

DIGIT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY DIGITAL IMAGING GROUP
Number 87 2020 Issue 4



Upcoming DIG events

Details of all DIG events are available on the Group's website at
tinyurl.com/sxzl487



Digital Imaging: South East

Saturday 9 Jan 2021
Online



Nat Coalson
Online Presentation

Abstract Photography as Fine Art

www.rps.org/Nat-Coalson-Online

Digital Imaging: Eastern

Saturday 16 January 2021
Online



Andrea Hargreaves

MPAGB EFIAP/b BPE3*

'Art of Metamorphosis Part 1'
her creative vision, approach & workflow

www.rps.org/ea/andrea-hargreaves/metamorphosis/

Digital Imaging: Eastern

Sunday 24 January 2021
Online



Martine Hamilton Knight
DLitt (Hon), FHEA, APRS

'Images of the Built Environment'
professional architectural photography

www.rps.org/ea/martine-hamilton-knight/

Digital Imaging: Online

Saturday 30 January 2021
Online



Jane Lazenby

Inspired by Art

www.rps.org/DIGONLINE14

Digital Imaging: Western

Sunday 31 January 2021
Online



Ralph Snook ARPS EFIAP
'Wildlife Snaps From My Travels'
"The Good, Bad and the Ugly"

covering anecdotes, techniques,
memories and frustrations.

www.rps.org/DIWesternRalphSnook

Digital Imaging: Yorks & NE

Saturday 13 February 2021
Online



Diane Seddon
Odd Things, and Multiple
Exposures

www.rps.org/events/groups/digital-imaging/2021/february/talk-by-diane-seddon-odd-things-and-multiple-images/

Digital Imaging: Yorks & NE

Saturday 24 April 2021
York YO23 1BW



Brian McCarthy FRPS
Images from a small shed -
How I created my A & F Panel

www.rps.org/events/groups/digital-imaging/2021/april/talk-by-brian-mccarthy/

Event programmes continue to be disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, please check on the RPS website or with the Centre Organiser for the latest status of any event.

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Cover image: Contemplation at the spa by Jose
Antonio Triviño Sanchez

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From the chair

Ian Race



Our Group membership, which includes the 'traditional' offering and the more recent 'online' membership option, has gone from slowly declining at the beginning of the year to an unprecedented

current high of over 1600 members. This is due to the splendid efforts of our volunteers, both in the Centres and the central DIG committee. Our online events have now been seen by over 6000 attendees.

Both achievements are a great response to the challenges that 2020 has presented to us and I would like to offer my thanks to all our volunteers for their efforts, and to those who have made this effort worthwhile by attending these events. And, of course, I would like to thank our speakers who have been good enough to share their thoughts, knowledge and skills with us.

We are planning that our next AGM, in February 2021, will be held virtually and we are currently working through the details of how we will manage this event.

We have used the expenses that would normally occur from holding the physical AGM; travel, accommodation, hall, and speaker hire; to fund our online events; speaker hire and Zoom licencing. We have also reinvested the income from these online events in further events to deliver more value to our members. One unintended benefit from the disruption that 2020 has brought is that we have been able to present virtual events which would not have been possible through conventional meetings and to enable a wide audience to enjoy some world-class speakers.

We now have a Zoom licence for 1000 attendees (we have outgrown our earlier 500 attendee licence), so please, when you see the event announcements, do share them with your local camera clubs as we have the capacity to reach a wider audience and this also helps us fulfil the charitable aims of the RPS by reaching that wider audience.

Editorial

Gary Beaton



As I write this we are still living through these strange times and, like most people, I suspect, I look forward to days when things begin to return to something like normal.

And when that time comes I will draw inspiration from the fascinating people that I have the privilege to meet and speak to as I put each issue of DIGIT together. And although travel may be difficult at present, we can still take a vicarious journey to far-flung places through the words and images of some of our contributors.

In this issue we meet Jose Antonio Triviño Sánchez whose long-exposure images of the coast around his home have an ethereal quality which seems to draw the viewer in. It leaves me wondering whether I will be able to produce something similar at Skegness!

Monique van Laake had been working as a management consultant and leadership coach, but took the bold step to leave all that behind and to become a portrait photographer, with a difference. Her portraits, always beautiful, always different, play at an emotional level and can invite you to build a story around the image.

For some photographers, half the fun is in the equipment, and it is easy to put together a collection of lenses from which one must choose which ones will go into the bag for the next photographic expedition. Spare a thought for Emin Kuliyevev, who has around 300 lenses to select from. And these are not conventional camera lenses; most are old, sometimes very old, projection lenses. I had the opportunity to speak with him and learned a little of what is behind his collection.

Some of you will have enjoyed one of the Group's recent, and inspiring, online events with Brooks Jensen. For those who missed it, Brooks has been kind enough to allow us to reproduce a recent Editorial from his publication *LensWork*, which gives a glimpse into his approach to photography.

Finally we have Challenges from Ken Hurst-Earl, Juliet Evans ARPS and Rose Atkinson LRPS which show us how they made their images.

As always, I hope there is something in these pages to inspire you and I wish you good reading over this holiday season.



Taking the long view



JOSE A. TRIVIÑO SÁNCHEZ has much patience, and puts it to superb use when capturing long exposures around his home city on the Spanish coast.

My name is Jose A. Triviño Sánchez and I was born in Guadalajara (Spain) some 46 years ago. I have been taking digital photographs of landscapes since 2012, with long exposure landscapes being the theme that most inspires me and that is closest to my style of photography and life.

I consider myself a sensitive and fortunate person to be able to capture my personal world through photography, always emphasizing the conservation and maintenance of the world around us. I try to capture the beauty of places that must be highly regarded by human beings, and for this I hope my photographs serve to

demonstrate the importance of our seas, rivers and mountains. I currently reside in Murcia in the south of Spain, a city bathed by the Mediterranean Sea and Mar Menor, places that continually provide subjects for my long exposure photographs.

Why long exposure?

It was about five years ago when I discovered the long exposure technique, and from the first day I already knew that this technique was my favourite. With it I discovered another world, further from the conventional, and it gave me new sensations to my photographs. My desire



with long exposure photography is a symbiosis between the real and the imaginary through movement and the alteration that long exposure shots provide, managing to bring out that other 'me' that is numbed by the more real images that I glimpse every day. In many of my photographs I try to highlight, within the dynamism of the clouds and the calm of their waters, an element

that is recognized as part of man. For this I use a 'beacon', or several, that make me return to everyday reality and to wake up from that dream.

The sea is an unpredictable natural element that sometimes puts me to the test in long exposures, either because of the tide and waves, or because of the wind or the calm of that sunrise or sunset.



The same happens with clouds. I always try to have clouds on the chosen day, I also observe the direction of the wind, and where the sun is going to set or rise, to control the light.

For all this I use the *PhotoPills* app on my smartphone. The light in photography is always very important, and it is no less in my long

exposures. In fact, light is even more difficult to control as it can change significantly over the several minutes of exposure that some shots can require. In those minutes I have to try to make sure that strange artefacts do not appear in the image due to the sun, streetlights or any other source of lighting. Fortunately my filter holder has shades, which I use a lot and enable me to



manage the problem. In my photographs I look for everyday elements with a lot of visual force that convey sensations well through geometric shapes, such as the stairs into the sea (above). This gives me a feeling of depth and invites me to enter the waters. Generally, if the background distracts or disturbs me, I remove it in Photoshop to create that dreamlike, totally calm effect.

The importance of colour

I recognize that life is not conceivable without colour, and it is no less in photographs. Colour

helps me to find that imaginary triangle of warm or cold light, shadows and midtones all varying on the time of year and my mood. Through colour it is also possible to express and compose, hence the importance in painting and photography, it is with colour where, in the processing, I try to pass the barrier of the conventional and predictable.

I often use slightly saturated colours to add dynamism and strength in the most interesting areas in order to capture the viewer's gaze, where I want them to go in my photos. Sometimes I will take monochrome images, but usually I have a



specific end in mind, fine art architecture where there is high contrast of highlights and shadows, for example.

My technique

I generally take a number of shots of around 30 seconds exposure. I always leave the white balance on automatic and later I will correct colour casts in Lightroom or Camera RAW. The focus always is done using the hyperfocal technique, to keep focus from the foreground to infinity, so that I avoid focus problems later when I

process them.

I always capture my photographs in RAW format because it gives me the highest quality for subsequent processing. For light metering, I almost always use the camera's matrix mode, but on rare occasions I will use spot metering in areas with highlights so as to have a RAW file where I can fully recover all details, although for this I have to raise shadows and blacks.

Photography is conceived as an artistic medium as such, so I use digital editing programs like



Photoshop. Using Photoshop, I will start with a single long exposure shot or, more usually, stack several shots of around 30 seconds of the same subject. Sometimes I eliminate detail in the background of the photographs to create those dreamlike atmospheres I like so much. I know that not everyone can like them, but that is what my photographs of 'my world' are about, expressed through the prism of the optics of my cameras and the light that gives off day and night. I try to confuse the subconscious, not always with success, of the emotional states that take place in my life (restlessness, relaxation, fear, calm...).

Filters and holders

For my long exposure photographs I use neutral density filters of 10, 6 or 3 stops, the 10 being the most used, it is often paired with a soft 3-stop gradient filter for the sky so I avoid the strong contrast between ground and sky.

I use filter holders and 150mm filters from the Spanish brand Lucroit because they offer excellent quality of materials and they do not have colour casts.

Using neutral density filters allows the clouds to move and the water to become silky clouds in a way that the eye cannot see but my mind can.

Equipment

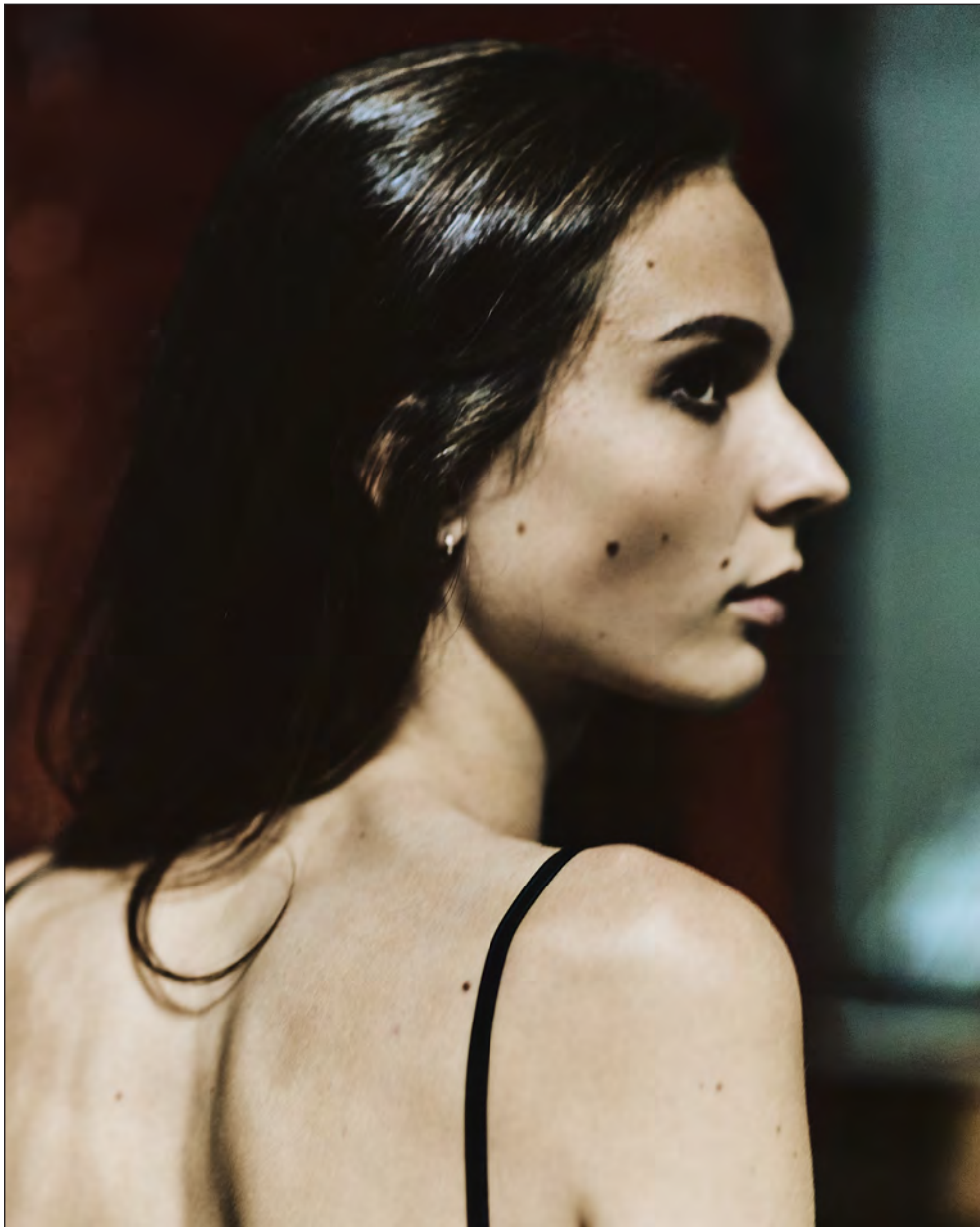
For my photographs I use full frame cameras (Nikon D800 and D810) with wide angle lenses, Nikon 14/24mm f/2.8 and Nikon 24/70mm f/2.8. The two lenses completely cover my long exposure photography needs, the 14/24mm being the most used.

Photoshop technique

As I mentioned, sometimes I use a single long shot of several minutes, but more often I take a series of shots of 30 seconds, perhaps eight or ten, and stack them in Photoshop.

Initially I add each shot as a layer in Photoshop, then I automatically align all the photographs in case there is any movement between shots. Once that is done I convert the image into a smart object, search for layer / smart object / stacking mode and choose average. With this procedure I add the 8 or 10 photographs in one, adding the 30 seconds of each one in total, giving me the result of a great long exposure without any strange light artefacts.

See more of Jose's work at 500px.com/p/joseantoniotrivosanchez.



A change of direction



MONIQUE VAN LAAKE is an independent photographer and artist, based in Bennebroek, a small village near Amsterdam in the Netherlands. She took the bold step to change direction and has not looked back.

Curious by nature, I have a fascination for life in general and I appreciate the little and overlooked moments that we encounter daily. As a child, I was given a camera and I would go out into the forest and heather fields around the corner from where I grew up and spend hours taking pictures of the light playing with the trees and water pools,

and all the magical moments that only occur for seconds. At that time I had no cares about how the camera worked. But looking back now, I realise the moments which intrigued me as a child - the light play, movement, moodiness, haziness, is still something that I pursue in my work today when making my portraits.

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Today, I always carry my small Leica with me wherever I go, to capture those unexpected moments. It provides a vast library of interesting captures that I use for digital artwork that I make together with my husband. More on that later...

Since university, my life took another course and I have been working as a management consultant and leadership coach. When I met my husband (artist and designer) in 2007, we travelled to romantic places and of course I would take pictures. Looking at those images, he told me "Gosh, you have a talent, maybe you should do something with it". Those words resonated and inspired me, and I decided to follow a basic photography course, learning the technical principles of how a camera works, working with Photoshop, etc. And that's the starting point of my photography/artistic career.

Now I enjoy creating artistic portraits that are aesthetic, bold, poetic, painterly and sometimes a bit estranging. I suppose the underlying themes in my work deal with notions of love and space, i.e. the complexity of seduction and repulsion, autonomy versus surrender, desire, fear and losing oneself. The human face is interesting; the smallest change in facial muscles can make a big difference in expression and meaning.

Just as I used to as a child, I'm hunting for that

energy or emotion, to grasp an indefinable moment in a split second. Something your brain picks up, before anything else. It is the subtle interaction between the photographer and the one being photographed. And hopefully that results in a reflection you do not see in the mirror. Light exists with shadow, and serenity coexists with movement, which is what I try to grasp in that one shot.

Preparation for a shoot is important... the concept, the props, location, knowing the results you are aiming for, model, camera and lightning gear, etc. Once I have that in my mind, the best thing for me is to sort of detach from that. It is like having your guidelines in your back pocket.

When I start photographing my model, I begin with what I have prepared but usually I will soon play around, experiment, follow the flow and be inspired by the collective energy. I love the intuitive process while shooting and I may end up with something different from what I had planned. But that's totally OK for me and it is even something that I might hope for.

There are different aspects to my work as a photographer/artist. Some I enjoy thoroughly and some I perceive as challenging or even painful at times. The creative process, starting from conceiving a project to the actual shoot...usually



Lucid dreams 1



Lucid dreams 2

Both images are long exposure shots using daylight and a pocket flashlight.

brings me in a state of flow, feeling energized and being happy.

Then what happens after, selecting and processing images, that's another story. My emotional state can go in all directions. From 'yes, great shots' to

'shoot, not good'. I need time to actually digest my work in order to make final selections, a process which can take several weeks. But once I am there, I take the next step and lose myself in finalizing my artwork. An image straight out of camera is never



This image is part of a larger series, where colours are the leading principle (make-up, styling, etc.). Other colours in the series are blue, yellow, white, bronze, black. White stands for divinity, pureness and strength.

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an end product; it's the starting point of creating my art. In the same way that I love the intuitive process while shooting, I enjoy the same when I do my post-production, working towards a final image. It is inseparable from my art; it is my vision and signature.

My 'go to' post-production programs

For RAW conversion, I prefer *Capture One 20* rather than *Camera Raw* from Adobe. It may seem a subtle difference, but in my experience the colours and tones are richer in *Capture One*, and you can work very precisely. In the last few weeks, Adobe has released an update to *Camera Raw* (version 13.0) and I will now re-evaluate it because this new version includes tools which are similar to those available in *Capture One*, like colour mixer and colour grading.

Having said that, I will do my first quick scans in *Camera Raw* and play with the different sliders to give me an idea of what's possible with the image, but the actual RAW file conversion I'll do in *Capture One*. For a long time, I was too intimidated to use *Capture One*. I was so used to *Camera Raw* and I had never used *Lightroom* – this meant that I wasn't used to the structure of catalogues and sessions, and I didn't find *Capture One* easy to use. But as with everything else, practice, practice and learn from their online

support, and it's the program that I now use for conversion. When that's done, I take the image back to *Photoshop* where I do most of my edits. When I'm happy with the result I like to use *Exposure X6* for final touches; they have beautiful presets for film. I'm also a long-time fan of the *Nik Collection*, and on the reserve bench I have *DxO* and *OnOne* software.

The final aspect that I have found needs attention when changing careers, is getting exposure in the outside world. It is something I don't find easy, promoting oneself, finding a way on social media, to the art world and galleries. That requires a different mind set. It is nice to live in an artistic bubble and to be free from all kinds of influences, but there is also a need for recognition and to see the (large) works exhibited in a beautiful space or in a book. So, for me, self-promotion is a big effort, but the reward is that I absolutely enjoy seeing my work beautifully printed hanging on a wall.

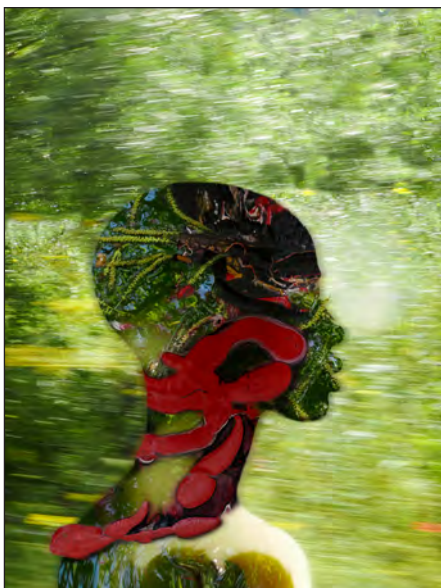
Even though I start from a concept, when it comes to describing my art or finding the right captions, my initial desire is to leave it open, to give space to the spectator to make their own narrative with the image. After all, we create meaning through our own references and perceptions. That's how it usually works for me but I understand some people take an interest in finding out what the artist's



Both images shot using daylight and a big backlight.



The model exudes an interesting mix of innocence with the sensuality of a young woman, her shyness with strength and of course her bone structure. While we were working together, she reminded me of the works of Egon Schiele.



Silence by Art MoeT

The artworks in this series are open to a myriad of interpretations and we allow the viewer to participate with their imagination. The motion is frozen and becomes silent.

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intentions were, or need to have an idea of what was in the artist's mind to help them to understand the piece. And the truth is I sometimes don't even know myself what drives me to make certain artworks.

My hope is that my works are felt and that they evoke a shared emotion or provoke a thought.

One aspect of developing yourself as an artist is to understand, and come to grips with, your personal style. You hear that all the time, but it not an easy thing. What is your style?

I like it when people tell me 'Oh that's so you'.... and I always ask 'what makes you say that'.

I've been fortunate to be in a Master class with Albert Watson, a living legend with an incredible track record, who described my work as: fine art, aesthetic, strong, bold, poetic, with an idea and a congruent portfolio. And as you can imagine, I was very happy to receive this feedback. It sums up nicely what I want to achieve.

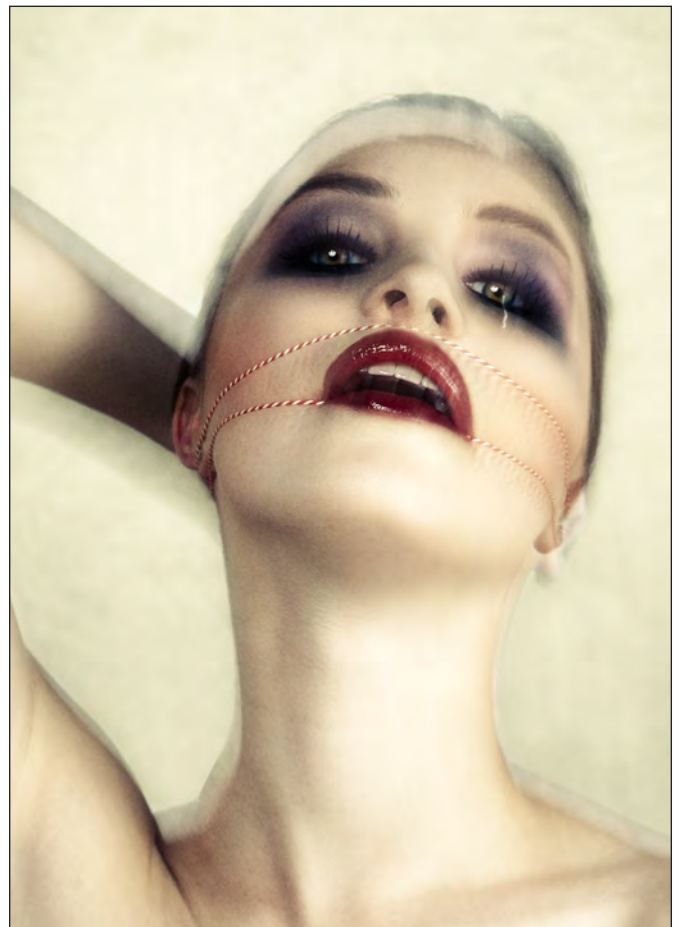
Aside from my personal work, my partner and I

also work together as a creative team as ArtMoeT: which stands for both our names: Monique (van Laake) and Teun (Anders). Art MoeT explores the endless possibilities of our combined work, we use and reuse all of our work in different settings. As I described earlier, we have a vast library of images that I have collected over the years from the unexpected gifts that come across our paths.

Teun Anders is artist and designer. His art includes paintings, sculptures, drawings and he works with all kinds of different materials. And always the human head as subject. I photograph his work both creatively and non-creatively. When we combine forces we use all of our work and create 'digital art'.

At the start of this year I was delighted to look forward to seeing my work exhibited but like so many things, due to COVID-19, this year's exhibitions have been postponed, and will take place 2021 in Paris, The Hague and Amsterdam. And I am, of course, open to invitations to exhibit in other places.

See more of Monique's work at moniquevanlaake.nl and on Instagram [@mofotografie](https://www.instagram.com/mofotografie).



Both images are long exposure shots using daylight and studio flash. The images are part of a larger series from the project 'Luscious', made for an art project for a Michelin star restaurant. It is referring to the complex relationship we have with food, (self)love and lust.



Taken with a custom modified 85mm projection lens attached to a Fujifilm GFX 50R

Through a glass darkly



Photographer EMIN KULIYEV is not content with popping into his local camera store and buying his preferred brand of camera and lens. He is always on the lookout for alternative lenses to help him to achieve his artistic vision, many from some surprising sources.

Most photographers, over time, collect a variety of lenses, and have their own favourites because of the characteristics that they offer. New York-based Emin Kuliyevev is no different, except perhaps in that his collection stretches to over 300 different lenses. And many of those lenses are not the typical lenses that most of us may put into our camera bags as we prepare for a shoot.

More surprising still, is that Emin came to photography relatively recently, a little under 20 years ago, at the age of 30. Soon after arriving

in the United States from his native Azerbaijan, he was involved in a car accident which left him bedbound for some months. During his enforced rest, he occupied himself by reading everything that he could find about photography, despite having no previous experience or interest with a camera. This was around the year 2000, just as digital photography was becoming a reality and accessible. Previously, to Emin, photography was a dark art involving chemistry and secret potions done in the privacy of a darkroom; not something

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY



Taken with a custom modified Kinostar 80mm projection lens attached to a Sony $\alpha 9$



The custom modified Kinostar 80mm projection lens and Sony E-mount adaptor used for the image above

that was easily accessible to the amateur and, of course, it was rather costly.

But, after recovering from his injuries, he bought his first camera, a small digital point-and-shoot model, and even used from eBay, it cost \$700. A lot of money, but it was magical, being able to click the button and capture a two-megapixel image and see it on that little screen instantly! Emin was hooked. Most other photographers were still using film, but he was a digital

photographer. While he was still bedbound his early experiments were confined to taking shots of whatever was within reach or around his bed.

Although it was not until the early 2000s that Emin started taking his own photographs, he had developed an interest in image manipulation a few years before, starting with Photoshop when it was at version 3. He recalls challenges when either Photoshop or Windows would crash within a few minutes of use and large files often would cause the computer to crash before the image appeared on screen. Nonetheless he enjoyed the endless possibilities that manipulating an image in this way could clearly offer. These days he looks at the tools included in current versions of Photoshop and other image editing software, and sometimes feels that life has become too easy; in the early days if you wanted to change the sky you really had to work at it, today you click a button until you find sky that you like, or add that rainbow which makes the image perfect. But not all of the effects that Emin creates can be achieved with a simple built-in tool or selection from a gallery of options.

A lot has changed for Emin over the last 20 years. These days, by profession, he is a busy portrait

and wedding photographer. Over recent years he has found that the skills that he has developed to capture those lasting memories of the bride and groom's big day are becoming less valued as people with a mobile phone are able to produce quite respectable images. Suddenly, everyone can be a wedding photographer. Fortunately, however, from the very early days with Photoshop, Emin developed a love for images which are a little bit different, something which continues to evolve today.

Modern lenses can produce incredibly sharp, precise images. And so, with image quality all but guaranteed, many photographers have become interested in the other characteristics that a lens may have, such as the bokeh, something that originally was almost a side effect of the design of the lens. Older lenses often had 'quirks' which made up for, perhaps, the lack of sharpness back at the edge of the shot. It was the effect that these quirks often had on the image that appealed so much to Emin.

Over the years, Emin has changed his choice of

cameras, most recently favouring Sony mirrorless models, after having used both Nikon and Canon systems in the past. His choice to go mirrorless was made largely because he wanted to be able to use a particular Voigtlander lens, the 40mm f/1.4 Nokton, very similar to a Leica design but a fraction of the price. He calls this lens a diamond, not perfect but very much like the Leica and he is very happy with its performance. One problem,



The custom modified 70mm projection lens and Fujifilm G-mount adaptor used for the image below



Custom Modified Lens 70mm + Fuji 50R

Taken with a custom modified 70mm projection lens attached to a Fujifilm GFX 50R

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY



Gaumont kalee 216mm f1.9 + Sony A9

Taken with a Gaumont-Kalee 216mm projection lens attached to a Sony $\alpha 9$



The Gaumont-Kalee 216 mm projection lens and Sony E-mount adaptor used for the image above however, was that the camera he was using at the time had an APS-C sensor which turned his lens into the equivalent of around 60mm. What he really wanted was the bokeh that this lens offered with 'full-frame' 40mm focal length, so he became a Sony owner.

He soon found that the versatility of the Sony cameras suited his way of working, and before long had become a firm fan and invested in another body. But this did present a slight problem, particularly in the early days, because

although he had selection of lenses, few would fit directly onto the Sony bodies. He started investigating the possibilities of adapting lenses to fit his current favourite cameras and found that it was often possible to fit a lens of another marque to the body of another. His first attempts used lens mounts he found on eBay taped to the lens barrel of a lens of another marque. Later he found adapters that were made for the job were sometimes available, although limits due to the lens geometry sometimes means that some combinations are impossible.

For most, having found a way to use his existing lenses on his new cameras might be sufficient, but Emin started wondering about other possibilities, and particularly whether it would be possible to fix other types of lens to his camera, and what effect these other lenses might have on the background. By chance, he spotted an old projection lens on eBay and wondered what sort of images it might produce if he were able to fit it to a camera. Out came the tape again to attach a lens mount to the projection lens (although soon he had also found an adapter to fit any lens barrel onto his cameras). And then things got really interesting...

Knowing that the characteristics he was looking



Custom Modified 70mm lens + Fuji 50R

Taken with a custom modified 70mm projection lens attached to a Fujifilm GFX 50R



The custom modified 70mm projection lens and Fujifilm G-mount adaptor used for the image above for included a sharp subject and 'different' background, he attached his first projection lens to his camera. Immediately he found it a rather different experience. After more than ten years of shooting with automatic exposure, he was now having to set his exposure manually. And that was not the only difference; projection lenses do not have any need to adjust apertures, and so exposure options were limited to 'wide open',

similarly, the focus of the lens was fixed and had to be set when attaching the lens to its adaptor. All of this was good news and promised some interesting effects in the image as it moved away from the plane of focus. He expected something similar to the effect that a Lensbaby might produce, but even today the greatest focal length of a Lensbaby is around 80mm, while projection lenses are just starting at that sort of focal length. (Focal lengths of projection lenses range from around 50mm to 300mm, but most commonly are between 100mm and 150mm.)

The results exceeded his best hopes. One of the things that appeals to Emin is that every lens is different. Not every lens responds well to this new life, but most do, and it is impossible to predict just how the images will turn out. Since his first experiments, Emin has taken the opportunity to pick up projection lenses whenever he sees them available at reasonable prices. And in a few short years he has amassed around 300 in his collection...and it continues to grow. Each lens has its own characteristics and personality. Emin points out that his projection lenses are

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY



Taken with a modified Neokino 140mm projection lens attached to a Sony $\alpha 9$



The modified Neokino 140mm projection lens and Sony E-mount adaptor used for the image above usually far from perfect, often producing very soft images from the edges of the lens, but as long as the central portion will enable the subject to be sharp, this is no problem; after all, much of the charm of Emin's projection lens images is that the background is not sharp! This does highlight one drawback in that unless the image is cropped, the subject (or the part that will be sharp, anyway) must be in the centre of the frame. In addition to mounting different lenses on his cameras, he sometimes enjoys 'freelensing', hand-holding a

lens in front of the lens mount of a camera, which then means that the central point of focus can be placed somewhere other than the centre of the frame. Recently he has started using a tilt adaptor which has enabled him to achieve similar effects in a more predictable way.

Whilst the results of these combinations of camera and lens may be unpredictable, behind every adapted projection lens is Emin's wealth of knowledge of optics and the physics of glass, stemming originally from his bed enforced rest some 20 years ago. Not content with attaching projection lenses to cameras, Emin sometimes seeks to achieve a particular optical result by combining parts of more than one lens. This involves not only knowledge of optics but also some well-developed engineering skills in order to ensure that the resulting lenses - he calls them Franklenses - are, at least where he wants them to be, optically sound and correct.

When choosing the lens to use for a shoot, he does not remember the characteristics of each particular lens but can usually remember the general effects that a lens will create. Of course, though, his favourites do stand out in his mind. And there is rarely a day when Emin is not taking

photographs or working on images on the computer, so he tends to remember when he has recently used a winning combination.

Despite never having been a film photographer, his most recent interest has been to reproduce the visual effect of a large-format film camera - inspired by finding large-format images on the internet - using a contemporary medium format digital camera, the Fujifilm GFX 50R. Originally purchased for portrait photography, he often uses his old Canon lenses via an adapter, giving his lenses a wider angle of view and increased depth of field (the focal length of the Canon lenses is multiplied by a factor of 0.79 when used with the Fujifilm camera). Once again, it's that depth of field, and the background, that appeals so greatly. Of course, he has a wide selection of lenses to choose from because many of his projection lenses will cover the Fujifilm sensor and, with their long focal lengths and wide-open apertures, offer that bokeh so reminiscent of large-format portraits of days gone by. And, by combining a number of frames taken from slightly different viewpoints, he has found a technique which can produce an image of shallow depth of field that is almost indistinguishable from a true large-format shot using camera movements.

Emin knows well that many results that he produces can be achieved from a straight shot using Photoshop or other software packages but, he says, finding that he can create something using his lenses, particularly if others have not produced anything similar in software, is almost addictive. He usually limits his use of Photoshop to stitching images together or cropping and adjusting colour and contrast, all of the background effects in his images are captured in camera.

For his commercial work, although some of his clients come to him because of his style, many of his customers may not share Emin's artistic vision and look for more 'traditional' wedding or portrait images. But his equipment bag always includes a few projection lenses as well as a number of other rather esoteric items. Consequently, he will often include a small number of images taken with

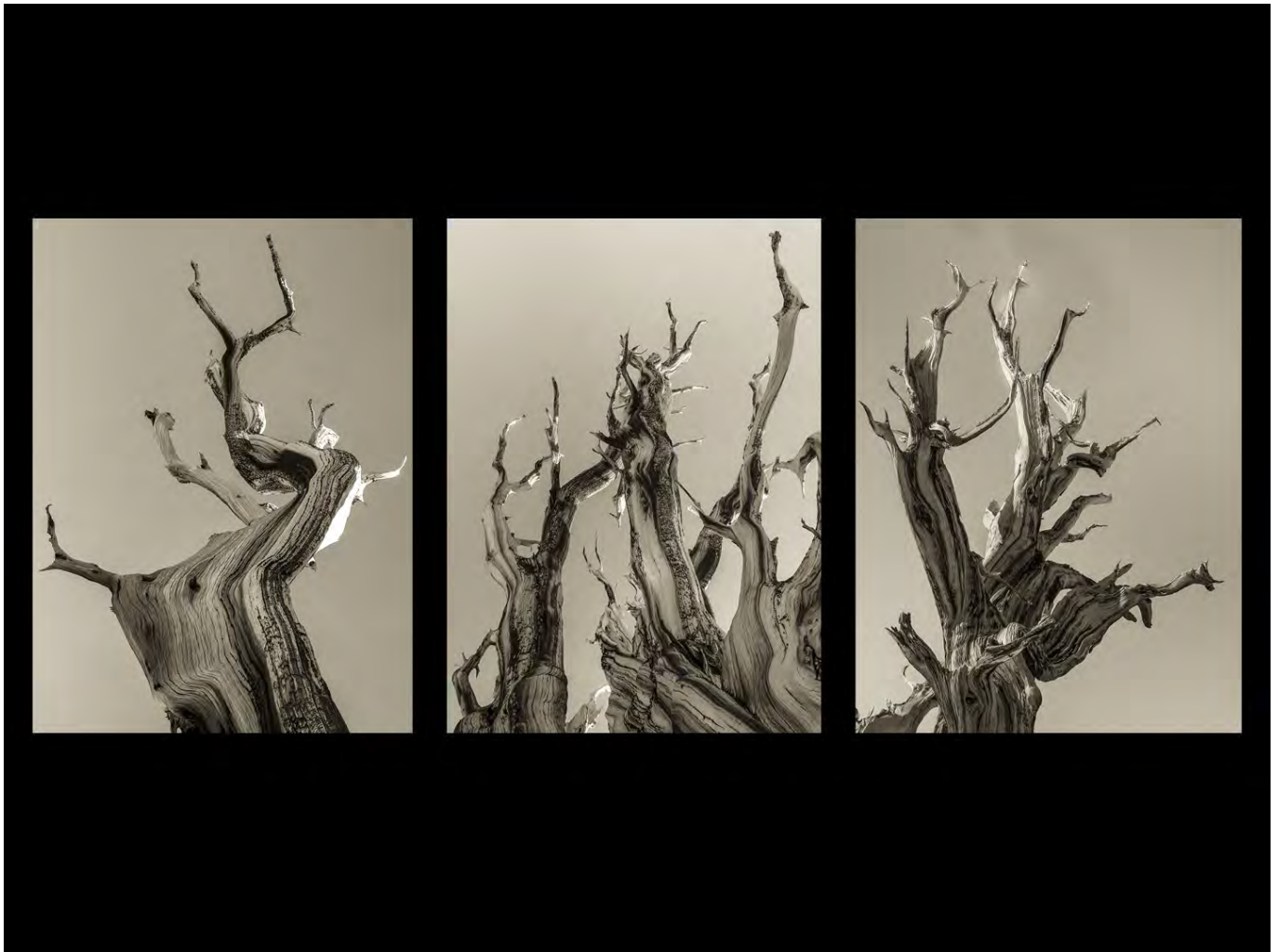


Emin's current wedding shoot equipment - note the selection of projection lenses

projection lenses, although without specifically mentioning this to the client, and usually these are welcomed. He likens his projection lens images to the spicy dish on a dinner menu, it offers a welcome contrast but you wouldn't want every course to be spicy.

For Emin, it all comes down to how the viewers of his images react and respond to the final result. Although fellow photographers may think they recognise a particular technique that has been used or understand some of the technical challenges that have been overcome when taking the shot, this is far less important than how the non-technical viewer sees the image. But there is a hard core of equipment enthusiasts for whom Emin must be nothing short of a guru, and he is happy to share his experiments and techniques, and his enthusiasm, with others. He maintains several websites where he regularly posts information about his latest exploits and the results of his experiments, forming a huge resource for those wishing to try something similar. In these pages we include just a small selection from some of his test shoots but you can see many more on his websites. I recommend spending some time browsing his work on the web, but be warned, you might get addicted!

See more of Emin's work and experiments at:
em34.com/,
[flickr.com/people/187839796@N02/](https://www.flickr.com/people/187839796@N02/),
[flickr.com/photos/em34/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/em34/albums),
[flickr.com/people/168486244@N07/](https://www.flickr.com/people/168486244@N07/), and
shotkit.com/emin-kuliyev/.



Both images illustrating this article are from Brooks' Tree Bones series

Every Day Art Mind



Those who were able to join our online event with BROOKS JENSEN enjoyed a treat as he shared his thoughts on some of those who had inspired him. Brooks has long published a bi-monthly magazine about photographs, *LensWork* and he has been good enough to allow us to reproduce an editorial from one recent issue.

I have yet to meet an artist who hasn't, on occasion, experienced a creative fallow patch, when the muse simply withdraws and leaves us languishing on the couch with a half-eaten bag of cheese puffs. The methods for pulling one's self out of such doldrums would be a handy thing to know. Without exception, the advice appears to be a rather simplistic: *Just Work*. There may be some truth in that, but this is a complex pragmatic problem for artists — and one that is not resolved with simplistic answers. Evens so, I'm going to attempt to do so.

I remember one particularly stubborn patch in my

youth in which I had gone several months without picking up the camera or doing any work in the darkroom. Filled with the assumption that I was lazy, I concluded that what I lacked was sufficient discipline. Knowing that discipline is often a function of simply developing a work schedule, I decided, with calendar in hand, to map out a path back to productivity. Filled with enthusiasm, I decided I'd discipline myself with a weekly schedule that would put me in the darkroom every Tuesday and Thursday night, and out in the world photographing every Saturday. Upon reflection, I confessed "No I

won't." There was no way I could keep up such an aggressive schedule. Trying to be more practical in balancing my art life with my everyday life, I modified my proposed schedule to darkroom work every Thursday evening and photographing every other Saturday. But then I realized that, too, was not going to work in the midst of all my other career and family obligations. I reassessed and decided that I could realistically commit myself to one Saturday a month. Whew! But then I realized that this schedule would leave me with a scant 12 days of photography during the entire year, a paucity of time and work that clearly did not fit well with my enthusiasm nor my dedication to becoming a serious photographic artist. Being a little more than discouraged and depressed, I reached for the cheese puffs.

The more I thought about this, the more I came to realize that the problem was not the *schedule*, but rather the fundamental basis of the question. I was insisting on bifurcating my life into two mutually exclusive endeavours - my regular life on one hand, and my art life on the other. I then remembered a great lesson from workshop instructor David Bayles. He explained that a violinist who strove for excellence would intuitively know that they must practice *every day*. Why, he proposed, would photographers think they can achieve their highest aspirations without similar commitment? *Every day!* What a lovely theory, but clearly there was no way that I could do photography every single day of my life. Or so I thought.

Fortunately, Bayles had also explained that doing photography every day did not necessarily mean making new pictures every day, nor working in the darkroom every day, but it did mean *thinking photographically* every day. I realized the solution to my creative desert was, in essence, *momentum*. And momentum meant developing an Every Day Art Mind.

But what precisely does that mean? Here are several practical ideas that I've found useful for making photography a part of my everyday existence for the last 35 years.

Look

Because looking is the fundamental act in photography, it shouldn't be a surprise that this is one of the most obvious ways we can practice our photography every day. Be aware of light. More than that, be aware of the *specifics* of light - angles, colours, quality, and its other characteristics. I've often resisted those proponents of 'golden hour' photography. All light is good light, but different.

It can be harsh or soft, reveal different details depending on the angle of incidence, render colours with amazing plasticity, and thereby be useful for creating an infinite number of subtle variations in our photographs. Studying light is almost the number one task of being a photographer - far more important than understanding the mere mechanics of cameras, or even the geometries of composition. Light is our primary tool, and if we don't know it well, we must instead rely on luck.

Conversely, learn about shadows. They too have different characteristics - for example, transitions, depth and detail, contrast within the shadows, etc. One could have an interesting philosophical debate about whether photography is primarily about light or primarily about shadows, but in the practical world, I found it far more important to pay attention to shadows. Shadows define the mood of the photograph as well as defining the photograph's visual depth.

Develop your own vocabulary for qualities of light and shadow. By defining them, you will find that you learn them and know them more concretely. Every day, whether you have your camera with you or not, whether you are engaging in a moment of art-making or a moment of everyday life, light and shadows present an opportunity for study.

Stories

Life presents itself to us in a sequence of theatre-like scenes. Mentally practice identifying the various images that would be necessary to describe a scene. What would you use as an establishing shot? A tight shot? A reverse angle point of view? Human interest shot? A texture shot? Even if you don't have a camera, you can identify these components and hone your storytelling skills. The more quickly and assuredly we can identify the shots of a scene, the more our odds of success with the camera improve.

Be aware of potential locations. It is so seductive to reserve your art-making time for those days when you travel to exotic locations. But isn't it obvious that where you live is an exotic location to people who don't live there? Learn to see what's within reach, within your city, town, neighbourhood. File away potential locations for future photographic efforts. Pay attention, and then keep GPS location points so you can return later with your camera, when you have time.

Capture ideas

I am not a student of psychology so I can't explain



how the subconscious mind works, but I know that it does. It is constantly working on creative and artistic problems, even when I'm doing something completely unrelated. I know this because in the middle of some mundane activity - like washing the dishes or driving to the grocery store - the most interesting creative ideas will bubble-up to consciousness, seemingly from nowhere. I've learned the importance of capturing these ideas as they arise. Don't rely on your memory. Write them down, use a digital recorder, email yourself a note. Make sketches, capture words or phrases, compositional ideas, subjects you're interested in exploring, and questions that need to be answered. Use your phone to make quick visual sketches or capture image ideas to explore more fully later with your more serious camera gear. However it works for you, develop the habit of doing it. Your mind is creative all the time, but it is necessary that you develop the habit of listening.

Read

First, look at books of photographs. If you don't have access to anything else, *LensWork* will do. I suspect, however, that between your personal

library and the public library there is a lifetime of photography books you could study.

How does one 'read' a book of photographs? Try this: study the sequencing, image selection, image content, and text.

What is the sequencing structure for this book? Forward in time? Backwards in time? From large subjects to small subjects? From the grand view to the detailed view? Is the sequence determined seasonally? Can you identify the specific structure of the sequencing used in the book? If so, do you agree with that structure? How would you have done it differently?

What about the image selection? Are there any images that seem unnecessary, out of place, or weaker than the rest? I'm yet to find a photographic project that couldn't be intensified by eliminating 10% of its images. Which 10% would you eliminate? Would you identify the same images as the weak ones if you were to change the sequencing?

With each individual image, what would you do to improve it if it were your image? Do you have any images that are similar to this, and if so, could yours be improved by what you learned from looking at

this book?

What about the text? Is it readable, understandable, persuasive? How would you rewrite the text to make it stronger? Consider the title of the book. Can you find a short phrase in the introductory text that might be a stronger title? (By the way, this is how we often find titles for projects in *LensWork*, by simply looking at the photographer's introductory text and identifying the title hidden there that is easily overlooked.) It's hard to come up with good titles. Instead of writing titles, just find them in the already-written introductory text.

Read interviews. I've interviewed some 500 photographers during my years as the editor of *LensWork* and I have yet to interview a single photographer who has not revealed to me at least some interesting nugget of wisdom that I can use in my own creative life. Reading interviews is a search for that nugget.

Review

One of the reasons I love producing my work as digital PDF publications is because I can carry them with me everywhere on my phone and tablet. I find it incredibly useful to review what I've produced with an eye toward learning and improvement.

How well does a project wear over time? What would you do differently if you were to produce it today, or to produce a new edition? What do you think are the project's strengths and weaknesses? Does your opinion change depending on when you review it? I'm always surprised to see how my work seems so different if I'm viewing it while I wait for my dinner to arrive at a restaurant table as compared to lounging in a chair at the beach, or waiting for my flight at the airport. Depending on my mood, stress level, surrounding hubbub, or the vagaries of everyday life, I can think quite differently about my artwork depending on the background it's viewed against. The same could be said for our website.

Actual work

As technology has changed in the recent years, so have the options for incorporating art-making in our every day life. In the past, my pursuit of 'Every Day Art Mind' did not include doing processing work on my own photographs. Nor did I make photographs on a daily basis. But with small, pocketable, digital

cameras, and more recently the advancements opened up with Adobe's Lightroom Mobile, I find I can actually extend my every day art mind to include making and processing images. I've been amazed, for example, how many small snippets of time present themselves in my day when I can work in Lightroom Mobile to make collections, selections, even some image processing. It's mind-boggling, the amazing technology we have today to integrate our art life and our everyday life so seamlessly.

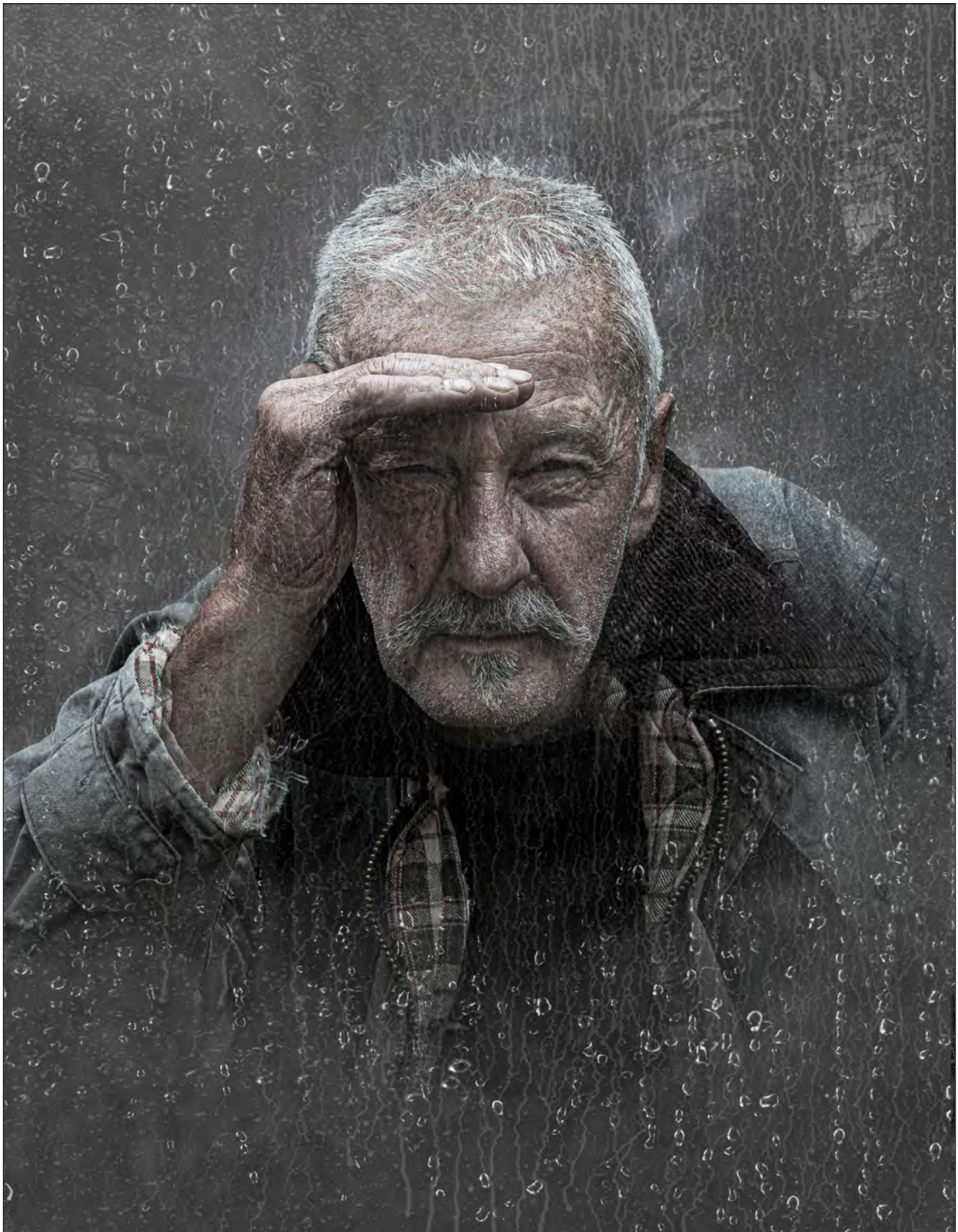
Think

In my youth, I thought photography was all about seeing and making. I now realize I had left out the most important component: *thinking*. Photographs without some foundation in ideas are simply reproductions of what the world looks like. They might be lovely photographs, but they often fall short of their greater potential. What and why do we photograph what we photograph? How and when do we do so? What is it that we're trying to say or ask or define? We are visual artists, and although such questions are often impossible to answer in words, they are, nonetheless, questions we can ask ourselves in words. Here again, we find an opportunity for our Every Day Art Mind to contribute to our creative process by simply thinking about what it is we are doing, why we're doing it, and how we can accomplish that most successfully.

Conclusion

Wynn Bullock's wonderful 1973 monograph is titled *Photography: A Way of Life*. I do not believe he was referring to camera and darkroom nearly as much as he was calling attention to a state of mind and strategy for integrating art-making with the activities and responsibilities of everyday life. I've come to believe that the idea of being an artist does not mean that we simply 'make art', but rather that we *make a life* in which the creative process is fully integrated into our daily existence. Every Day Art Mind is not a trick for making better photographs, but rather a strategy for engaging life in a more meaningful and conscious way. These suggestions probably just scratch the surface. Perhaps expanding the integration of our everyday life and our art life is the true work of an engaged artist.

All the Editor's Comments from every issue of *LensWork* are available as both PDF and audio files (read by Brooks) to members of *LensWork Online*. lensworkonline.com is a membership website with literally terabytes of information on photography and the creative process.



IS THERE ANYBODY IN THERE?

Ken Hurst-Earl

I have been mildly interested in taking images for most of my life but like so many others, as a snapper. My photographic journey really began some ten years ago. Having long admired the images in my dentist's practice room and commented on them, he told me that he was a member

of a local camera club, Beacon, in Malvern and that they were his images. So after a couple of years of gentle nudging to join, I took the plunge and joined that club.

That's when I discovered what was possible if you put the time and effort into learning how to use Photoshop. Now, I have moved from mildly interested to mildly obsessive.

The image *Is There Anybody In There?* is taken from our monthly themed creative competition. For that month, the theme was 'Looking In'.

Briefly, before I get into how it was done, I like my images to tell a story or at least give the viewer the opportunity to imagine one.

So... the image is the story of a man looking in from a dark and wet place on the outside of a house where there appears to be nobody home, but he isn't sure. His clothes are a bit ragged and he looks a bit rough. What does he intend? The viewer must speculate on where this is going, if anywhere!

The fellow in the image is my gardener and very kindly allowed me to take a few shots of him against a very dark background which I subsequently cut out with Photoshop. He was then placed onto another image of some trees in my garden on a misty morning. The background tree image was almost monochrome but the gardener was taken on a bright day and was rather tanned, so I had to desaturate his image somewhat, darken it down and add some texture. The woodland background was still too bright and had to be darkened down. Next, to give some depth, I blurred the trees and slightly blurred the coat on the right shoulder.

To then give the impression of glass, I overlayed some streaks taken from a window that I had seen on holiday several years ago. Like a lot of compositors, I collect stuff which might come in useful someday for a project.

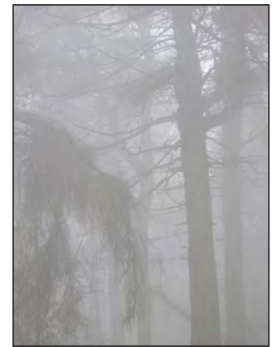
The water droplets came next and consisted of a very laborious shoot in my bathroom taking images of droplets on my shower screen. These were placed on top of the water streaks layer and set to a screen blend mode. Graduated filters were also used to darken and lighten certain areas.

Both the water droplets and the window streaks were layered several times onto the images below. These were all layer masked and could be rubbed out around the face as required, so as to make it look as though he had cleared the glass to get a better look inside.

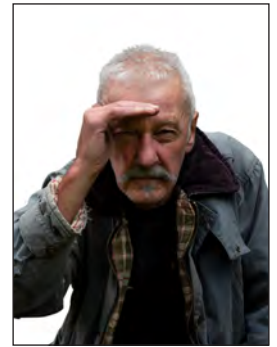
Then the streaky window image was again copied and overlayed at the top of the stack. Parts of the image were rubbed out, leaving a more opaque area at the bottom to suggest some coldness on the inside and perhaps some cleaning on the outside. Are the owners away?

Lastly, some tweaking of the brightness and contrast to give the whole of the image more impact. It looks quite simple as an image, certainly more so than a lot of composites and more than I sometimes build, but there are about 26 layers here. This is mainly because of having to duplicate some layers - e.g., water droplets and streaks - to achieve the desired effect.

There was rather a lot of trial and error involved as I had never attempted simulating rain on glass but as always, compositing is a learning process and I am lucky to be constantly inspired by the members of my club. It's always fun (when it works out) and always challenging!



Step 1 The background



Step 2 The model



Step 3 Place and desaturate and blur



Step 4 Window streaks



Step 5 Add rain



LEAF SPIRIT

Juliet Evans ARPS

Leaf Spirit was one of the images accepted for the open colour category of the 2019 Projected Image Competition. It was taken during my second visit to the wonderful Sculpture by the Lakes at Pallington, Dorset (www.sculpturebythelakes.co.uk/).

The sculptures, created by sculptor Simon Gudgeon, are naturally blended into the landscape; a mixture of lakes, paths and gardens. Leaf Spirit, in particular, was hiding in a dense area of undergrowth. I took a few alternative shots from different angles (see right) but I preferred the profile view, which of course meant I was left with a huge branch across her face to contend with (see image 1)!



I tend to use Photoshop for most of my editing, only because I am more comfortable with it, having come into Lightroom much later. I started by duplicating the layer to preserve the original. I then removed the large blurred leaf in the top right-hand corner as it was distracting. I should have left that out of the frame when I took the photo.

I just selected the area with a rectangular marquee tool and right-clicked fill>content aware. Then I set about removing the branch. In Photoshop, I used the Spot Healing brush in the content-aware setting set at a size equal to the width of the branch (see image 2). Then by gently sweeping down through the branch in sections, I was able to remove it and replace those pixels with the foliage in the background. I do this in small sections at a time so it is easy to undo if something goes a bit wrong! I also recommend zooming in to between 66% and 100% so you really see what you are doing.

I only wanted to remove the branch across the face and not the foliage in front. The idea was not to change the overall setting or appearance of the sculpture, just remove the one thing that was blocking the view of it.



Image 1 - the original RAW image

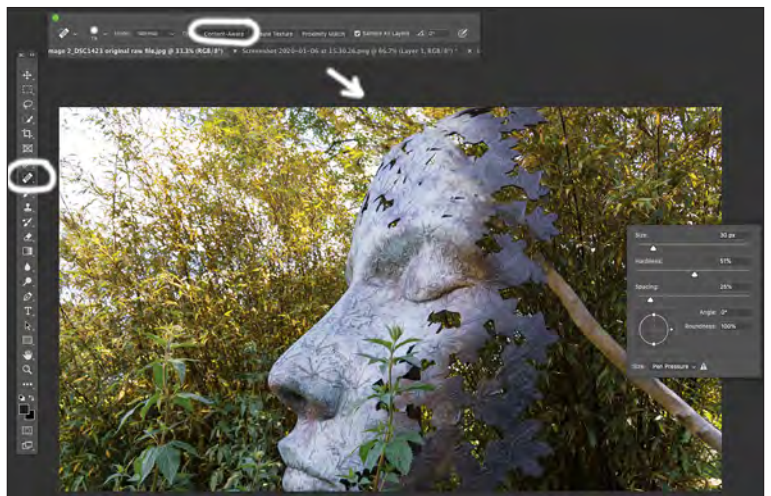


Image 2 - removing the branch

Once the branch was removed, I cropped the image to a 5:4 ratio as I felt it suited the proportions of the face better. I then wanted to inject a little more atmosphere into the image by changing the colour contrast. I felt the greens and yellows too bright and wanted to tone down the colours and slightly soften the image, so that she blended into her landscape. I did this by using one of my favourite pieces of software, *HDR Efex Pro* from the *Nik Collection*. This used to be free from Google but has now been taken over. A free trial is currently available; see nikcollection.dxo.com/. Once downloaded, the *Nik Collection* can be incorporated as an add-on filter to either Lightroom or Photoshop, depending on your workflow preference.

I rarely use *HDR Efex Pro* to create HDR images, but more often to enhance or mute colours and to add or remove textures and structure at the same time. With many Presets to choose from, it's a great starting point. I chose the Preset 16; Dramatic under 'Surreal' as a starting point and just played around with the sliders until I was happy. It's a great place to experiment! See image 3 showing the slider positions I used as my final settings on the right-hand side. I tweaked the structure and saturation in addition to the HDR settings, in order to mute the greens until I was happy with the subtle way the face blended in with her environment.



Image 3 - adjustments in HDR Efex Pro

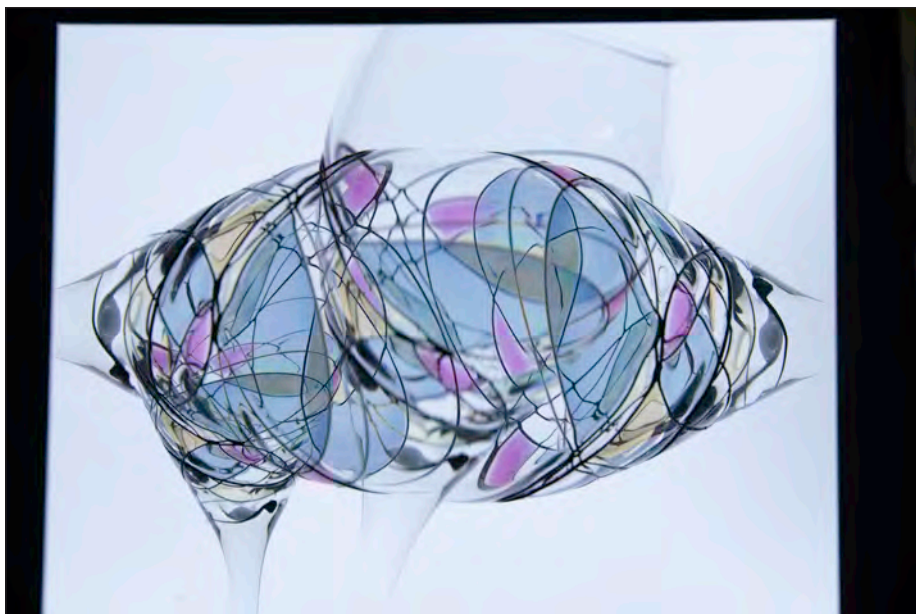


MAKING AN ABSTRACT TRIPTYCH

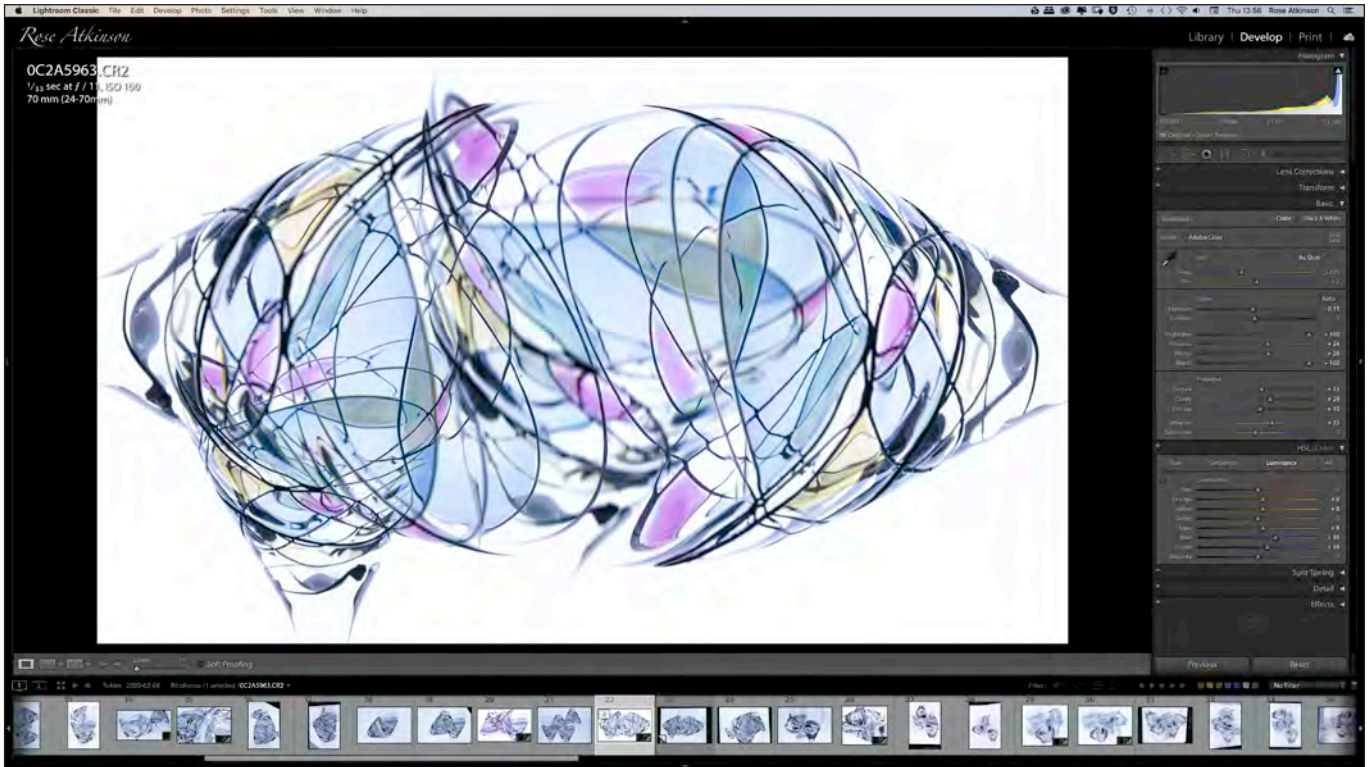
Rose Atkinson LRPS

Unable to pursue my original photography plans during lockdown I turned to making abstracts from household objects. I photographed ornaments, extracts from paintings, textures and patterns from cushions, curtains, rugs... anything that took my eye. One subject I photographed a lot was a decorative wine glass which I have captured in many different ways using intentional camera movement and in-camera multiple exposures. This is how I created one abstract image from the glass.

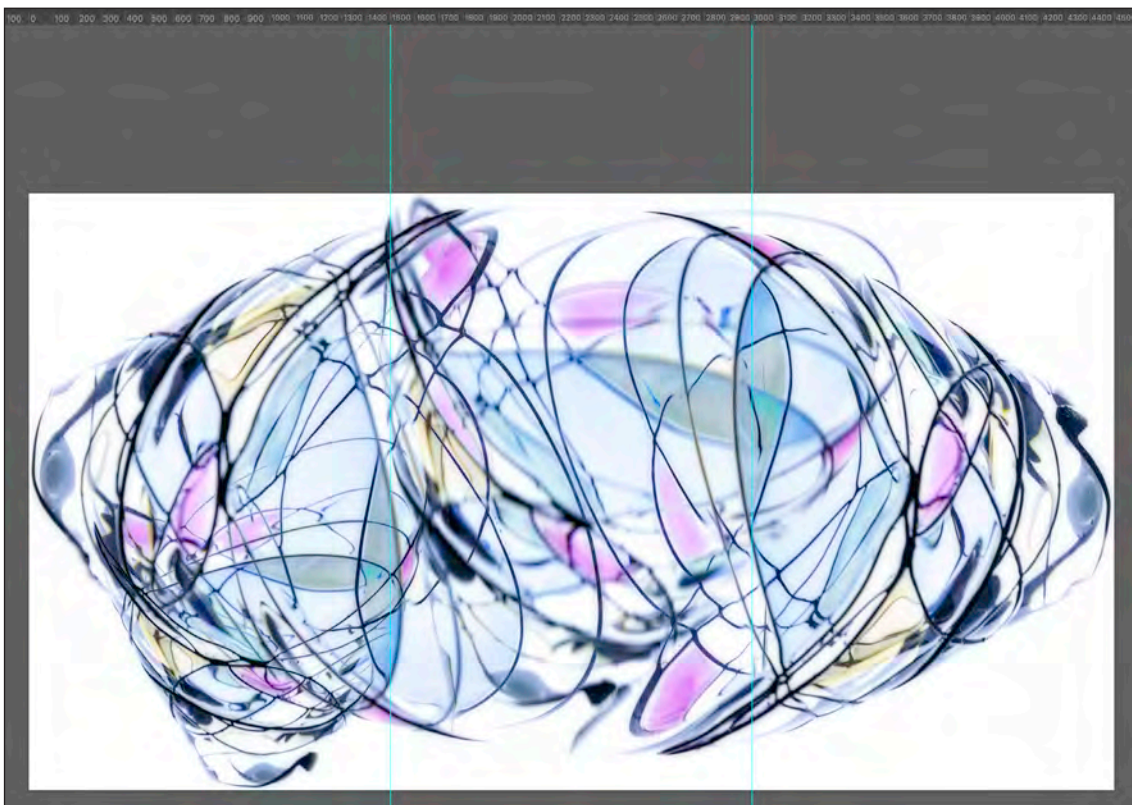
Using a flexible soldering clamp to hold the glass in front of a vertically placed light pad, I took four in-camera multiple exposures at $f/11$, $1/13$ sec and ISO 100, photographing the glass from different angles, overlaying it in different places in the frame. I set the camera's ME function on Average blend mode to even out the exposure automatically and used live view to build a composition. The image straight out of camera is shown below.



I processed the RAW file in Lightroom to enhance the tones and make the background pure white. I then took it into Photoshop and tidied up the composition by cloning out some elements on the edges, as shown below.

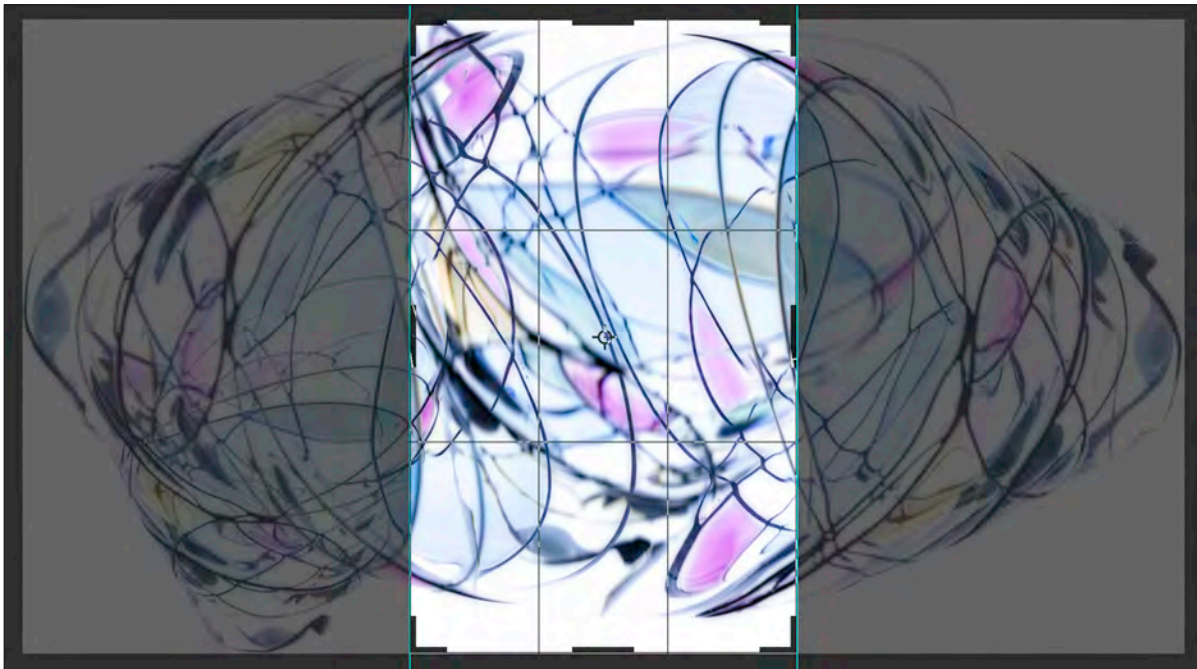


I needed to divide the image into three to create a triptych. Firstly, I cropped it right to the edges on all four sides, then resized it by changing the width to a number I could easily divide into three (maths definitely not my strong point!). Making sure I had the ruler turned on, I dragged two guides across to the 1/3 and 2/3 points, dividing the image into three equal parts. I created a new, bigger file with a white background so I could cut, paste and move all the parts around on the canvas, as below.

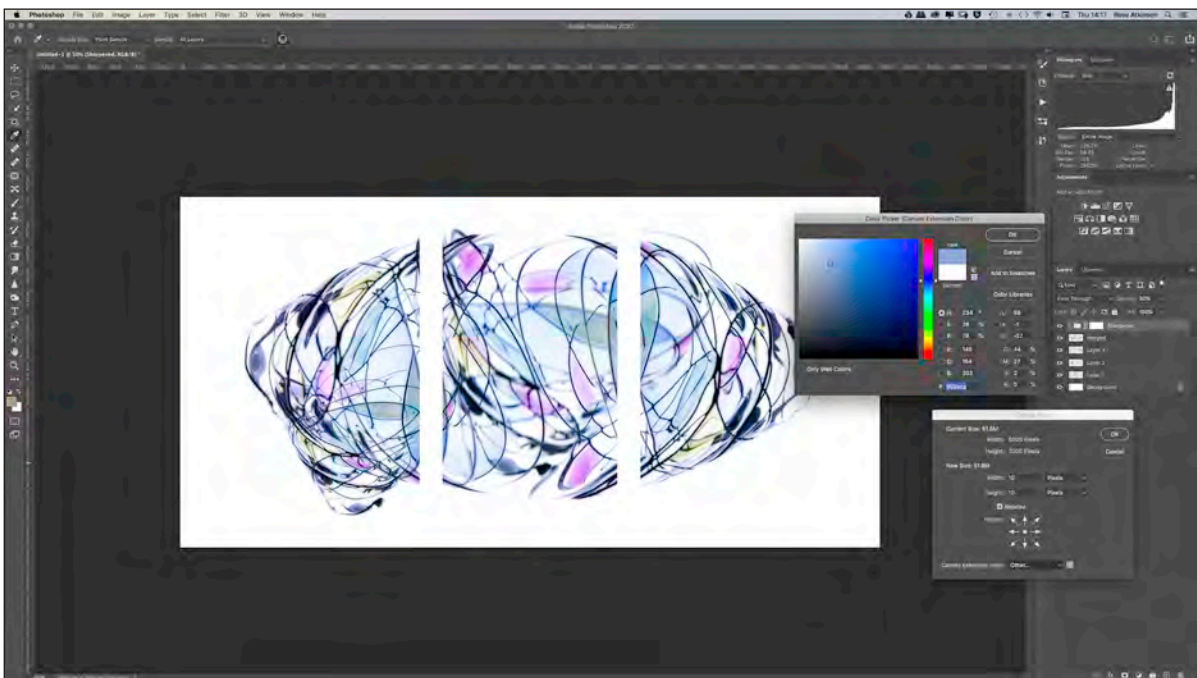


DIGIT CHALLENGE

Going back to the original file I clicked and dragged the rectangular marquee tool to select the middle third - the marquee snaps onto the guide lines on either side making it easy to make a precise selection.



I copied and pasted that selection into the new file which Photoshop automatically placed in the middle of the canvas. I went back to the original image again, copying and pasting the left and right-hand parts into the new canvas using the same method. Photoshop always puts a selection into the middle so I then dragged each of them where I wanted. Once I was happy that the composition looked balanced, I merged the layers, sharpened, and cropped the canvas. As a finishing touch I created a bi-coloured border for the triptych by extending the canvas twice by a few pixels, using the colour picker to select colours from the image; and extended it once more with white to create a matte surround, as below.



This method of using guides in Photoshop to divide images is really quite easy and you can use any combination of horizontal and/or vertical guidelines to help create diptychs, triptychs and multi-image collages.

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



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