Boat in the water*





*Red and Yellow*

# PRINTING IN LIGHTROOM 3

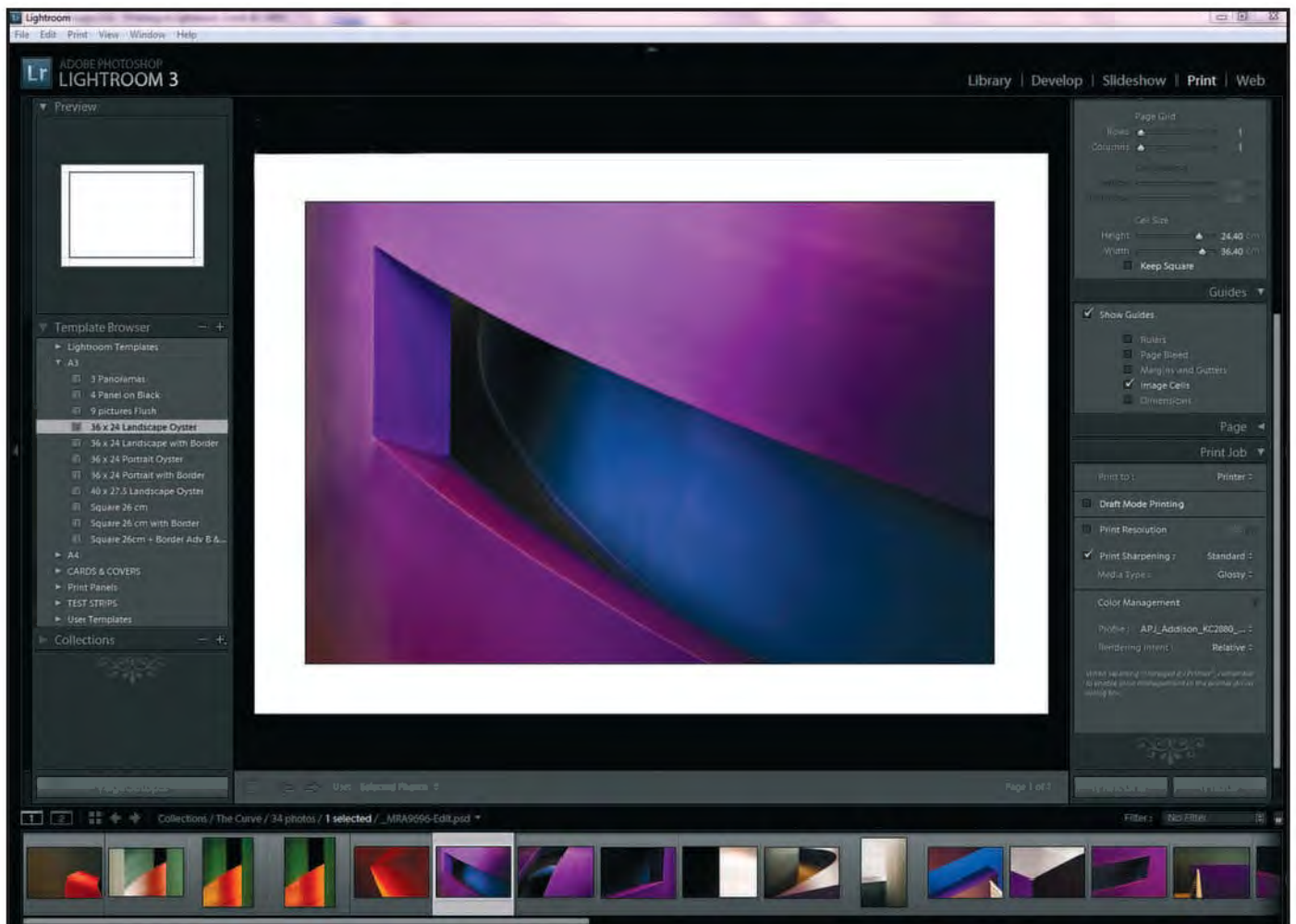


Figure 1



Martin Addison provided an introduction to Adobe Lightroom in the Spring 2010 issue of DIGIT (No. 45, pages 16 to 20). Having used it for several months, he has become extremely impressed by the Print Module. Here, he provides a step by step guide to using its features.

There are many good reasons for using Adobe Lightroom as your main image handling program. What initially appealed to me was the outstanding cataloguing system and the smooth workflow but after using it for several months I was surprised to find myself in love with the Print module (Figure 1).

So here is a quick guide to printing from Lightroom 3.

The layout is the same as in the other modules with the control panels on each side of the main window which shows the layout in detail. There are three tabs in the left panel, Preview, Template Browser and Collections.

The **Collections** panel now appears in all the modules and makes it easy to select a number of photographs in the Library Module and then to access and print them without leaving the Print module. The **Template Browser** is probably the most important part of the Print module as it is here where you can select particular layouts and use them time and time again. When I have described the rest of the panels I will show you how to create and use the templates. The **Preview** area (Figure 2) is where you can see a graphic impression of the various saved templates which makes it easy to select the template which best suits your needs.

The right hand side contains all the options for layouts, so let's go through this step by step. Remember that once these options have been set up, you can save them as a Template and not have to set them again.

1 Select your picture in the Library and use Develop to make any alterations then move to the Print module.

2 At the bottom of the left side click **Print Setup** and then Properties to set the paper size and printing preferences. You will be familiar with these as they are the same when printing from Photoshop.

3 In the **Layout Style panel** (Figure 3) select the Single Image/Contact sheet



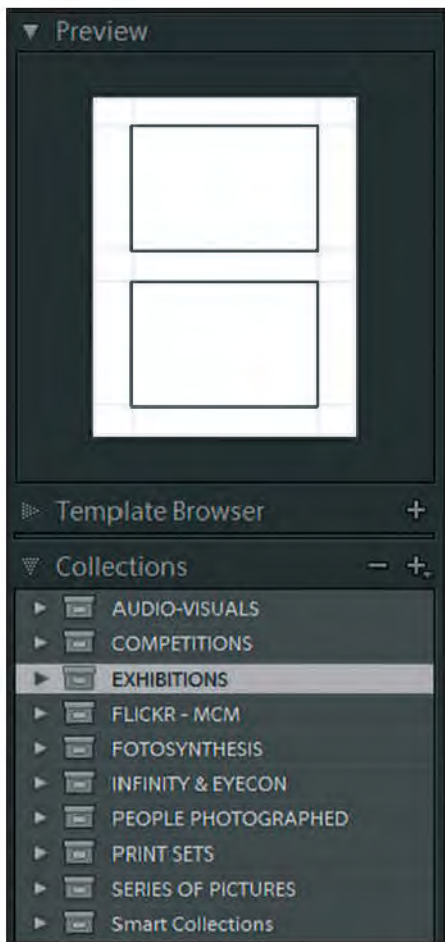


Figure 2

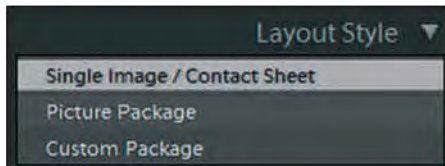


Figure 3

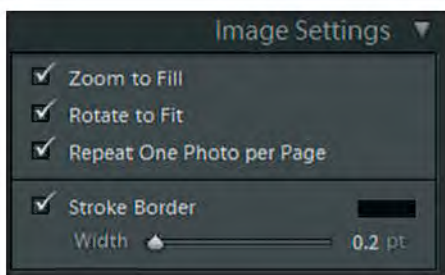


Figure 4

option. This is what you use most of the time. The other options are used when creating more complex multi-picture layouts.

4 In the **Image Settings panel** (Figure 4) there are several important options: Zoom to Fill will enlarge the picture to fill the selected aperture. This may cut off parts of the picture if the image is not the same proportions as the layout. Rotate to Fit, this rotates the picture to fill the space in the most economical way. This is particularly useful if you are printing a mix of landscape and portrait formats.

Repeat one Photo per page, tick this if you are printing several pictures on one sheet and want the same image in all the spaces.

Stroke Border, this enables you to add a simple border to your picture, click the colour swatch to select the colour. You can also use this to add white space around the picture.

5. In the **Layout panel** (Figure 5) you can set the margins, create multiple pictures on a page and control the spaces between them. If you are printing a single picture, and want it to print as large as possible, move the Margins sliders fully to the left and the Cell sliders to the right. Should you want to print a particular size, change the Cell sizes to the size you want. The other sliders can be ignored for single image prints.

6 Guides (Figure 6) add overlays to help in designing layouts, I usually just have the Image Cells option ticked.

7 The Page panel you don't usually need. Here you have some limited text options and other information. Ignore it for now.

8 The Print Job panel (Figure 7) is very important and contains all the output information.

Draft Printing Mode should be left unticked unless you want to print at a very low quality.

Print Resolution can be left unticked.

This allows Lightroom automatically to select the best resolution for the size you are printing. I find this works very well although you can set it yourself if you prefer.

Print Sharpening, I nearly always leave this turned on. Lightroom uses a very sophisticated output sharpening process which applies the correct level of sharpening, adjusted for the print size and paper. This output sharpening is quite separate from any sharpening you make in the Develop module and I have never known it to over sharpen any picture - and I am very critical of over sharpened pictures. The options are Low/Standard/High and I usually leave it on Standard. You should also select the paper type Glossy/Matt as LR will apply different levels.

Finally Color Management, the all important way to get the correct colours in your print. I am not going to cover the process of getting profiles created and installed as I will assume that you know this, so click the Profile option (the default is Managed by Printer) and select the colour profile for the paper you are

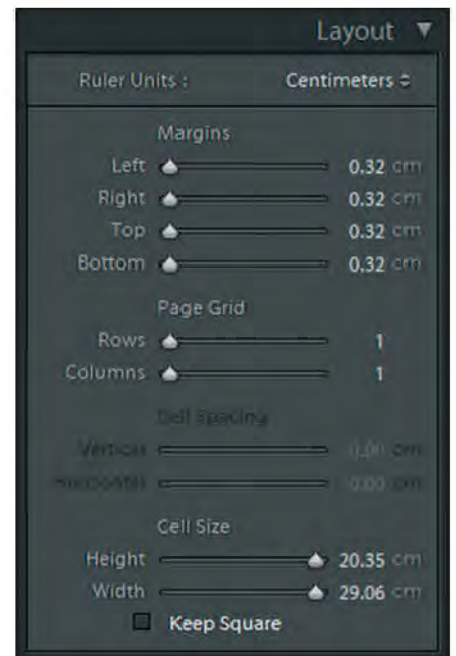


Figure 5

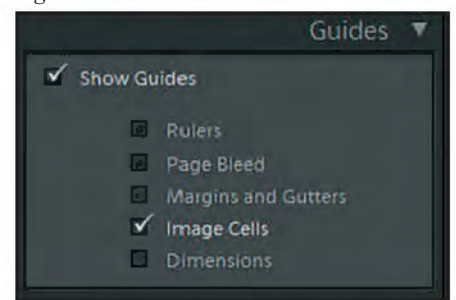


Figure 6

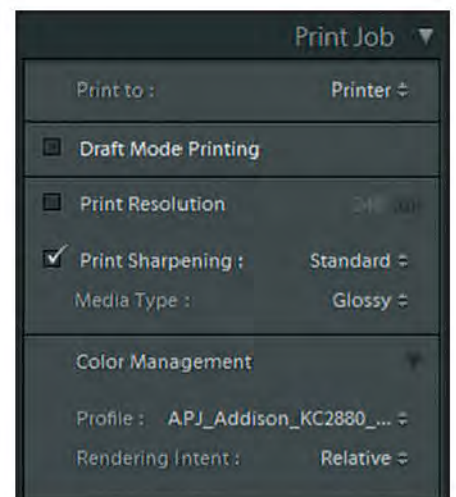


Figure 7

using. The first time you use this you will have to select 'Other' and the list of your installed profiles will appear, tick the ones you want to use (a lot of them will not be relevant) and those will appear as the options in future.

You can also change the Rendering Intent here if you wish, but I usually leave it on Relative.

9 Now that has taken a long time and you might be thinking that you can do it a lot faster in Photoshop! But wait for the next step.

10 In the Template Browser panel

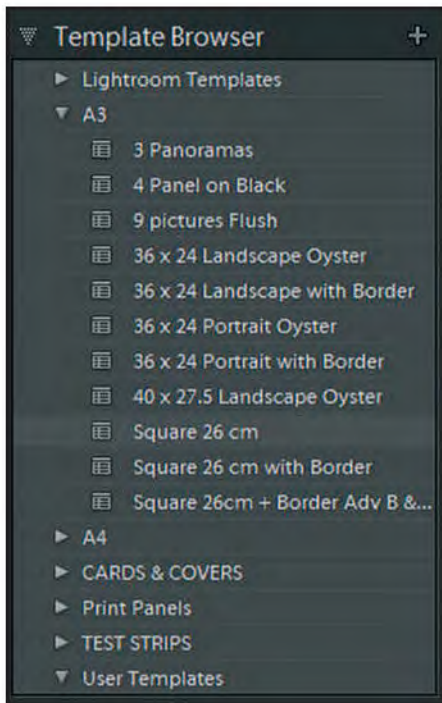


Figure 8

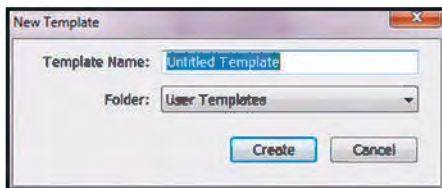


Figure 9

(Figure 8), click the + sign to the right of the heading and give it a name in the dialog box which appears (Figure 9).

This should reflect the settings you have entered, for instance it might be:

A3 Fit on Page Oyster paper - or...

A4 24 x 36 Matt paper

You should use a name to make it easily identifiable next time you want to use it and it will probably include the paper size, the aperture size (or fit to page) and the paper type. Click OK.

11 This has now saved all these settings as a template, so the next time you want to print to the same paper etc, you simply select your picture, go to the Print module and press Print One and it will print immediately. You do not need to do anything else.

12 If you want to use most of the settings, but are using a different paper, click on the saved template, change the paper type (and perhaps the sharpening) in the Print Job panel and click on the + sign again to save it under a new name, so now you have 2 templates.

13 Every time I print and use a different setting I tend to save it as a new template as I am quite likely to want to use it again. Currently I have about 40

templates saved and I organise them into folders A4, A3 etc - you can see them in the screenshot.

14 Lightroom comes complete with quite a number of Templates, many of them for multiple pages on a sheet and often it pays to find one similar to what you want and then alter certain options until it suits your need, then save it under your own name. You can preview what these look like in the Preview box top left, just run your cursor down the list of templates.

15 To create templates which have a number of different sizes on a page, go to the Layout Style panel and select Picture Package. This brings up a different view and you can add, move or resize boxes very easily. Another set of options will appear when you select Custom Package and in this layout you can drag and drop pictures onto the page completely independent of any preset sizes.

I recommend Lightroom very highly for printing. I get exceptionally good results and it is fast and easy to use. Some multi-image layouts are shown in Figures 10 to 13.



Figure 10





Figure 11



Figure 12

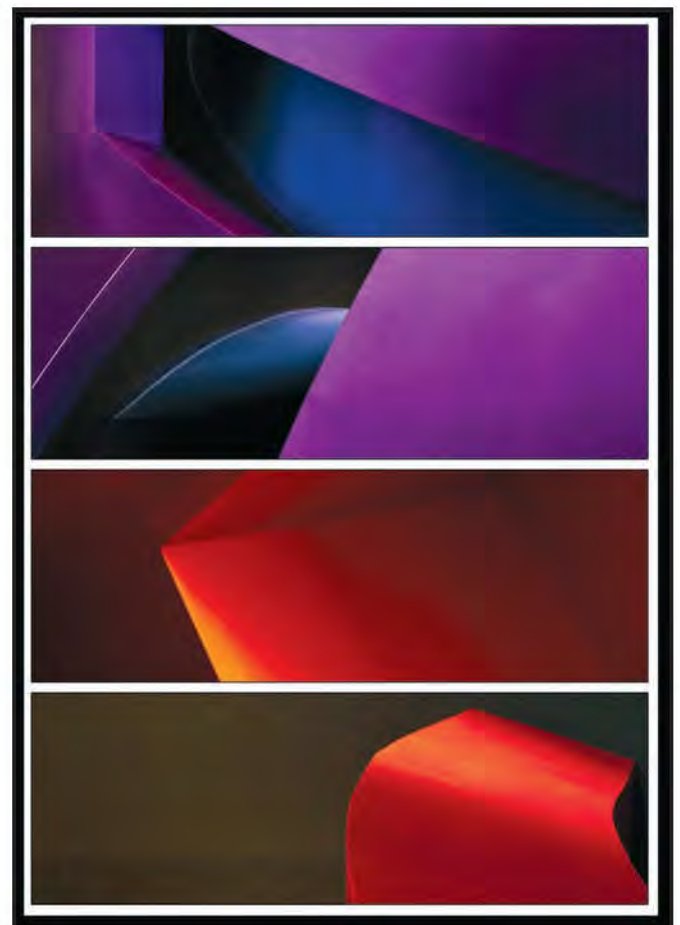


Figure 13



# MAKING AUDIO-VISUAL SHOWS WITH PROSHOW PRODUCER



Clive Haynes has been producing Audio Visual (AV) presentations since the mid 1960s when he and his brother used manual slide projectors, a mechanical iris ‘dissolve’ system and reel-to-reel tape machine. The technology has changed a lot since then. Here, he describes ‘ProShow Producer’, one of a number of affordable and versatile programs on the market.



Figure 1

Digital Imaging increasingly offers photographers and creative artists the ability to explore numerous methods of working and options for presentation. Once an image has been captured it can be translated readily to different media e.g. prints, (mono or colour), projected imagery and audio-visual (AV). The marriage of pictures and sound has a long pedigree and is now more accessible than ever before. My own adventures in AV began with my brother, Malcolm, in the mid 1960s. We used a pair of Leitz ‘Pradovit’ manual slide projectors, a mechanical iris ‘dissolve’ system and reel-to-reel tape

machine. We moved to a Kodak Carousel based presentation using pulse and glide-tone electronics, which in its turn became more sophisticated with the introduction of computers and a professional Electrosonic system to control our, by then, seven projectors. Eventually the large-scale outfit was ‘retired’ and together with colleagues, I waited for digital systems to develop and to become reasonably affordable. Today, there’s no doubt about the quality of digital projection and the price of data projectors is now within reach of the enthusiast. Computer-based AV systems need a method of synchronising images and

sound and we are fortunate that there are several very affordable and versatile programs available. In making a choice, one simply needs to look at one’s goals in terms of presentational needs, audience expectation, program versatility, levels of sophistication, ease of use and depth of back-up. The most popular contenders for the needs of enthusiasts are, ‘Pictures to Exe’, ‘ProShow Gold’ and ‘ProShow Producer’, these last two are products of Photodex Corp, USA. After exploring the facilities and options offered by all three, I decided to opt for ‘ProShow Producer’ as this program, admittedly the most expensive of the three, ‘ticked all the boxes’ from my point of view. As many digital-photographers may also be faced with a similar choice, this piece illustrates how ProShow Producer works for me. In this overview, I thank my colleague, Martin Addison FRPS, with whom I work closely in developing our joint AV programmes, for his advice and input. Indeed, Martin shared the learning-curve with me during our collaborative AV presentations from the mid 1970s to the dawn of the new millennium and now we’re once again exploring new (AV) worlds.

This isn’t intended as a sort of ‘shoot-out’ review comparing one program with another, as all



will meet most of the needs of the enthusiast, but simply a presentation illustrating how the workflow and options offered by 'ProShow Producer' fulfil a particular high-level of requirement.

### Preparing Images

This is one significant area where ProShow Producer (PSP for short) has a distinct advantage. When sorting and storing the images for the show, there is no need to resize, indeed such is the versatility of PSP, that if needed, RAW file images can be added directly to the image store. With large image files as a resource, PSP converts the image data to the size required at the point when the show is 'created'. This offers great flexibility as images for AVs can be resized without loss in minutes, making it simple to upgrade a show to a higher resolution as data projectors evolve and improve. In this way programmes made with ProShow are to some extent future-proof. It's important to remember that the source files in the PSP image store always remain at their original size. However it must be emphasised that in common with good practice for all imaging programs, the image file should be large enough to begin with, as just for any image, up-sizing / up-sampling should be avoided. I'll say more about this topic later.

A note about nomenclature: PSP refers to images as 'Slides', this is a legacy from the days of transparencies and is a charming American convention. For clarity of explanation, I will also use 'image' where helpful.

### Getting Started

Make a new folder to contain all the images (slides) for the show as an 'image store'. The picture order isn't important as this is simply a storage location. Open PSP, navigate to the Image Store and simply drag and drop the slides on to the 'timeline' at the base of the large dialogue box. A slide can be dropped into the sequence at any point, as

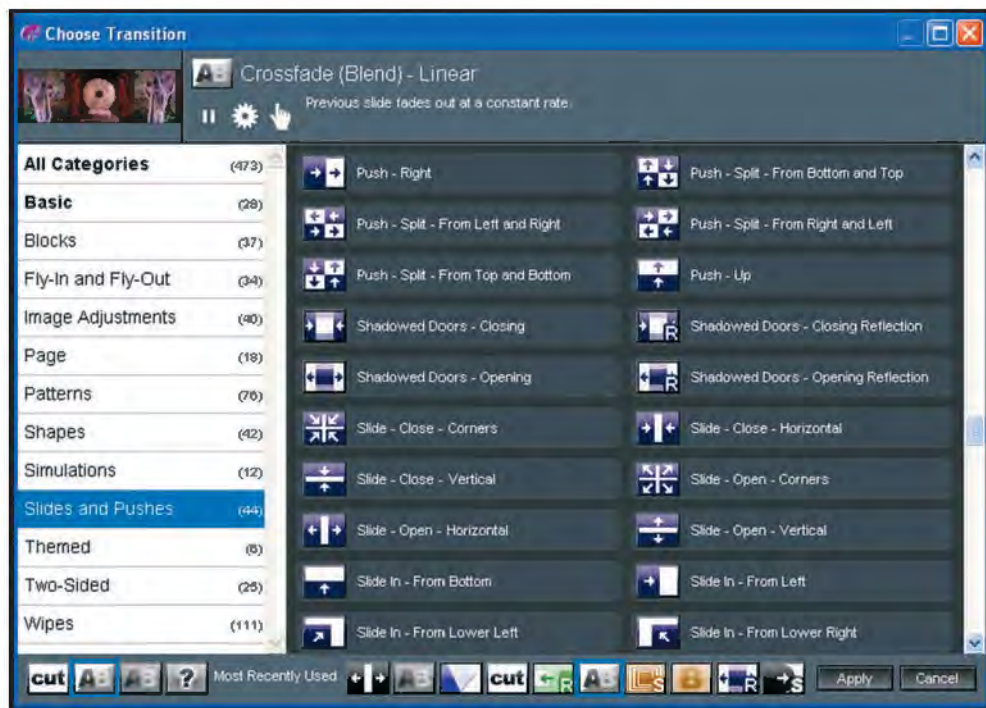


Figure 2 Choose your Transition from around 500 effects.

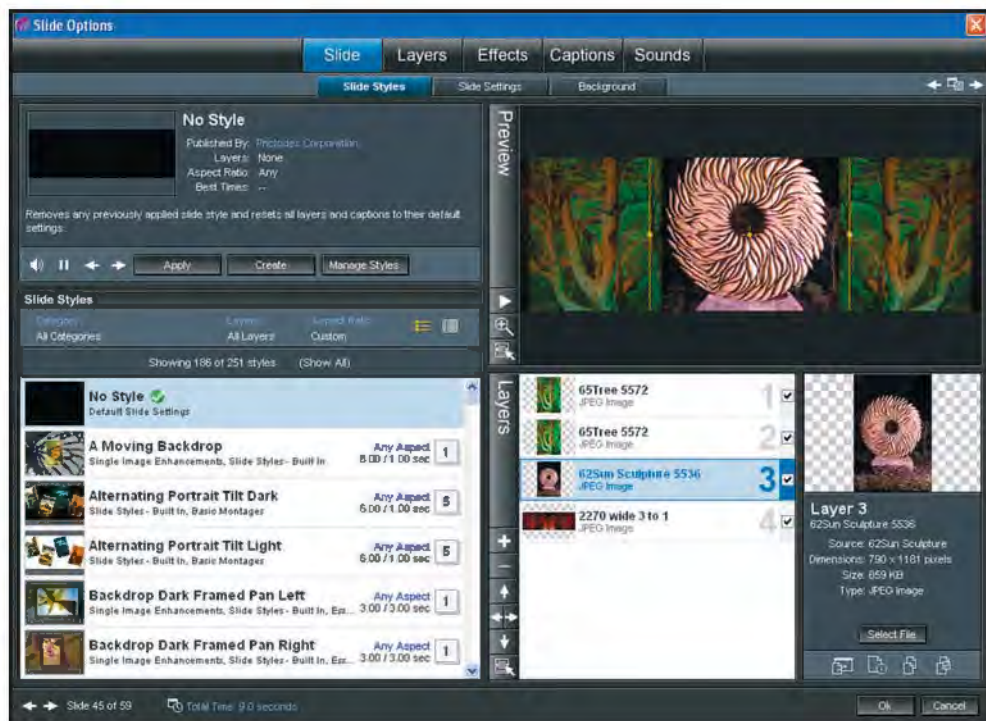


Figure 3 A section of the 125 Slide-Style pre-sets list.

illustrated in the screen-grab. (Figure 1) **Slides**

Once the slides are in show sequence, the program helpfully places 'tick' marks on those selected (and yes, you can use the same slide more than once). You can edit the sequence, add new slides, set transition and duration timings, edit the sort of transition (Figure 2), add vignettes and masks, adjust individual slide settings (colour, contrast, brightness, etc), add text, styles, special effects, backgrounds, blends, motion and panning, screen aspect

ratio, etc. Many styles (Figure 3), effects and transitions can be downloaded from the Photodex website and other links.

### Audio

Save the audio track you need for the show to one of the major formats (MP3, WAV, Ogg Vorbis, etc) and pop it into the show store folder. To add audio to the program, simply drag & drop the audio file onto the audio channel track at the base of the dialog box. The audio file will be displayed as a waveform along the baseline. The audio track can be edited



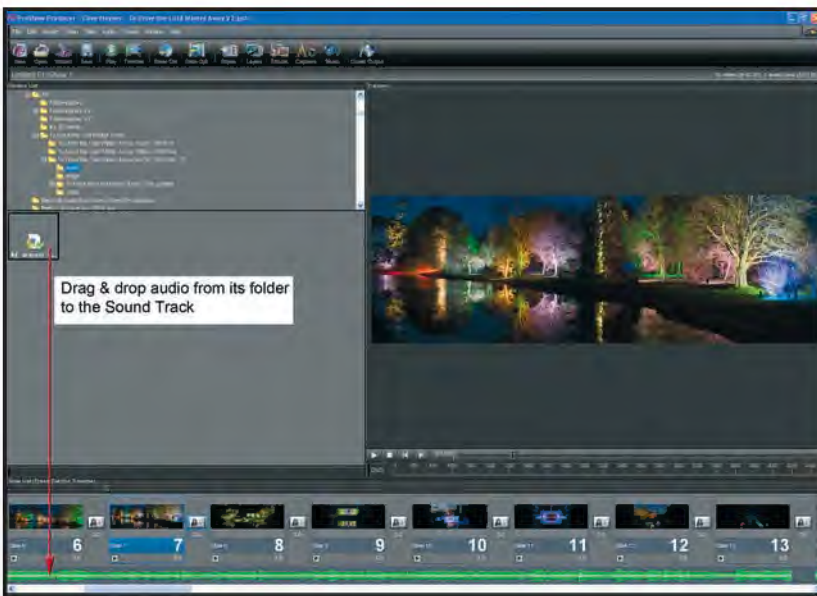


Figure 4

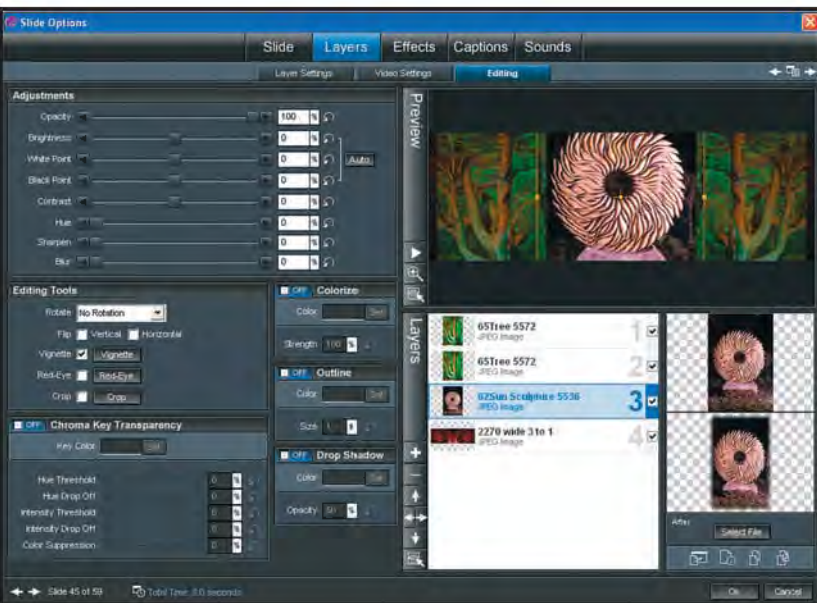


Figure 5 Slide Options. Showing some of the many Layer Tabs for the selected slide. Note: A soft-edge has been applied as a 'Vignette'. In this screen-grab, four Layers are illustrated, two to form the edges (one of which will be 'mirror-flipped'), one for the centre image (with vignette) and one as a background.

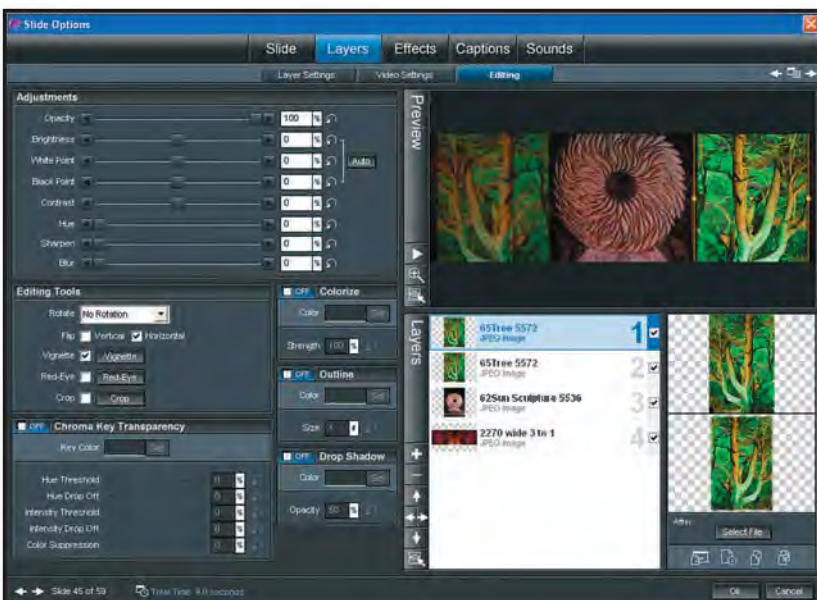


Figure 6 Screen-grab to illustrate how the active layer is 'flipped'.

and faded in and out to meet the needs of the presentation. (Figure 4).

**Layers**

In common with other, similar programs, PSP includes 'Layers' and this facility offers many adjustments. (Figures 5 & 6).

**Key Frames**

Huge benefits are gained from the 'key-framing' facilities. This could occupy a whole article in itself. In short: 'Keyframing' allows the user to set the beginning and end points for a particular effect or motion. The program will automatically work out a path between the two keyframes. Additional keyframes can be added to expand its use and versatility. This is certainly one big advantage that ProShow Producer has over its companion ProShow Gold. Keyframes are illustrated in Figure 7.

To this point we have a general overview illustrating how simple it is to get the images in show sequence order, set basic timings and ensure the audio-track is ready and in place.

As a first run though, the AV can be replayed by using either the editing window or as a full-screen presentation. Obviously, it's helpful to view the program in the editing dialogue box as everything is visible for adjustment and refinement.

To illustrate this article, I've used screen-grabs from one of my AVs and this sequence includes careful use of zoom-motion. PSP has many motion-effects features and Figure 7 shows a Motion dialogue box with Keyframes. As a detail of production workflow, Figure 8 illustrates how easy it is to make a soft-edge 'vignette' for a slide.

**Efficient Workflow and Short-Cuts**

A cleverly evolved design, particularly in the interests of maintaining a speedy and efficient workflow is demonstrated by numerous time-saving features such as the ability to copy settings, layer features or an effect as applied to one slide then paste, en masse, to a series of other slides in the show.

Most imaging programs include a wealth of short-cuts to enable speedy working and PSP is no exception.

**Final Stages, Creating the Show for presentation**

Once you're happy with the show and ready to finalise it, there are decisions to be made about resolution and output. This is where we return to the important factor of 'resolution'. With the slide or image store for the program containing images at full size, it's possible to set the output resolution when one is ready to "Create" the show. At



this point one can choose the resolution that best suits the viewing media. The images in the 'store' are unaffected by these decisions, the settings chosen only apply to the 'copy' file that's created at this output stage. This is really useful particularly because, as the requirements for presentation advance, the output file resolution can be altered to suit the media. Typically the show created will be an .exe file. However, the 'Create' stage also includes facilities for DVD (replay on TV systems), Blu-ray, video, web, U-Tube, etc.

**Instructions**

The program comes complete with a very comprehensive 550 page PDF instruction manual.

**In Summary**

ProShow Producer is an excellent program which enables us to make AV shows from the most simple to the highly sophisticated. Closer acquaintance constantly reveals levels of thought and planning making its operation smooth and intuitive.

Photodex has arranged for a 20% discount to be available to members of the Digital Imaging Group. The Discount coupon and instructions for its use are below. The ProShow Producer website is:

[www.photodex.com/products/proshow/producer](http://www.photodex.com/products/proshow/producer)

*Editor's note: Proshow Producer is designed to run in Windows.*

*For details of how to run it on a Mac please see:*

[www.photodex.com/support/resources/howto/mac](http://www.photodex.com/support/resources/howto/mac)

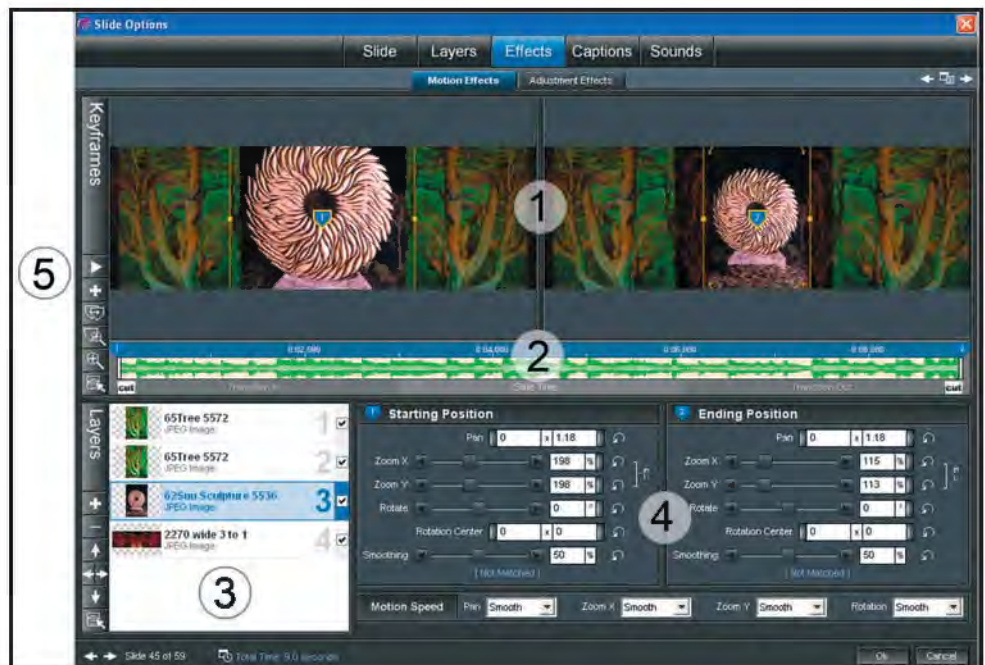


Figure 7 Editing the start and end positions for a 'zoom' using 'Keyframes'. In this example the centre slide layer was 'zoomed-in' to position. 1: Keyframe previews: the start and end points for the effect / layer; 2: Keyframe timeline: controls when the keyframes happen; 3: This list area selects the layer the keyframe is applied to; 4: Starting and end values to configure settings to keyframes selected; 5: Keyframe toolbar for quick access.

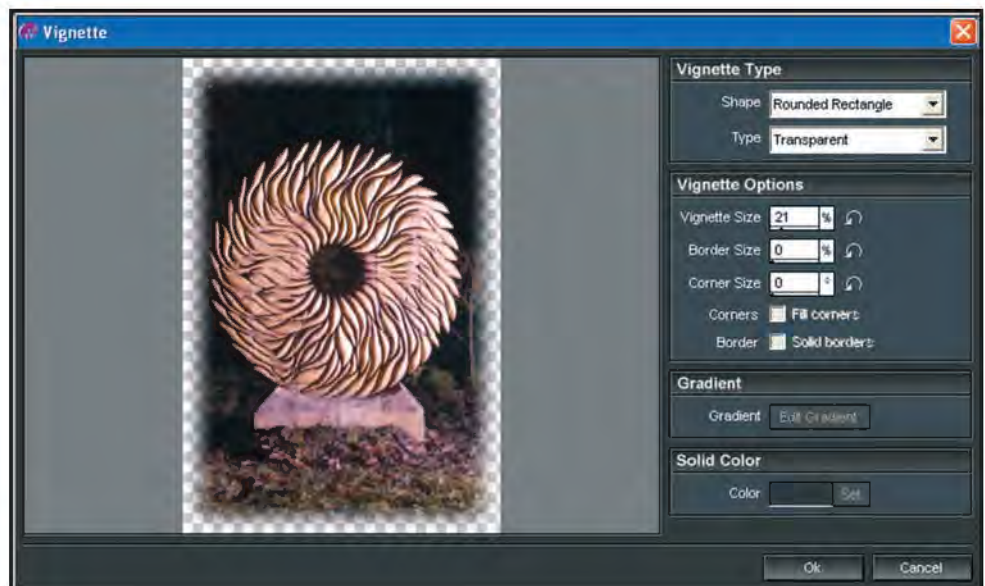



Figure 8 Editing the vignette.



# 20% OFF PROSHOW® WEB, GOLD OR PRODUCER

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ProShow Producer, boxed edition normally \$269.95 for only \$215.96. ProShow Gold, boxed edition normally \$79.95 for only \$64. ProShow Web Plus normally \$30/year only \$24. ProShow Web Premium normally \$150/year only \$120. To redeem call the number below and provide your sales rep with the discount code above, or email [support@photodex.com](mailto:support@photodex.com) to arrange a callback.

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# USING PHOTOSHOP TO REVEAL TEXTURE

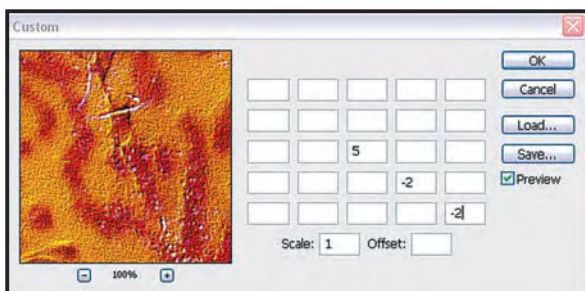


Figure 1 Custom filter settings

Many photographs can be improved by having the latent texture therein being made visible. Close up macro work can benefit especially from this technique if used in a subtle manner. Generally, it involves making either a Bas Relief or Embossed duplicate layer of the sharpened original and changing the blend mode from Normal to Overlay. Usually sharpening is the last thing to be done, but if carried out before using this technique, then the final effect is more easily seen on screen so that adjustments can be made before it is too late!

## Method

1. After applying the unsharp mask, save the file now! If using the Bas Relief technique, change the bit depth per channel to 8bit if using 16bit or higher (Image>Mode>8bits per channel). NOTE: Filter>Stylize>Emboss and Filter>Other>Custom will handle 16bit files.
2. Make a duplicate of the background (Ctrl + "j")
3. Change the blend mode from Normal to Overlay.
4. Apply Filter>Sketch>Bas Relief with Detail=13, Smoothness=2, Light from Top Left or the same as the lighting angle of the original. If 16bit files are used then the above has to be modified slightly in order to retain the extra colour information available:- Image>Duplicate and name it "8bit". Mode>8bits/channel.
5. Make a duplicate of the background (Ctrl + "j").
6. Change the blend mode from Normal to Overlay.
7. Apply Filter>Sketch>Bas Relief with Detail=13, Smoothness=2, Light from Top Left or the same as the lighting angle of the original. Do not flatten the layers!
8. Select>All. Edit>Copy. File>Close without saving. (This copies the Bas Relief layer only)
9. Edit>Paste and change the blend mode from Normal to Overlay. Done! The background (layer) has retained all of the 16bit colour information of the original. The action supplied uses this method which also works with 8bit files.
10. If too much texture is revealed, reduce the opacity of the Bas layer to 75% or even 50% to suit the subject.
11. Try cycling through the blending modes for some

different effects (pictorial NOT nature!) before flattening.

12. Finally, flatten (Layer>Flatten Image) & Save as... (new file name).

The Bas Relief method can give rise to an effect in skies especially, which looks like the contours on a map!

The Emboss technique described next does not do this.

3D texturizing can also be done using Filter>Render>Emboss in lieu of the Bas Relief filter when a slightly different effect is obtained. Try the following settings: - 135° angle, Height 3 pixels, 500%. It is a good idea to desaturate the layer to avoid introducing false colours from the embossing filter. Again this layer must have the blend mode set to Overlay. A 1 pixel height gives a more subtle effect.

A third method is to use Filter>Other>Custom either directly on the background layer or preferably on a duplicated background layer (Ctrl + "j"). The screen grab (Figure 1) shows the settings used for the example in Figure 5.

If preferred, the -2s can be replaced with a single -4 in either the very corner box or the one where the innermost -2 is sited. This creates a subtle difference only however.

As always, different subjects will respond better to one particular technique so it is worth trying all three methods on each of your images every time. This is most easily done using the actions I have written to accompany this article.

If it is desired to retain the extra colours of a 16bit original file when using the Bas Relief filter, before flattening and saving, copy the Bas layer to the clipboard (Select> ALL, Edit> COPY, Select> DESELECT), File>Revert (F12 hot key), then

Paste (Ctrl + "v") and set the blend mode to Overlay. Flatten & Save as ... (new name) the now 16bit file with all the original colours.

Changing the angle of light by 180° will cause previously sunken details to appear raised and vice versa.

It will be interesting to see if the above techniques are acceptable to nature photographers as nothing is being added, merely the latent texture in an image revealed. I personally have no problem with this provided this is not done to excess or if it looks unreal.

The orchid image was taken on a Canon 40D EOS camera, 430EX flash, 100mm, f2.8L USM IS macro lens at f22. The RAW file was converted in CS5 Camera Raw as a 16bit file. Then sharpened with Unsharp mask.

Figure 2 is the Original image sharpened. Figure 3 has had the Bas Relief filter applied. Figure 4 has had the Emboss Filter applied. Figure 5 has had the Custom filter applied.

None has been faded or retouched. Dust on the flower is now revealed!

The action set "3D Texture effects by JW.atn" is to be found and downloaded from <http://sites.google.com/site/digitdownloads/> and includes all three methods above, which have been tested in Photoshop CS3 and CS5.

*AUTHOR'S FOOTNOTE: Users of this texture generating technique should be aware that a colour variation can be interpreted by the computer as latent texture. This can add interest to a pictorial picture but may be inaccurate if applied to factual subjects e.g., record or nature, and therefore should be used with care.*





Figure 2 Orchid Original with Unsharp Mask

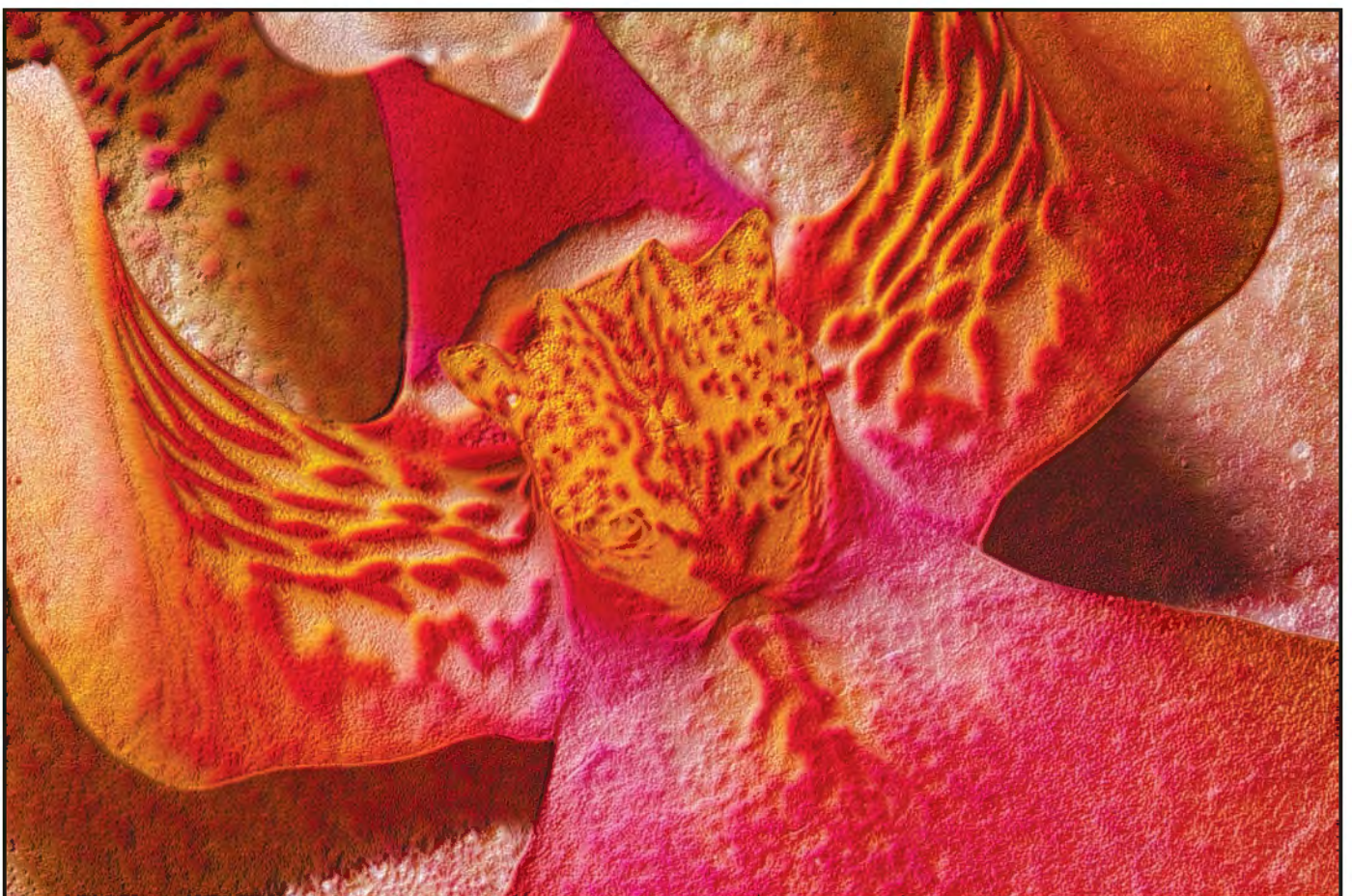


Figure 3 Orchid Original with Unsharp Mask then Bas Relief



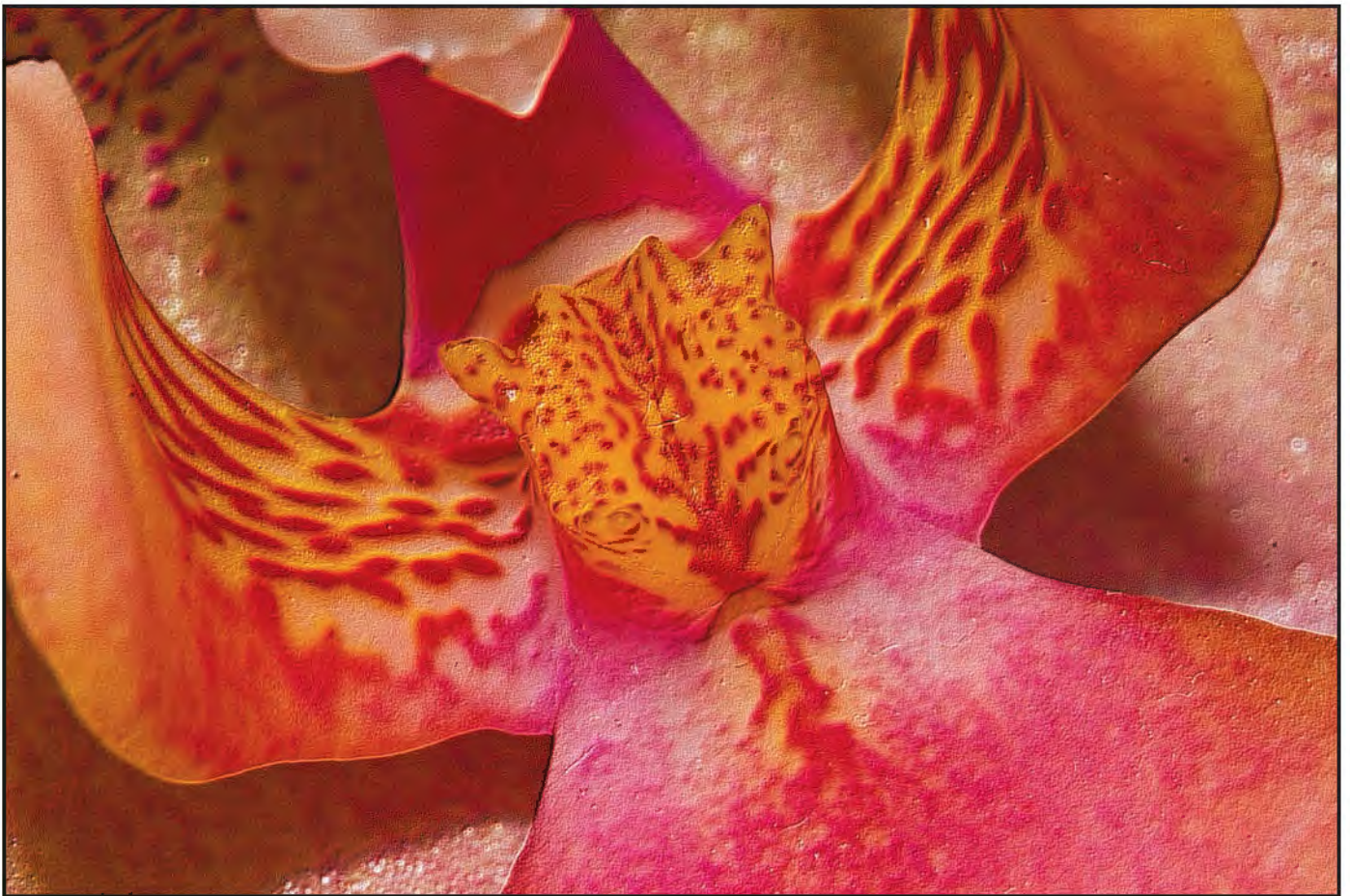


Figure 4 Orchid Original with Unsharp Mask then Emboss

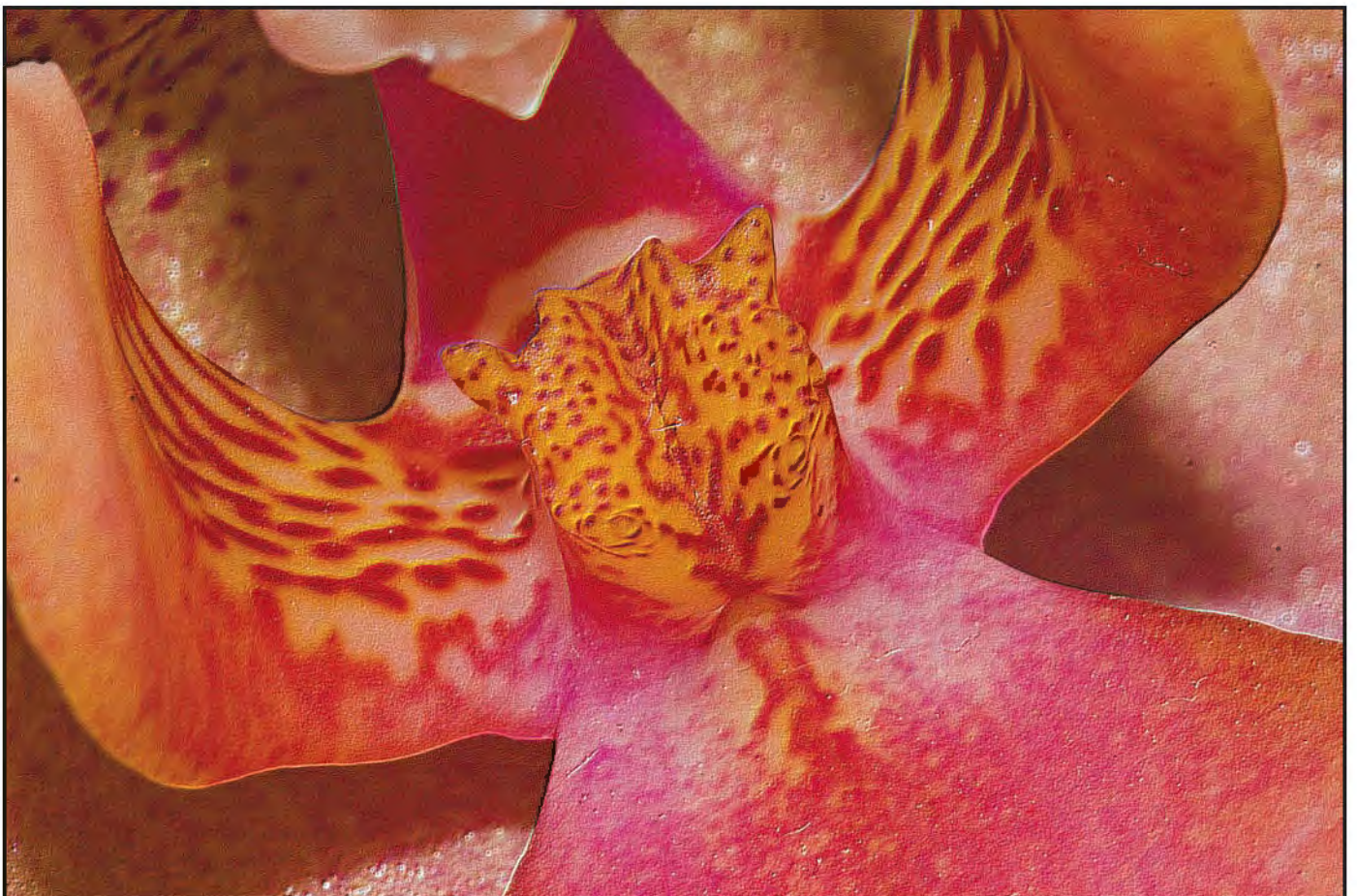


Figure 5 Orchid Original with Unsharp Mask with Custom



# ARE YOU MISSING A TRICK?

Forum	Stats	Last Post Info
Forum Rules & Disclaimer	1 Topics 0 Replies	→ 25 March 2009 - 11:15 AM In: Rules & Disclaimer By: Tone
Introductions	94 Topics 669 Replies	→ Yesterday, 04:28 PM In: How Do By: Richard Arran
General Discussion ↳ Talk Photography ↳ The Cafe ↳ Business Help ↳ Education	402 Topics 2,798 Replies	→ Today, 11:26 AM In: You Are Losing New Blood By: Cotswolds Chap
Image Posting ↳ Random Image Post ↳ Abstract/Still Life ↳ Landscape/Seascapes ↳ Wildlife ↳ People ↳ Architecture ↳ Sport ↳ Travel ↳ Digital Art	1,856 Topics 7,959 Replies	→ Today, 10:41 AM In: Turquoise And Pinks By: Keith (M)
Practical & Equipment ↳ Digital ↳ Traditional ↳ HOW TO ... ↳ Classifieds	283 Topics 1,767 Replies	→ 21 November 2010 - 05:54 PM In: Canon 144mm F/2.8L II USM Fo... By: Natalie James Photography

Forum	Stats	Last Post Info
Distinctions Discussion	70 Topics 717 Replies	→ 23 November 2010 - 07:38 PM In: Went To Ask Advice Day Today By: woodstock
Successful Panels Links to panels of work that passed a distinction	5 Topics 151 Replies	→ Yesterday, 01:43 PM In: Lps Panels By: Tone

Forum	Stats	Last Post Info
Fun and Games ↳ Monthly Theme ↳ Travel Games ↳ Picture Relay ↳ What we look like ↳ Caption Competition	48 Topics 1,225 Replies	→ 08 November 2010 - 03:05 PM In: Novembers Caption By: BrianL
Events Workshops, lectures, courses, meetings, conferences and field trips	38 Topics 156 Replies	→ 14 November 2010 - 10:54 AM In: Exhibition In Norwich - Sto... By: agd
Archive Information	2,910 Topics	→ 08 November 2009 - 11:42 AM

Figure 1



Janet Haines is a keen user of the Digital Imaging Group's own Forum on the RPS Server. In particular, the 'Images for Discussion' area where members can post one image a week for comment by other members. In return, they comment on others' images. She explains the benefits of joining the Forum and how to do so.

Membership of the Digital Imaging Group is now just over the 1000 mark. Of course we all get the quarterly copies of this super magazine, which is well worth our additional £15 per year subscription in itself. But how many of us take advantage of what else is on offer?

Did you know that as a member of this Special Interest Group the RPS Forum can offer you a whole lot more?

Talking to Tony Mant (RPS) he tells me that as an ordinary RPS Member you can only see the sections on the forum down to 'Odds and Ends' (Figure 1)

But there is a whole lot more awaiting you and a great deal more 'value for money' to be had. Hidden below 'Odds and Ends' is the Digital Imaging Group special section. This now partly replaces all the various previous web sites that we have had over the past few years; courtesy of

Bill Henley and Maureen Albright. These two older incarnations were housed outside of the RPS main web site and run separately by these good folks. Now we have come in out of the cold and are the only Group to have a separate forum on the RPS server. It has the same look and feel as the main RPS area - but the secret is how to find it!

It's easy. A quick email to Tony Mant (tony@rps.org) and he will 'switch a switch' and just like magic the Genie

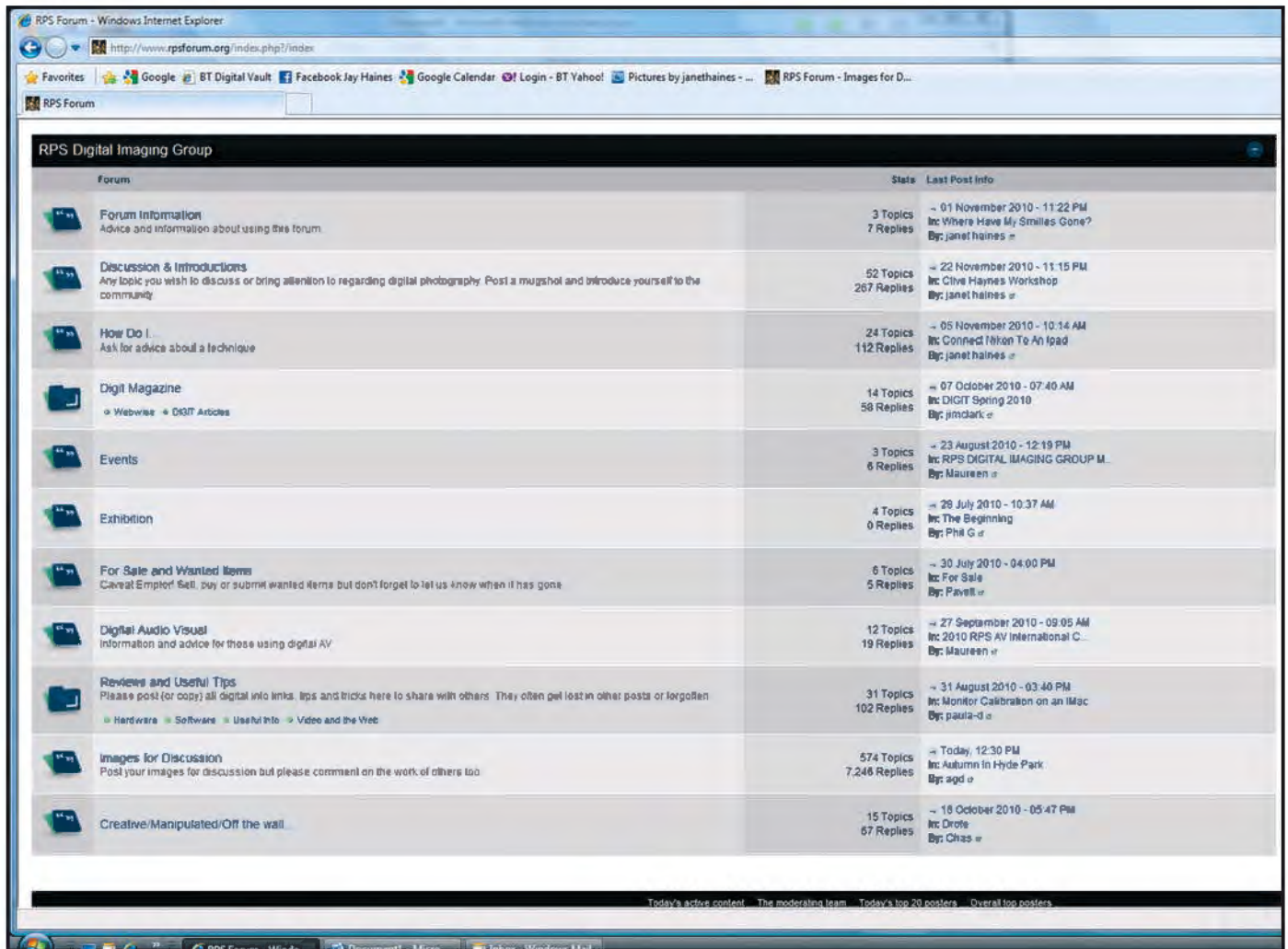


Figure 2

appears. Now below ‘Odds and Ends’ comes a whole new area to be explored (Figure 2). No further names and passwords are required to access this area – this is something that many of us have been confused about and has often caused Tony time and effort with individuals to sort us out (me included – thanks Tony). For me the very best section is the ‘Images for Discussion’ area. Surprisingly only 2% of the members use this facility, so the other 98% of you are really missing a trick here. Once a week you can post one of your images for review and feedback

from other members, and we all know how valuable constructive feedback can be in assisting us to improve our work. Posts which regular members make cross all spectrums of digital photography, some producing straight images and others high art works of self expression. We are very polite to one another and the feedback is constructive and supportive, often with a bit of humour when appropriate. It is all very enjoyable and our virtual friends all contribute both interesting images and genuine feedback. What I cannot for the life

of me understand is why more of you do not take advantage of this forum. An individual can post once a week, uploading their image either direct to the RPS server using the upload feature, or you can link out to an image hosted on an alternative site such as Flickr or Photobucket by pasting in their link code. Out-linking has the advantage that images are often displayed slightly larger than the RPS server provides, but either method is perfectly valid and acceptable. In Figure 3 I show one of my weekly postings where the image is actually resident on my



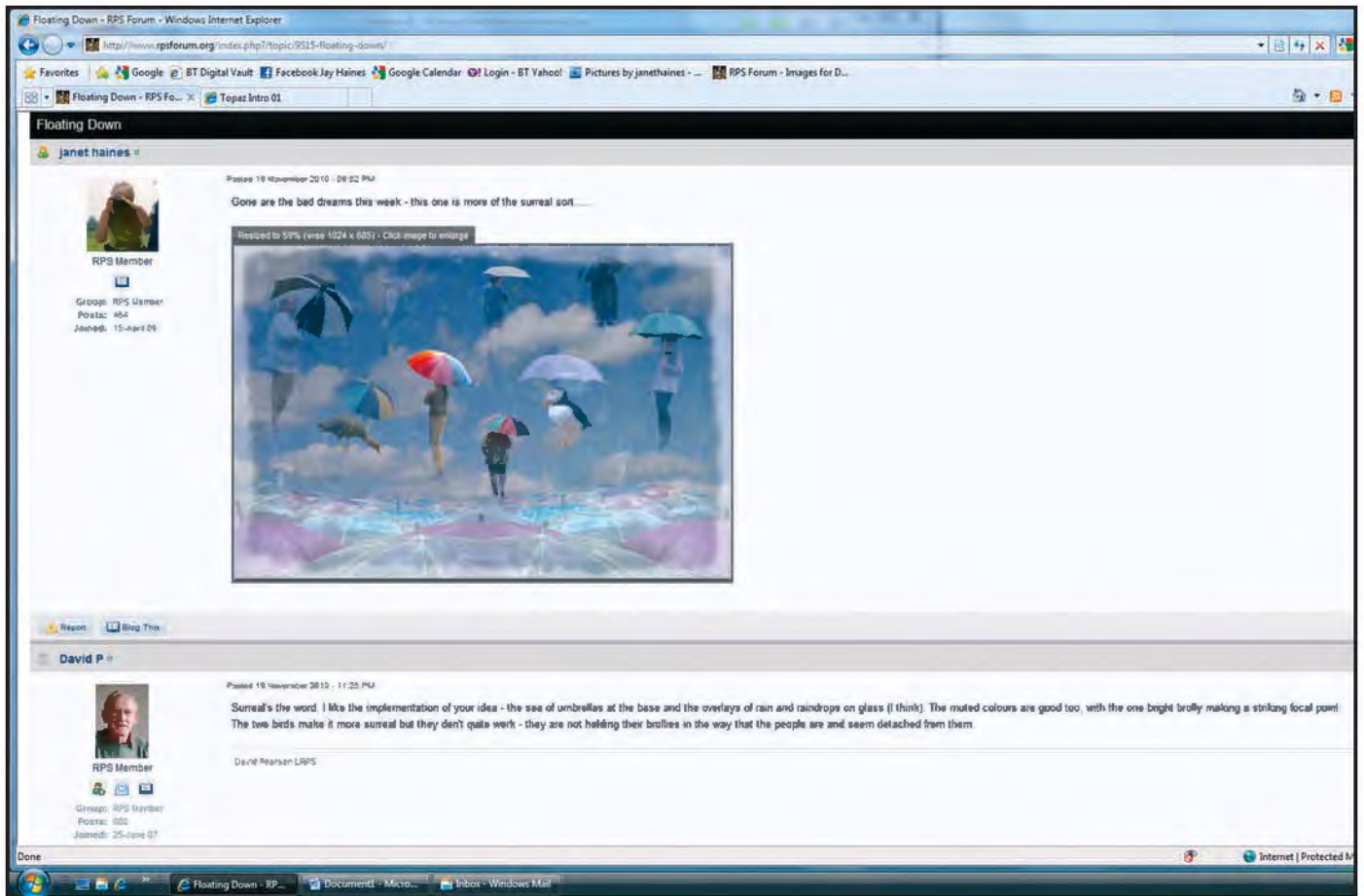


Figure 3

Photobucket site. You will see that the presentation of the forum is clean looking and intuitive with respect to 'add reply' or 'start new topic'. Postings are 'live' for one week. During this period other members can visit and comment and the unwritten rule is that if you post you also comment on others' work too. We often make changes to our work and re-post the modified image mid week if members are making good points. This way we can all see if it really was an improvement or not. But on Friday the axe falls and the lock goes on. No more commenting, but the

images do remain to 'view only' for many months. Watching the statistics I suspect some of you view the images but leave it at that, not bothering to comment or put up your own work. Don't be shy – we are very gentle with new-comers! You really do have something to gain from joining in. And it doesn't stop there. As you can see in Figure 2 other sections include the 'How do I' section. I find this really helpful when I am stuck with something as you can be sure there is someone out there who not only knows the answer, but will willingly

share his or her knowledge with you. I won't go through them all laboriously as you can see for yourself from the headings on the screen grab what these are. So if you aren't already taking advantage of this special area within the RPS site then do send Tony an email and get 'switched on'. Whether or not you choose then to post images is entirely up to you, but you will be made very welcome if you do.



# THE DIGIT CHALLENGE

This time we have five images from DIG members who explain how they created them. I hope you'll find these interesting and helpful techniques to use in your own photography. If you do, why not join in and send some of yours to me at: davidfcookearps@gmail.com.



*"Rockers"*

**"Rockers"** by Jim Clark: This photograph is extremely simple. It was taken from my wheelchair, which I have been confined to for a couple of years and which unfortunately limits the photos I can take. However, this summer I was able to get to our house at Ars, on the Ile de Ré. One day I was pushed to the market by my daughter. In the market I went past this group of resting musicians that I call "Rockers" – probably a misnomer. They were snapped en passant. I later cropped the picture and applied Topaz Adjust 3 choosing the HDR Pop, which I then lowered to about 80%.



*The Original Image*



**Lost Memories by Martin**

**Addison FRPS:** The original photograph was taken with a compact camera in Worcester, I had borrowed the camera from John Wells as we had swapped cameras for a couple of hours, he had my DSLR with fisheye lens and I had his compact. We both enjoyed the experience! The photograph was of a derelict building about to be demolished and what attracted me was the peeling paper and the colour combination of blue and cream. All my photographs are imported into Lightroom and having decided to work on the picture I took it into the Develop module and started by cropping to a square format. I have used the square format a lot for several years and it works really well for so many pictures. It is surprising how a change of format can completely change the way a picture is read by the viewer. I wanted to make it very delicate and ethereal and take away the rather mundane quality of the original so I made adjustments to quite a number of sliders. The first block are in the Basic panel. Exposure to +1.89 to lighten the overall tone  
Fill Light to 55 to keep the darker tones very light  
Blacks slider to zero for obvious reasons  
Contrast to - 22 as I wanted a fairly flat tone  
Clarity to - 45 this slider is great for adding a delicate softness  
In Curves I brought the Highlights slider to -39 as I felt the highlights were a bit strong  
In Detail I took the default sharpening off and increased the Noise reduction to Luminance + 83. I didn't need to remove any noise, I just wanted to add a little extra softness.  
I added a Vignette, Amount +77, Midpoint 0, Roundness -100 and Feather + 100. These sliders need playing around with in combination to get the effect you need. In this case I wanted to add a soft border without creating a circular vignette.  
I also used the spot removal tool to remove the small orange

*Lost Memories*

seeds. Then I printed it in Lightroom using a preset square format onto Permajet Papyrus paper, which is a wonderful surface to use for this sort of delicate images.

All this was done in Lightroom 3, but if you don't use Lightroom, you could do most of this in Camera RAW in Photoshop CS5.

*The Original Image*





*Magical Woods*



*Figure 1*



*Figure 2*

**Magical Woods by Alan Dedman LRPS:** Every Autumn I go into the woods for some images of the wonderful colours. Every year I look at what I have captured and think that I have not managed to catch that essential magical quality. I look at other people's images of autumn and get the same feeling. Wonderful as many of them are, they tend, to my mind, to be record shots. So for my own enjoyment I set out to try to create a more magical image of the woods

in autumn. I wanted an image that was dark, rich and with some of the wonderful side lighting you get at this time of the year. Figure 1 is a straight shot of a woodland path. I took several on that occasion. The good thing about digital photography is that it allows you to throw away what you don't want without running out of film. All the shots I took were bracketed, one stop over and one stop under. The under exposed images turned out to be the best for my purpose. From the straight image and using 'Corel Paintshop Pro' I played with the levels and curves until I got what I thought was the most natural rendition. I created a duplicate layer and using 'Low Key' from the Nik software collection I made a darker, richer layer. I changed the 'saturation' and the 'glow' to achieve what I thought looked best. With Paintshop's 'New mask layer> Show all', being a layer over the original, I was able to use a large, very soft, brush to paint

back in the brighter sun caught highlights from the original layer underneath. I did this several times before I got just what I thought was right and how I wanted it. I then applied the 'Pastel' filter from Nik lightly to various areas, as I had used the 'Low Key' filter. I decided that a figure was necessary and from shot number two (Figure 2) I took out the lady, turned her round, and gave her a shadow. I made sure the 'saturation' and 'glow' were similar. I then used the simplifier in various settings for different parts of the image, masking and brushing till I had finally created the final image. There was no precise formula that I followed. In fact I did it over several days which allowed me to consider better each stage. At each point I had saved the image so I could dodge back and forth. To my surprise many people have said how much they like it.





*Harley Man*

### Harley Man by John

**Long ARPS:** The original shot was taken with a handheld camera from a low angle and using a fill flash.

I started by cropping the image to give me the composition I required. The background was then desaturated and I carried out extensive cloning and darkening around the edges. Finally, it was taken into Topaz 'Adjust' (a Photoshop Plug-in) and I treated the image to create the feel I wanted.



*The Original Image*





*Chrysanthemums and Roses*

**Chrysanthemums and Roses by Olive Linton LRPS:** I recently received three Nikon body caps with pinhole sizes of 0.20mm, 0.25mm and 0.35mm as one of my birthday presents. Being a retired laboratory technician who has not

yet lost her interest in experimentation and who still has an undying sense of adventure, I decided to attempt some pinhole shots for the first time using the 0.25 pinhole. I took my Nikon D80 camera, removed the lens and

replaced it with the body cap. I was now all set for the pinhole project and went out to look for a suitable subject. After some initial experimentation, I decided to shoot some flowers in a vase which I thought were



'fading' rather attractively. Although I don't have any studio lighting set up, I do have a recessed side window in my living room which I thought might do as a suitable position for the shot. I placed the vase of flowers there and took many trial shots while the creative urge was on me. I found it was quite difficult to place the camera at the correct height and distance in relation to the vase of flowers as I didn't have a tripod at the time. I achieved a satisfactory result finally by trial and error. I had tried various shots in turn by placing the camera on top of the fire surround, on the opposite window sill, the arm of a settee and even eyeing at one point my cat Alfie who was curled up asleep and motionless on top of a bookcase. In the end however I put the camera on my ironing board which I moved backwards and forwards until I found a 'correct' position. At the same time I tried to ignore the mountain of ironing which I could see out of the corner of my eye piled up accusingly in another room. I shot in RAW with a 30 second exposure, ISO 800 and Manual setting. I used the self-timer to avoid camera shake.

I used a standard lamp to add a bit of spot lighting to the flowers. I had a rough idea of what I thought the final picture might look like i.e. soft and romantic and painterly. The pictures shown here are from the first cropped PSD to the final one. I had to crop off the curtains and shelf in the original RAW file in order to get just the vase of flowers and shadow (Figure 1). I then 'beautified' the background by using one of the filter effects in 'Nik Software Color Efex Pro 3 Complete' (Figure 2). I had a free download trial for fifteen days. It's fantastic software, albeit a bit expensive, but highly recommended if you are feeling wealthy. I expect it could all be done in Photoshop, the hard way, instead of a few clicks in Nik software but I took the lazy way out when I had the opportunity. Finally, I added a textured border to the picture by enlarging the canvas size. This made it look more like a painting.

I haven't yet decided what my next pinhole attempt will be. Maybe a people shot? I might even try to combine a pinhole with an infrared shot. Now that could be very interesting...



Figure 1: Crop from original file



Figure 2: Nik Color Efex Applied



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