

DIGIT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP

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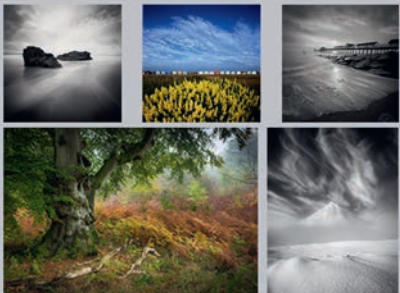


UPCOMING DIGITAL IMAGING EVENTS

Details of all Digital Imaging events are available on its website at bit.ly/RPSDIEventsListingOnline



Digital Imaging: Southern
Sunday 16 October 2022
Ringwood BH24 1DW



Paul Mitchell FRPS
Landscapes and Woodlands
Fine Art, Pinhole, Infra red, Landscape, and Woodland prints
bit.ly/RPSDIsO-Oct2022

Digital Imaging: South East
September-October 2022
Online




Celia Henderson
ByteSize
90-minute • interactive • hands-on
online Photoshop workshops
(limited availability)
rps.org/di/workshops/

Digital Imaging: South East
September & October 2022
Online




Joe Houghton
Lightroom Step by Step
#2 Organising Images #3 Finding your images
#4 LR Settings #5 The Develop Module
#6 The Hidden Powerhouse
rps.org/di/workshops/

Digital Imaging: Online
Saturday 10 October 2022
Online




Helen Sloan
The Photography of
Game of Thrones
bit.ly/RPSDIGOnline037

Digital Imaging: Online
Saturday 12 November 2022
Online



Bill Ward
Experiments: Adventures in
Creative Photography
bit.ly/RPSDIGOnline038

Digital Imaging: Online
Saturday 10 December 2022
Online



Ami Vitale
Reframing the Narrative
bit.ly/RPSDIGOnline039

In the last issue of DIGIT we featured some of Annemarie Hoogwoud's work Annemarie is offering DI members the opportunity for one-to-one Photo Reviews

You've been shooting for a while and would like feedback on some of your photos to put you on the right track on your photographic journey.

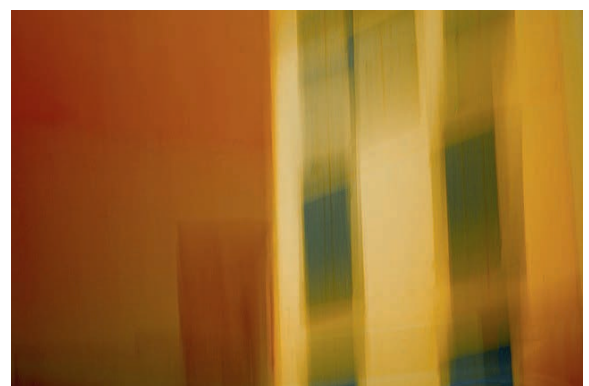
An online photo review is a great way to help you with this. We discuss in an online one-to-one session your unique view and approach to your work and how you can best build on this.

Do you want to take the next step on your photographic path? Book a photo review.

After your registration I will contact you to arrange a date that suits us both.



Do you have any questions? Please don't hesitate to contact me!
Annemarie Hoogwoud - photographic expressionist
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Have a look at the website for more information
annemariehoogwoud.nl/en/photo-review

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Cover image: **While waiting - over the road from the barn** by Meyrick Griffith-Jones

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FROM THE CHAIR



I am currently reading *Rebel Ideas* by Mathew Syed which has chapter titles which include 'Collective Blindness', 'Constructive Dissent', 'Innovation', 'Rebels vs Clones', 'Echo Chambers' and 'Groupthink'.

The book provides examples where like-minded people make erroneous decisions and cross fertilisation leads to innovation and change. It is a fascinating book.

I was wondering how this applied to me and what I do.

I recalled that I joined the RPS as I wanted to see Excellence in Photography and felt club photography had gone off on its own tangent. Judges all had the same toolbox, said the same things and not only that but things that I thought were wrong. This move, I now realise, was in line with *Rebel Ideas*. I had taken a step to widen the influences upon my photography. (Note this is a lot less dramatic than examples in the book)

I also did a four-year course in understanding art which gave me ideas well outside the normal photographic circle of inputs. It had quite an effect on my photography as well as changing the art hanging on my walls. Hindsight says this is also something that would be in line with Syed's book.

I did a project pushing myself well out of my comfort zone by doing a book of portraits.

I gave a talk on Street Photography and had to study it in order to give the talk.

So now I am starting to congratulate myself on my past and how this fits in with *Rebel Ideas*.

However I looked to the future and wondered if I have stopped taking in new ideas and meeting those with different concepts of photography. Have I got myself stuck in a rut, a bubble of like-minded photographers?

So I visited the Facebook pages of a couple of other SIGs. I read a description of Contemporary Photography. I've read more of the current Journal than I have before. These are all different inputs that I've started to enjoy. I don't know if this will help my photography but realising that I might have become stationary in my journey because I am in a comfort bubble has to be better than staying there.

Join more SIGs, do a distinction, or another distinction, get photographic input from places you haven't used before.

Above all enjoy your journey.

Rex Waygood

EDITORIAL



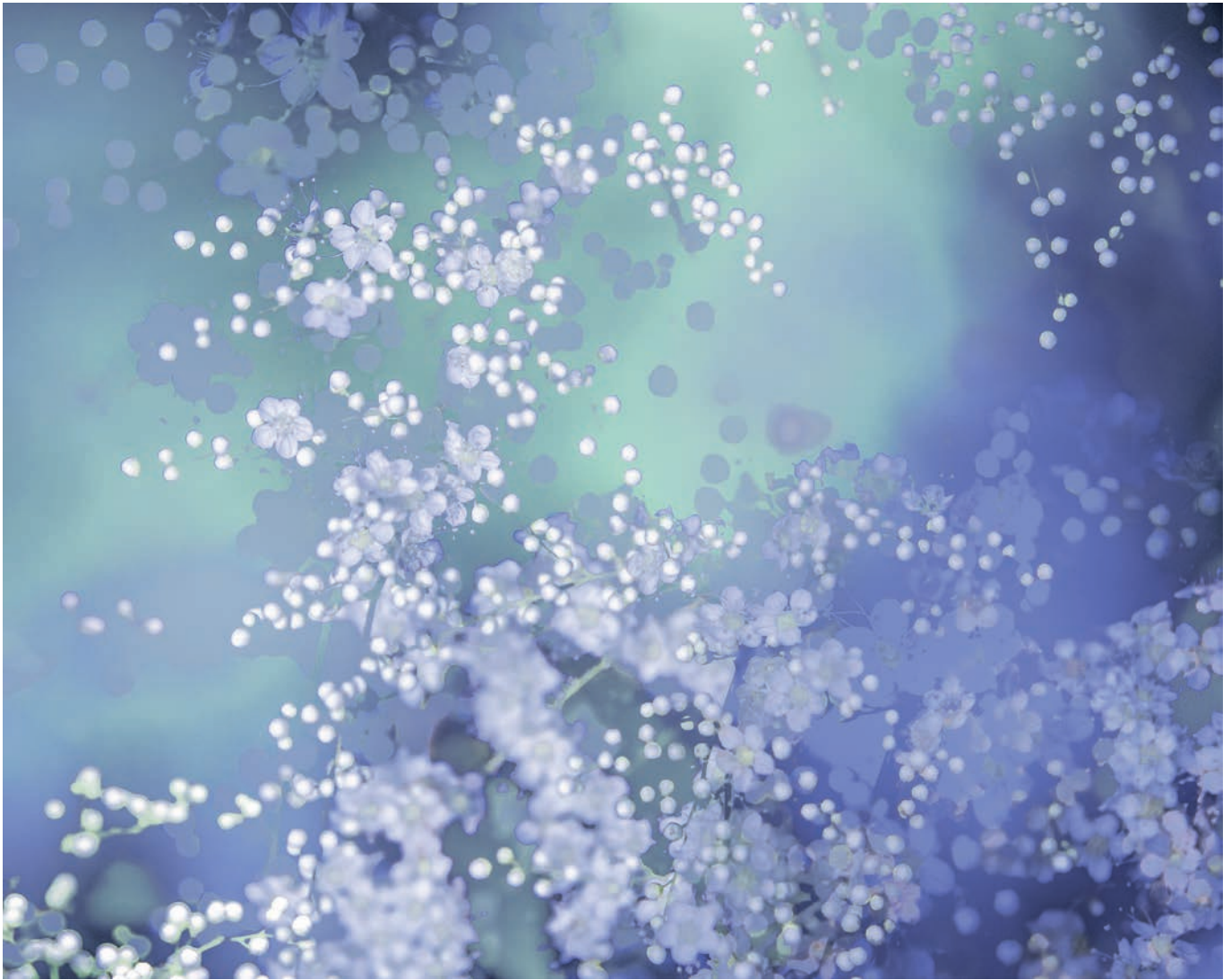
It is with great pleasure we bring you this latest edition of DIGIT. With Janet Haines' help, we have compiled a cornucopia of photographic delights.

Ranging from the beautiful mindful abstracts derived from flower blooms created by Jocelyn Horsfall to thinking about how we photographers can contribute to raising awareness of environmental initiatives, and much in between. As ever, we try to bring something for everyone (and, hopefully,

more than one thing) to each issue of DIGIT.

It is always fascinating to see the hugely varied and creative work that photographers create and I find it a privilege to be involved with the compilation of each edition of the magazine. But we curate the magazine for DI members, and if there is something that you would like to see covered in a future edition, or would like to contribute some of your own work, do please let us know.

Gary Beaton



Light-washed Spray



FLOWER BATHING

JOCELYN HORSFALL ARPS

Jocelyn Horsfall is an award-winning photographic artist, specialising in impressionistic images inspired by flowers and foliage and the natural world.

I have always been influenced and inspired by nature, both photographically and from the emotional and spiritual benefits that I can find there. In particular, from my early days in photography, like so many others, I've been attracted to the natural beauty of flowers - the wonderful colours, the sensuous curves, the delicate textures - which I have wanted to capture and celebrate in my images. My style is painterly and impressionistic, combining a strong sense of

colour and form with an interest in textural effects and abstraction, using different techniques to create atmospheric and evocative results. Georgia O'Keefe's flower studies have always been an inspiration here.

When I first started out, back in the days of film, I quickly became interested in this more impressionistic style for my flower studies, whether out in the field or in my studio. I experimented

with intimate ultra close-ups, very shallow depth of field, and using ice and water to create unusual effects. I got into shooting through textured glass in a big way, and still have a large collection of vases and plates and sheets of 'bathroom window' glass that I still use sometimes. I love the fact that with selective focusing, the camera can see and record something that is invisible to the naked eye. The shape and curves of some glass can create a wonderful sense of movement and



Breaking Waves

intriguing distortions.

I have also used 'found' glass to good effect when out in the field. Early in the morning, the windows of tropical glasshouses have wonderful patterns of condensation from the warmth and breathing plants inside. Through the condensation and marks on the windows, the shapes of the foliage pressed against the glass can appear diffused and distorted, almost like an underwater scene.

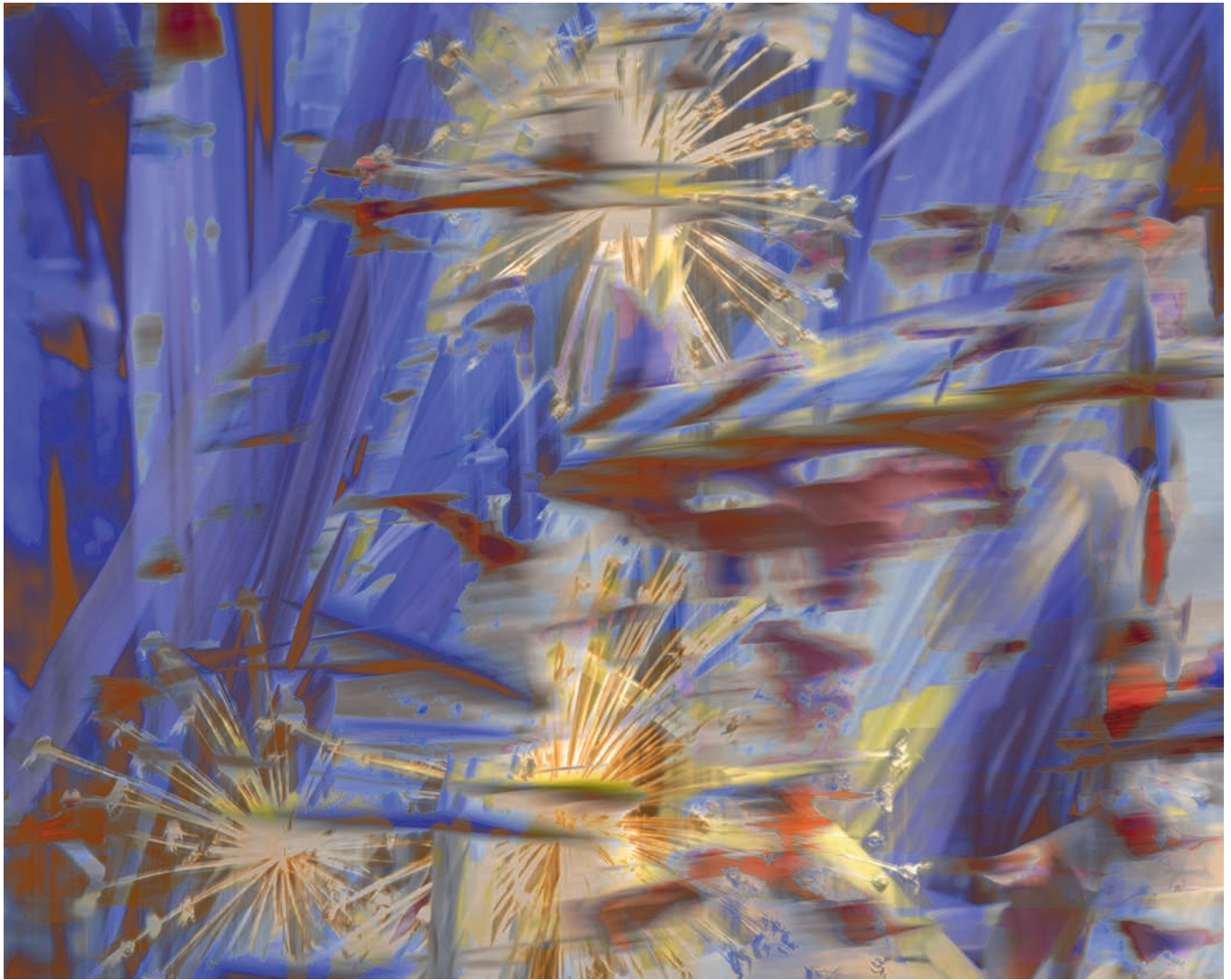
Digital of course opened up a whole new era of experimentation, at the taking stage with quick access to results, but also at the processing stage too. I continued to develop my painterly images of flowers and foliage, with colour becoming increasingly important in the creation of expressive images. Around this time I took a course in colour therapy, which definitely

filtered through into my work, as I learnt about the different qualities and emotions that are associated with the different colours, and how they can be used for projecting different values as well as for healing and mental wellbeing. So depending on the colour palette I choose to use (or that nature has provided), my images will project a different feeling or association - whether calming and nurturing, or stimulating and optimistic, or cool and fresh, or subtle combinations that affect people in different ways. Blue for example is quiet, peaceful and uplifting.

Most recently, my photography has been hugely influenced by Valda Bailey and Doug Chinnery. I have been fortunate enough to have taken part in several workshops with them - first in the Camargue and then Morocco - and in the last two years, online. I had done a bit

of intentional camera movement (ICM) before but now learnt all about multiple exposures as well, both techniques that can be used to wonderful effect to produce impressionistic and abstract images. More importantly, their inspirational teaching and encouragement is all about cultivating and developing your own creativity, taking chances, experimenting, and finding your personal style - 'creating' rather than simply 'taking' photographs.

During lockdown, with one of their online courses I was working on a project to create a set of images that moved beyond the literal to convey something more. Encouraged to choose a subject we were passionate about, I started thinking about my emotions and feelings around nature in general and flowers in particular. The power of nature to restore and recharge has become much more recognised



Ebb and Flow

and acknowledged in recent years, and this has been replicated in artwork too, but it has always been my driving force. For me, being amongst flowers and foliage is uplifting and restorative - peaceful and calming, it can still my mind, and fill me with joy. Very much about transporting me away from the worry and stress of the day to day. It's a kind of meditation - being in the flow - particularly when engrossed in photography too.

Looking to capture these feelings, I started by exploring the Japanese practice of *Shinrin Yoku* or Forest Bathing, which is immersing yourself in a mindful way in woodland and nature to reduce stress and create a feeling of wellbeing. But for me there was something missing - a specific focus on the delights and benefits of flowers and blossom. A different sensory experience, with the richness of colour in particular,

but also delicacy of design, lightness and airiness, and of course a transient beauty.

So I invented a new term - that of *Hana Yoku* or Flower Bathing. Immersing myself in the flower borders of a local garden, I let my senses float. I felt surrounded by waves of colour, adrift in a sea of blooms. The watery analogy became the focus of my experience, and the sensation I wanted to capture. Fluidity and flow, the flowers waving and dancing as if underwater, softly melting together. I was awash in nature's palette - truly bathing in flowers.

Imagine yourself in this flowery ocean....starting at the surface, a bright sun-kissed feel like spray catching the light (see *Light-washed Spray*)....but there is movement too, with waves appearing to break (see *Breaking Waves*)....and fish

swimming past as you descend (see *Ebb and Flow*)...vibrant corals glowing like jewels as you pass (see *Sea of Coral*)....down to a deeper, darker place towards the sea bed. But there are still rich vibrant sea anemones glimmering (*Jewels of the Deep*) and deep blues in the quiet depths (*Blue Sargasso Sea*). Making the visual journey through the images is designed to create the feeling of bathing in this mythical ocean of flowers, to be filled with joy and peace.

I have used a variety of techniques here, mainly in-camera multiple exposures, with additional ICM. Colour refinements were added where necessary in post processing. For example, the first image I created (*Light-washed Spray*), was a multiple exposure of summer blossom using Bright mode in camera, with additional duplication in processing using different blend



Sea of Coral

modes to keep the light airy feel. I then experimented with some changes to the colour palette to move from the original soft greens to a more watery blue. But the whole feel of the image was there from the start.

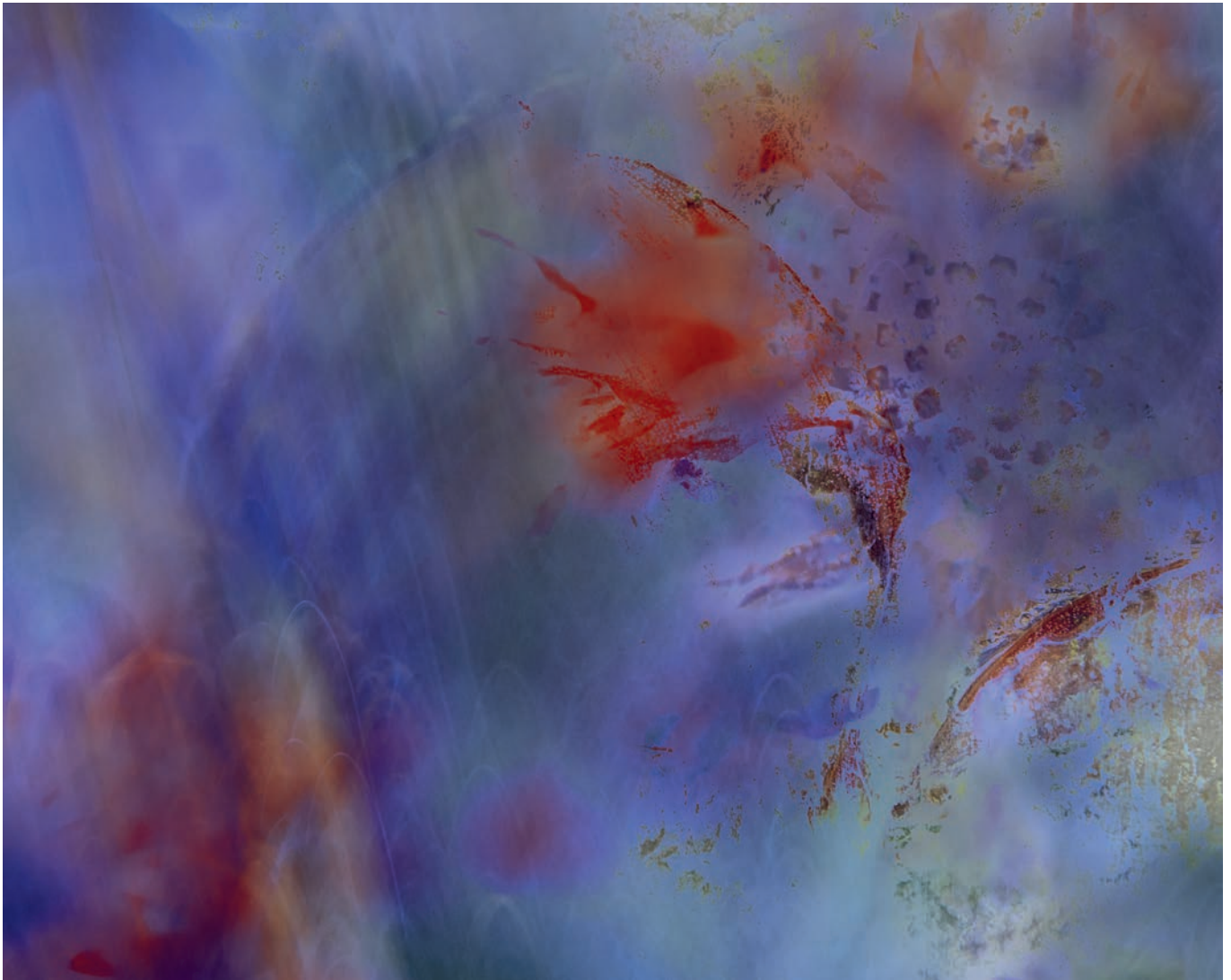
For *Breaking Waves*, I had gone out specifically looking to create images with a watery feel, mainly using ICM. This was new for me, as I usually go out and see what attracts me and how I am feeling, and work from there. It was a very productive exercise to have such a clear intention, and one that I should use more often when I have a particular project that I am working on. This image, an ICM of an *Agapanthus* flower head initially, provided the wave-like movement I was looking for. I added a close up of some *Astrantia* florets to suggest some spray to the waves.

In contrast, *Sea of Coral* with its wonderful colours, was created through serendipity in post processing. I started with a multiple exposure of reed reflections in water, and then thought I'd add some dried allium heads as they looked a bit like coral. Scrolling through the blend modes in Photoshop, with the two images on separate layers, these wonderful orange colours suddenly appeared! A little digital gardening to remove a few stray stems, and that was it.

The last image, *Blue Sargasso Sea*, was one from my tropical glasshouse windows collection, with its often underwater feel. A double exposure of foliage pressed up against the glass, one in focus and one de-focussed, with the condensation and marks on the window giving added texture. I applied a painterly Topaz filter

to soften and smooth some of the detritus, before adjusting the colours. It was quite moody and dark to start with, and the foliage was purple and green, so I played around until I got this richer blue colour palette that seemed to work better.

The Flower Bathing series was the first of my project work for Bailey Chinnery courses, and I am now working on a collection of images for a group exhibition that is the culmination of a recent 12-month course with them called *Abstract Rhythm and Blue Notes*. This was very intensive, but so inspiring and valuable. We covered a wealth of subjects across the year, and were encouraged to experiment with new ways of working, including but not limited to the art of abstraction, which is an area I want to develop and explore further. I learnt so much



Jewels of the Deep

from the course, but also from the wonderful other participants - all hugely talented and creative with their own distinctive styles, which will be on show at the exhibition, to be held at the Horsebridge Arts Centre, Whitstable, Kent, from 16 to 28 November 2022 ●



Blue Sargasso Sea

HORSEBRIDGE ARTS CENTRE

For more information about the forthcoming exhibition

arbnexhibition.co.uk



First attempt – 2019. The rape is not uniform, and I think I was too close. The tramlines work, but it needs more space.



THAT BARN AT SIXPENNY HANDLEY– THE EVOLUTION OF A PHOTO

MEYRICK GRIFFITH-JONES

Some might say that Meyrick Griffith-Jones has the patience of a saint. But when he has a particular image in mind, he doesn't give up until it's in the can!

I first saw a picture of 'that barn' in a book: a relatively tight crop, yellow rape surrounding black. Intrigued and fascinated, I looked at other photos on Dorset's Facebook pages. However, usually poorly composed, and many not making use of the light, they failed to engage or convey a sense of what was there. Nor even did my preparatory work with *The Photographers Ephemeris* really give a sense of scale.

It was nearly 4 years, 2019, before I managed a visit. I expected an intimacy, a dominance of a black shape in the crop, rape or yellowing corn. What I actually saw was space: a small barn in a sea of colour, under a huge sky. Not a portrait view, but a landscape or letterbox. It reminded me of the American mid-West, and the closer in the view, and the more uncluttered the

composition, the more spacious it appeared.

Now, I had to express this state: to stop philosophising, and let practicalities take over. I had a view, but now had to make it work. How to compose? Where to shoot from? What to put in? What to leave out?

Where? Clearly one wanted a long view, with the barn in the crop and the hill behind it. I did look at shooting downhill, from a road beyond, but one ended up with a roof on legs and little shape in the barn. Also there was no sky, not without a very long horizon and the inclusion of a lot of ordinary fields. It simply did not reflect what I felt.

So, definitely an uphill shot with the wedge of the barn pointing into negative space, and not much else in the shot. That meant being in the crop, but position was limited by

the tramlines - one cannot march all over a planted field. However, the tramlines themselves posed a problem. They were very obvious and unavoidable, and if allowed to be too dominant they would hustle the view past the barn to the horizon. I didn't appreciate this earlier on, but I later realised they would need to be toned down with a clone tool set to a reduced opacity. Again, if I got too close to the barn, it would be too large, and its roof would cut the skyline. Either would destroy the sense of space and mood, as well as being a compositional disaster. Everything must have its space!

However, a tramline did run close to the barn, beside an irregularity in the crop. It is a depression of some sort, that could be used as an eyecatcher, if it were placed so that the eye went through the barn ►



Wiser, a few days later. Better, but the tramlines are not right, and nor is the sky what I wanted.



Another year – 2020. Beautiful dawn – very pretty, but dull.



2021 and trying an evening. Loved the colours. Lines are good and the blue and green suit. Almost a favourite view.



A month later June 2021. A day of sunshine and showers, with the light too good to miss. Lines are good, space and composition are good, and so they should be after so many attempts. Just waited for the clouds to perform. Deeply satisfying, and it won a gold at last year's Welsh International.

to that feature.

I also needed some room between the barn and edge of frame. Not necessarily 1/3rds, but enough to avoid being cramped, and to clear a hedge. The tramlines precluded that. If I had the space, I had the hedge, but it was removable. If I moved to avoid the hedge, all seemed cramped, and one introduced a bush on the skyline, and a clean skyline was essential.

Then, how high with the tripod? Too high and the slightly downward view would make the next tramline dominate or split the foreground. Too low, put the barn very close to the skyline, and introduced a wall of crop, shutting the door on the viewer. A large, blurred, dominant foreground would not create a long sweep into the shot. I wanted it all in focus: soft if necessary, but not blurred, because that would distract and block the foreground. So, I

was looking at a medium telephoto shot, and while focal lengths have varied, they have all been taken standing fairly well back, using a small aperture, with the foreground roughly placed at the beginning of the hyperfocal range.

One can say that position was critical and make an issue of it. Yes, the right place was vital, and I wish I could say I appreciated all the problems on the first visit. However, then I was neither so



July 2021 Loved the light, but needs a better sky



April 2022 In rape again, and thought it would be best like that, and the weather obliged with sunshine and heavy showers. So one just had to wait until the clouds lined up. I prefer the softer browns of ripening barley.

experienced nor critical. More recently, finding the right place was not very difficult at all, despite the constraints. That was partly through familiarity with the place, and partly because I had taken the lessons, practised them elsewhere, and now was returning. I had a

vision, and I looked for things that supported it. Equally places that introduced items that jarred were rejected, so the options decreased automatically. I find I quite like that approach. They do say be flexible and open minded, but I would rather stick to my impressions: how

I feel about somewhere, and try to make that work, before chasing other possibilities. I used to be overwhelmed by possibilities, because I had no vision, and so flitted amongst the options, and failed to make anything work. Nowadays I am more pragmatic - or



A freezing dawn April 2022. My second favourite version. The muted yellows in the frost with the sky on fire. Needed a lot of processing to get it to look right, but the oranges, are for me, better than the bright yellow.

disciplined.

So now I had a spot: tramlines were controlled in the main, and there was a plan for those that were not. I knew where my picture was to start, where to put that clear horizon, the barn pointed neatly into negative space: all I needed was the light. That ray of sunshine to light that barn. Except that sunsets declined to occur, or produced a muddy orange glow. Letterbox and a clearer sky didn't work very well either. The acid green of young barley wasn't quite right. Featureless grey skies came and went, and I even sold out and took a shot in portrait. (It turned out better than it should have, but I didn't show what I felt!)

Eventually, much later that year, as the barley ripened to brown we got sunshine and showers, or cloudbursts to be truthful. This was going to be the day. Packed the bag in the car, added a waterproof and some poly bags for the camera, and beetled off. I took one frame on arrival just to check focus and settings (to be deleted), and waited. Two showers and a couple of hours

later, for ten seconds through a hole in the racing clouds, the sun lit the barn. A hole in the clouds sat on the golden triangle, and fluffy cotton wool and dark bits filled the rest of the sky, ahead of another drenching! Of course, I waited for another shower to see if the sky would improve, but it didn't, and one took a few more frames in hope. Still, the one frame was enough, and I was thrilled to bits. Just looking at the review, I knew it was alright.

This year the crop rotation produced rape, and I tried again: black and yellow. The decisions were much easier of course, because I was still thinking of the big skies of the American mid-West, and in any case, they had been well rehearsed! But, despite the excellent light, sunshine and showers again, I preferred the soft browns of the barley. That image was more gracious and less blinding. Then a frost at dawn - which didn't colour. Even driving there, there was no glow, and I thought I had wasted my time. However, some contrails came to

the rescue before sun -up, in just the right place, at the right time. However, as taken the shot was very flat, and getting the light in the sky and on the iced rape to balance took some processing and masking. But, cold or wet, I was happy.

Somewhere in those three photographs and four years I had my picture.

Now, unfortunately, the barn and its field are off limits. Despite the care of the early few to stick rigidly to the tramlines, latterly there were reports of as many as 30 people wandering through the crop trampling willy-nilly, photographing away. Whatever the truth, the farmer who was so tolerant, has put the signs up keeping people out, and warning of criminal damage. Perhaps unsurprisingly ●



During lockdown I photographed some garden flowers, and used textures, and layers to create depth. We discussed the use of textures and which parts of the image benefitted and which didn't and debated the saturation of the yellows in the image.



ECIRCLES - WHAT ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

JEAN ROBSON

In the last issue, Brooks Jensen shared with us his thoughts about critiquing images. But this is something that is available to all of us. Jean Robson tells us about ecircles which enable us to discuss and constructively critique our work.

If you put 'Circles and Photography' into Google the top results are articles on either 'circles of confusion' (a focusing issue), or examples of circles in composition, nothing about groups of

photographers who learn together. It is therefore worth clarifying what Digital Imaging Circles are, and why many photographers find them useful.

Peer learning groups involve

colleagues learning from one-another. Critically it is a reciprocal and non-hierarchical process, with all members contributing, and no member acting as tutor. Evaluation of peer learning groups in health

ECIRCLES- WHAT ARE THEY AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

care and in teaching has shown them to be effective in improving skills knowledge and attitudes. Groups of photographers meeting to support one another in their efforts to improve often refer to their peer learning groups as circles, emphasizing their non-hierarchical and social aspect.

I enjoy learning in small groups, sharing ideas and experiences helps to consolidate information, it builds confidence, friendships are formed and it's fun! On retiring I had time to develop an interest in photography. Signing up for the Royal Photographic Society and Open University joint short course was my first step. In that course participants were allocated to groups, and we were asked to provide feedback to the other group members on the 10 images which we posted each week. For me the main benefits of the course were having to take images for the weekly assignment, which often I would not otherwise have taken, and practicing reviewing others'

images. It is much easier to critique someone else's image, than one in which you have invested time and effort, and doing so helps to develop the skills to better analyse your own images. Since then, I have been a member of a number of different types of circle, from a face-to-face group, through Zoom groups, a postal print circle, and a platform group.

During the COVID lockdowns, when meeting for face-to-face activities was banned, Zoom became a valuable tool, enabling my face-to-face group to go on functioning, and to flourish. Whilst we were confined to our homes and gardens many of us experimented with garden, still life, or macro photography, and tried new processing methods. Our group met more frequently than previously, providing members with a social outlet, but also allowing us to offer mutual support as we explored photographic techniques. In addition to receiving useful comments about my own work, I

gained a lot from considering the work of others. We ensure a positive supportive atmosphere by always asking the author to verbalise their intentions and areas in which they need help before anyone comments, and always drawing out positives before addressing areas for improvement in any image, Attention to these "group rules" in the fraught COVID atmosphere was particularly crucial.

Circles can be run in real time either face-to-face or on platforms like Zoom; by post (where prints are circulated by post and each group member adds comments as they receive them); or using internet platforms where members post an image each month, which are then commented upon by colleagues. Each type of circle has advantages and disadvantages. Some circles are genre-specific (such as those run by RPS Landscape Group), while others welcome discussion of images of any genre. ►

Circle type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Face-to-face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for building the group and forming relationships • Good for discussion of suggested changes • Prints or PDIs can be used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel required • Participants limited by distance • Set time/ date cannot suit everyone
Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for building the group and forming relationships (perhaps not as easy as with face-to-face groups) • Good for discussion of suggested changes • Accessible from anywhere in the World with internet access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot use prints • Set time/ date cannot suit everyone
Platform-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible from anywhere in the World with internet access widening participation. • Contributions can be made at any time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More difficult to build the group and form relationships. • Only limited discussion possible • Cannot use prints
Postal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prints involved • Contributions can be made at any time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No real options for discussion • Long delay in receiving feedback • More difficult to build the group and form relationships.
Genre Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone in the group has interest / knowledge of the genre • Learning gained may be more applicable to current practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits exposure to other genres • Members not encouraged to experiment with new genres.

Advantages and disadvantages of different types of photographic circles.



The Hebrew Character moth was photographed sitting beneath the flower, the group suggested that a better pictorial effect would be achieved by rotating the image.



This image was taken in thick fog, I was wanting to convey the still calm enveloping whiteness which was occasionally broken as a cliff high above the ice emerged. My RPS Landscape group suggested cropping the image to reduce the ice and lower the horizon. For me the original better conveys the feelings I was after, however that does not detract from the value of listening to and considering the suggestion, rather it adds to my understanding of my composition choice.

RPS Digital Imaging has many members living remote from others, unable to access our regional hubs, and therefore unable to attend face-to-face sessions. We have a longstanding postal Print Circle, and from spring 2022 have offered members the opportunity to join real-time eCircles, where they can meet virtually with colleagues, discuss their work, and make friends.

Our eCircles are groups of between 6 and 10 photographers who meet monthly on Zoom. They are non-hierarchical: there is no tutor, a key principle is that every photographer is welcome to take part, and every photographer's views and experience are valuable. Authors introduce their work, intentions, and explain what they need help with; members offer suggestions rather than advice, which is for the author to consider. Of course, for many problems someone in the group will have more useful knowledge than others and this knowledge is shared, on the understanding that on another topic someone else will have a better insight. Sometimes

the group is unable to solve a problem immediately and may delegate a member to find more information.

We have three types of groups:

A - Critique eCircles In these groups members share an image for detailed discussion.

B - Processing eCircles In these groups members all work on a RAW file volunteered by one member and discuss different approaches to processing to achieve the volunteer's visualisation.

C - Projects eCircle This is a new group which will discuss projects that members are working on.

If you want to improve some aspect of your photography and are prepared to meet up with colleagues for constructive, honest giving and receiving of feedback why not consider joining one of our eCircles? ●

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information about the eCircles and the Print Circle visit the DI webpages.

There is more about one of the processing eCircles in an article in a recent e-News [issuu.com/royalphotographicsociety/docs/issuu_di_news_july_2022/s/16514687](https://www.royalphotographicsociety.com/docs/issuu_di_news_july_2022/s/16514687)



IPHONE SKETCHING

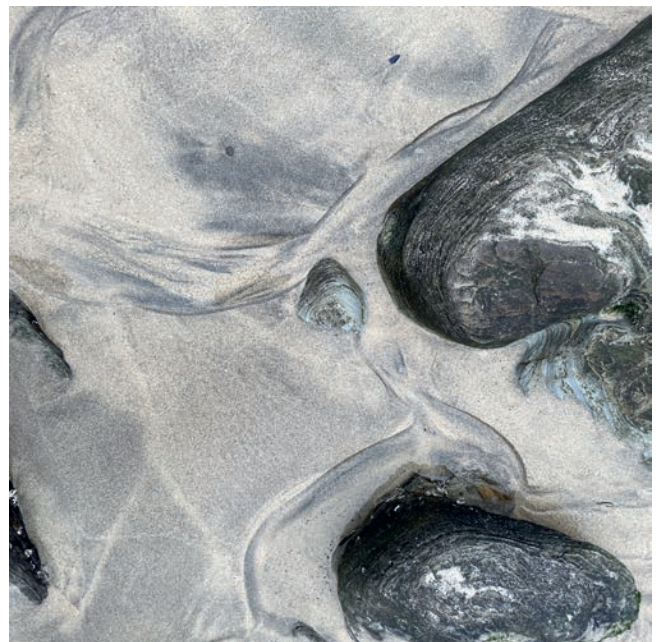
PAUL SANDERS

Paul Sanders plans many of his photographic journeys visually long before he gets his camera out.

When making photographs I start out by sketching ideas with my phone. Recently I mentioned in my newsletter about iPhone sketches and a couple of people emailed to asked what I meant, so here is a little tutorial on iPhone sketching.

Most artists throughout history have produced work based on initial sketches. As photographers we are artists and therefore we don't have to produce the finished image straight away. We can, and should, take our time, grow into a location

or get to know our subject. One way of doing that for me is iPhone sketching - very simply it means I use my phone to create initial images of ideas that come to me. The phone (mine is an iPhone 12 Pro max) has three lenses, wide,





standard and short telephoto, it has exposure control and variable aspect ratio. So I can observe and record without getting all tangled up in kit.

For me it makes the whole process of photographing much more accessible. It allows me to respond quickly too, which I can't do with my camera.

The images on these pages are some I made while walking on a beach in Cornwall recently

Using your phone to make initial observations helps tune your eye into the subjects around you, you start to get drawn into an idea, the subject leads you through various

ideas and viewpoints until you arrive at your final point where you decide you have found the thing that speaks to you the most and then you commit to the bigger camera.

Because the phone has enabled you to access the flow state (where the world seems to disappear, your senses are more aware and your vision is really tuned into the subject) when you get your camera out you don't have to worry which lens because you already have a pretty good idea from your phone. By not having to start being distracted by the compositional questions sometimes posed by exploring a subject you can maintain the flow state and

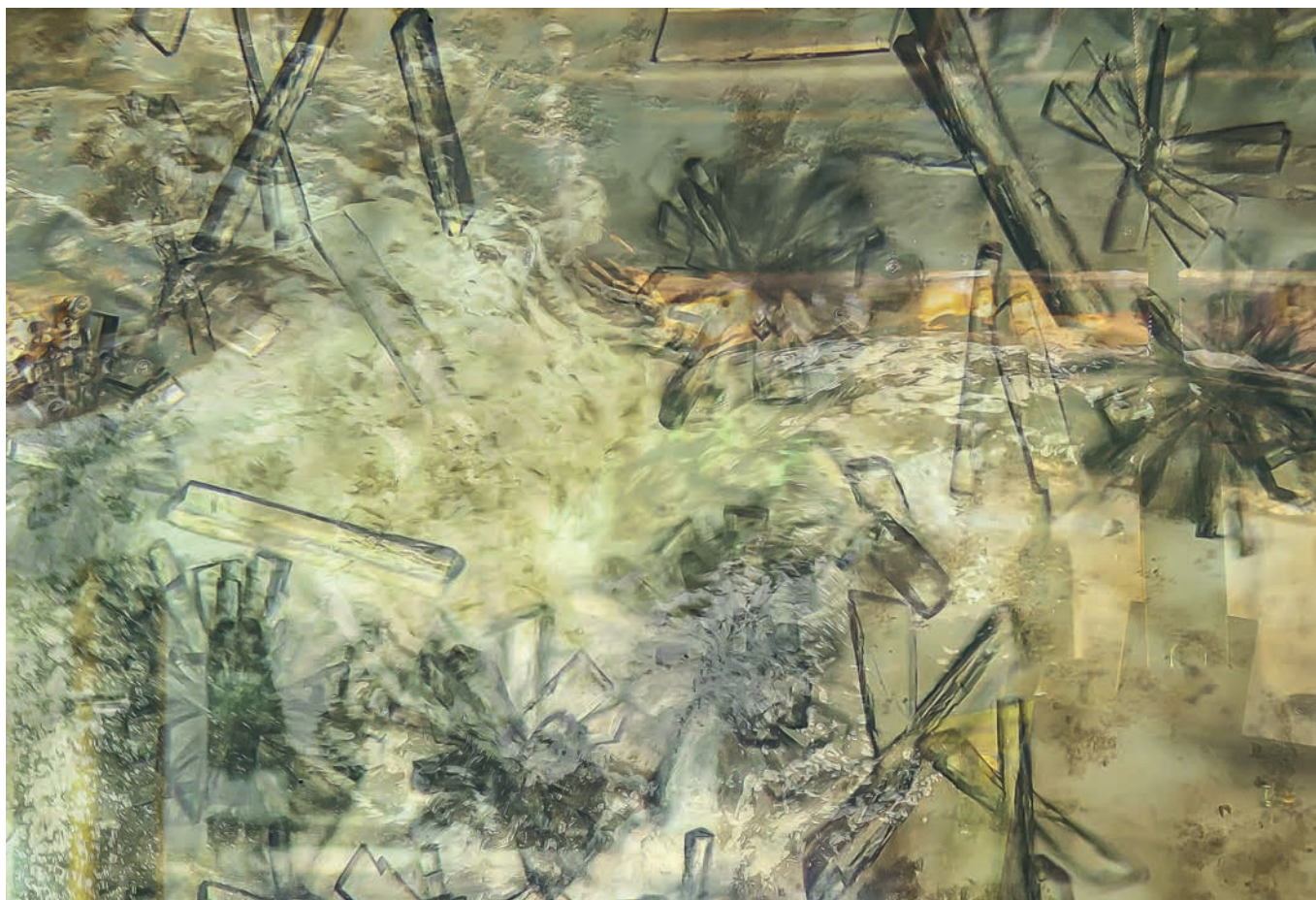
seamlessly move from the phone format to camera format with ease.

Sometimes, as in this case, I didn't actually get my camera out and that is ok too. Whatever camera you are using at the time is the right one ●

LEARN MORE

To see more of Paul's work go to [instagram.com/discover_still/](https://www.instagram.com/discover_still/).

To learn about workshops that Paul offers visit discoverstill.com/



Microbes on a crashing Wave



WHAT PHOTOGRAPHERS CAN DO TO SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

NIGELLA HILLGARTH

Biologist, environmental advocate and photographer, Nigella Hillgarth explains how photography can influence environmental awareness and activities.

Can beautiful images of nature really contribute in a positive way to environmental initiatives, or would it be better to simply donate to a good environmental cause instead? This question is often asked, and the answer is a resounding yes, but it all depends on the context. If you want your images to make a difference you need to tell a story around them. If you take a photograph of a beautiful bird and post it to social media, is that going to make a difference? The answer is probably no, unless you are using the image in a certain way. For example, if you talk about why

this beautiful bird is under threat due to loss of habitat, then you are putting the image in context and strengthening the story that you were trying to tell. Also, when you are trying to explain some of the science behind environmental change, digital images, including manipulated illustrations, can be extraordinarily powerful and get the message across as well.

So many people learn well through images and educators know people vary in how they learn. Some people learn best from the written word, and others through visual

expression, and many individuals in multiple ways.

Photographs can play an extremely important function in education and be a major contribution to the awareness of environmental issues. The conservation and protection of wild places and wildlife only happens with educated awareness of the issues including climate change. It's often very difficult to explain the importance of the underlying science to a lay audience and digital imagery can play a vital part in interpreting the work.

The more beautiful and striking

an image the more powerful the message, and that is why I believe photography can play such an important role in conservation and environmental science, provided the image enhances the story.

There are many photographers worldwide who specialize in nature and environmental photography in various forms and use their work to further conservation and environmental concerns such as climate change. The images are extremely powerful, and I believe they make a real difference.

Below I give two examples of my own projects where I have used digital images to interpret and enhance environmental and scientific issues. The first project uses manipulated digital images to tell an environmental story and the second uses traditional nature photography.

In 2019 I was at Scripps Institution of Oceanography as Artist in Residence for an experiment involving 12 institutions and 94 people focused on understanding the chemical and biological

interactions between the ocean and the atmosphere. The scientists were examining changes in these interfaces with climate change and the implications for our warming world. The large laboratory had a giant artificial wave tank filled with seawater containing an algal bloom (when conditions are right small single cell organisms in sea water can reproduce very fast and are so plentiful that they change the color of the water), and a multitude of complex instruments collecting data taking up most of the space. I was asked to tell the story of the science and why it matters to the public. It was a challenge to showcase the work in an interesting way designed to draw the observer into the purpose of the work as well as producing a beautiful image. I started off by capturing an artificial wave just before it broke but also including two scientists taking measurements on the other side of the tank (see *Cresting Wave*, below).

When waves crash, they form bubbles that break on the surface and consist of the white foam

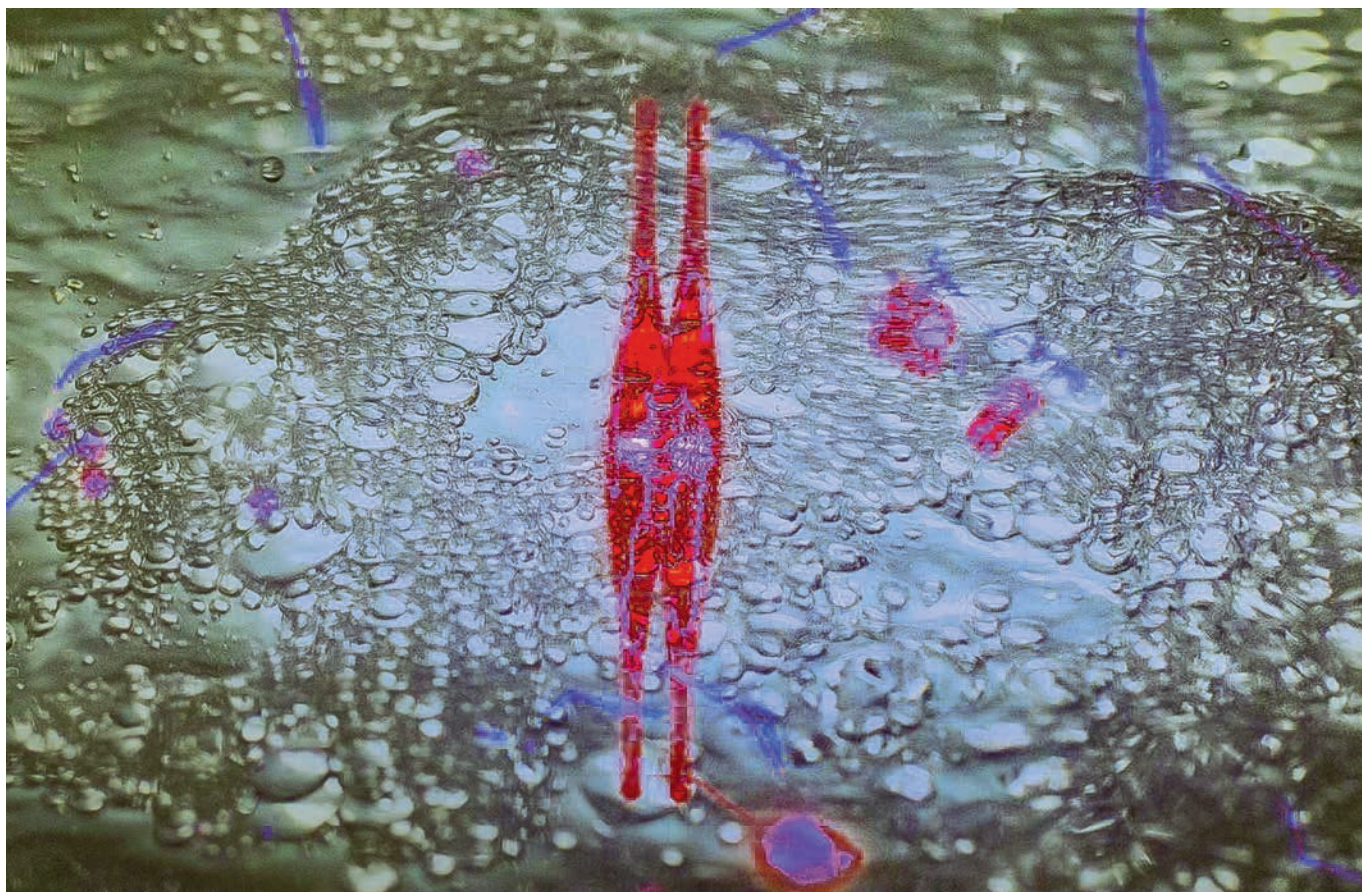
when waves smash on shore. In these bubbles are gases and small particles including viruses and even bacteria that are blown free when the bubble breaks and floats into the lower atmosphere. I worked with two microbiologists to take images of small organisms and particles in the sea water and then, using photoshop, layer photographs over bubbles and breaking waves to draw the viewer into what was happening in the water (see *Microbes on a crashing Wave*, previous page). This image show ice crystals surrounded by bacteria in sea water from the wave generating machine.

I used higher magnification microscopy (partnering with Clare Morris) to portray a dying diatom (that looks a bit like a space alien but is actually a plankton) being attacked and eaten by bacteria and viruses causing the formation of the gases and particles that end up in the atmosphere (see *Stained Diatom on Wave Bubbles*, next page).

The final image in the series of



Cresting Wave



Stained Diatom on Wave Bubbles

sixteen focuses on molecular vapor that rises from interactions in the ocean into the atmosphere even when there are no breaking waves. As the ocean heats up due to climate change, more vapor rises just like warming water on a stove. These molecules are not visible, so I layered the breath of a whale, from a photograph I took of a Humpbacked whale, onto the image of a Pacific Ocean sunset and then reversed the color of the sea and the sky to emphasize a warmer ocean (see *Molecular Vapor*, next page). Many of these images have been used by scientists and students to illustrate their work in publications, as well as shown at climate change conferences and photography exhibitions.

The second example is my ongoing project bringing awareness to the plight of birds impacted by climate change. In this project I use portraits of birds in different parts of the world to illustrate the effects of warming. In the United States of America there are over 40 million people who describe themselves as interested in birds

and 18 million who say they go on holidays specifically to bird watch. If you want to interest people in climate change birds can be a great vehicle for this purpose. The first image, *Osprey with Fish* (see next page), is an Osprey and its prey looking into each other's eyes. It is a powerful image that draws the viewer into the story. Ospreys have made a great recovery since the days DDT pesticide caused a major decline in numbers worldwide. However, warming oceans are causing some fish to move to other areas or to deeper, cooler water. So, in some places the Osprey may decline again due to lack of prey as an indirect effect of climate change. The second image is of an Adelie Penguin in the Antarctic Peninsula (see *Portrait of an Adelie Penguin*, next page). The distribution of these birds is changing due to melting sea ice and lack of food. I wanted to take an image that spoke to the charm of these birds to accompany a story about climate change in the Antarctic.

Nature photographers can contribute a great deal to helping

the environment, but it is not enough to simply take a beautiful or striking image. Conservation and environmental photographers plan their work with a story or issue in mind. Context really matters. When you share an image, talk about the importance of the habitat if it's a landscape, or something interesting about the animal you are portraying, in order to increase interest in nature and not just your photography. There are also many ways to partner with organizations and scientists who need help with environmental causes. You can volunteer with local Wildlife Trusts and similar groups. For example, I work with my local Audubon Society on various projects including documenting species and habitat. I retain the rights to my images but allow them to be used for publications and websites that help them with their conservation work. Recently I partnered with the National Parks Service to create an exhibition of interesting birds found in the Cabrillo National Monument in San Diego. The exhibition was shown in the visitor center at



Molecular Vapor

Cabrillo for many months and I had a wonderful time photographing birds in a beautiful park. I had access before and after public hours which made it an even more special experience. A great place to learn more and get inspiration is the website of the International League of Conservation Photographers (conservationphotographers.org). Many of the photographers mentioned have excellent websites including estherhorvath.com and melissagroo.com.

I strongly believe photographers have a powerful role to play in highlighting environmental issues and helping to make positive change happen. Do not stop taking wonderful nature photographs and using them to help our environment. You really can make a difference ●



Osprey with Fish



Portrait of an Adeli Penguin

LEARN MORE

To see more of Nigella's work go to nhillgarthphotography.com/ and [instagram.com/nhillgarth/](https://www.instagram.com/nhillgarth/).



Angle Oak, Johns Island, SC. This massive tree is a tourist attraction, but none the less, one of the most photogenic live oak trees in the area. It's easy to get lost in all of the green and brown in color, but in infrared, it was easy to separate tones to show the spread and rhythm of this great tree. The longest branch is 180 feet long. For scale, there is a car parked to the left of the base, that is dwarfed by the tree.



THE OTHER WORLD OF INFRARED PHOTOGRAPHY

TONY SWEET

Capturing photographs of things we cannot see may seem strange but the results can be stunning. A master of infrared imagemaking, Tony Sweet tells us more.

I remember the first infrared image that captured my imagination. It was when I was 10 years old and in the 4th grade. I saw a LIFE magazine with red palm trees on the cover. This was before Photoshop.

There was always a photo caption in those magazines. I read that the image was colour infrared, which I learned renders greens as reds.

Many years go by, as I didn't get to a photography career until age 44, but I never forgot the excitement of seeing that first colour infrared image.

After researching colour infrared

film processing, I decided to start with black and white infrared. I was set up to process black and white film and B&W infrared could be processed in the same tank. It was more convenient and much easier to process (in the wet darkroom in those days).

When digital came in, it took a few years for conversion companies to begin switching out sensors to get an infrared camera. At that time, I got my first digital infrared converted Nikon D200.

Let's have a look at several discussion points, infrared properties, and image examples.

Why would one choose to shoot infrared?

#1: It's different

The number of good photographers and outstanding images makes finding a new and exciting way to self-expression a bit daunting. It's easy to give up, thinking that everything has been done. This is a common path to cynicism, which can be stifling to creativity and to 'out of the box' thinking.

Even with its growing popularity, infrared is still in the margins. However, B&W infrared is an interesting look, different, and popular with fine art photographers



Backroad Barn, Eastern WA State. Normally, clouds are desirable, but blank skies, as in this image, can give us a clean palette for texturing.

and galleries.

#2: Shooting times

A common misconception is that infrared is the domain of bright sun and trees with full green leaves. Although, it's true that the aforementioned is a great situation, it is only one of many viable conditions. I photograph infrared at dawn/early morning, late afternoon/dusk, bright overcast/ dark overcast, in the rain, in fog, mist, midday, and during a full moon.

#3: Qualities of light

Overcast/diffused conditions give a soft light spreading evenly over the subject. Rain provides an unexpected time for infrared photographers whilst bright overcast/soft drizzle, and just after a storm are both excellent times for infrared. And a bright and crisp early morning fog can be outstanding in infrared.

Low angle front and side light can be quite dramatic in infrared.

#4: Ethereal and surreal look

One of the great appeals of infrared photography is what many people

refer to as the 'other worldly' look. Infrared is literally re-visualizing your world.

#5: Compared to B&W photography

Infrared can capture greater cloud detail (which is not visible to the naked eye), and naturally adds glow to highlights.

Hardware and Software Conversions

You can dedicate a camera to be an infrared camera by getting an infrared filter installed by a company specialising in infrared conversions.

What do the number designations mean?

The numbers associated with infrared camera conversions relate to the wavelengths of light (in nanometres) that are captured. The lower the number the closer to the visible light spectrum and the easier to introduce colour.

Between 590nm and 650nm - This range of wavelengths give the advantage that you can introduce faux colour and softer blacks.

720nm (Standard infrared) - Creates high contrast black and white infrared, yielding puffy white clouds and dark skies. This wavelength creates high impact, black blacks and white whites.

830nm - This wavelength provides higher contrast than 720nm and is best used in flat or subdued light conditions. It has the advantage that it increases contrast on low contrast days.

Full Spectrum - Basically, a clear filter is inserted in the camera allowing you to add external infrared filters on your lens to achieve any and more of the aforementioned designations: 590 filter, 650 filter, 720 filter, and 830 filter. You will have to purchase each filter separately.

Note: The eye piece is blacked out when using infrared filters. Live view is essential. Recommended for mirrorless cameras.

Singh Ray 690 infrared filter – Designed to be used on a colour camera to create true B&W infrared images. Note: The exposure time ►



Arnistapi, Westfjords, Iceland. Photographed from the pier, this is a favorite image from this area. The low tide opens up a wonderful foreground of large boulders, lush with kelp, which renders glowing white in infrared.



Hill Street tree, Whidbey Island, WA. I added a 10 stop neutral density filter to create the 4 minute exposure. No wind for that long on a coastal hill is unusual.



Time warp, Badlands NP, SD. The long exposure and spires exemplify what many refer to as 'the other worldly look' of infrared. I needed 15 stops of neutral density to achieve the 4 minute exposure in late morning light.

will be a little longer than on a converted camera.

Here's the way it works: All sensors have a hot mirror to block infrared for cleaner/sharper images. However, all hot mirrors leak small quantities of infrared. It takes time to gather enough infrared leakage to create an image. Hence, a normal exposure of 1/30 sec may result in a 2 second exposure. Exposure times will vary greatly depending on the amount of light. You can raise the ISO and lower the aperture for a faster exposure using the filter. But remember, you will need Live View as the eye piece will be blacked out when the filter is added.

Focusing

There is slight disparity between the normal visible light focusing point and the infrared focusing point. Live View focusing AF is more accurate than through the eyepiece focusing. However, the disparity is small enough that stopping down to $f/16$ or $f/22$ will cover the difference. As a general practice, we focus through

Live View on our DSLRs.

Lenses and hot spots

This is a known issue and there are lists of lenses that create the hot spot, which is a bright spot (BW infrared) or a discolored spot (colour infrared) in the centre of your infrared image. The intensity of the hot spot can be more pronounced at higher apertures.

In addition to the list of incompatible lenses, you can easily determine if a lens creates the hot spot by taking a properly exposed image of a clear blue sky, using several different apertures. The hot spot will be visible on incompatible lenses, and not there on compatible lenses.

If you currently have images with the hot spot, it can possibly be corrected. Depending on the image, the hot spot can be fixed in many cases by adding contrast by any number of techniques: Nik's Viveza (now owned by DxO), brush contrast in the area, try the burn tool and cloning at a very

low opacity. It is a time-consuming process. The easiest fix is to use a compatible lens.

Processing

A red cast shows up on the image on the back of the camera and when imported. It has no effect on the infrared image, but can be a bit distracting when viewing on the camera. If you would rather see your images in infrared on the camera, you can go into your respective camera menu and choose to view in monochrome. However, the image will still input with the colour cast, which quickly goes to infrared when processed as B&W.

My infrared set up

Main Camera: D800 converted to standard infrared, 720nm

Second Camera: D800 converted to 590nm, which enables introducing color into the image.

I use a Singh Ray 690 infrared filter which has 2 functions:

Firstly, it can be added to a colour ►



Spot light, Badlands, SD. A single ray of light spot lights this single cottonwood tree. The effect enhanced by the use of a radial filter, bring out the tree and single cloud and darkening the edges.



Turf Church, South Coast, Iceland. An example of photographing infrared in the rain where the whites become bright white and tree bark goes dark when wet.

camera to create a true BW infrared image.

Secondly, the way that I use this filter to greatest effect is to take a color and infrared image of the same scene (tripod needed), have both images open as layers in Photoshop, then adjust the opacity. I then mask in/out certain areas. It's pretty much up to you at that point.

Is a tripod always needed?

No, not always. If the exposure is fast enough. The old guide of using a shutter speed $> 1/\text{focal length}$ works well for infrared. So, for example, if you are using an 85mm lens, the shutter speed has to be 1/85 sec or faster to successfully hand hold the camera.

Personally, I use a tripod as a matter of course.

What camera mode to use?

It depends on what you're used to, as all metering systems work the same in infrared.

Experiment with all modes. To get

the quickest and most accurate histogram, try shooting in program mode, but you will need to remember to watch the aperture, as P mode resets to the widest aperture when turning the camera off and on. I will shoot on P mode for street shooting, as things can happen quickly and taking time to set anything could result in missing a shot. I switch between Aperture priority and Program modes in all my work.

Since my first exposure to infrared as a child, I've developed and maintained an affinity for infrared. It wasn't until recently that a point was reached to where hardware and software came together to help me achieve the look and feel to my work that I've been seeking.

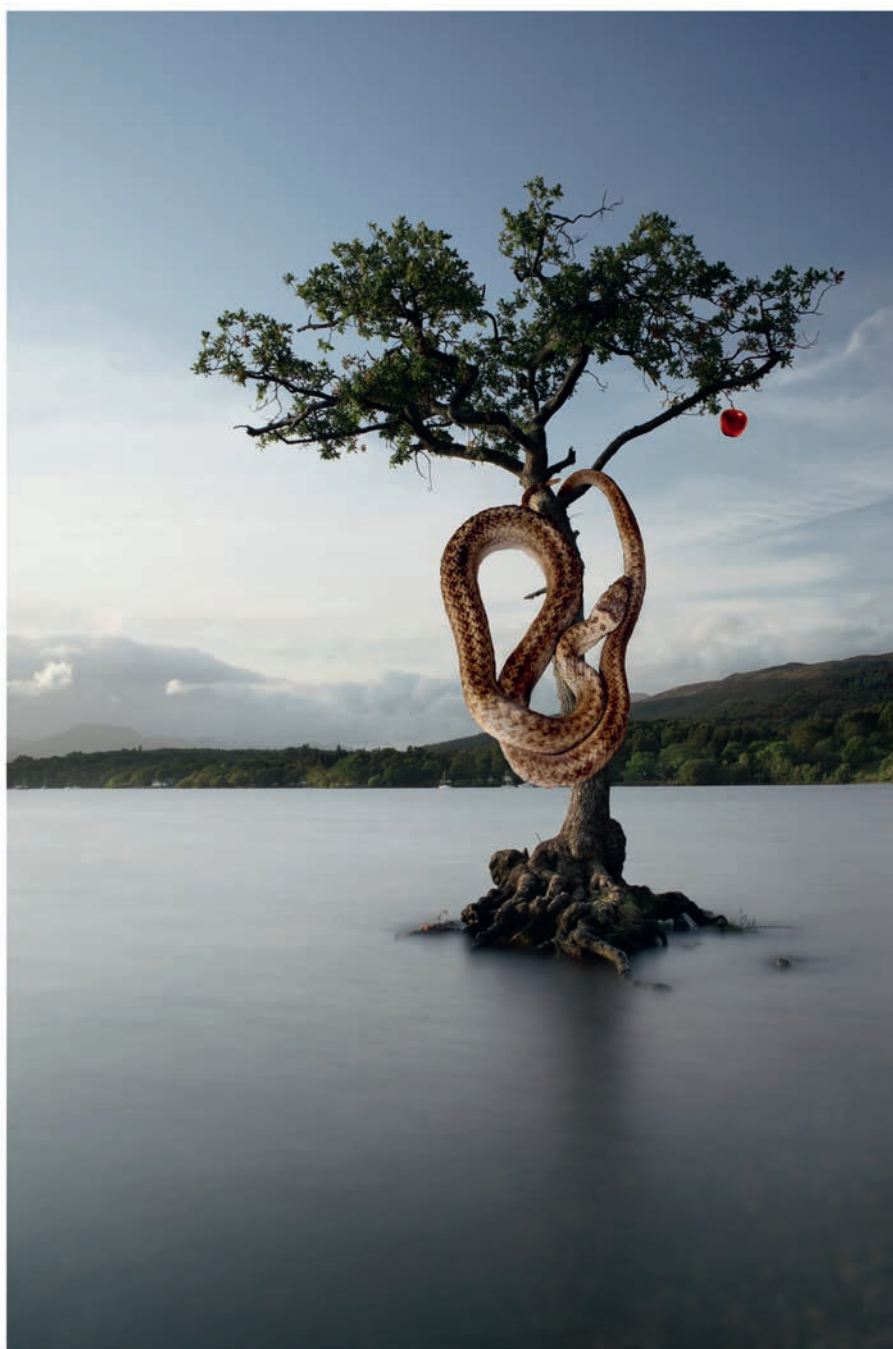
Enjoy your fantastic voyage into infrared-land ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tony Sweet is a 35 year professional photographer, workshop leader, author, lecturer, online instructor, and Nikon Legend Behind the Lens.

Tony and Susan Milestone co-teach for their Visual Artistry photography workshops and live in central Maryland, traveling six months a year teaching workshops and lecturing throughout the United States, Canada, Cuba, and Iceland.

See more of Tony's work at tonysweet.com and [instagram.com/tonysweet_](https://www.instagram.com/tonysweet_/)



Temptation

TEMPTATION

JOHN CUTHBERT ARPS

The act of tempting, Adam and Eve, tree, snake and an apple always springs to mind as an image involving temptation leaning towards something sinister and an engrained vision many of us would have been familiar with while growing up.

This graphic vision, including my example, is one that has been recreated many many times over the centuries with the likes of Willem Vrelant producing samples in the early 1400s and even further back in the 10th century and beyond when there were multicultural Eve, serpent, and Adam images being produced on ancient manuscripts.

The basis for my more modern day example of temptation, and the reason it is so special to me, came about in 2019, around a year or so before entering an image of the Milarrochy tree in Scotland's Tree of the Year competition back in 2020. The tree was nominated by both myself and Gary Chittick, who unbeknown to me was a relative of

a good friend of mine, and a lovely gent, it must be said, Tom Chittick. The main image was taken in a time before the pandemic hit the world and restrictions started having an impact on travel movement, a time when the water level around the tree was at a height to submerge a good part of the root system (something the tree experiences and copes with frequently).

Both myself and Gary were really pleased when the tree made it to the final. It is one reason we hold it so dear to our hearts and both have photographed on many an occasion, both before and a good few times after the nomination event.



The base Oak tree image

For advertising and voting purposes, all five nominated tree finalists were invited to get our photograph taken at the tree site and this was then used to promote the competition in the media.

As I was first to nominate the Oak tree at Milarrochy Bay, I was offered £500 to go towards its upkeep and was pleased to hand over this award to the Park Authority which manages the area.

Returning to my Temptation image, I was browsing social media as I so often do, looking for inspiration and had a seed planted within my mind after seeing another sample of a tree, snake and apple image.

Being a nature lover for decades and one time a licenced surveyor of protected species, I visited the tree on a good few occasions and knew I had lots of good ingredient images to work with. I just had to dig them out among the many thousands on the hard drives. The smooth snake selected and used for the final image is one warmly known and referred to as No5, after his heathland site refugia cover number.

The major component of the image No5 the smooth snake was captured while surveying under licence issued by Natural England in Dorset back in 2016. Credit must go to Mr Chris Roughley another licenced nature surveyor, and a truly brilliant friend who freely shared his vast skill, knowledge, experience, kindness, help and support during this period and many a year afterwards, and this may go some way in showing and explaining why this image is so special to me in so many ways....

This image was edited and inserted into the long exposure tree image along with an image of apple using PaintShopPro and all three layers flattened as one to finish off and produce the final result...

The Temptation base Oak tree image was captured using a long exposure image with a Sony A7Rii camera, Zeiss Batis lens, Manfrotto tripod and Nisi filter system. The smooth snake captured using a Sigma 105mm lens, Sony A77 handheld dedicated flash and homemade diffuser ●



The smooth snake, No5

The Milarrochy oak - Loch Lomond



John and Gary at the Milarrochy tree



ROMANESCO BROCCOLI

STEVE VARMAN LRPS

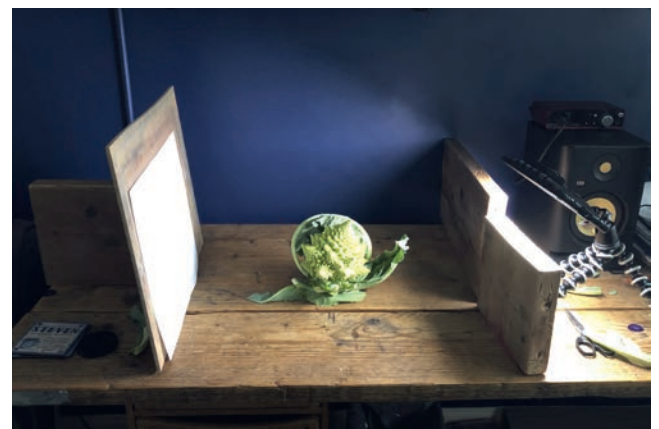
This is how a still life of a vegetable, morphed into a snail and went on to be commended in this year's Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year.

Using an LED panel to light the scene (see top right) allows you to immediately see the effect of moving or modifying the light. For example, I placed blocks of wood to create a narrow shaft of light, and to cast an interesting shadow on the background. I then used white paper to bounce light into the shadows. The intensity of the light can be controlled by moving the paper or LED closer or further away from the subject.

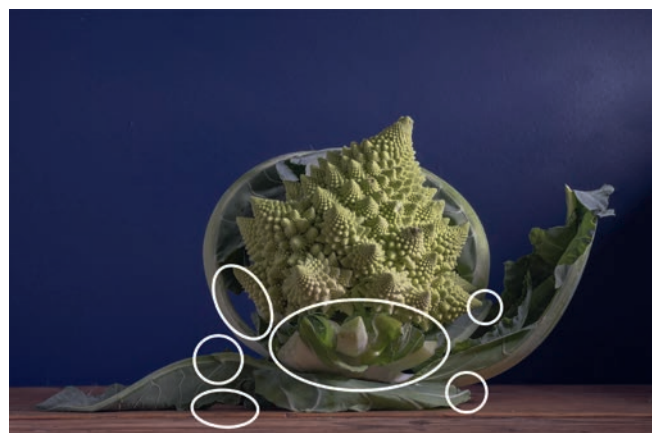
I used a Fujifilm X-T2 with a Fujinon 80mm Macro lens. I also focus stacked each image from several exposures of 1 second at $f/9$ (ISO 200).

As I was removing broken leaves between shots, the broccoli began to resemble a snail! This serendipity sparked a completely new direction for the project. After fine tuning the lighting and composition I had my base image. However, there were a few problem areas, such as gaps, broken stems and rough edges - all requiring attention from the Clone tool (see bottom right). I also took photographs of some of the discarded leaves, so I had plenty of source material to work with.

The biggest challenge was to create the tentacles. To do this, I selected a section of the main stalk, created a new 'layer via copy', and moved it roughly into the position



Lighting setup

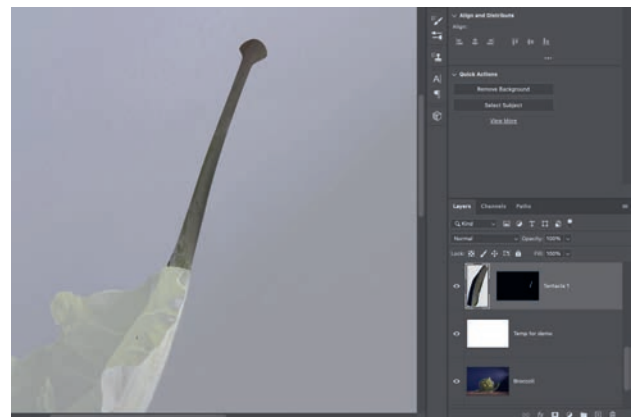


Clone and tidy up



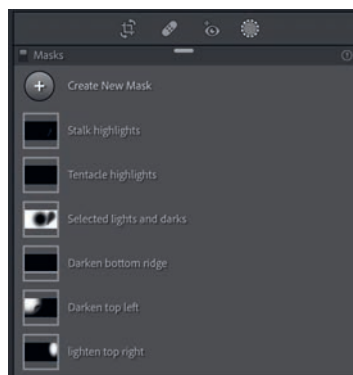
Tentacles

for the tentacle. I then added a layer mask, and painted the shape of a tentacle. In the screenshot (see top right) note that layer and layer mask are unlinked. This allowed me to move, resize and warp the cloned section of stalk until the 'hole' in the layer mask was filled. Shadows and highlights were added to make the tentacles look rounded. The tentacles were finished off with a cloned leaf for a head (see top of page).

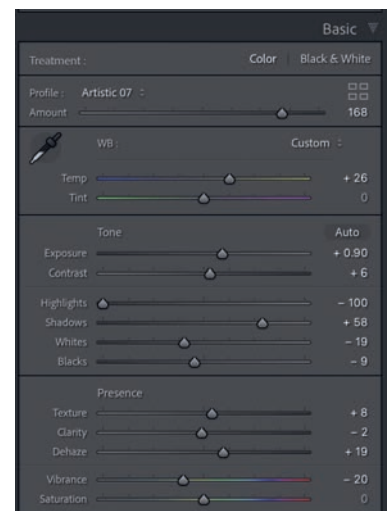


Creating the tentacles

With the Photoshop work completed, it's back to Lightroom to make adjustments to the tone using the Basics panel. However, it's the application of the 'Artistic 07' colour profile that is contributing most to the look of the final image. Artistic 07 is one of Lightroom's built-in colour profiles, and these are a great way of giving your creation a distinctive look.



Finally, I use Lightroom's mask adjustments for dodging and burning (see bottom right). The different types of masks, the way they can be combined, and the array of sliders makes Lightroom (I think) more intuitive than Photoshop or Nik Collection. For example, applying a feathered radial mask, adding/removing areas of the mask with the brush tool and then adjusting exposure, contrast, highlights or shadows, I can precisely target just the areas and tones that I want. There are exceptions, but Photoshop for layers and Lightroom for everything else is pretty much my standard workflow ●



Dodging and burning in Lightroom

IN PREVIOUS ISSUES

All previous issues are available from the Digital Imaging magazine page of the website at rps.org/digitarchive



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