

RPS Central Contemporary / Documentary Group, April 2023

We have had new members to each of our last two meetings, and it has been great to have new faces and new voices. If you've not yet attended a meeting, please know that you will be very welcome.

At the last meeting, David Blower shared with us some documentary images of Brass Castle Country House and of Derwent Water, from an off-season visit.





Andy Thorpe shared with us an interesting panel of photographs. This is his statement, along with the panel:

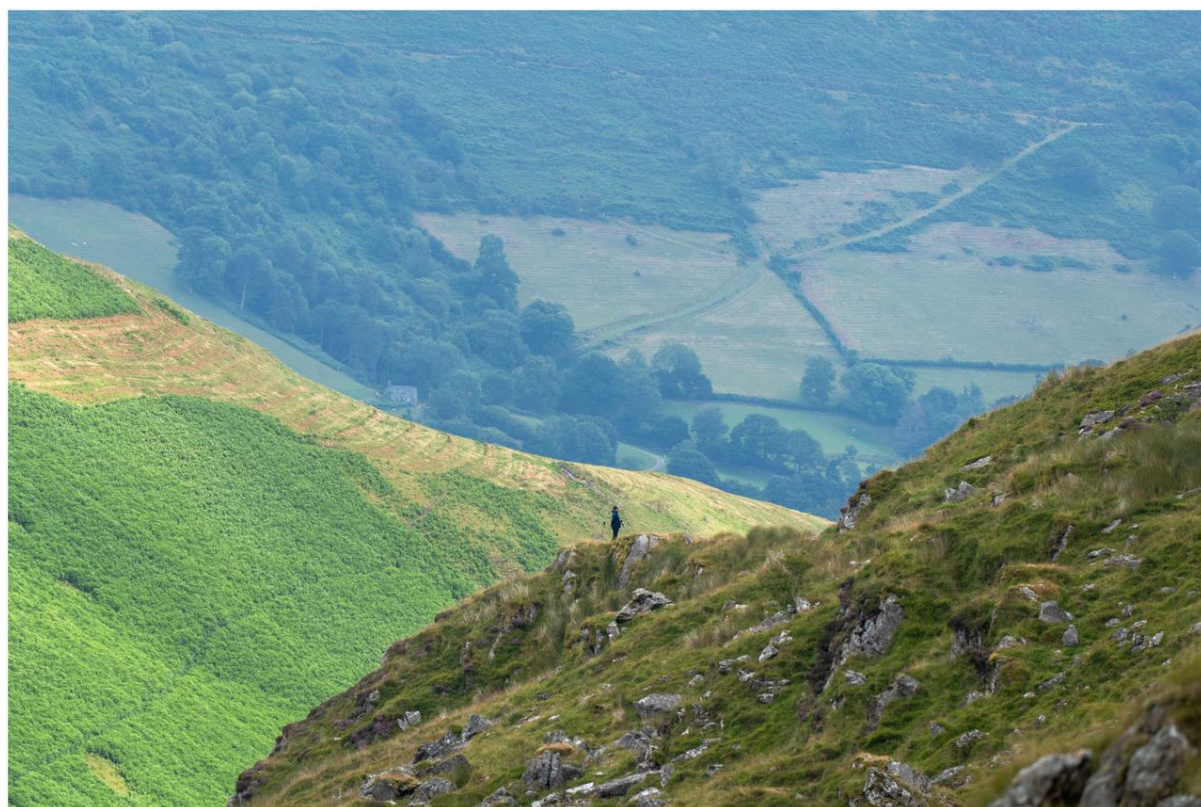
Pipes of Peace (A pipe dream?)

The gun barrels (the “pipes”) set against the roof of the exhibition spaces of the tank museum at Bovington is an attempt to portray the potential for the guns of tanks (and indeed other artillery) to cause destruction. Maybe a better way for us, especially children, to take lessons about the destructive potential of weapons like tanks, would be an exhibition of destroyed tanks and buildings, rather than just the tanks themselves displayed inside a clean and orderly building.

It’s probably a pipe dream that tanks could cease to exist, or at least always be kept indoors out of harm’s way as exhibits. Indeed, the features shown here could also be regarded as “pipes of peace” in terms of their defensive or deterrent capability.



Cliff McFarlane shared some of the images he has taken at the Mach Loop. We enjoyed the documentary mix of photographs of the planes that everyone had ventured there to take, and the photographs of the waiting photographers (and other day-trippers) themselves.



As in the email I sent out after the last meeting, Cliff also raised the question of **'Why do you take photographs'**. Thank you for the answers sent to me so far. Cliff shared the following list that was given by those present at the meeting: Continuity, sharing, response to a view, therapeutic, enjoyment, record, comradeship, liking isolation, just like taking photos, taking photo to really see what's there, discovery, documenting life, because I see it, it tells a story.

Carol Olerud added by email: I like to take photos as a way to keep track of my life. It's like a diary for me. I go to a lot of places (museums too), meet many people and I always take a record of that. Once I'm out and about I also watch for any recurring themes I may have. I'm also a street photographer, so I'm on the alert for anything happening – so I can focus my cam on that. Photography is also fun and I like to play around with my cam as well. There's always something to take a photo of and I do that, I break 'rules'. I also like to tell stories. So often make small or large, series. I also am a theatre photographer, mostly young people presenting their end of year workshops like music, theatre, dance etc – I really enjoy this as watching performances is great fun! My latest project is night photography, in Mexico on my recent travels, my cam is of course, always in hand's reach and walking back to my hotel or B&B after dinner, I can focus on some night street scenes. (it not being too late to be dangerous).

Ken Dickson contributed: I feel there is not one single reason I take photographs, but most commonly as an expression of artistic Creative vision, using different techniques.

And materials to create an Image.

On occasions to tell a story and convey a contemporary message of something specific – the images of the potential for "Global Warming" I think we're a good example.

To Capture an event in such a way that I record and document the memories of day – I did a series of shots for the NHS which was a record of a concert put on by the local

Arts Council as a thank you for the NHS effort just after the pandemic.

To record and display an item / person which is something of beauty – our Local Castle had an exhibition of Statues, some of which were works of art in their own right.

This became a project of mine to record the "beauty of the statues".

And Documentation of life events – Street, Fairs, Marches, Protests etc.

Motivation for all of the above is to engage with the outside world and give me an excuse to get out of the house and do something constructive, in addition to which,

I enjoy the postproduction of the images and producing the output, printing and mounting – which I consider to be a part of the creative process.

While Glyn Harrison added: I take photos to re-live those magical moments I experience out on the street and even in my studio. I like to push the boundaries and see what happens.

I'm not too keen on using my phone for photography, but it's great if I've left my camera at home.

Photography is great for recording history, I can hardly bring myself to delete anything! It's so special to look back on photographic trips and expeditions.

We decided that in our September meeting, we will each share 3-5 images and why we took them, as an extension of this discussion.

Back to the meeting last month, there was one final contributor: Clive Haynes shared his recent project on global warming:

Consequence

With increasing evidence for global warming and climate change there's no doubt that mankind and other species will experience profound changes.

For those of us of an older generation, this oncoming catastrophe will become more than a mere inconvenience. However, we'll only experience the beginnings of a profound change. In contrast, future generations will struggle with widespread flooding, seasonal aberrations, ecological collapse and crop failures.

We're all very much aware that action to limit climate change, especially the part that human activity has impacted and continues to cause, is required now.

Unless we each begin to understand how devastating the impact will be, there's an inclination to think of it as an abstract concept and something which may happen in the future. The process of sea level rise is both slow and inexorable.

My purpose is to bring that future forward and make the impact of sea-level rise up close, personal and directly relevant to where we live.

This set of pictures explores the possible effect upon the City of Worcester. I imagine how well-known landmarks and features would be affected by a rise in sea level between 23 metres and 32 metres. The consequences are quite sobering.

Sadly, the ancient city of Worcester will all but disappear and the British Isles will diminish to become nothing more than the British Archipelago.

It really ***is*** up to us.





All the best,

Steff

For further details of the Central Contemporary/Documentary Group meetings please contact info@steffhutchinson.co.uk