

Saturday 30 January 2021

Amateur Photographer

Collecting cameras
What makes a camera collectable?
John Wade shows what to look for

Passionate about photography since 1884

Raw or JPEG?

Do you **really** need to shoot raw? We look at the pros and cons

Beastly images

The fast-growing genre of **animal photojournalism**

Kevin Cummins

On 40 years shooting the **biggest names in music**



TESTED

Sony 35mm F1.4 GM

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DSLR lens buying guide 294 lenses featured in the UK's biggest listings

I N T R O D U C I N G

The Rhino Collection



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The debate over whether it's better to shoot in raw or JPEG is as old as digital photography itself. In the early days the answer was clearly in favour of raw, but over the years JPEG output has improved to the point where the answer is a resounding 'it depends'. This week we look at the factors that you should consider before deciding which is the more suitable for your needs.

Documentary photographers have always turned their cameras on uncomfortable subjects, like war, famine, poverty and exploitation, but recently there has been a growing focus on food production and the way we treat animals. This week we look at a major new book on the subject, edited by former AP Editor Keith Wilson. Finally, if you're thinking of starting a camera collection, or already have one, our expert John Wade presents his guide to what to look out for. **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

If you'd like to see your words or pictures published in Amateur Photographer, here's how:

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This week in 1969

gettyimages

TREASURES FROM THE HULTON ARCHIVE



Rooftop Beatles by Express

On 30 January 1969 The Beatles famously performed their last live public concert on the rooftop of the Apple Organisation building for director Michael Lindsey-Hogg's film documentary, *Let It Be*, on Savile Row, London. Drummer Ringo Starr sits behind his kit, while Paul McCartney and John Lennon perform

at their microphones and George Harrison stands behind them. Lennon's wife, Yoko Ono, is sitting on the right. The location for the gig was decided after several other ideas – including a boat, an asylum, the Tunisian desert and even the Colosseum – were rejected. The group parted ways in 1970.

The Getty Images Hulton Archive is one of the world's great cultural resources. Tracing its origins to the founding of the London Stereoscopic Company in 1854, today it houses over 80 million images spanning the birth of photography to the digital age. Explore it at www.gettyimages.com.

This week's cover image

Robert Pugh contributes to this week's Raw vs JPEG feature, and took our cover shot using the JPEG format. See page 14

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See page 38 for details



It's good to share

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

AP picture of the week

Asian Bride in Darkness by Akhlaq Ahmed

Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 50mm lens, 1/60sec at f/2.8, ISO 400

'I'm a big fan of Hollywood movies,' says Bradford-based Akhlaq, 'and although I photograph a variety of subjects, cinematic style portraits are what I enjoy the most. I had the idea for a portrait of an Asian bride in low key, since these shoots are more usually shot in high key. I took this in my home studio, which is only a small space with softboxes and a black backdrop. It just shows that you can have the smallest bedroom studio and still capture amazing shots.' This is a striking portrait – the bride's costume, make-up, pose and expression are all perfect, while Akhlaq's exquisite lighting and the shallow depth of field draw the viewer's attention inexorably to her eyes. This could indeed be a still from a Hollywood – or Bollywood – movie. Follow Akhlaq on Instagram @Akhlaqphotofilm or on Twitter and YouTube as AA Photography & Film.

#appicoftheweek

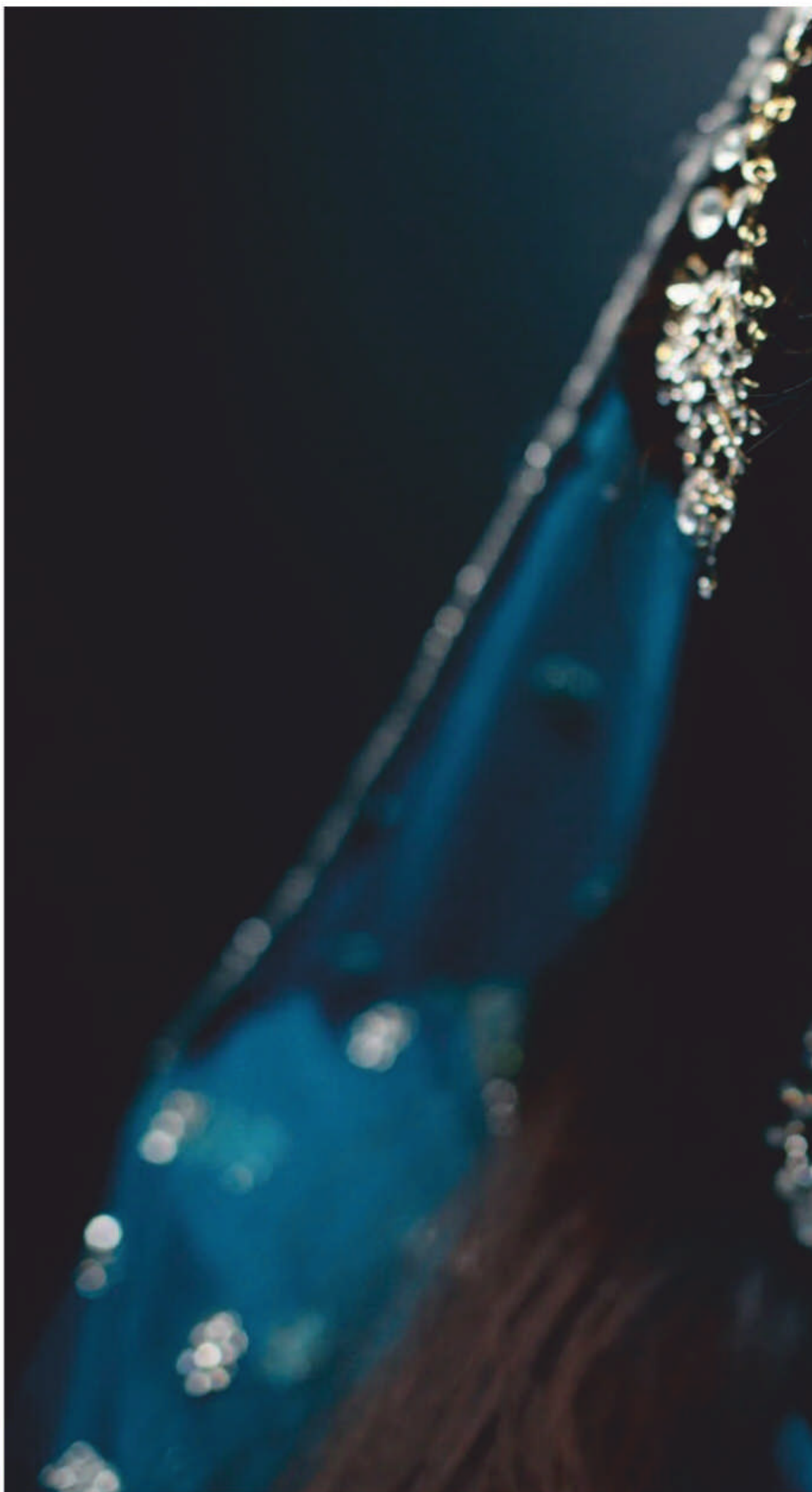
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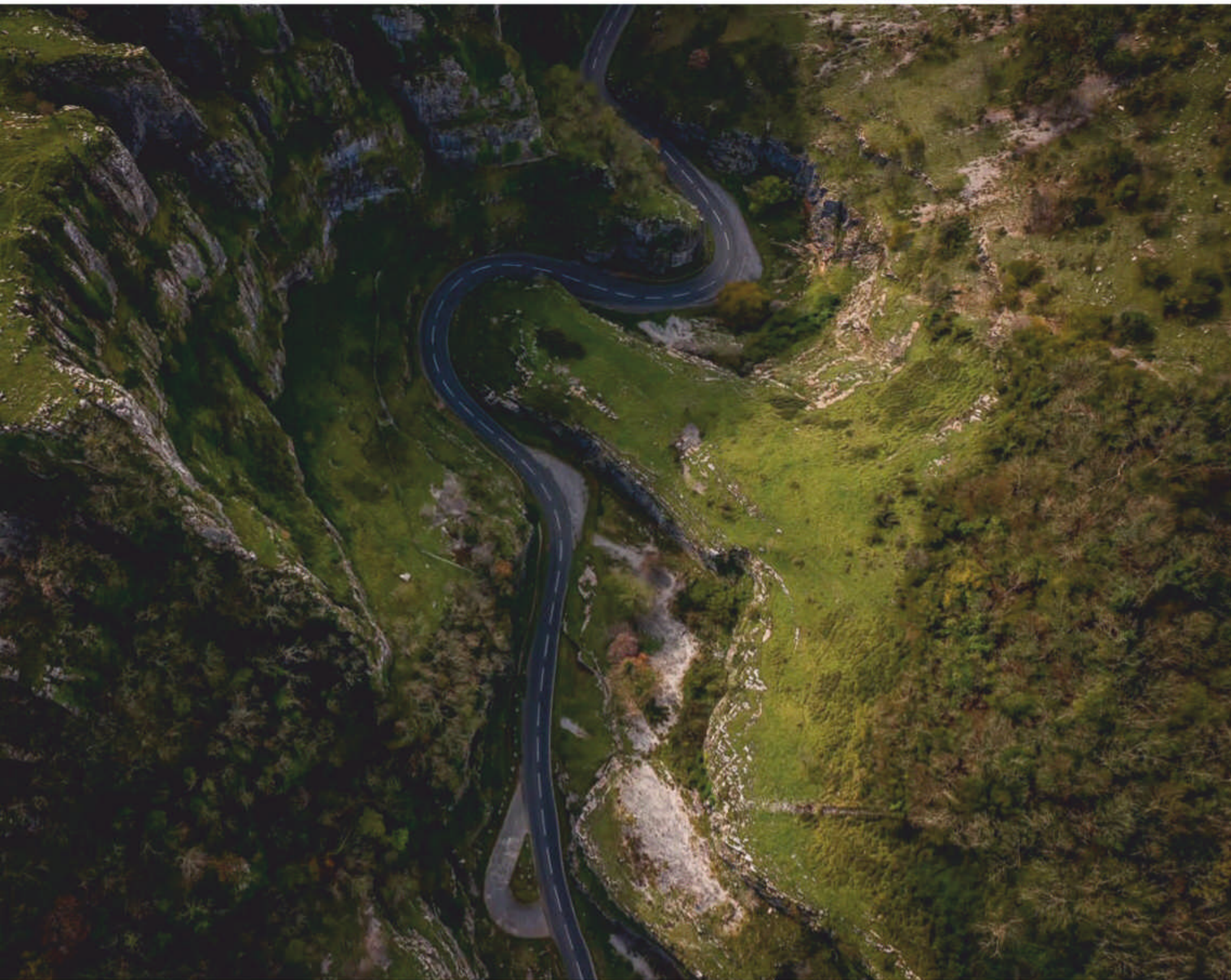


Each week we choose our favourite picture on Facebook, Instagram, Flickr or Twitter using #appicoftheweek. PermaJet proudly supports the online picture of the week winner, who will receive a top-quality print of their image on the finest PermaJet paper*. It is important to bring images to life outside the digital sphere, so we encourage everyone to get printing today! Visit www.permajet.com to learn more.

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Through the Gorge by David Ball

DJI Mavic 2 Pro, 1/30sec at f/3.2, ISO 100

After ten years of experimenting with different genres of photography David says he finally found his passion with landscapes. 'You can find me chasing waves in Cornwall or hiking around the Scottish Highlands, capturing its beauty, and I also take the odd drone image, which is lots of fun.' David took this shot at Cheddar Gorge, in Somerset, on the way back from a trip to Cornwall. 'It's a place I've been meaning to shoot with the drone for a couple of years,' he says. 'I noticed some beautiful light and shadows on the cliff tops so I took the drone up and used the road as my main subject, as I thought it made a strong lead-in for my composition.' Cheddar Gorge is one of Britain's natural wonders and this unusual bird's-eye view certainly captures its magnificence. Visit his website at www.davidballphotography.co.uk or follow him on Instagram at @davidballphotography.

Garden Visitor by Darryl Lauga-Brown

Sony A7 III, 150-600mm, 1/400sec at f/6.3, ISO 2500

'I spotted this garden mouse in our garden, so placed some food in the small terracotta pot outside our back door,' says Darryl, a self-employed gardener who only took up photography last year. 'Straight away the mouse came and posed alongside the pot. Some shots take a while to capture but luckily this one I captured within five minutes.' I managed to sit around 3 metres away without the mouse being disturbed.' Darryl may be new to photography but he seems to have the hang of it already. Well done for being alert to the opportunity! His Instagram is @daz_flicks.



Autumn 1, Highgate Wood, London by Neville Morgan LRPS

Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mk III, 12-100mm F4 IS PRO, 0.4 sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

'I am a self-taught photographer and I strive for minimalism or abstraction in my approach to image making,' explains Neville. 'I look for interpretation rather than representation and am

always searching for different views of the ordinary by exploring line, colour, shape, texture, tone and pattern. This was taken in late afternoon, as a hand-held double exposure in-camera in order to capture the essence of autumn, by combining both the graphic quality of the bare tree branches and the colours of the fallen leaves on the ground. Taken in Highgate Wood, north London. Neville's Instagram is @ojelliven.



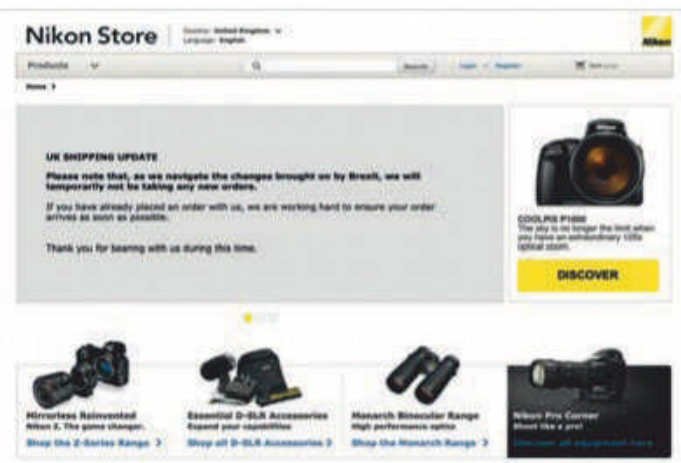
Bath Abbey Reflection by Craig Blackley

Sony A7 II, 17-28mm lens at 24mm, 1/50sec at f/11, ISO 100

'As Bath Abbey has been photographed so many times, I looked for a unique viewpoint to shoot from,' says Craig, a recent BA Photography graduate with an interest in landscapes and architecture. 'I'd shot from this spot before but previous attempts didn't quite work. This time it was just after a heavy downpour when sunlight burst briefly through the clouds, and I used my Tamron 17-28mm wideangle to include more in the image.' It's always difficult to find a new way to capture a much-photographed subject like Bath Abbey, but Craig has done well to create something original.



Want to see your pictures here? Share them with our Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. Or email your best shot to us at ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. See page 3 for how to find us.



Despite Brexit, Nikon orders will arrive

Nikon shipments up and running again

Nikon UK has released an update on its store, saying, 'Please note that, as we navigate the changes brought on by Brexit, we will temporarily not be taking any new orders. If you have already placed an order with us, we are working hard to ensure your order arrives as soon as possible.' Happily, Nikon UK has now told AP that, 'Like many brands, Nikon had been experiencing some issues with delivery due to the impact of Brexit delays, however shipments are now up and running again.'



The aftermath of the attack

Nick Ut attacked

Pulitzer-prize winning photographer Nick Ut, who took the famous 'Napalm Girl' image during the Vietnam war, was attacked by a mugger outside the White House on 14 January after receiving the Medal of Arts from President Trump. According to Nick's Facebook page, his friend and fellow photographer, Mark Edward Harris, helped fight the attacker off, who was arrested by the Secret Service. Nick did not sustain serious injuries.

Strong EOS R5 sales boost Canon's latest results

LAST year was a challenging one for most of the big camera makers, but Canon has started the new year with some positive news. The company announced in mid-January that it is raising its consolidated net income for the fiscal year ending December 2020, thanks to strong sales of digital cameras in China – particularly the EOS R5 and R6 full-frame mirrorless cameras.

The Nikkei business newspaper reported that Canon's consolidated net income for the fiscal year ending December will be 80 billion yen (approximately £565 million) – although this represents a 36% decline year on year, it is still 28 billion yen higher than the

company's previous forecast. As well as the positive performance of new full-frame mirrorless cameras in the Chinese market, printer ink sales increased owing to the rise of home working during the pandemic.

Meanwhile, Yodobashi Camera – one of Japan's largest camera retailers, with huge branches in Tokyo and Osaka – has reported that the EOS R5 was its best-selling camera in December; it was also the best seller at another major retailer, Map Camera. The EOS R6 sold well at both retailers in December, too. Other good sellers at Yodobashi included the Sony Alpha 7C kit, the Sony Alpha 7S III and the Nikon Z 7II.



The Canon EOS R5 full-frame mirrorless camera has sold well in China

We can take photos during our daily exercise

IT IS far from clear when the current lockdown restrictions will lift across the UK, and there is a lot of speculation that the restrictions will be further tightened. Britain has one of the worst mortality and infection rates in the world, despite the promise of widespread vaccination bringing down the numbers. So where does this leave photographers? While you are not allowed to go out specifically for recreational or leisure purposes, including photography, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport confirmed to AP that it is okay to take photos as part of your daily exercise.

'It goes back to applying common sense,' said a spokesperson. 'We've made clear that basic exercise is allowed. So if you're on the move whilst doing photography, then yes that should be fine.' The key point here is 'on the



Can we take photos during lockdown?

move,' so setting up a tripod or lighting gear at the moment is likely to attract official attention – unless you are a professional landscape photographer, say, who is unable to work from home. See the official exercise guidance for England at bit.ly/exerciserules.



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Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II	9 Excellent	£630
Nikon Z50 Body	9 Excellent	£540

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Inclusion a key trend this year: Shutterstock

MAJOR stock image library Shutterstock has released its annual Creative Trends report. The data, analysed over the past year across images, videos, and music, helps to determine the trends that Shutterstock believes will globally influence creative direction and aesthetics in 2021.

From a photography perspective, Shutterstock found two key trends that demonstrated photographers are focusing more on real people, real situations and real life.

'In alignment with the events of 2020, there was a demand for inclusion and representation, with searches such as non-binary (+2,300%) and authentic people (+133%) trending up,' according



to the company. 'There are over 7.5 billion people on Earth, and authentic portraiture is helping us see the wide gamut of beauty across our world; Shutterstock searches for "candid portraits" were also up by 350%.'

Searches for 'self-care' increased by +177%, with 'home hobbies' not far behind with an increase of +102%. 'This year's trends centred on individuality, imperfection, authenticity, and escapism – despite the obstacles we were forced to navigate and the uncertainty we faced, there was no shortage of creativity and innovation,' added creative director, Flo Lau. See: bit.ly/newshutterstockreport.

Last year's winner, by KM Assad



Food POTY exhibition at RPS

THE PINK Lady Food Photographer of the Year competition is premiering its tenth-anniversary exhibition at the Royal Photographic Society HQ in Bristol. The exhibition will feature the winning and highly commended images from this year's competition, which there is still time to enter (entries close at midnight, 7 February). This year's global judging panel, chaired by well-known food photographer, David Loftus, includes Fiona Shields, head of photography, Guardian News & Media, Susan Bright, writer and curator, and Nik Sharma,

cookbook author and photographer. 'The RPS is excited to present the visual feast that will be the Pink Lady Food Photographer of the Year 2021 exhibition at its new gallery space in Bristol and are proud to be the first venue to host the finalist work outside London,' said Dr Michael Pritchard, director of education and public affairs. 'This showcase is sure to satisfy the city's ardent foodies and the wider public.' The exhibition will run from 20 November to 12 December 2021. Entry is free. See www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com.

Books

The latest and best books from the world of photography



A-Z of Photography by Mike J Smith

£1.99 / £5.99, Independently published, eBook / softback, 178 pages, ISBN: 979-8579545473



Delve into the people, history, manufacturers, techniques and images of photography from the gear and artists of today as well as those at its birth in the early 1800s. This book is presented in sections devoted to every letter of the alphabet, with two per letter leaving you with 52 detailed explanations of topics, some of which will be familiar, some of which won't.

There's everything here from Manuel Álvarez Bravo and Bronica through to Image Stabilisation and Zeiss. The book is also illustrated with 55 images and extensive hyperlinking (in the digital version) to allow you to explore each subject further. A great reference manual to flick through.

The Relation Between Us by Bo Bech

£42, hardback, Narayana Press, 368 pages

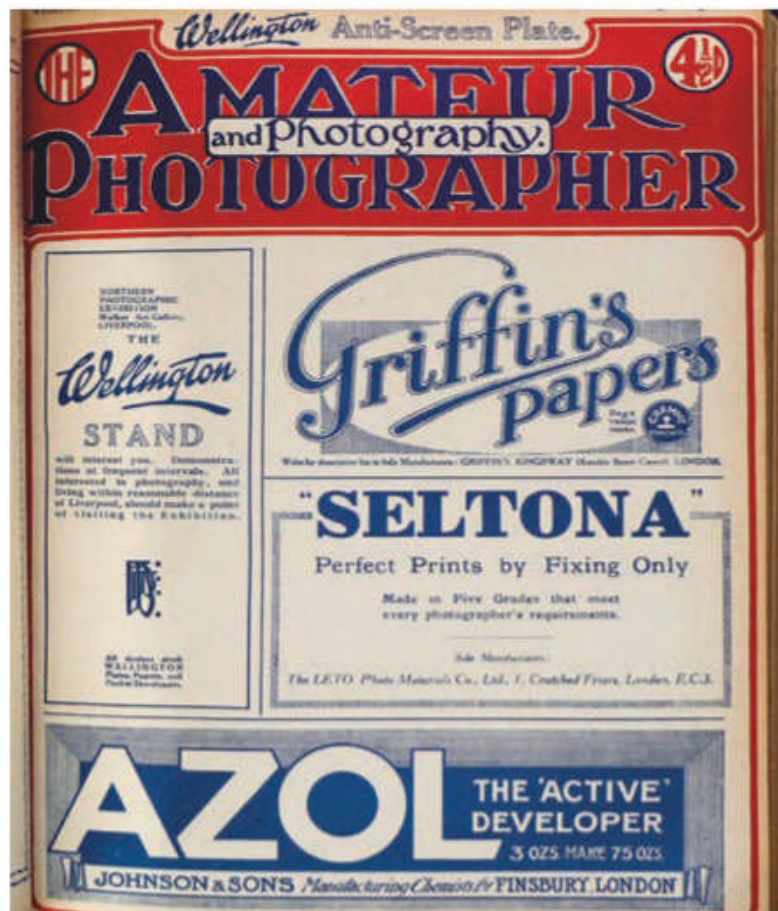


Three passions have influenced the life of chef Bo Bech – cooking, travel and photography. While his food has led him to becoming a celebrated chef across the world, his travel and photography has remained a private hobby – until now.

Over the past 15 years, Bech has taken over 50,000 photographs, with this compilation put together in 2020. From Tokyo's most elusive sushi restaurants to a temple in Bhutan; from the favela in Rio de Janeiro to a food market in Moscow, no matter where he travels, he brings his appetite, love for food and his camera. Combining photo reportage, journal notes, stories and recipes to inspire rather than dutifully follow, this book is a visual feast for all lovers of cuisine-inspired photography.

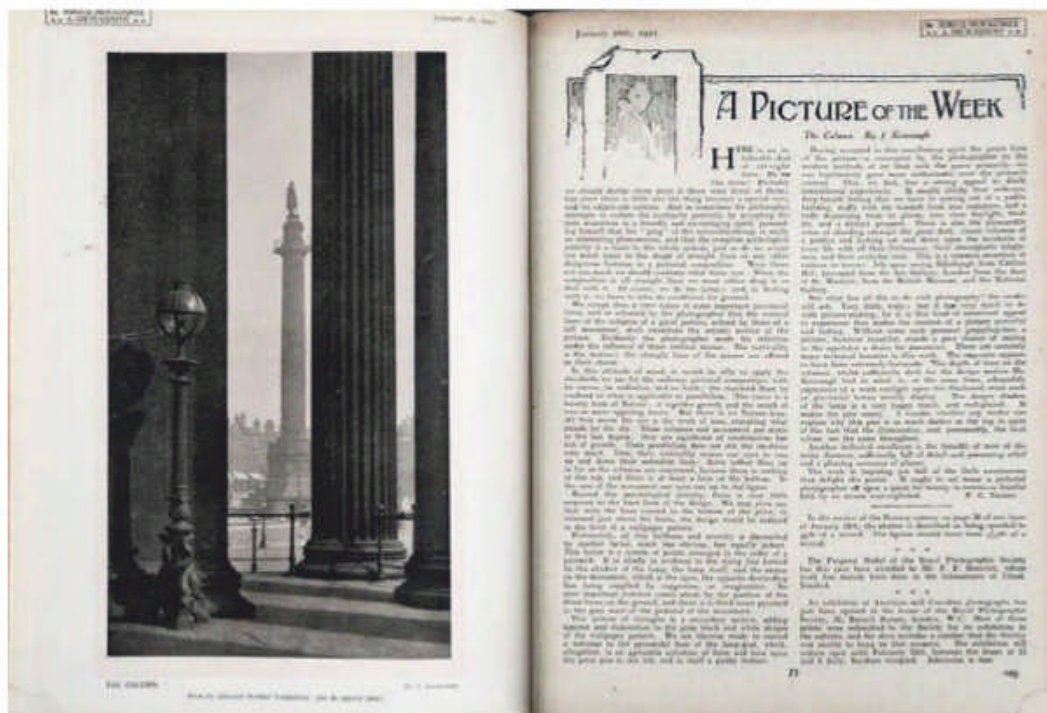
From the archive

Nigel Atherton looks back at past AP issues

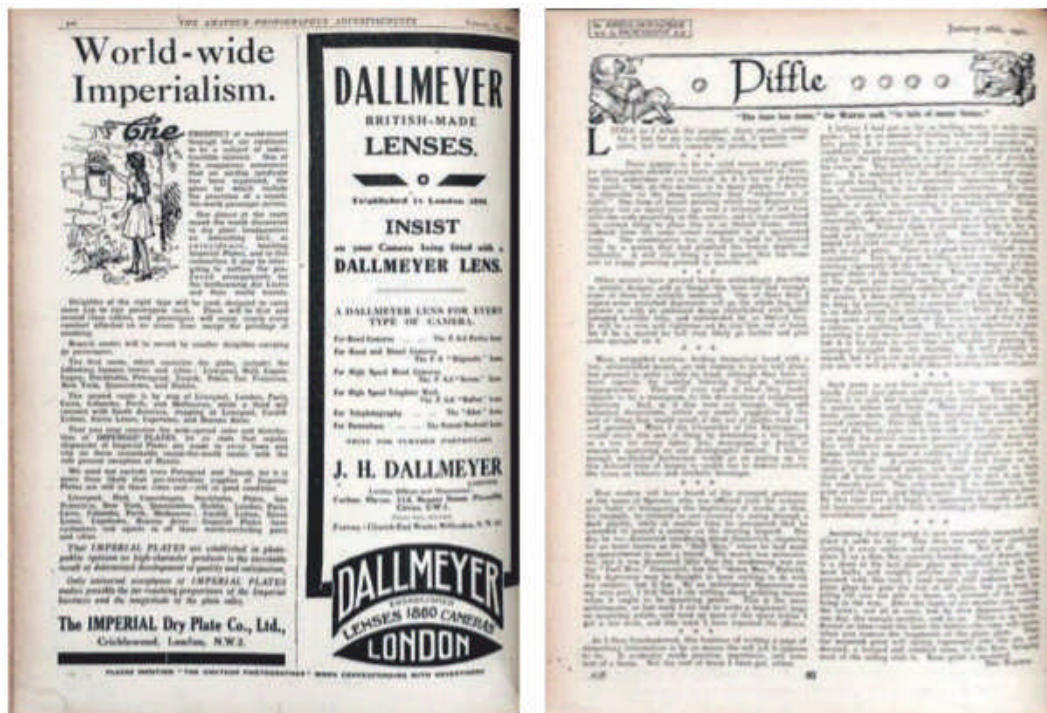


26 January 1921

ONE HUNDRED years ago photography was a grave and serious business. 'Here is an intolerable deal of straight lines,' began FC Tilney in his critique of J Kennaugh's *The Column*. 'Do we like them? Probably we should dislike them more if there were fewer of them.' He compared the tolerance of such compositions with having to endure a toothache, but it turned out that, despite everything, he rather liked it. 'The work is imposing yet full of the little sweetnesses that delight the purist. It ought to set many a pictorial photographer off on a quest for beauty in towns – a fruitful field by no means over-exploited.' In his weekly *Piffle* column, *The Walrus* raged about fancy photo mounts that were 'disgracefully popular'. When placed in an Oxford frame, 'the combination is one that would be tolerated only by a nation that had plumbed the lowest depths of barbarity.' The highlight however was the Imperial Plates ad. 'The prospect of world-travel through the air continues to be a subject of indestructible interest,' it began, before enthusing about the forthcoming plans for a fleet of airships that would soon be providing a round-the-world passenger service. 'Dirigibles of the rigid type will be used, designed to carry some 150 to 250 passengers each. There will be first and second class cabins, and passengers will enjoy nearly every comfort afforded on an ocean liner except for the privilege of smoking.' Imperial was delighted to announce that their plates would be available in every port of call except for Russia, thanks to that nuisance Lenin, though pre-revolution supplies may still be available in Petrograd and Tomsk.

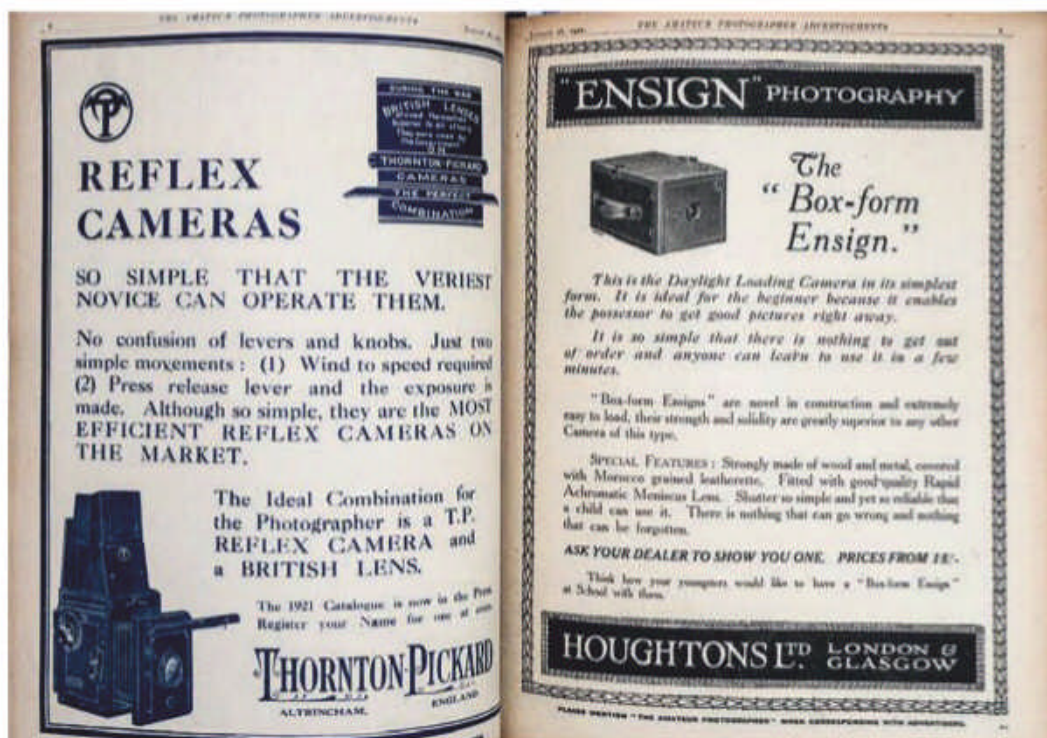


'An intolerable deal of straight lines' but FC Tilney confessed that he rather liked it



Imperial enthuses about airship travel

'The Walrus' gets annoyed about mounts



Ads for Thornton Pickard cameras (from around £550) and Ensign (from £33)

SIGMA

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Raw **vs** JPEG

JPEG offers the ultimate in convenience while raw files have more data, but there's a bit more to file format choice than that.

Angela Nicholson explains the key points

Carolyn Mendelsohn
chooses to shoot in raw
to capture the maximum
amount of data possible
Nikon D800, 85mm, 1/2000sec at f/4,
ISO 400

© CAROLYN MENDELSON



1 First decision

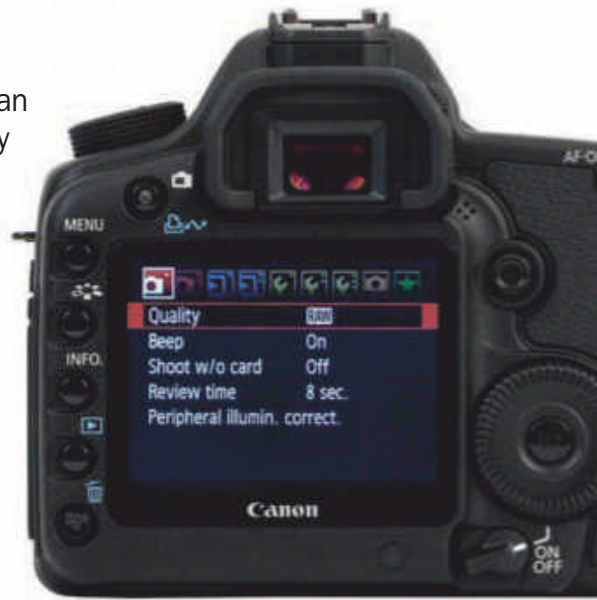
When you're setting up your camera for the first time, one of the decisions that you have to make is what file format you want to shoot in. This usually comes down to a choice of two formats, JPEG and raw, with the option to shoot both simultaneously.

If you're new to photography and the concept of editing images, JPEGs make a good choice because they are universally recognised and can be opened and viewed by any image-viewing or editing software. You can upload them to Facebook or email them to a friend and they are visible.

Raw files, on the other hand, can only be opened and viewed in specialist software. Thankfully, this is provided by the camera manufacturer and there are alternatives from

third-party software companies like Adobe, Phase One and DxO. Before you can share a raw file, it needs to be processed and converted into a more accessible file format (usually a JPEG).

If you decide to only shoot JPEG images, make sure that you select the largest size and highest quality via the camera menu.



2 What is a JPEG?

JPEG stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group, which is the name of the committee that defined the format's standard, and a JPEG file has the file extension .JPG at the end of its name.

The format uses a lossy form of compression, which means that data is lost from the image when it is saved, helping to keep its size down.

3 What is a raw file?

Raw files are often referred to as digital negatives because they contain the maximum amount of data that can be gathered by the camera. Also, setting selections such as the white balance and filter effects aren't 'baked in' like they are with a JPEG, which means you have more scope to change how the image looks.

Raw files are accompanied by a JPEG that has the camera settings applied, so when you scroll through your images on the computer, or open the raw files in the manufacturer's software, you see the image. However, these settings may be stripped out by third-party software, so you see a less-processed image when you open the file for editing. If you shoot in monochrome mode, for example, you may see a colour image when you open the raw file in Adobe Camera Raw, the raw-file conversion software that comes with Photoshop, or DxO PhotoLab 4.

4 Software updates

Even though a raw file name extension (ARW, CR3, ORF, NEF and WR2 etc.) may be the same as that from another camera by the same manufacturer, the format is bespoke to the camera model. When a new camera is introduced, raw-editing software needs to be updated before it can read the files. Camera manufacturers issue updated software when the camera goes to market and most third-party raw editing software developers are pretty quick to roll out updates these days.

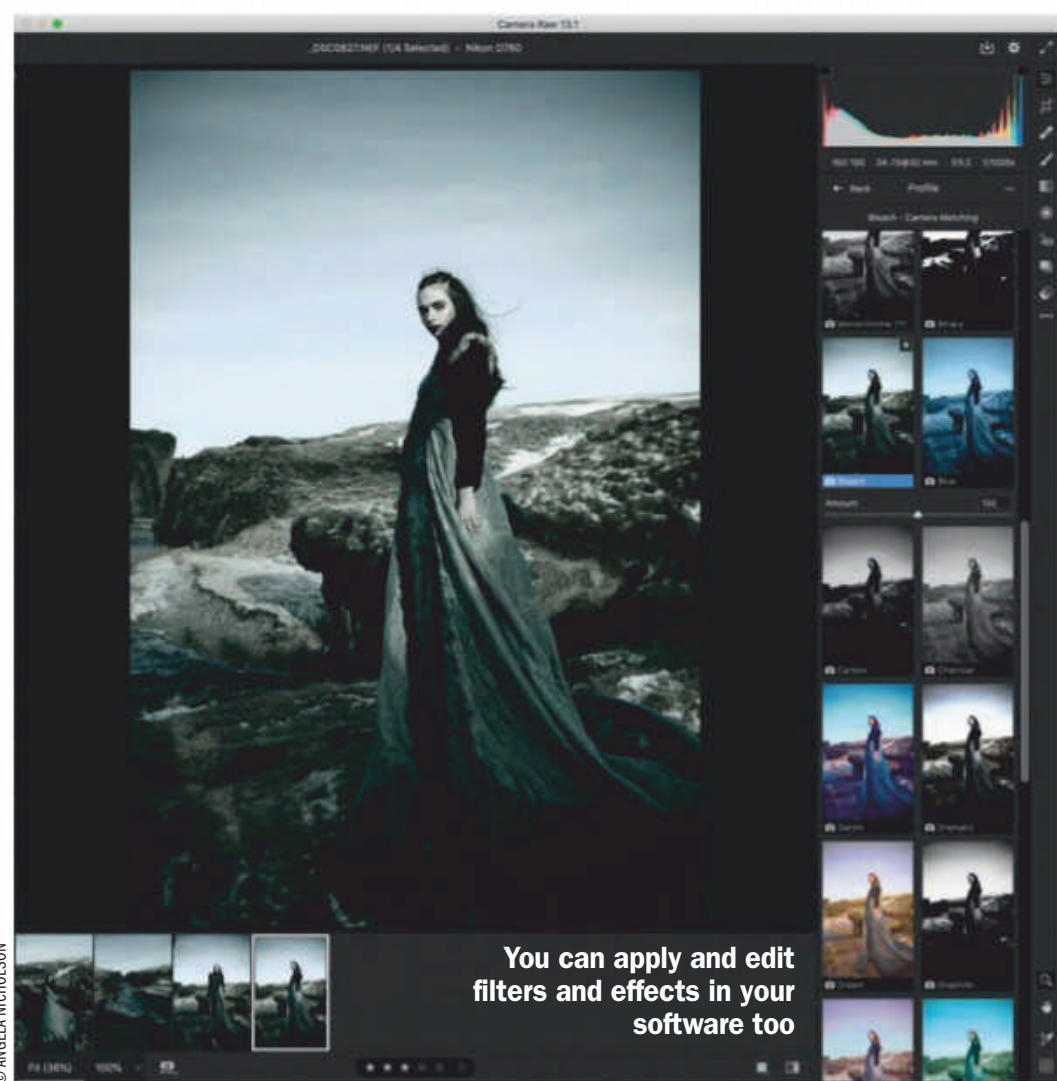
5 Which is best for colour?

JPEG images are 8-bit files which means they can contain up to 256 tonal values for the red, green and blue channels. That gives them a total of 16.8 million (256x256x256) possible colours. 12-bit raw files, however, can store up to 4,096 tonal values per colour channel, giving a total of 68.7 billion colours. Some cameras enable you to shoot 14-bit raw files which pushes the number of colours to an incredible 4.4 trillion (16,384 per channel).

A top-quality computer monitor can display up to 1 billion colours, so it can't display the full range of colours

from a 12-bit raw file, but it's more than enough for a JPEG.

The advantage of raw comes when you need to edit the colours: more data is available so you can make greater adjustments without introducing banding, posterisation or colour shifts. This is particularly useful when you're working with extremes of colour and exposure, for example when you're editing highlight areas on a portrait or the brightest areas of a blue sky. That extra information means you are more likely to be able to retain subtle transitions and natural colours with a raw file.



6 Getting the look

One of the great things about JPEG files is that they can be share-ready. You can use the in-camera Picture Styles, Picture Controls, Film Simulation modes or Art Filters and effects to capture an image that looks good enough to share straight away. I'm a fan of Fujifilm's Classic Chrome and Acros Film Simulation modes for example, while Nikon's Bleached Picture Control produces some great results and Olympus's Grainy Black and White Art Filter is nice for moody portraits and street scenes.

As I mentioned earlier, if you shoot raw files the effects that are applied

in-camera may be stripped out when you open the file in third-party raw processing software. However, it may be possible to retain, edit or apply these effects in the software supplied by the camera manufacturer or in Lightroom or Adobe Camera Raw as some in-camera treatments are stored as profiles. With images from Nikon cameras, for example, you'll find all the Picture Control options are available to apply as a one-click edit, but you can also adjust the degree of the applied effect and tweak all the usual parameters. It's a slower process but you may get better results than the JPEG straight from camera.

7 Dynamic range

As well as having a wider range of colours, the extra bit-depth of raw files mean they have more dynamic range. That means that they can have a greater range of tones. In some instances you may not be able to distinguish a raw file from a JPEG, especially if you're only sharing small images or making small prints, but on other occasions you may notice that raw files have smoother tonal gradations at the extreme ends of the exposure range and that there's more detail in the brighter and darkest parts of the image.



8 File size and storage

Take a look at a folder full of raw and JPEG files and another advantage of JPEGs becomes immediately apparent – they take up much less room on a memory card or storage drive. For example, the folder shown here contains images from the 24.5MP Nikon D780 and the 14-bit lossless-compressed raw files take up around 2.7x the storage space of the Large Fine-quality JPEGs. When the JPEGs are opened for editing, they expand and a 9.1MB file, for example, becomes a 69.6MB file – however, it compresses down again on closing.

While the JPEGs take up much less space than the raw files, at around 10MB each, it only takes around 100 JPEGs to occupy 1GB of storage, so if you're shooting raw and JPEG files simultaneously, but only using the raw images longer-term, you might want to consider getting rid of the original JPEGs. Also, if you use the JPEGs for sharing quickly on social media, you could consider switching from shooting the largest to the smallest-sized files. On the D780 this reduces the Fine-quality JPEGs to around 4.1MB while the Small Basic-quality files occupy just 1.2MB of storage capacity.

Name	Date...ified	Size	Kind
_DSC1897.JPG	22/02/2020	9.1 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1897.NEF	22/02/2020	25.8 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1896.JPG	22/02/2020	9.6 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1896.NEF	22/02/2020	26.1 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1895.JPG	22/02/2020	9.9 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1895.NEF	22/02/2020	26.2 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1894.JPG	22/02/2020	10.2 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1894.NEF	22/02/2020	26.5 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1893.JPG	22/02/2020	10.1 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1893.NEF	22/02/2020	26.4 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1892.JPG	22/02/2020	9.9 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1892.NEF	22/02/2020	26.2 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1891.JPG	22/02/2020	10.3 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1891.NEF	22/02/2020	26.4 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1890.JPG	22/02/2020	10.4 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1890.NEF	22/02/2020	26.5 MB	Nikon raw image
_DSC1889.JPG	22/02/2020	7.7 MB	JPEG image
_DSC1889.NEF	22/02/2020	25.2 MB	Nikon raw image

Carolyn Mendelsohn
shoots raw files in manual
exposure mode for
maximum control
Nikon D800, 24-70mm, 1/200sec at
f/2.8, ISO 400

© CAROLYN MENDELSON

Raw-only

Carolyn Mendelsohn is a photographer and filmmaker. Her passion is photographic and film work on a large scale, based on the lives of individuals and their stories. She says, 'Whether on location or in a studio, I love having complete control of the creative process and I am happiest when I am shooting raw files in manual exposure mode. I aim to get everything right in camera, however occasionally if I am working in challenging lighting conditions – changeable weather on location or dealing inside with different lighting sources – then I need to tweak the file post-capture. I choose to shoot in raw format because it is a brilliant starting point; all the information is contained within the file, and no processing has been applied (unlike JPEGs). The file is of the highest quality, so should there ever be any issues, for example, any areas where the highlights are almost blown, or the shadows are too dark (underexposed,) then it is easy to correct them when processing the file and there is more latitude. I tend to process the file lightly in Adobe Lightroom, tweaking the curves, and contrast. I can bring what is essentially a flat file full of information to life and give the image a signature look.'

www.carolynmendelsohnphoto.com

www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

JPEG-only

Robert Pugh is a wedding and portrait photographer, and although he shoots raw files at the same time as JPEGs, the raw files are only a back-up and he doesn't touch them unless something has gone wrong with a JPEG – usually a sudden change in the light causing a change in the white balance. He explains, 'I like to get as much as I possibly can right in-camera because it saves me spending time at my computer processing raw files. I still shoot raw files just in case, but I've set my camera so that raw files go to one card and JPEGs to the other. I only import the JPEGs to my computer and if I need a raw file, I only download the one I require from the SD card.'

Once everything is finished and I've delivered all the images and the album to client, I format the cards for a new day. I shoot around 32 weddings a year and I only tend to download and process around 12 to 16 raw images in total. I prefer to use JPEGs because they are faster to load and render and they take up much less storage capacity.'

www.rpphotographybydesign.co.uk

Robert Pugh shoots
both JPEG and raw
files as a back-up
Sony A9, 25mm, 1/1250sec at
f/5.6, ISO 100



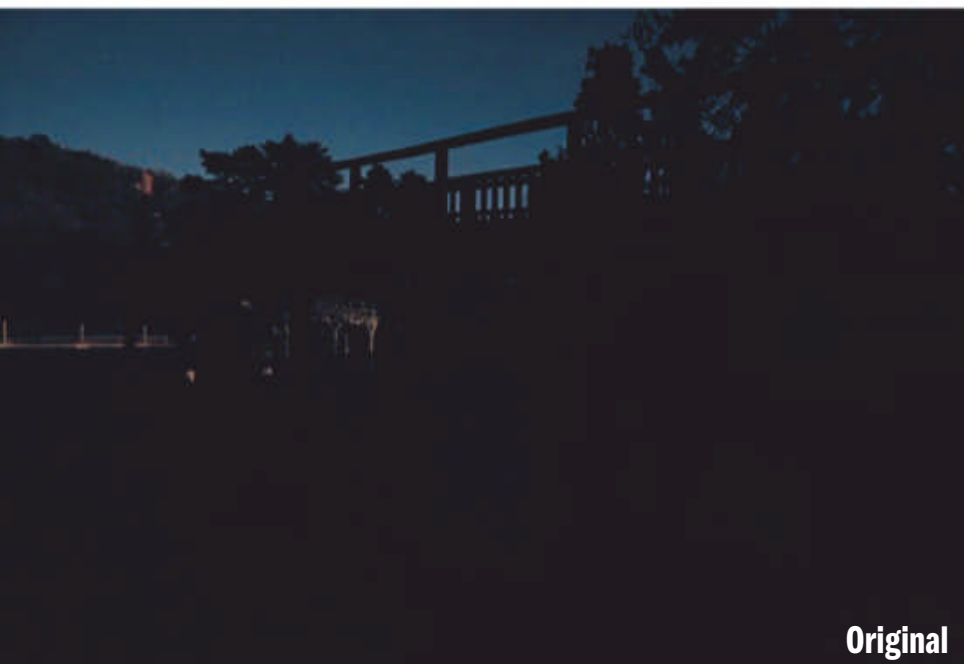
© ROBERT PUGH

9 Recovering highlights

A benefit of raw files having a greater dynamic range is that they have a greater latitude for recovering the brighter areas of an image. If the highlights are burned out, they cannot be pulled back, but there's likely to be a smoother gradation towards the burned-out area than in a simultaneously captured JPEG image.

In the brighter parts of this scene, which was simultaneously captured in raw and JPEG format, for example, the specular highlights look more natural in the raw files than they do in the JPEG. Even after some careful adjustment, they quickly become a large burned-out area in the JPEG whereas in the raw they look like sparkly highlights.

‘Whichever file type you work on, zoom in to 100% and watch out for noise and/or false colours appearing in the shadows’



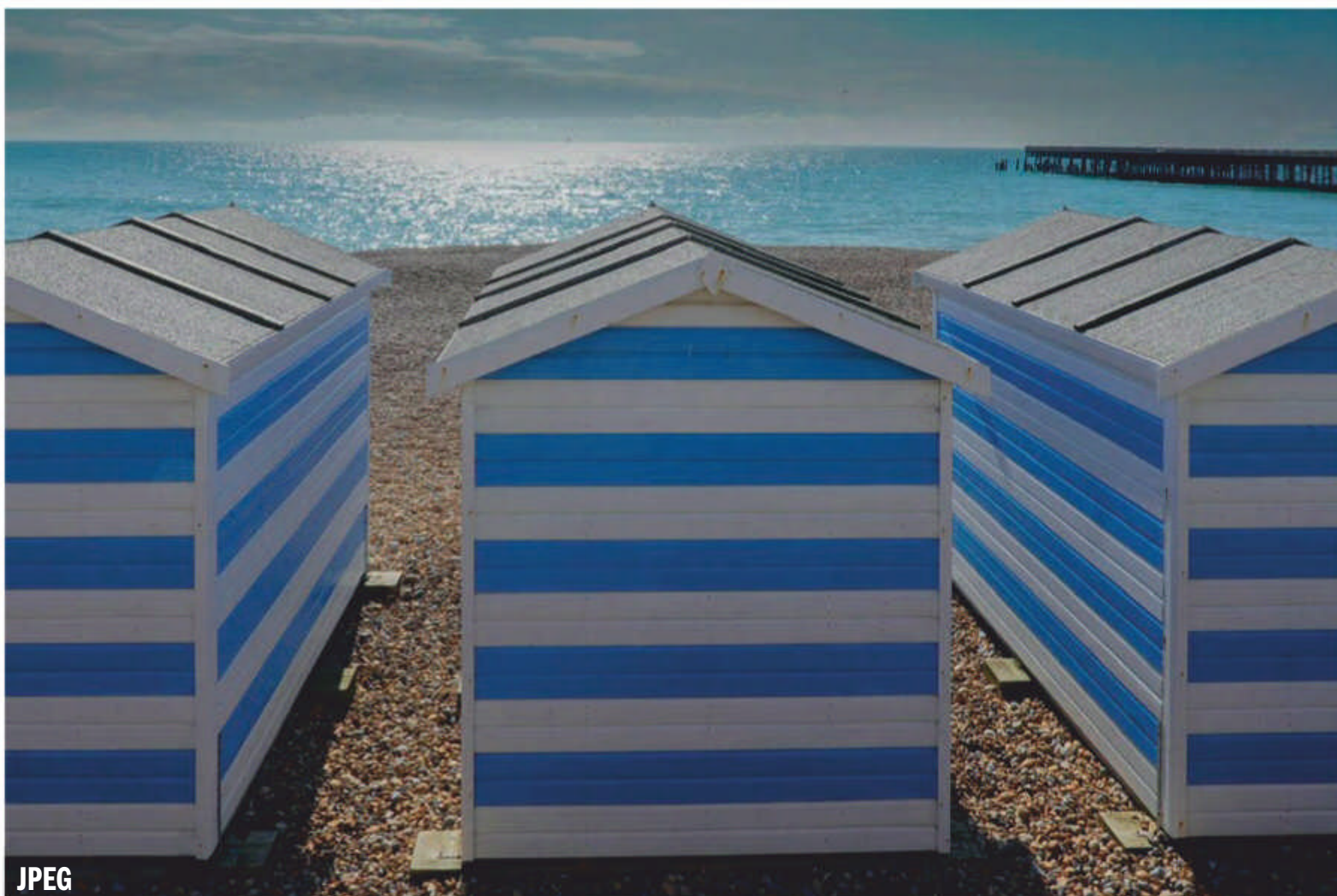
10 Boosting shadows

Just like the highlights, the shadows in an image have less information in a JPEG than in a raw file. That means that you may not be able to brighten them as much as you can with a raw file. This heightened potential for highlight recover and shadow-boosting is especially helpful in landscape photography when you may want to under-expose a little, to capture every scrap of detail in the brightest areas of the clouds.

Whichever file type you work on, zoom in to 100% and watch out for noise and /or false colours appearing in the shadows.

The raw and JPEG images shown here were deliberately underexposed to make them almost completely black, and the files were brightened in Adobe Camera Raw to bring out the details. The raw file has coped much better than the JPEG with the exposure change, the colours look more natural, the details are clearer across the whole image and there's less luminance noise.





11 Best for burst depth

If you're shooting sport or fast action and using a high continuous shooting rate, you'll find that you're able to shoot more images in one hit if you set your camera to JPEG-only. If you're shooting at 20fps with the Canon EOS R6, for example, you can get 120 raw files in a single 6-second blast but if you switch to JPEG-only you can shoot over 1,000 images. That could be useful when the action is unpredictable.

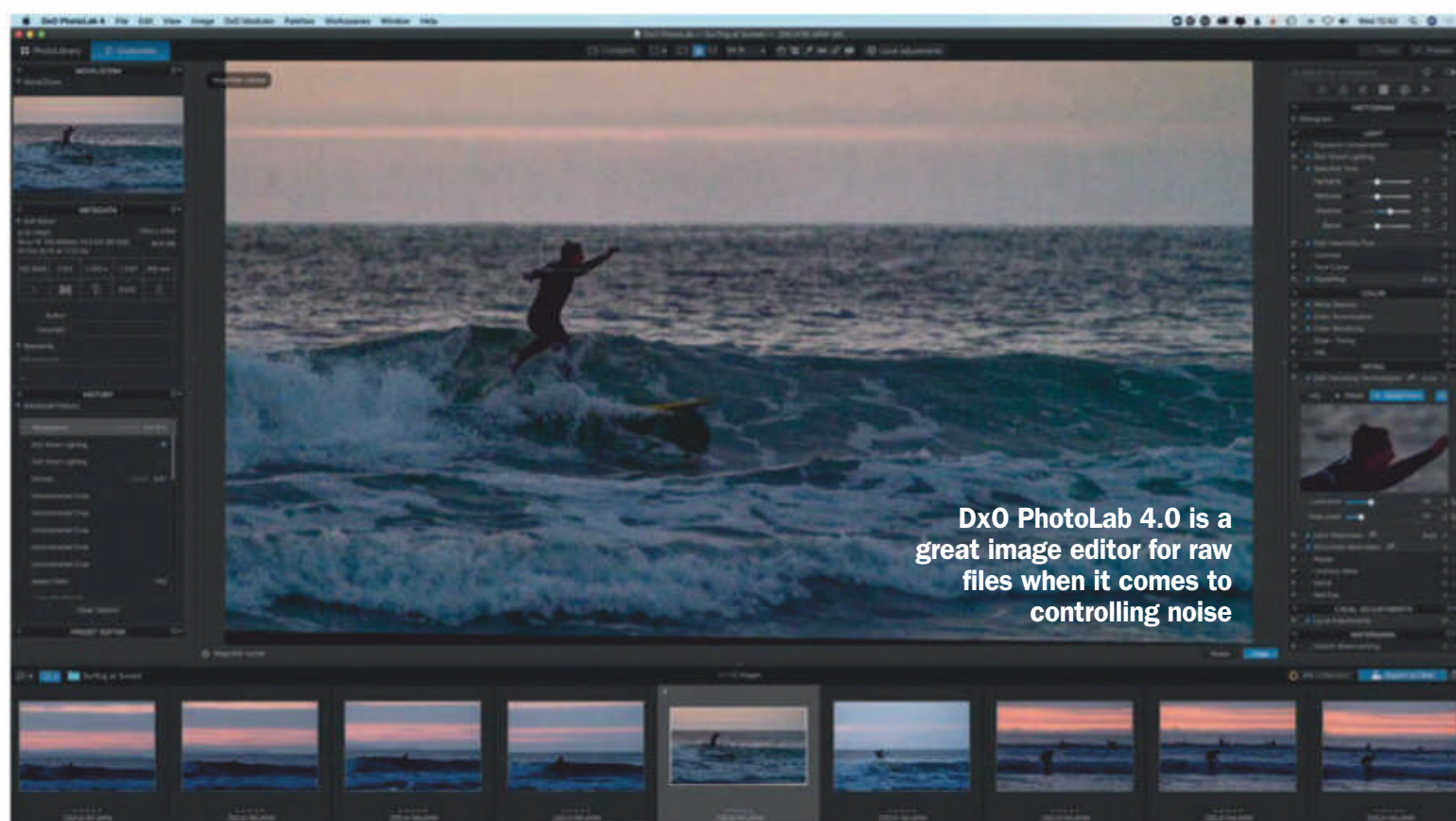
12 Noise control

Most cameras allow you to set the level of noise reduction that's applied to JPEGs and it's well worth experimenting with the settings to see which you prefer. On the whole it's best to be cautious and not ramp up noise reduction to its top setting because it can result in some loss of detail and smudging of finer details. You may also want to vary the strength of the noise reduction depending upon the subject and the ISO setting.

While using in-camera noise reduction keeps things simple, the best-quality results are produced when you

tackle noise at the post-capture processing stage. Some software packages enable you to reduce the amount of visible noise in JPEGs, but the highest-quality results come from raw files that have received bespoke treatment with a careful eye on the details.

If you read my round-up of noise-reduction software in our 16 January issue, you'll know that DxO PhotoLab 4.0 is my pick of the options out there (it's also a great image editor), but it only works on raw files. Topaz Labs DeNoise AI also works well and it can work with JPEGs, but the results are still better with raw files.



DxO PhotoLab 4.0 is a great image editor for raw files when it comes to controlling noise



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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Review everything

I have read with interest the frequent exchanges in Inbox regarding AP reviewing higher-end, relatively expensive cameras. Much of the critique seems to boil down to: 'I can't afford camera X and therefore you shouldn't review it.' It seems to me arrogant to assume that any one person's particular set of life choices and circumstances should act as a proxy for a whole extraordinarily disparate group such as photographers. For any particular piece of high-end kit there will be a whole range of responses to it, and to those who choose to own it. These might include envy, ridicule, and dismissing it as irrelevant, while others will see its availability as aspirational and a sign of a healthy industry.

I strongly support AP reviewing the whole range of camera kit available, including the highest-end models. I can still remember reading the review of a Hasselblad 503CW as a teenager and dreaming that one day I might own such a beast. I didn't find it offensive that a camera I couldn't afford was being reviewed but rather enjoyed reading about this wonderful piece of kit. Years later, when I did finally acquire one on the used market (and for less than the cost of



Mark is glad AP reviews a wide spectrum of cameras

most modern mirrorless cameras), referring back to that review was both really nice and very useful.

Leica cameras seem to be singled out for particular opprobrium but I think a pertinent question is how could AP not review something as special as the M10 Monochrom, which brings the unique concept of a monochrome sensor and which is therefore relevant both as a tool in its own right and also a wake-up call for the rest of the industry. It goes without saying, of course, that AP should also review the gloriously inexpensive cameras but I believe it does this very well. For me at least I'm glad that AP caters for the whole range of photographers and chooses to continue to evaluate significant cameras regardless of cost.

Mark Brickley

Win! SAMSUNG

A Samsung 64GB EVO Plus microSDXC with SD adapter Class 10 UHS-1 Grade U3 memory card supports 4K UHD. Offering R/W speeds of up to 100MB/s / 20MB/s and a 10-year limited warranty. www.samsung.com/uk/memory-cards.



On the bridge

Roger Braga's letter about how complicated modern cameras are rang true with me to a certain extent. I also agree you

can use a complicated camera as a simple camera. I generally just used aperture priority most of the time. I am 78 and found the weight of

the camera and lenses a burden. I no longer strive for perfection, just to enjoy what I take, so I have exchanged all my kit at MPB for a Panasonic

FZ1000 bridge camera plus a load of cash. I can cover all my needs with the zoom lens and get good results with a lighter bit of kit. MPB were quick and reasonably priced, particularly taking into account the service they gave. Thank you for a fine magazine.

John Farebrother

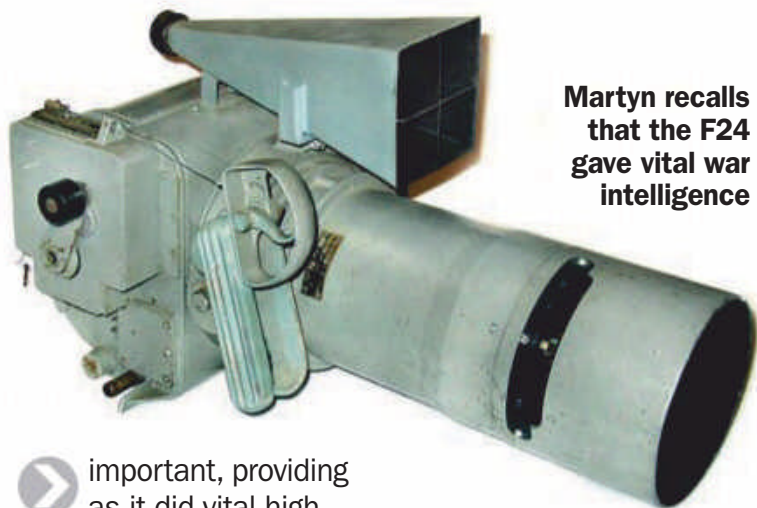
A joy to use

A message for Roger Braga (*Inbox*, 14 November) – you will love the Fujifilm X-T2. I got into photography 52 years ago. My first real camera, and the one I cut my teeth on, was a Rollei SL35 M and it was simple to use. Since then, and particularly with digital, cameras have become more and more complex, filled with features that I largely neither want nor use. That is exactly why I moved to Fujifilm. It is about the only manufacturer which makes cameras that can be used like my old Rollei, at least in my price range. Photography shouldn't require a degree in computing; the focus of our efforts should be on creating stunning images. I bought an X-T1 and it transformed my photography. From what had become blasé picture taking, I returned to enjoying my hobby once more. And if you like the X-T2, give the X100 series a go if you get a chance; they are an absolute joy to use. **Rick Corbishley**

Cameras at war

The article about cameras at war in the 14 November issue of AP was an excellent snap-shot of the role and importance of cameras in modern warfare. Besides the cameras used to document (officially and unofficially) the conflict, the F24 camera is arguably the most





Martyn recalls that the F24 gave vital war intelligence

important, providing as it did vital high quality visual intelligence. Indeed a Spitfire fitted with several F24's was instrumental in giving superlative photographic intelligence about the German radar station at Bruneval, enabling the accurate planning of the commando operation that stole the radar array so that we could study it and make our own better. For anyone interested in the wider story of the camera at war I can recommend the book *Glass Warriors*, which details combat photography and photographers from the Crimean War onwards.

Regarding Derek Forss's interesting article and fabulous images of church interiors, his handholding technique is basically what I use but I'd recommend a slight modification. A basic principle of rifle marksmanship is breath control. Rather than take a deep breath and hold it, take a normal breath, let it out and hold it for a second or two longer than the normal pause between breaths. This is much more stable and easier to control. **Martyn Boyd**

Printed manuals

Regarding Mike Smith's letter about the lack of a manual with some cameras (*Inbox*, 17 November). I was surprised by your sweeping statements about not many people reading them and everyone being used to accessing information online, which I find hard to believe, certainly in my age group. We like books and informative manuals. You just learn so much more and can refer back easily. A modern camera is a complex piece of equipment, small as it may be. Manufacturers are doing a great disservice to their customers by not helping them to achieve the very best from their products. **Donald Hawkins**

OTC

I would like to make Mike Smith aware of the excellent and comprehensive printed camera manuals available for most makes of camera from OTC Ltd. I've purchased manuals for all

my Olympus cameras and highly recommend them. They are inexpensive and available from www.printed-manual.com.

David Austin

Robert Blomfield

I was delighted with your article about Robert Blomfield (AP 17 November). I discovered his exhibition in the City Art Gallery in Edinburgh in 2018 by accident and was privileged to be able to attend the inaugural evening at which Robert himself made an appearance. This extraordinary archive deserves the prominence which it is now slowly getting. Its 'discovery' reminds me of Lartigue in France with its time capsule images of a lost era. Some of his compositions are quite sublime. I purchased an enormous print of the student union picture which now has pride of place in our kitchen. He was fortunate to have a family behind him who appreciate the cultural value of the archive and are helping it come to prominence.

Ian Macilwain

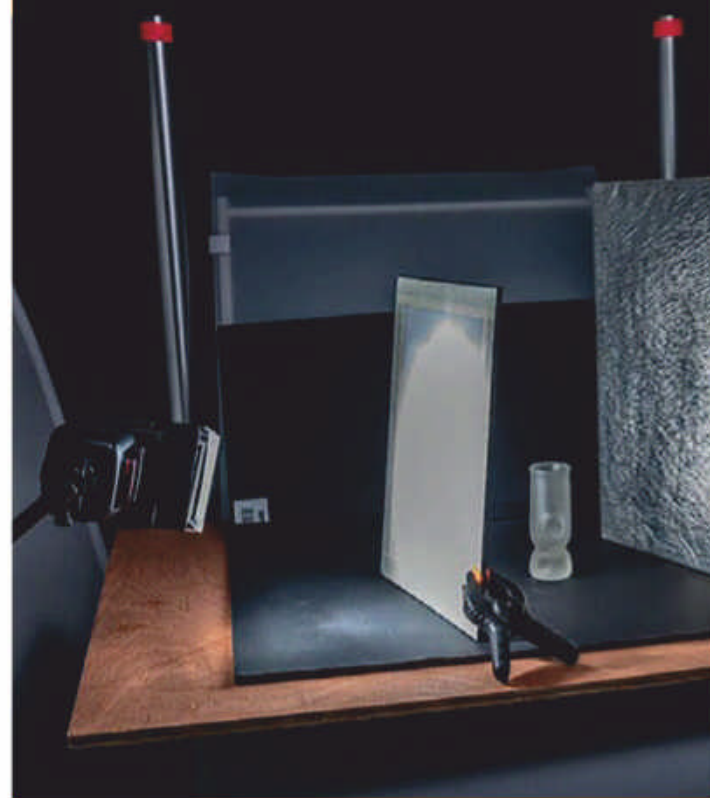
Personal information

Every so often I like to enter a photo competition (usually to see how far adrift I am of the winning photographers!). However I get irritated when asked for 'Personal Information' which has nothing to do with the competition. For instance, the current Nikon Photo Contest requires your date of birth in terms of year, month, day. This is unnecessary. I'm sure this isn't the only competition requiring such info. If they really want to do some analysis on the entrants then make it optional, not conditional, or put age category boxes such as under 18, adult, over 60. **Brian Holmes**



Ian says many of Robert Blomfield's images are sublime

In next week's issue



Great DIY hacks

Experts reveal their money-saving tips and tricks to help your photography



Nikon Z 7II

Michael Topham tests Nikon's latest high-resolution mirrorless camera

Remembering cheetahs

Remembering Wildlife founder Margot Raggett talks to Tracy Calder

Formatt Hitech Onyx Kit

Andy Westlake tests Formatt Hitech's premium toughened glass Onyx filters

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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



At the Door

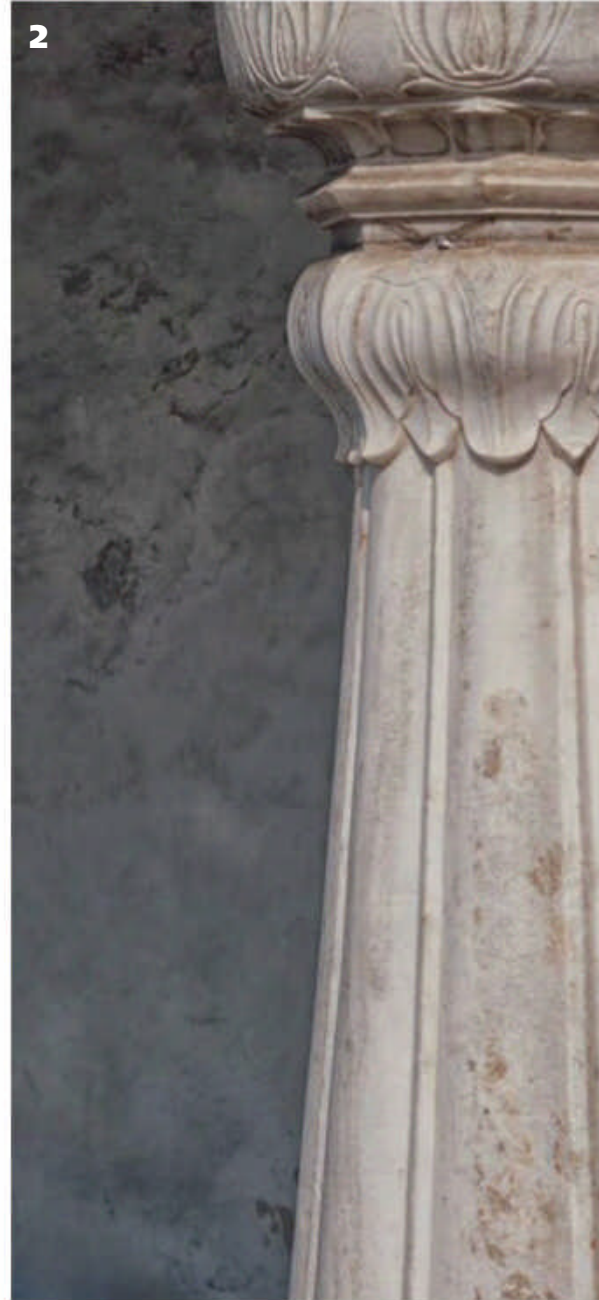
1 I like the warm red colour and the framing of this image from Lake Pichola, Udaipur, Rajasthan. I feel it has a sense of mystery.

Nikon D3100, 18-55mm, 1/500sec at f/5.6, ISO 100

Holy Site

2 There's a pleasing contrast between the column on the left and the dynamism of the Sikh man tying his turban. Taken at Gurudwara Bangla Sahib, Delhi, India.

Nikon D3100, 18-55mm, 1/400sec at f/5.6, ISO 100



Yasser Alaa Mobarak, Alexandria



About Yasser

Yasser is a teacher of photography who lives in Alexandria, Egypt.

Favourite subjects

I love shooting portraits and people, as well as architecture. Both have a particular beauty, and people's faces convey stories and express feelings. With my architectural photography, I often like to compose and then wait for someone to pass by before I take the picture. This creates a dynamic contrast between stillness and movement, and between humans and inanimate objects.

How did you get into photography?

I started taking pictures when I was 18 years old, during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011. I became interested in documenting the events of the uprising, and photographed protests, sit-ins, curfew and clashes. There were many times when I felt at risk, because it wasn't safe to photograph: some photographers were injured, and others even lost their eyes. I feel happy that I played a small role in documenting such an important event as the Egyptian Revolution, and that it was the starting point of my photographic journey.

What do you love about photography?

The opportunity to express myself and document the world around me.

First camera

An Olympus point and shoot.

Current kit

Nikon D5600.

Favourite lenses

The AF-P DX Nikkor 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR and AF-S Nikkor 50mm f/1.8G. The 18-55mm because I love to shoot wide images where I can tell a story with my subjects, while the 50mm is an excellent, sharp lens for shooting portraits.

Dream purchase

A Leica camera, because it's small, elegant and produces images of excellent quality.

Favourite photographers

Ashraf Talaat and Steve McCurry. I love Ashraf Talaat's work, because he shoots dynamic, spontaneous photographs that aren't staged, with multi-layered subjects. Steve McCurry is the king of portraits. His images tell stories and leave a powerful visual impact on the audience.

Favourite book

Any photo books from National Geographic.

Favourite tips

Practise until your last breath, because we never stop gathering knowledge or learning when it comes to photography.

See more

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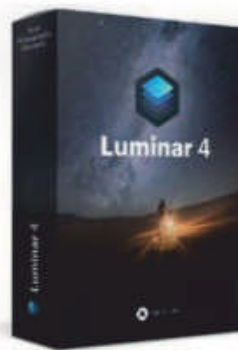




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Luminar is a fully featured photo editor for Mac and PC designed for photographers of all skill levels, blending pro-level tools with remarkable ease of use and an enjoyable experience. A new Library feature lets you organise, find and rate images easily, while over 100 editing features, plus a suite of fast AI-powered technologies under the hood, will make any image stand out.



YOUR PICTURES IN PRINT

Submit your images

Please see the 'Pictures' section on page 3 for details on how to submit. You could see your images here in a future issue!



In Shali Town

4 The old Coca-Cola advertisement caught my eye on this house in Shali Town, Siwa Oasis, Egypt.

Canon EOS 6D, 18-55mm, 1/500sec at f/2.8, ISO 10

Shades of Blue

3 There's a nice balance to this image from a Nubian village in Aswan, Egypt. I like the cool tones, too.

Canon EOS 600D, 18-55mm, 1/60sec at f/8, ISO 100

Bikes for Rent

5 I like the contrast of warm and cool colours in this shot of a bike-rental shop in Shali Town, Siwa Oasis, Egypt.

Nikon D3100, 50mm, 1/125sec at f/6.3, ISO 100

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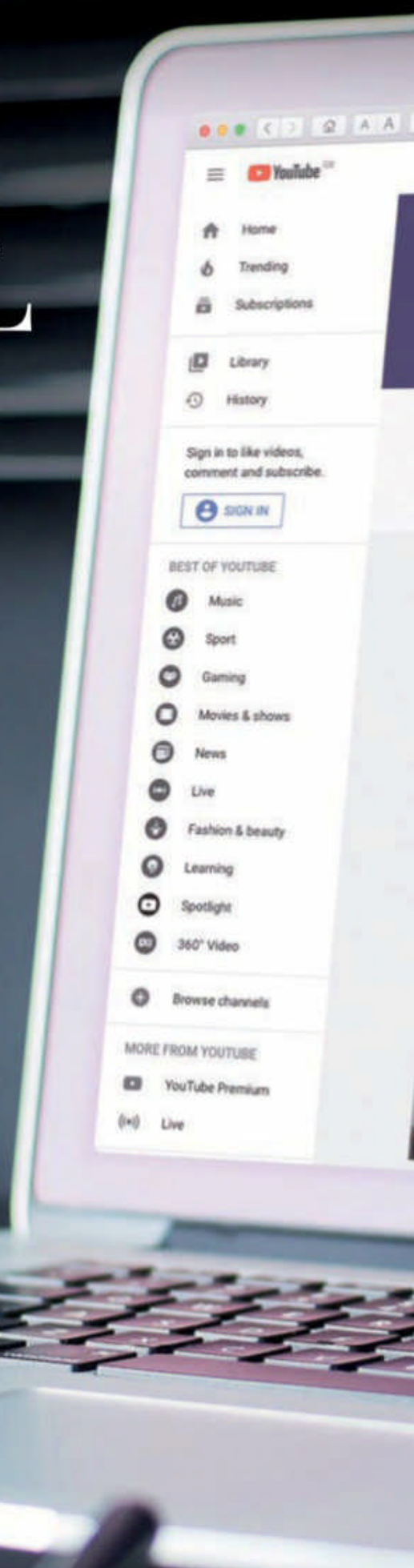
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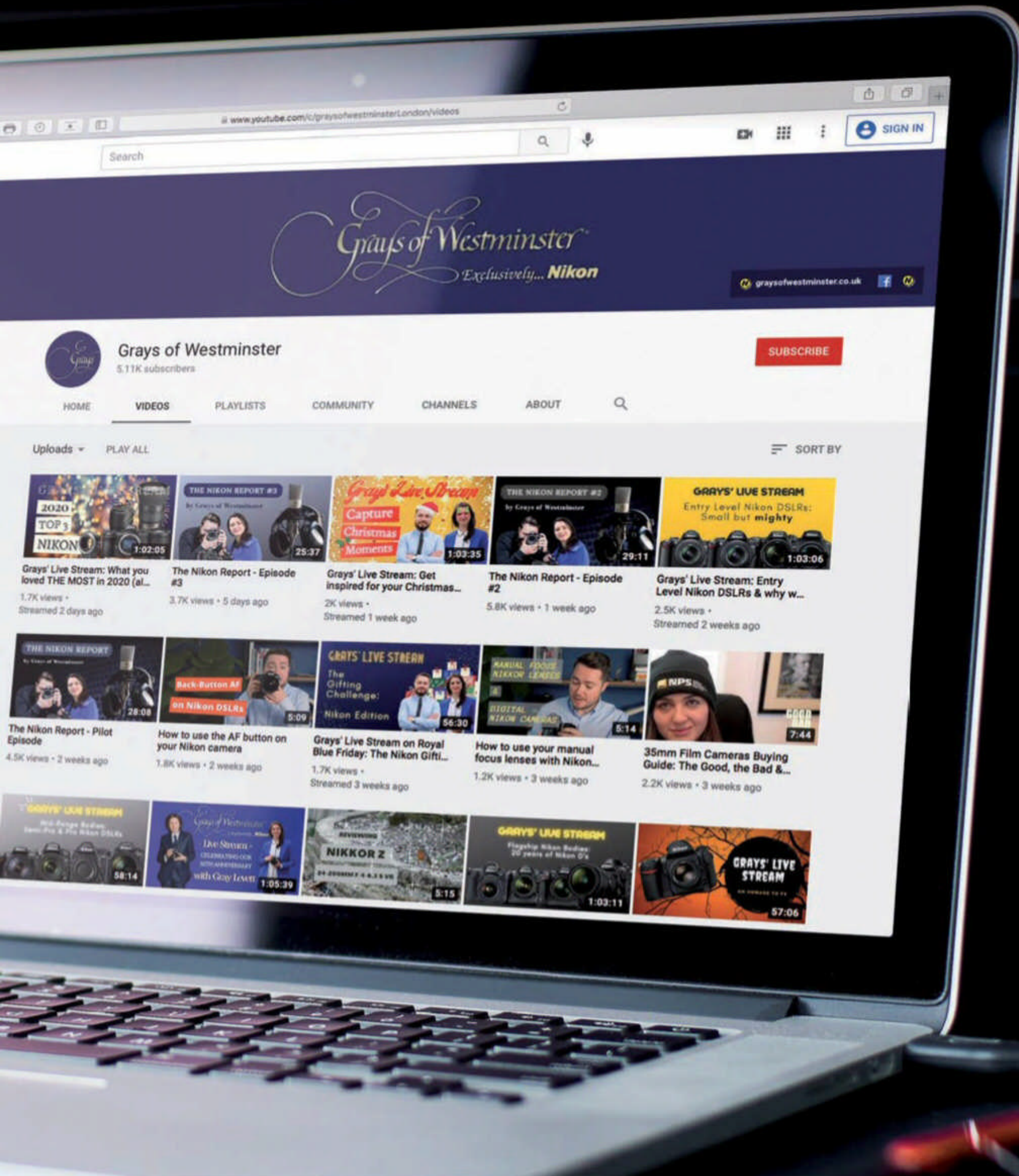




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Pop art

Kevin Cummins has photographed the biggest names in music for over 40 years. **Steve Fairclough** spoke to him about his career and his new Britpop book

It's little surprise that Kevin Cummins ended up as a photographer as he received a camera for his fifth birthday present and both his father and maternal grandfather had home darkrooms. After developing his own darkroom skills at a young age he studied graphic design and photography in Salford, 'much to my parents' annoyance... they never thought it was a real job'.

He regularly viewed the reportage photography in the Sunday supplements but admits, 'I was more interested in portraiture. The three photographers whose work I really liked were August Sander, Bill Brandt and Diane Arbus. That taught me a lot about connecting with people, how to photograph them. Arbus had only just killed herself when I started my first year [at college], but that idea that you didn't just turn up and take a picture, you could spend days

with somebody to craft a picture, stayed with me.'

Cummins graduated when the punk rock era was exploding. 'I started shooting that because, obviously, you don't walk out straight into a job. I went back [to college] for a year teaching and I also did two days a week printing in a darkroom for some industrial photographers, so I had access to darkroom and camera equipment. I was able to get out and shoot bands and I quickly got a piece published in the *NME*, about Manchester music, in July 1977.'

The hard yards

The life of a rock and roll photographer may appear to be glamorous but it is anything but. Cummins explains, 'When I did a live show for the *NME* you'd go to the gig and stay sober because the darkroom was about ten miles





outside Manchester. I'd drive there after the gig, process it, print it, contact sheet it, pick the best four shots and wait for those to dry. I'd get back into Manchester about six in the morning and put it on Red Star Parcels, the only way of getting pictures down to London at the time. Then, if the *NME* remembered I'd shot it, they'd go and pick it up... you might get one picture in the following week's paper and you'd get £6.50 for it for 14 hours of work.'

The Manchester music scene of the late 1970s was vibrant with bands like the Buzzcocks, The Fall and Joy Division building up followings. Cummins reveals, 'I'd do regular work for the *NME*, plus I could do stuff for the other music papers. I lived in Manchester and I just shot everybody. [Journalist] Paul Morley and I were commissioned to do a

piece about Manchester music, so we did three or four bands. There was a band called Spherical Objects and the singer was Steve Solamar, who was an interesting bloke. He was the fulcrum of the piece until we sat down with Joy Division, talked to them properly and realised they had a better plan and were hungry.'

Cummins shot his iconic picture of Joy Division on the Epping Walk Bridge in Hulme, Manchester, in 1979, the year before the band's lead singer Ian Curtis took his life. He adds, 'Now there's this huge mystique around Joy Division and they're bigger than they've ever been, but at the time they were a peripheral band. They were the kind of band the music press gets excited about because they did a great first album. They were exciting but, at the time, the Buzzcocks and The Fall were probably bigger than them.'

Moving to London

In 1987 Cummins moved to London as he felt he'd done all he could in Manchester, though he made sure he had work lined up when he made the move. He laughs, 'I threw my lot in with *NME* and didn't do anything for other music papers. Pretty much just as I moved down all the stuff in Manchester with Acid House, The Stone Roses and Happy Mondays exploded, so I was spending about three days a week coming back to Manchester having moved down to London... great timing!'

Despite having now lived in London for over 30 years he often goes back to Manchester, especially to watch his beloved Manchester City playing football. He admits, 'I've pretty much painted myself into a corner by concentrating on Manchester stuff which, in a way, is why the Britpop book is quite nice, even though there's Oasis running through it. It just shows I'm allowed to leave the city occasionally!'

Britpop book

His new book, *While We Were Getting High: Britpop and the '90s*, features over 200 images shot throughout the 1990s when British bands like Oasis, Blur, Pulp and Suede were dominating the charts and the tabloid headlines. Despite the vibrancy of the imagery in it Cummins wasn't 100% sold on the idea: 'I wasn't completely convinced by it because I think it's quite hard to sell a book on a genre

Above: Oasis, *NME* feature, outside Manchester City's old ground, Maine Road, July 1994

Far left: Joy Division, Epping Walk Bridge, Hulme, Manchester, 1979

Left: The Smiths, Manchester

of music. Generally, with music books, it's much easier if you stick to a single band.'

He sourced his archives from Getty and ended up looking through over 50,000 photographs for the book. He explains, 'When you do a shoot for a music paper it's quick. You'd have to choose the best half dozen pictures, print those, put them in the file, they'd be used the following week and then everything just gets filed. I managed to get quite a lot of stuff that hadn't been published before in [the book] but there's no point in putting 300 pictures nobody has ever seen because they want the picture of Noel and Liam in [Manchester] City shirts and they want the picture of Blur dressed as Blondie, so you've got to do that.'

Although he is happy with how the Britpop book has turned out – it also includes interviews with musicians Martin Rossiter (Gene), Noel Gallagher (Oasis) and Sonya Aurora Madan (Echobelly) – Cummins was careful with its contents. 'It's quite a difficult thing putting a book out celebrating Britishness in this fairly toxic period we're living through, which is why I was careful not to overdo the Cool Britannia thing. I didn't want flag waving all over the book. There's only one flag in the book and that's



a black and white of [Blur's] Damon [Albarn] in Tokyo.'

Changing times

Cummins has spanned the analogue to digital eras but he retains some of his basic principles. 'I try to shoot digitally like I'd shoot with film. I think every 36 frames is costing me 20 quid. What has changed enormously from analogue to digital is the sense of camaraderie with other photographers. After a session we were all used to going to Joe's

Above: Radiohead, Gloucester, August 1994

Above right: The Charlatans, Brighton, January 1994

Below left: Jarvis Cocker, north London, December 1998

Below: Blur as Blondie, NME shoot, studio, December 1991

Basement, or one of the other labs in Soho, and going to the pub next door while your film was being clip tested... moaning about your editor or something. Now we do a shoot and go home... it's become a very isolated profession in a way. You meet the person you're photographing – that's it, end of story. Then you go home and then you do all the work, rather than the lab, and you get paid less for it.'

Cummins had always shot with Nikon film cameras but with digital





Kevin Cummins's top tips

● 'People ask, "Will you look at my portfolio?" If someone has just done a gig and has put it on Facebook occasionally I'll have a look... and they've posted 800 photographs taken at a gig. My advice is to put five on there... less is more. Instead of shooting 800, look through your camera and wait for the magic moment. Don't just assume it's going to be there because you've shot a frame every second of the gig.'

● 'Plan ahead. If I was doing a complicated lighting set-up in the studio – for instance, the New Order shots where there's three silhouettes in the background and one spot lit in the foreground. We spent eight hours the day before with my assistant and a couple of friends trying that shot out in different ways, taking it to the lab, getting it processed and looking at how it was working best. When New Order turned up they got in position and it took 15 minutes. They don't need to know I spent a whole day working that shot out.'

● 'You're not the most important person in the room – your subject is – and so you've got to get them into a position where they're relaxed with you and also where they're not just looking at the front element of the lens. They have to look at you, that's where the film plane is and then it works. If they're just staring at the front element it doesn't work and it's not a good portrait.'

● 'I worked for the *NME* for 20-odd years and very rarely would anyone say, "This is great. I love this cover." The only time you ever get any feedback is if someone doesn't like something. You have to have very thick skin and you've got to assume that people like your work, because they won't commission you if they don't.'

he changed brands. 'Canon was much further ahead than Nikon at the time. All of a sudden I had to learn to use a different camera and, just like when you use a new batch of film, you're likely to make the odd mistake. I think you learn by those mistakes. A couple of friends had used Photoshop and they showed me the basics of how to use it, so that's what I did and that's all I do. I've got a Canon scanner, Canon cameras and lenses and whatever Photoshop is called these days.'

He continues, 'The camera body doesn't necessarily matter to me, just that it's not going to fall apart, but I will always buy the best possible lens. I've got a Canon 16-35mm, a Canon 85mm f/1.2, which is a really lovely lens, an 85-200mm and, obviously, a 50mm. My 50mm is a close-up lens as well so you can take a picture of someone's knuckle or a ring on their finger. So that's all I need. I've got a 1.5x converter that I sometimes stick on the 200mm.'

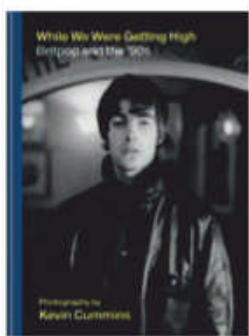
Cummins does prefer to have a viewfinder through which he can view 100% of what he's taking. 'If I had a Nikon FM, say, I was getting 95% of what I was seeing in the viewfinder so when I'd process it I've got more on the film than I wanted which was really irritating. As soon as I could afford it, I bought Nikon F3s, which were as close as you could get to that edge-to-edge experience.'

Portrait influences

For someone who has spent over 40 years photographing musicians Cummins has a surprising confession. 'I never liked music



Kevin Cummins was born in Manchester. He spent ten years as the chief photographer for *NME*, he has contributed to publications worldwide and he remains one of the UK's foremost music and portrait photographers. www.kevincummins.co.uk



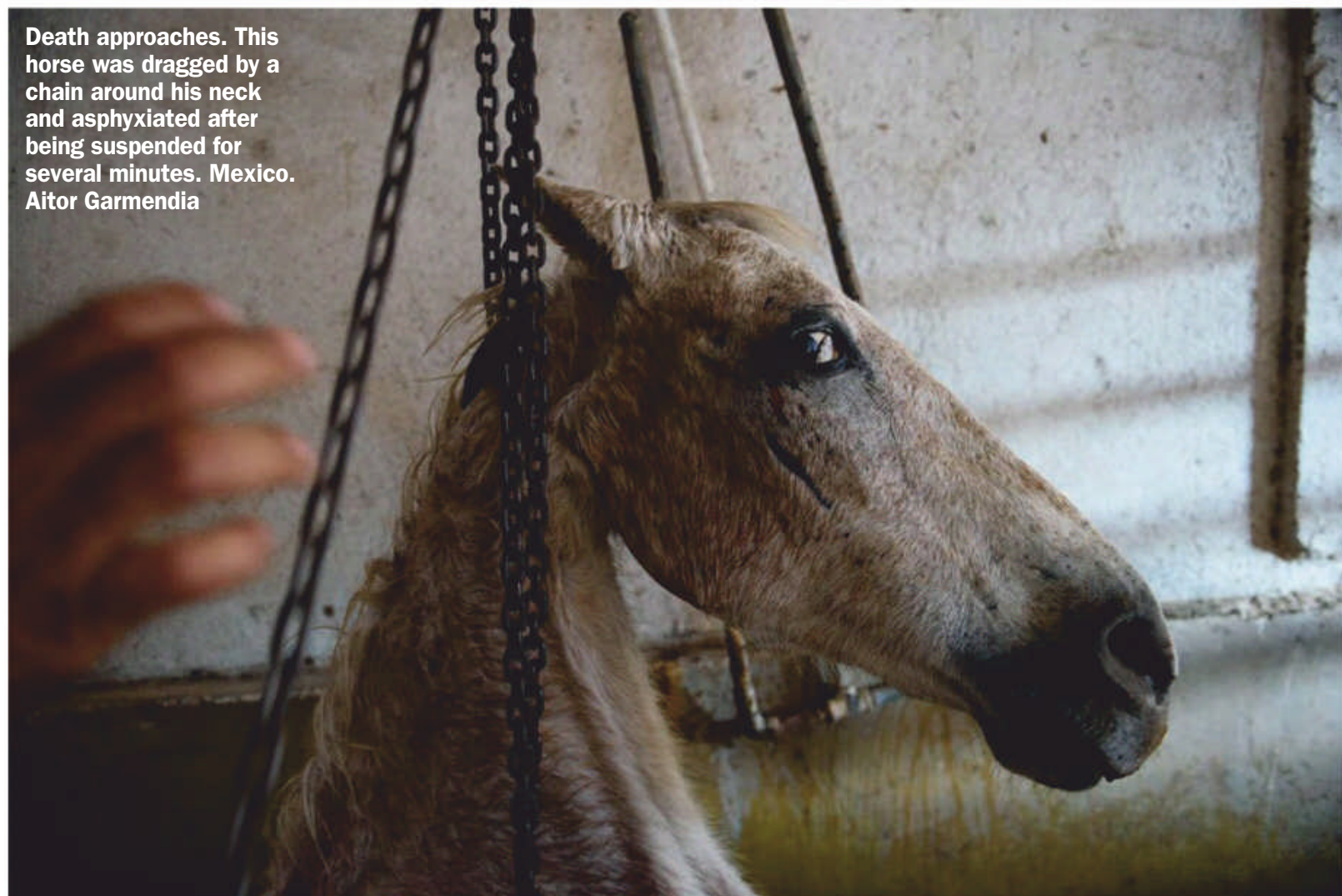
The book *While We Were Getting High: Britpop and the '90s*, by Kevin Cummins, is published by Octopus Books, ISBN: 978-1-78840-220-0, with an RRP of £30. To find out more go to www.octopusbooks.co.uk

photography much. Obviously I'm interested in it because that's the genre I've worked in but I find a lot of it too confrontational. When you look at a couple of my pictures of Liam Gallagher they're quite sensitive, but people don't want sensitive portraits of Liam – they want him spraying beer into your camera lens and I've never been the sort to do that kind of thing.'

He adds, 'I'm much more interested in getting a soulful portrait of somebody. That's why I'm more interested in portrait photographers and what they can offer – massively undervalued people like Jane Bown. Jane's pictures were an enormous influence on me and even [Lord] Snowdon was. Snowdon was a massively underrated photographer and I learnt quite a bit from reading about him and looking at the way he worked.'

Cummins regularly shoots commercial work for an Adidas capsule leisurewear brand and admits he is 'lucky' that at this stage in his career he can pick what he works on. During 2021 he is planning a new take on his Joy Division book *Juvenes*. 'It's an extended version of a limited edition I published about 14 years ago. There were only 226 copies... half the people who bought it didn't even unwrap it, so now I'm giving them the opportunity to see what's in it. I keep saying to people who've got *Juvenes* and still haven't opened it, "I might as well just put a blank book in there." People would never know and by the time you did know it'd be too late, I'd be somewhere else!'





Death approaches. This horse was dragged by a chain around his neck and asphyxiated after being suspended for several minutes. Mexico. Aitor Garmendia

Hidden in plain sight

Some 80 billion land animals are killed for food, clothing, experiments, sport and tradition. **Keith Wilson** tells the story of *HIDDEN*, the first photo book to document the stories behind these practices

This darkest of stories begins with a bright, sunny day in May. The year is 2018 and I'm sitting on a step at Somerset House, London, overlooking the marquees erected in the Georgian courtyard for that year's Photo London. With me is the Toronto-based animal rights activist and photojournalist Jo-Anne McArthur. We are not entirely strangers to each other as a few

days earlier I interviewed her for a magazine profile and then we were both the focus of attention as part of the group behind the campaign and publishing project, Photographers Against Wildlife Crime, culminating in the launch of a book of the same name and an exhibition in Mayfair. Sitting in the warm spring sunshine, it really did feel like we were basking in the afterglow of something remarkable: the fulfilment of the

efforts by a group of outstanding photographers, using their images to raise the profile of an issue that much of the world had let slip past their gaze.

Now, Jo-Anne gives me insight into an area of photography that has been the primary focus of her life for the past two decades: documenting the short, brutal lives of the animals who live amongst us, those we exploit and consume for our food and clothing, or in the name of tradition, entertainment and research. For much of this time, her photographs have provided a rare visual record of the suffering endured by these animals. She has entered numerous factory farms at night, taken part in vigils outside slaughterhouse gates, and even stepped inside them, camera in hand, to photograph the carnage that follows. Then there are the zoos and wildlife shows, fur farms and puppy mills, wet markets and sale yards, hunts and blood sports; in short, wherever you find animal suffering or death, you are likely to find Jo-Anne McArthur moving silently in the darkness, focusing and framing, barely stopping while always keeping one eye open for a discreet exit.



‘When I take photos, I try to think of images as open wounds that can’t be ignored. They should communicate pain’
– *Konrad Lozinski*

A new genre of photography

This is the little-known world of animal photojournalism, and in the 20 years since she took up the mantle, there has been scant recognition of this genre as a bona fide form of photography. As Jo-Anne defines it, ‘Animal photojournalism captures, memorialises and exposes the experiences of animals who live amongst us, but who we fail to see.’ So, with our meeting on those worn stone steps began the process to open people’s eyes – not just to see, but also to engage with the experiences depicted in these photographs. Central to this ambition was to produce a book devoted to what Jo-Anne calls ‘the war on animals’, a volume of images akin in scale to the war and conflict photography of James Nachtwey’s *Inferno*. I was astounded by her vision, but not surprised given the tenacity and highly developed sense of purpose that has carried her this far, and for so long.

Although *Inferno* was her inspiration, this as-yet-unnamed book was to feature photographs by a multitude of photographers, not just Jo-Anne’s work. She already had a list of names in mind, many of whom had worked with her through her animal rights and journalism collective, We Animals Media. That list grew significantly over the following months as the picture search widened across six continents. My role was to be her co-editor, as well as the book’s principal writer and researcher. Our



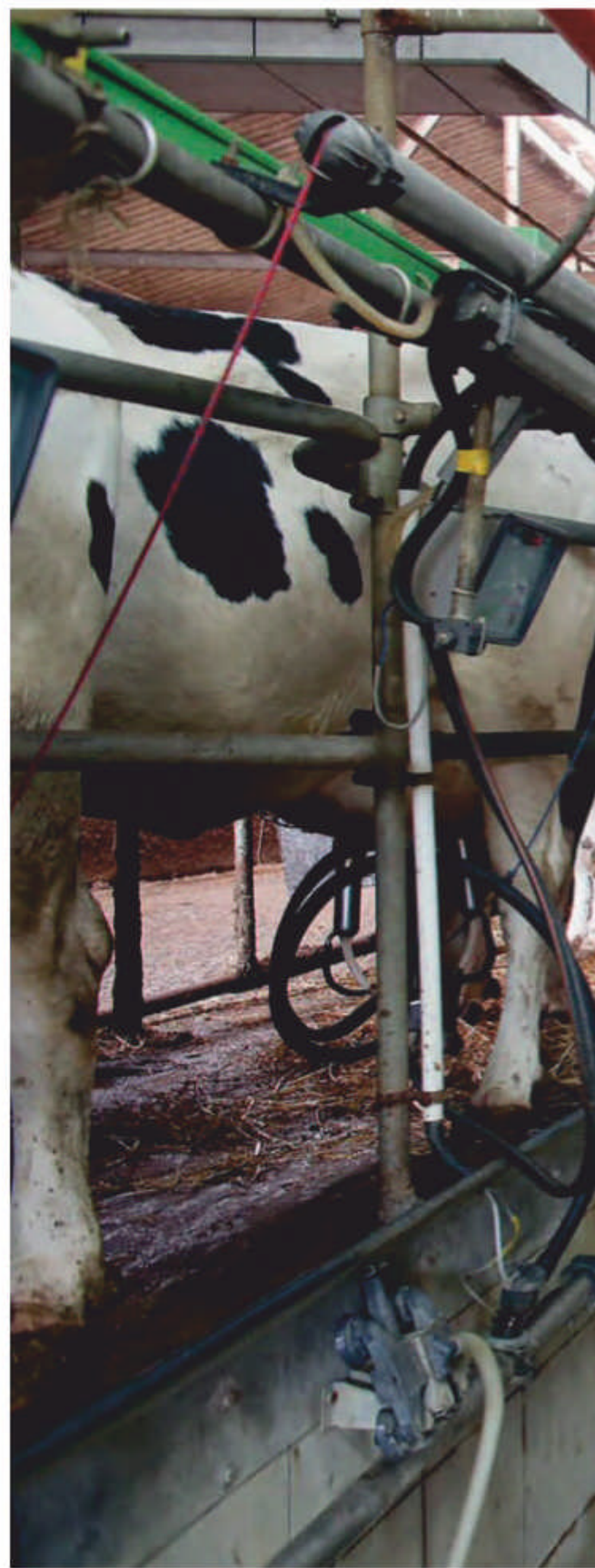
No way out. A rabbit looks up from among hundreds of others crowded into metal cages. Spain. Aitor Garmendia

A sick pig left to die on the floor of a farm corridor. Finland. Kristo Muurimaa





‘Animal photojournalism captures, memorialises and exposes the experiences of animals who live amongst us, but who we fail to see’ – Jo-Anne McArthur



➤ working title was *Animals in the Anthropocene*, and while we toyed with many main titles and cover concepts for what seemed like an eternity, it was our designer David Griffin who came up with the title *HIDDEN*. It was the perfect choice: one short word that summed up the status of the animals depicted between its covers.

Initiation and selection

Unlike Jo-Anne and the rest of the photographers, this was a subject area that I had never witnessed first-hand nor engaged with on an emotional level. All that changed when the picture editing and sequencing began. In some respects,

it felt like an initiation, beginning with a seemingly endless supply of pictures of doomed pigs in factory farms and some of the world's grimmest slaughterhouses. But it was an image by Louise Jorgensen – a close-up of the eye of a pig on its way to slaughter – that provided me with a profound moment of insight into the depth of feeling felt by an animal that most of us only see as a chop or sausage. This photo and a similar one by Louise, showing the frightened eye of a cow, also being trucked to slaughter, were among the first photos chosen for the book. I decided they would be best used as a pair and Jo-Anne and David agreed without hesitation.

Top left: Garbage day. A dead pig waits for collection outside a farm entrance. Denmark. Selena Magnolia

Above left: A pig looks out from a transport truck after reaching her final destination. Canada. Louise Jorgensen

Another photo which quickly won its place in the book was a portrait of a caged rabbit, by Spanish photojournalist Aitor Garmendia. Like many of the photos in *HIDDEN*, it was taken in the murky light of a huge factory farm. The rabbit is surrounded by hundreds of others, but she is the only one to raise her head above a mass of pink ears and grey cage bars, a figure of hope gazing towards the ceiling where a weak ray of light illuminates the darkness. It was Jo-Anne's idea to juxtapose this photo with a quote by Leo Tolstoy about suffering that has been adopted as a universal pledge by the animal rights movement: 'When the suffering of another



creature causes you to feel pain, do not submit to the initial desire to flee from the suffering one, but on the contrary come closer, as close as you can to him who suffers, and try to help him.'

Communicating pain

Not surprisingly, there is hardly an image in the book's 320 pages that doesn't depict suffering or death. For this reason alone, it is not disingenuous to compare the similarities of the animal photojournalism in *HIDDEN* with the conflict imagery of Nachtwey's *Inferno*. The commitment of many of these photographers, and the psychological price they pay is

Above: Steel barriers, concrete floors, tiled walls and push-button technology make up the habitat of the modern-day dairy herd. Poland. Andrew Skowron

Right: A macaque performs in a popular street show in Jakarta, known locally as Topeng Monyet (Mask Monkey). Indonesia. Joan de la Malla





➤ also comparable: some have been beaten and arrested, others treated for PTSD. Following such stories for years is bound to take its toll, and it was the words of another contributing photographer, Stefano Belacchi, which reminded me of my own responsibility when editing everyone's images: 'We must always remember that those animals portrayed in the photos will be dead when the public sees them. I feel a big responsibility when I think about that.' Another photographer, Polish animal rights activist Konrad Lozinski, who took the book's cover photo, declared: 'When I take photos, I try to think of images as open wounds that can't be ignored. They should communicate pain.'

Where possible, matching powerful words to powerful pictures is one of my personal objectives when editing photo books. It can also prove to be revelatory: with *HIDDEN*, the pull-out quotes weren't limited to some of the book's photographers; relevant quotes by historical figures including Martin Luther King, Alice Walker, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and George Orwell, as well as Tolstoy, were included too. The juxtaposition of their words

from the past with these images of the present served to illustrate how animal rights has been a longer-running issue than many of us, myself included, have realised.

Unforeseen circumstances

Creating a book of this scale requires meticulous planning and healthy financing. As publisher, We Animals Media took on the responsibility of raising funds for the book, most of which came through a crowd funding campaign that surpassed our target twice over. Of course, even the best-laid plans cannot account for unforeseen circumstances, and none of us foresaw the outbreak of Covid-19 and the challenges it brought. However, the pandemic also presented an opportunity for *HIDDEN* to take on greater relevance to a mainstream audience by the linking of animals sold at markets with the transmission of zoonotic viruses. Photos depicting wet markets and the wildlife trade were always considered part of our coverage, but the onset of Covid-19 gave these images a greater significance.

The pandemic also helped to give added weight to two of the most

Above left: Clubbing, used to stun pigs before their throats are slit. Thailand. Jo-Anne McArthur

Above: Day-old chicks are packed into crates at an industrial hatchery. Poland. Konrad Lozinski



HIDDEN: Animals in the Anthropocene, by Jo-Anne McArthur & Keith Wilson, is published by We Animals Media. Foreword by Joaquin Phoenix. Buy now: weanimalsmedia.org/our-work/hidden/

controversial images to be found in the book: one from China showing pigs about to be buried alive after an outbreak of African Swine Fever; the other from South Korea where a dozen or more masked officials in white hazard suits herd thousands of ducks into a pit, also to be buried alive, after contracting avian flu. Unsurprisingly, the photographers behind both images chose to remain anonymous.

Other catastrophic events that arose while we were editing the book included the widespread burning of the Amazon rainforest during the summer of 2019 and Australia's climate fires of 2019-2020. Here were two devastating outbreaks that helped to make clear the connection between climate change and people's use and exploitation of animals. In the case of the Amazon, ranchers continue to light illegal fires to clear land for cattle grazing to meet the world's insatiable demand for beef. We already had images by Daniel Beltrá showing the Amazon ablaze and cattle grazing in their aftermath, but the events in Australia required fresh images. So, Jo-Anne flew out and spent two weeks covering the incineration of vast tracts of forest

‘We must always remember that those animals portrayed in the photos will be dead when the public sees them’ – *Stefano Belacchi*



and wildlife. One of her photos, depicting a surviving kangaroo and her joey surrounded by burnt-out forest, became our opening image for the chapter entitled ‘Catastrophe’. It went on to win the Man and Nature category in the 2020 Nature Photographer of the Year awards.

Triumph and tragedy

There are many other award-winning images in *HIDDEN*: some

of the photographers, Paul Hilton, Tomasso Ausili, Britta Jaschinski, Aaron Gekoski, Francesco Pistilli, Kuni Takahashi, Joan de la Malla, as well as Daniel and Jo-Anne, are already renowned for their success in the World Press Photo and NHM Wildlife Photographer of the Year awards. Editing the work of such an esteemed group of photographers is both a privilege and a pressure. Fortunately, *HIDDEN* has been very well received and acclaimed by

Below left: A kangaroo and joey after the 2019-20 bushfires. Australia. Jo-Anne McArthur

Below right: A cage of dogs watches as others are killed and dismembered before cooking. Cambodia. Aaron Gekoski

reviewers and other prominent photojournalists, including Brent Stirton and Nick Brandt. Ultimately, even an epic undertaking such as *HIDDEN* has to be judged by sales, and in that respect we have also succeeded: two weeks after its November 2020 release date, the book sold out. As I write this, a reprinted edition is rolling off the presses in Italy.

Media coverage has been extensive too and there are plans for speaking engagements and exhibitions in 2021, Covid permitting. The first European exhibition is scheduled for a two-month run in Berlin from the middle of February. With displays such as this, strong sales and media interest, Jo-Anne and I feel that the work of the 40 photographers featured in *HIDDEN* is giving much-needed prominence to the emerging new field of animal photojournalism, as well as providing a chance for more people to engage with a global issue that has been overlooked for far too long.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention the sacrifice of one of the animal rights activists who died while we made this book. On 19 June 2020, 65-year-old Regan Russell was knocked down and killed by a truck laden with pigs as she protested outside Fearman’s Pork slaughterhouse in Toronto, Canada. Luckily, we still had time to acknowledge her death in the book before we went to print, but not with the official dedication, as that remained as we had always intended: ‘For the animals. They have no choice.’ We have no doubt that Regan would have approved of our choice.



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Making the right collection

What makes a camera collectable?

John Wade guides you through the basics

Why do people collect cameras with no intention of using them? Okay, maybe that's a little unfair. Some collectors do enjoy using their vintage cameras. But for most collectors, buying classic and antique cameras is more about the joy of owning and admiring something special and different,

while researching and learning about its place in the history of photography.

There are a lot of old cameras around, many of which are of no intrinsic value or deserving of a special place either in photographic history, or on a camera collector's shelves. So how do you tell what is collectable? Sometimes it's a matter of age,

other times it's the manufacturer or perhaps the country of origin. It could be a camera's rarity, an unusual specification or method of working, a one-off, a landmark in design... Finally sometimes it's just a gut feeling, nothing more than the fact that you like the look of a particular camera and buy it in the way you might purchase any work of art.

If you have never thought about buying a camera as a collector's item, or even if you are a collector already and are seeking confirmation of your sanity, read on.

Collectability factors

Early plate and film cameras c.1903:
No.3 Eastman Plate Camera (left)
and Butcher Carbine for roll film



Age

The older the camera, the more its way of working is likely to be of interest. Although what has come to be recognised as the first photograph was taken in 1826, the first practical method of photography came with the daguerreotype process in 1839 and the cameras that used it. Cameras from this era

are very collectable – and equally expensive. As are those from the following wet plate period. For the collector on a more realistic budget, collecting usually starts with dry plate cameras from the late 19th century until the 1950s, or 35mm and roll film cameras from around 1900 until the dawn of the digital age.

Just four of the vast range of different types of camera made by Zeiss Ikon, left to right: Ikoflex III roll film TLR, Contarex 35mm SLR, Kolibri 127 film camera and Super Ikonta 120 film folding camera



Manufacturer

While most collectors go for a wide and often eclectic mix of cameras, some concentrate wholly on one manufacturer. Leitz is a favourite, with its Leica cameras, along with the huge range of lenses and accessories, all confined to the 35mm format. Zeiss Ikon is another preference. The company was

formed in 1926 by amalgamating four other companies that go back much further and who, between them, made a vast range of different camera types, many of which continued to be made by Zeiss. Other names that attract single-minded collectors include Rollei, Canon, Ensign, Nikon, Voigtländer, Kodak and more.



Three notable firsts: Leica I, first viable 35mm camera; original Rolleiflex, first compact roll film TLR; and Noviflex, first 6x6cm roll film SLR

Landmarks

Whatever make or type of camera, there was always a first: the first Leica/Rolleiflex/Canon/Minolta/Olympus/Nikon, the first SLR, the first twin lens reflex, the first SLR with an eye-level viewfinder, the first camera with through-the-lens metering, the first SLR with an instant return mirror, the first instant camera, the first 35mm/16mm/120/127 film cameras... all these factors and more make certain cameras landmarks. And if it's a landmark, it's worth acquiring.

The rare Maton camera



Rarity

Some cameras were only ever made in limited numbers. Others failed to stand the test of time with few still existing. Very occasionally only one version of a particular camera was made. Whatever the reason, such cameras are rare and rarity is collectable. Collectors might not like to admit it, but they do enjoy obtaining a camera that no one else owns or, better still, has never before seen. The French Maton is a perfect example. Inside, an angled mirror reflected the image from the lens through 90 degrees and down onto paper-backed film running along the base of the body. With the addition of a suitable light source, it also acted as a projector. It was made in 1930 and few have survived.



The unusual PDQ that delivered a print within minutes of exposure

Unusual specs

A classic camera is a pretty simple concept. A lens on the front that projects its image onto film or a glass plate at the back, a means of controlling focus and exposure, plus a shutter. The majority followed the traditional design. A few didn't, and that's what makes them collectable. Here, for example, is the American PDQ camera from 1935. It shot pictures on rolls of direct-positive print paper. Turning a handle on the side released the paper and placed it behind the lens. After exposure, the photographer pulled a knob which activated a cutter to slice through the exposed paper, dropping it into a one-shot developing solution contained in a tank below.

Do they still work?

That's a question that collectors are continually asked. If you want to buy a collectable camera to use, here are six tips.

- 1 Go for cameras that take standard 35mm cassettes or 120 roll film, both of which are still available.
- 2 Check the shutter is working, especially at slow speeds which might stick on older cameras.
- 3 Check the lens for serious external surface scratches, or internal fungus.
- 4 If the camera uses bellows, make sure they are supple and there are no obvious light leaks.
- 5 Ensure that lens aperture and focusing rings turn smoothly.
- 6 Avoid shooting against the light with early unbloomed lenses that can cause flare.

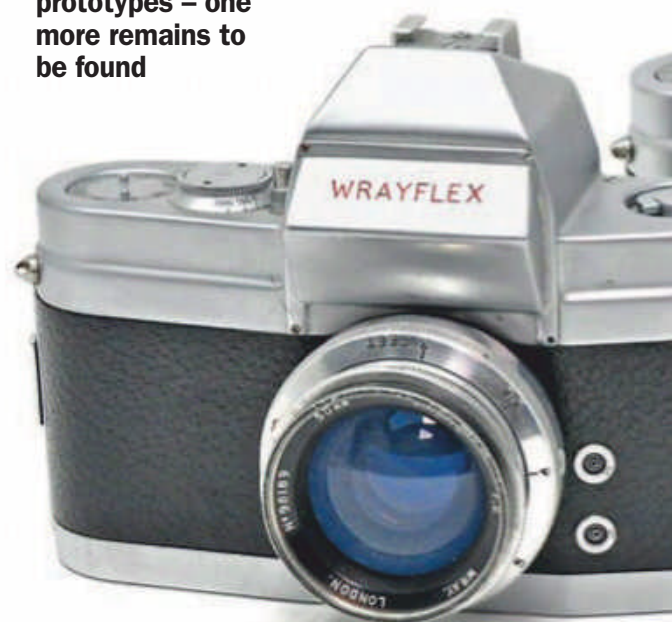


Two Alfa cameras, unexpectedly made in Poland

Country of origin

Which countries made the best-known cameras? England in the early years, Germany of course and then Japan. Anyone else? Yes, quite a lot actually. France was once prolific in camera manufacture, as was Russia. But what about the more obscure camera-making countries? In 1948 Hungary made the Duflex, the first SLR with an instant return mirror; in 1955 Italy made the strange-looking Summa Report with four lenses, two for shooting, two for viewfinding; in 1960 Poland made the unusually styled Alfa. Seek out the weird and wonderful from unexpected countries and you have another reason to collect.

Two Wrayflex II prototypes – one more remains to be found



Prototypes

The first Wrayflex SLRs used a three-mirror system in place of a pentaprism, which had certain disadvantages. Before the company eventually added a pentaprism to the camera to become the Wrayflex II, they experimented with adding a fourth mirror to one of the early models. Hence these two prototypes came into being. The first was



Colourful cameras, left to right: Kodak No.2 Hawketto, Mickey Mouse Petie camera, Kodak Rainbow Hawkeye, Coronet Midget and Ensign Ful-Vue



Colourful cameras

Not every camera was made in black. The 1930 Kodak No.2 Hawketto was made in brown Bakelite. Or there's the Ensign Midget and No.2 Brownie, both made in silver in 1935 to celebrate the silver jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary. Or how about the 1928 Vanity Kodak or the 1935 Coronet

Midget, both of which were made in five colours. Or maybe the Ensign Ful-Vue which, in 1953, was made in what was planned to be red, white and blue to celebrate the Queen's coronation, but which turned out to be red, grey and blue. If it's colourful, it's often collectable.



Disguised cameras from two eras: Ticka camera shaped like a watch from 1905 (left) and a Marlboro cigarette packet camera c.1989



Disguised cameras

During the history of photography, cameras have been disguised as all kinds of non-photographic objects that included books, cravats, walking sticks, waistcoat buttons, tie pins, parcels, belts, rings, lighters, matchboxes, cigarette packets, pocket watches, wristwatches, pens, hats, handbags, powder compacts, briefcases, binoculars, radios, revolvers and even machine guns. Some were made for genuine espionage purposes, but most were made for photographers who wanted to shoot candid pictures without being noticed. It was a craze that came and went around the turn of the 20th century, but was resurrected with the advent of 110 film in 1972. The early cameras are more collectable than those from the later wave.

bought in the assumption that it was the only one in existence. Later on, the second one was discovered. Since the serial numbers of the two cameras are 3469 and 3471 it stands to reason that 3470 is out there somewhere. The search for the missing link is another aspect of what collecting is all about.

‘The price of an antique camera is entirely dependent upon the moods of the buyer and seller at the time’



Early digital: the Canon iON with its image recording discs, which worked more like a still video camera

Early digital

The past few years have seen an awakening interest in collecting digital cameras from the early years. Digital cameras became available to the public in the late 1980s and, in many ways they echoed the early years of film camera development in that various manufacturers tried different ways of

achieving a similar end. The Canon iON (standing for Image Online Network) from 1988, for example, was the first digital camera aimed at consumers. It wasn't a digital camera as we know it today, though, but more like a still video camera that recorded images on a revolving disc. Those factors make it collectable.



Toys turned into cameras: the Mick-a-Matic for 126 Instamatic film and Donald Duck Camera that took 127 film

Toy cameras

Normal cameras made as toys are generally not collectable. Cameras that are contained within a more conventional toy or cartoon character are. The most obvious examples are Mickey Mouse-shaped cameras and, less common, Donald Duck. Others include Charlie the Tuna, Snoopy the Peanuts dog, various clowns, panda bears and even Father Christmas. Such cameras might be shunned by serious collectors, but they are still a lot of fun.

Collecting for investment

Prices right now are stable and rising slowly. Leica and Rollei have always commanded high prices, which have slowly risen over the years. English Wrayflex cameras have recently increased in value threefold. Wood and brass is very popular with American buyers. Chinese buyers on eBay are paying top prices for most quality cameras, which keep the prices buoyant overall. Anything unusual or rare commands a good price. All of that said, it should be emphasised that camera collecting is really about owning small pieces of photographic history and learning something of the fantastic, often weird, ways in which cameras were once manufactured. For most collectors, it's not about making money.

So how much should you pay for a collectable camera? Ask Jim McKeown, the renowned American collector who publishes *McKeown's Price Guide to Antique and Classic Cameras*, a veritable bible for camera collectors. It was Jim who coined an epithet that has become known as McKeown's Law. It states this:

The price of an antique camera is entirely dependent upon the moods of the buyer and seller at the time of the transaction.

Wise words that every single camera collector, buyer and seller should keep close to their hearts.

Collectable camera types



Sanderson's Universal Swing Front Camera, one of the first from this maker

Wood and brass

Craftsmanship is always collectable, as epitomised by this Sanderson Universal Swing Front Camera from 1895. It's typical of the designs of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in which a lens panel was separated from a plate holder back by bellows, the whole thing supported on a baseboard. So-called field cameras that followed the basic design were many and various. Frederick Sanderson, who built this particular model, was a cabinet maker. The then revolutionary rise and fall, swing and tilt movements of which the camera was capable were designed to satisfy his needs as a keen architectural photographer.

Voigtländer Prominent 2 with special Turnit 3 viewfinder fitted alongside wideangle, medium tele and telephoto lenses



35mm rangefinder cameras

The first truly viable 35mm camera was the Leica I, launched in 1925. In the years that followed, 35mm became the most popular film format, especially for coupled rangefinder cameras. This Voigtländer Prominent 2 from 1958 is particularly collectable. It's an

upgrade of an earlier model from 1950, standing at the centre of a system that includes a vast range of quality lenses from wideangle to telephoto, copying and close-up devices, filters, viewfinders and even a mirror box that turns the camera into an SLR.

Not every TLR looked like a Rolleiflex. Left to right: Minicord, Samocaflex, Univex Twin Flex, Tessina and Ross Portable Divided Camera



Early 35mm SLRs: the second model of the Kine Exakta (rear) and the now rare Russian Sport

35mm SLRs

The Kine Exakta, made in 1936, was the first 35mm SLR which makes it a collectable landmark. But rarer, more unusual in style and, for many, more collectable is the Sport which came from Russia in 1937. It was a little like a Leica with a large box to house the reflex viewfinder on the top, which had to be held to the eye at right angles to the film plane, giving a laterally reversed image. For some time it was thought that this was the first 35mm SLR, until research in Russia became easier and it was discovered that its launch date was later than thought.



Twin lens reflexes

The Rolleiflex, with its use of 120 roll film and a style of having two lenses – one for shooting, the other to reflect its image up to a hooded screen on the top of the body – epitomises what most people think of as a twin lens reflex (TLR). Rolleiflexes are still very usable and hugely collectable. But

there were many different styles of TLR, some dating back to the glass plate days, others designed for different formats that took 127 film, a few for 35mm film and even some that accepted 16mm and subminiature film. The more unusual TLR variations appeal to many collectors.



Three colours of the Art Deco style Beau Brownie

Roll film cameras

So many cameras have taken so many different sizes of roll film over the years that it's impossible to single out one that is more collectable than any other. So here's one of the most basic – the humble box camera, but an unusual and collectable variety. The Beau

Brownie, which was made in 1930, was available in two sizes for 120 and 116 film and with five different coloured Art Deco face plates. They comprised black/maroon, dark brown/tan, dark blue/light blue, turquoise/green and rose/pink, each with a matching leatherette covered body.

'If you're interested in camera collecting, join the Photographic Collectors' Club of Great Britain'

Two swing lens panoramic cameras: Kodak Panoram No.1 (left) and Al-vista



Panoramic cameras

The first successful panoramic camera was made in 1844. Although panoramic photography was achieved by several methods, the most popular was the use of a swing lens, as seen in cameras like the Kodak Panoram models starting from 1900. The lens of each was contained at the end of a short cylinder with a slit at the opposite end. As the shutter was released, the lens swung from side to side, gradually building up a super-wide image on film arranged in a curved plane. Panorams used roll film and were available in sizes that produced images ranging from 58x180mm to 90x305mm. Other panoramic cameras were made for 35mm and even 16mm film.



The Robin Hood stereo camera with its box, instructions, stereo viewer, film and paper packs

Stereo cameras

A stereo camera takes twin pictures which, when viewed in a suitable viewer, combine to display a single three-dimensional image. Stereo cameras have been around since the earliest days of photography, but were particularly popular in the 1930s and 1950s. This Robin Hood camera from 1930, made in multi-coloured marbled Bakelite, is one of the simplest. It took single sheets of film, 45x107mm, pre-loaded in a darkroom, and which could then be developed using the camera back as a developing tray. The Robin Hood is particularly collectable if found in its original box with instructions, viewer, film and paper packs.

The 50p coin in the foreground gives an indication of the size of the Petal (centre) surrounded by subminiature Petietux, Rubina, Snappy and Hit cameras



Subminiature cameras

Back in the 1920s, 35mm was known as a miniature format, but once it became established as a workable alternative to larger roll film sizes, 16mm cine film, used in still cameras, became the new miniature format. Some went even smaller. Made in 1948, the Japanese Petal, at 3cm diameter, is recognised by collectors as the smallest production camera ever made. Circular-shaped film in a metal container was dropped into the back of the camera and exposed six circular pictures, each one just 5mm in diameter.

Join the club

If you're interested in camera collecting, or if you are already a collector and would like to meet others, join the club. It's called the Photographic Collectors' Club of Great Britain. Find out more at www.pccgb.com.



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As part of the premium G Master range, Sony's new 35mm f/1.4 delivers exceptional levels of detail
Sony Alpha 7 II, 1/640sec at f/1.4, ISO 100



Sony FE 35mm F1.4 GM

Andy Westlake tests a sensational premium large-aperture prime for Sony's full-frame mirrorless cameras



Sony has been building up its full-frame mirrorless lens range longer than anyone else, having launched its Alpha 7 system in 2013. As it's gained experience in making high-end optics, the firm has also refined its design philosophy. Its early efforts were often criticised for being too large and heavy, but its more recent lenses have delivered stellar performance in a more compact

form, exemplified by the superb FE 24mm F1.4 GM. Now, it's applied the same idea to the 35mm focal length.

Those familiar with Sony's range will know that it already makes the Zeiss-badged Distagon T* 35mm F1.4 ZA, which dates from early 2015. However the FE 35mm F1.4 GM is distinctly smaller and lighter, focuses closer, and uses 11 diaphragm blades rather than

nine. It costs £1,500 at launch, just £200 more than its predecessor's street price.

Other fast 35mm options for E-mount users are the Samyang AF 35mm F1.4 FE (£550), and the ultra-fast Sigma 35mm F1.2 DG DN Art (£1,549). However, the former is just as bulky as Sony's ZA optic, while the latter weighs over a kilogram. So the new GM lens promises a unique blend of quality and portability.

Features

Sony says that its G Master lenses are designed to combine top-level image quality, speed of use and reliability. Accordingly, the 35mm f/1.4 provides a feature set that will be instantly recognisable to anybody who's used one of the firm's recent G or G Master primes, including weather-sealed construction and a full array of controls.

Optically the lens employs 14 elements in 10 groups, with an extra-low dispersion (ED)





The large aperture allows use of low ISOs even in low-light situations
Sony Alpha 7C, 1/40sec at f/1.4, ISO 200

glass element to suppress chromatic aberration, along with two Advanced Aspherical (AA) elements to minimise peripheral aberrations. An 11-bladed diaphragm is used to render out-of-focus highlights as circular, rather than polygonal, when the aperture is stopped down. Sony's Nano AR Coating II is on hand to maximise contrast and minimise flare and ghosting.

Focusing is internal, with twin XD Linear Motors required to drive the large focus group. At the

minimum object distance of 27cm, the lens provides 0.23x magnification, compared to the 0.18x offered by its predecessor. When it comes to manual focus, the firm has included its Linear Response MF system that emulates the feel of a traditional mechanical lens. A bowl-shaped hood is supplied, complete with a locking button on its bayonet mount and a rubber-armoured rim to help absorb accidental knocks. Filter users are catered for by a 67mm thread.

Build and handling

Thanks to its new optical design, the 35mm f/1.4 GM is distinctly smaller than its predecessor. Specifically, it's 16mm shorter at 96mm in length, while its barrel is slimmer, too. The firm has used a combination of metal and plastic in its construction to reduce the weight to 524g, representing a saving of more than 100g. Not surprisingly, this results in a lens that balances better on Sony's small cameras.

As we'd expect from a pro-spec optic, the barrel is dust- and moisture-resistant for use outdoors in inclement conditions. This includes a rubber seal around the mount, which the ZA version lacks. A fluorine coating is applied to the front element to help shed raindrops and keep it clean of fingerprints.

Operationally, the lens matches Sony's other recent designs, with a large rubberised manual focus ring at the front and a slimmer aperture ring closer to the body. The latter can be switched between clickless and clicked operation, with one-third stop detents from f/1.4 to f/16. Rotating it further engages an A position that hands back control

to a dial on the camera body. On the left side of the barrel you'll find a large focus-hold button whose function can be re-programmed from the camera, with an AF/MF switch beneath it. Neither of these controls are found on the older model, which makes the GM just that bit more pleasant to use.

Autofocus

Fast primes inevitably require large focus groups, which means they rarely autofocus as quickly as smaller-aperture lenses. This is true of the FE 35mm F1.4 GM, but your experience will depend greatly on which camera you use. On recent models such as the A7R IV and A7C it snaps into focus quite smartly, but on older cameras such as the A7 II it's rather less decisive, focusing with a very noticeable 'wobble'. Its AF speed is also highly dependent upon the set aperture, due to Sony's practice of stopping down for live view and focusing.

However, you can't fault the results. Thanks to the inherent accuracy of on-sensor AF, the lens nails focus every shot, no matter where you place the subject within the frame. It's fully



Out-of-focus backgrounds benefit from a lovely soft blur
Sony Alpha 7 II,
1/125sec at f/1.4, ISO 100



Impressive sharpness combines with attractively blurred backgrounds to deliver a three-dimensional feel
Sony Alpha 7 II, 1/4000sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

compatible with Sony's AF technologies including eye AF, so you can be confident of getting portraits nice and sharp.

Manual focusing is also a very positive experience, thanks to the finely honed response of the focus ring. When MF assist is enabled on the camera, turning the ring will engage magnified live view. This allows the focus to be judged with critical accuracy, which I found particularly useful for close-up shooting. Alternatively, you can use the camera's peaking display and toggle it on and off using a function button. But this isn't quite such an accurate tool, especially given how shallow the depth of field can be at f/1.4.

Performance

To get the best possible impression of the FE 35mm F1.4 GM's abilities, I paired it with the 61MP Alpha 7R IV – currently the highest-resolution full-frame camera on the market. This provides an extremely tough test for any lens, but one that it passed with flying colours. It resolves an astonishing amount of detail from corner to corner, even if you point it at a flat wall and shoot wide open at f/1.4. Naturally, there's a little blurring towards the far edges and corners, and for the very sharpest results across the frame you'll need to stop down

'Out-of-focus backgrounds are generally delivered with a very pleasing blur'

to f/5.6, with diffraction then taking the edge off fine detail at smaller apertures. But in real-world use, the amount of detail you can record is restricted far more by depth-of-field limitations than by lens aberrations. Remarkably, the lens maintains much the same impressive sharpness through its entire focus distance range.

On the whole, optical aberrations are notable by their absence. If for some reason you decide to turn off in-camera lens corrections, you might be able to trace the barest hint of colour fringing towards the corners of the frame owing to lateral chromatic aberration. However, if you use Adobe software for raw development, this will be corrected automatically. Likewise, with high-contrast three-dimensional scenes shot wide open, a little colour fringing can be visible around out-of-focus elements of the scene when viewing files at 100% onscreen. But it's easy enough to suppress in raw processing using the defringe controls. Examining raw files also reveals minor pincushion distortion, which again is normally corrected in the camera's JPEG output. This can be suppressed

in raw processing using generic sliders, but for perfect correction a lens profile will be necessary.

Large-aperture primes invariably show strong vignetting on full frame, and this one is no exception, with pronounced darkening towards the corners of the image at large apertures. However, a gradual fall-off profile means it's not aesthetically displeasing; in fact it can be very effective at framing the subject. It also effectively disappears on stopping down to f/4. If you don't want to see this vignetting, then setting Shading Comp to Auto in the camera menu will practically eliminate it from both JPEG and raw files.

Out-of-focus backgrounds are generally delivered with a very pleasing blur, aided by a smooth transition from sharp, in-focus regions. Flare is rarely a problem, even when the sun is placed directly in the frame, although you'll inevitably see some patterning in such images if you expose for the highlights then draw up shadow detail in post-processing. Overall, about the only possible criticism is that Sony's use of 11 rounded diaphragm blades gives rise to fussy 22-point sun stars at small apertures.

Verdict

WHEN we reviewed Sony's Distagon T* FE 35mm F1.4 ZA a little over five years ago, we were quite happy with its optical performance, but disappointed by its bulk. However the firm has learned a lot in the meantime, with the result that the new FE 35mm F1.4 GM is a very different kettle of fish. It's smaller and lighter, while being optically improved to the point of being phenomenal. Indeed on the Alpha 7R IV, it's one of the finest combinations I've ever used, and on a par with its superlative 24mm f/1.4 and 135mm f/1.8 siblings. Place it on a less-demanding 24MP camera and it'll deliver image files that quite simply look flawless.

It's not just the optics that satisfy, either. The autofocus works well, particularly on recent cameras, while the manual focus experience is excellent too. It's always great to have an aperture ring on the lens, and I'd love to see Sony start adding them to its high-end zooms. I'm also hoping that Sony will apply a similar downsizing exercise to its superb, but oversized, FE 50mm F1.4 ZA.

At £1,500, this isn't a cheap lens, but it's more affordable than Canon or Nikon's equivalent DSLR optics. Let's not forget that Sony still offers a compact f/1.8 alternative for those on a tighter budget, too. Ultimately, though, the FE 35mm F1.4 GM is one of the finest lenses we've tested.

Data file

Price £1,500	Aperture f/1.4 - f/16
Filter diameter 67mm	Min. focus 27cm
Lens elements 14	Length 96mm
Groups 10	Diameter 76mm
Diaphragm blades 11	Weight 524g
	Supplied accessories Front and rear caps, hood, case



Joby Smart Stabilizer

Michael Topham tests a smartphone gimbal with a telescopic handle

● £89 ● www.joby.com

IF YOU were interested in our recent article about vlogging (AP 17 November), buying a smartphone stabiliser is a great start. As well as allowing you to present video independently, they help turn amateurish looking handheld video into smooth, steady footage that gives a much more professional appearance. Joby's Smart Stabilizer is a motorised three-axis gimbal that comes with everything you need to improve the quality of handheld smartphone video for less than £100. However it's a bit different from other examples in the way it features a telescopic handle that can be pulled out and extended by up to 7 inches.

Connecting the device to a smartphone is easy. Download the Smart Stabilizer app, mount your phone, turn the stabiliser on and the two devices pair instantly via Bluetooth. With a maximum payload of 210g and maximum phone width of 8.4cm, it's compatible with most smartphones.

The app is very intuitive to use, with large icons clearly arranged down either side of the screen. Useful functions include the option to select face tracking or draw a frame around objects you'd like to track automatically. Face tracking is reasonably effective provided you keep in the frame and don't move too erratically. Users get excellent time-lapse control as well as panorama options in stills mode.

The handle of the gimbal, despite feeling a little plasticky, is comfortable with the supplied wrist strap adding security. The joystick provides precise manual control with no lag and the gimbal motors perform smoothly and silently. Panning speed in its default mode is fairly slow, but this can be increased from the joystick settings just like the tilting speed. Users will want to enter the menu that's located next to the art filters to turn off the watermark that's added to still photos and this is also where the picture and video resolution is set. The built-in rechargeable battery lasts for ten hours on a charge and is charged via Micro USB. The top of the stabiliser did get warm during testing, however this didn't affect its performance.

Verdict

If you fancy an effective stabiliser for your smartphone that's quick to set up, offers precise control of axis rotation and is supported by an intuitive app, Joby's Smart Stabilizer is a good choice that represents great value. It does a fine job of banishing handshake when you're stationary and creates smooth-looking footage when you're recording on the move. It's not as compact as the Benro 3XS Lite (£69), but has the advantage of being able to extend the handle, which is important if you'd like to show more of your surroundings.



At a glance

- Charges via Micro USB charging cable
- Supports 210g load weight
- 428g
- 11.1x11.8x32.3cm

IN THE KIT

The Joby Smart Stabilizer comes protected in its own clamshell carry case. You'll find a user manual that clearly explains the controls and the LED status indicator, along with various cables that allow smartphones to be charged direct from the stabilizer. A small tripod with rubberised feet is included too, for setting up on smooth, even surfaces such as a desk.



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Professor Newman on...

The camera operating system

Is there a market for cameras capable of running third-party imaging apps, just like smartphones do?

It's often said that a digital camera is a computer used for taking pictures, and there is a lot of truth in that. But it's a particular kind of computer called an 'embedded system'. These are generally designed to replace what in older times would be the mechanical, chemical or electronic gubbins in an instrument designed for some specific purpose. There was never a view to user extendibility or repurposing.

The personal computer was something different. It was designed as a general-purpose machine, with the specific purpose of being a vehicle to run third-party software. After a couple of false starts, smartphones have followed in the same direction, in which the original telephone function now takes a minor role compared to the execution of third-party 'apps' which allow the owner to customise their phone to do the particular job they want done, be it participating in social media or organising and displaying their photos. Now, with phones having evolved into tablets and super-tablets, and personal computers, in the shape of the new Apple range, being built around phone technology, the wheel of invention has turned a full revolution.

But where does this leave cameras? The phone is nowadays the camera of choice for many, and its capability to run third-party apps allows those photos to be creatively edited and shared, all on the phone. The specialist camera is much more limited in this regard. Whilst quite a few cameras now have built-in image-processing capability and a



The Zeiss ZX1 uses the Android OS, but its high price will likely limit its success

variety of picture styles, they don't have the ability to select third-party apps if you want to do something different from the camera-manufacturer's tools.

The Android camera

There is an exception. Zeiss has released its ZX1 camera after having announced it some two years ago. This is a fixed-lens full-frame 'compact' (using a fairly loose definition of the word) in which the computational facilities are controlled by a mobile phone operating system, Google's Android. This allows the camera to run image-processing apps. It comes ready loaded with the mobile version of Adobe's Lightroom, but in principle, it should be possible to load and use the app of your choice.

In a related development, Qualcomm, one of the major manufacturers of mobile phone chipsets, has announced its latest product, the Snapdragon 888. This is an eight-core processor, running at up to 2.84 GHz. It also includes three

image-processing cores as well as its own graphics processing unit (GPU). Systems built around this chip will have access to as much processing power as a top-end desktop of only a couple of years ago. Given that the chip is available on the open market, there is no reason why it shouldn't be used as the basis for a camera following Zeiss's lead, an Android-powered camera with the capability to load user-selected image-processing apps and the computing power to run them effectively.

Is this a likely development? I think that the answer may be 'no'. Not because of technical infeasibility, but because it creates a too-large excursion from the camera manufacturers' established commercial thinking, and also possibly because the Zeiss is unlikely to sell in large numbers, which might be taken as an indication that there is little commercial demand for such a product. The major factor which might limit its market is its cost, which is US\$6,000 for a camera with a fixed 35mm f/2 lens and a 3fps frame rate.

Bob Newman is currently Professor of Computer Science at the University of Wolverhampton. He has been working with the design and development of high-technology equipment for 35 years and two of his products have won innovation awards. Bob is also a camera nut and a keen amateur photographer

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Buying Guide

294
lenses
listed &
rated

Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for DSLR lenses

DSLR Lenses

Interchangeable lenses come in a huge array of types for shooting different kinds of subjects

IN GENERAL, the easiest way to expand the kinds of pictures you can take is by buying different types of lenses. For example, telephoto lenses let you zoom in on distant subjects, while macro lenses enable close-ups of small objects. Large-aperture lenses allow you to isolate subjects against blurred backgrounds, or shoot in low light without having to raise the ISO too high. Meanwhile, all-in-one superzooms cover a wide range of subjects, but usually with rather lower optical quality.



Lens mounts
Each manufacturer has its own lens mount and most aren't compatible with one another. For example, a Canon DSLR can't use Nikon lenses, although you can use independent brands if you get them with the right mount.

Built-in focus motor
Most lenses now incorporate an internal motor to drive the autofocus, although some are still driven from the camera body. DSLR lenses often use ultrasonic-type motors for fast focusing, but some now have video-friendly stepper motors as widely used in mirrorless systems.

Filter thread
A thread at the front of the camera will have a diameter, in mm, which will allow you to attach a variety of filters or adapters to the lens.

Maximum aperture
Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds.

OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

AF Nikon AF lenses driven from camera	DC Sigma's lenses for APS-C digital	ED Extra-low Dispersion elements	LM Fujifilm Linear Motor	SP Tamron's Super Performance range
AF-S Nikon lenses with Silent Wave Motor	DG Sigma's designation for full-frame lenses	EF Canon's lenses for full-frame DSLRs	MP-E Canon's high-magnification macro lens	SSM Sony Supersonic Motor lenses
AF-P Nikon lenses with stepper motors	Di Tamron lenses for full-frame sensors	EF-S Canon's lenses for APS-C DSLRs	OIS Optical Image Stabilisation	STF Sony and Laowa Smooth Trans Focus
AL Pentax lenses with aspheric elements	Di-II Tamron lenses designed for APS-C DSLRs	EF-M Canon's lenses for APS-C mirrorless	OS Sigma's Optically Stabilised lenses	STM Canon lenses with stepper motor
APD Fujifilm lenses with apodisation elements	Di-III Tamron lenses for mirrorless cameras	EX Sigma's 'Excellent' range	PC-E Nikon tilt-and-shift lenses	TS-E Canon Tilt-and-Shift lens
APO Sigma Apochromatic lenses	DN Sigma's lenses for mirrorless cameras	FA Pentax full-frame lenses	PF Nikon Phase Fresnel optics	UMC Ultra Multi Coated
ASPH Aspherical elements	DO Canon diffractive optical element lenses	FE Sony lenses for full-frame mirrorless	PZD Tamron Piezo Drive focus motor	USM Canon lenses with an Ultrasonic Motor
AW Pentax all-weather lenses	DT Sony lenses for APS-C-sized sensors	G Nikon lenses without an aperture ring	RF Canon full-frame mirrorless lenses	USD Tamron Ultrasonic Drive motor
CS Samyang lenses for APS-C cropped sensors	DX Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital	HSM Sigma's Hypersonic Motor	S Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless	VC Tamron's Vibration Compensation
D Nikon lenses that communicate distance info	DS Canon's Defocus Smoothing technology	IS Canon's Image-Stabilised lenses	SAM Sony Smooth Autofocus Motor	VR Nikon's Vibration Reduction feature
DA Pentax lenses optimised for APS-C-sized sensors	E Nikon lenses with electronic apertures	L Canon's 'Luxury' range of high-end lenses	SDM Pentax's Sonic Direct Drive Motor	WR Weather Resistant
DC Nikon defocus-control portrait lenses	E Sony lenses for APS-C mirrorless	LD Low-Dispersion glass	SMC Pentax Super Multi Coating	Z Nikon's lenses for mirrorless cameras

ALL PRICES ARE RRPS, STREET PRICES MAY VARY

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DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																															
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DSLR Lenses														IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	FULL FRAME	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY											MOUNT							DIMENSIONS					
PENTAX DSLR																										
DA 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 HD Fisheye ED	£499		Updated fisheye zoom lens gains refreshed cosmetic design, new optical coatings and removable hood															•		14	n/a	70	67.5	317		
DA* 11-18mmF2.8 ED DC AW HD	£1399		Premium fast ultra-wideangle zoom, includes all-weather construction and innovative focus clamp															•		30	82	90	100	704		
DA 12-24mm f/4 smc ED AL IF	£1050		Two aspherical elements, ELD glass and a constant aperture of f/4 in this wide zoom															•		30	77	83.5	87.5	430		
DA 15mm f/4 smc ED AL Limited	£820		Limited-edition lens with hybrid aspherical and extra-low-dispersion elements															•		18	49	39.5	63	212		
FA 15-30mm f/2.8 ED SM WR HD	£1500		Weather-resistant ultra-wideangle zoom with fast maximum aperture and fixed petal-type hood															•	•	28	n/a	98.5	143.5	1040		
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 smc ED AL IF SDM	£950	3.5★	A nice balance and robust feel, but poor sharpness at f/2.8 (which significantly improves from f/4 onwards)															•		30	77	98.5	84	600		
DA 16-85mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC WR	£600		Weather-resistant, this zoom features a round-shaped diaphragm to produce beautiful bokeh															•		35	72	78	94	488		
DA 17-70mm f/4 smc AL IF SDM	£630		Featuring Pentax's Supersonic Direct-drive (SDM) focusing system															•		28	67	75	93.5	485		
DA 18-50mm f/4-5.6 DC WR RE	£230		Super-thin standard zoom that's weather-resistant and features a round-shaped diaphragm															•		30	58	71	41	158		
DA 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 smc AL WR	£229		A weather-resistant construction and an aspherical element, as well as SP coating															•		25	52	68.5	67.5	230		
DA 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DA ED DC WR	£600	3.5★	A weather-resistant mid-range zoom lens															•		40	62	73	76	405		
DA 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 smc ED SDM	£699		15x superzoom for company's K-mount DSLRs featuring two extra-low-dispersion (ED) elements															•		49	62	76	89	453		
DA 20-40mm f/2.8-4 ED Limited DC WR	£829		With state-of-the-art HD coating, a completely round-shaped diaphragm, and weather resistant															•		28	55	68.5	71	283		
DA 21mm f/3.2 smc AL Limited	£600		This limited-edition optic offers a floating element for extra-close focusing															•		20	49	63	25	140		
FA 24-70mm f/2.8 ED SDM WR	£1149		Full-frame-compatible premium standard zoom - includes a HD coating to minimise flare and ghosting															•	•	38	82	109.5	88.5	787		
FA 28-105mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC HD	£549		Standard zoom lens for the K-1 full-frame DSLR that's much more affordable than the 24-70mm f/2.8															•	•	50	62	73	86.5	440		
FA 31mm f/1.8 smc AL Limited	£1149		Aluminium body; when used on a Pentax DSLR offers a perspective similar to that of the human eye															•	•	30	58	68.5	65	345		
FA 35mm f/2 HD	£399		Updated version of classic Pentax fast prime features new multi-layer HD coating															•	•	30	49	64	44.5	193		
DA 35mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£640	4.5★	Despite slight edge softness, this lens performs excellently and is a pleasure to use															•		14	49	46.5	63	215		
DA 35mm f/2.4 smc DS AL	£180	5★	A budget-priced prime lens for beginners															•		30	49	63	45	124		
DA 40mm f/2.8 smc Limited	£450		Pancake lens with SMC coating and Quick Shift focusing system															•		40	49	63	15	90		
FA 43mm f/1.9 smc Limited	£729		Focal length is ideal for portraits as well as everyday use, and features an SMC multi-layer coating															•	•	45	49	64	27	155		
FA* 50mm f/1.4 SDM AW HD	£1200		Premium fast prime with dustproof, weather-resistant design and electromagnetic aperture															•	•	40	72	80	106	910		
FA 50mm f/1.4 smc	£399		Compact fast prime with film-era double-Gauss optics and traditional aperture ring															•	•	45	49	63.5	38	220		
DA 50mm f/1.8 smc DA	£249	4★	Affordable short telephoto lens ideal for portraits															•		45	52	38.5	63	122		
D-FA 50mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£550		Macro lens capable of 1:1 reproduction and with a Quick Shift focus mechanism															•	•	19	49	60	67.5	265		
DA* 50-135mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1200	4★	Constant f/2.8 aperture; well suited to portraiture and mid-range action subjects															•		100	67	76.5	136	765		
DA 50-200mm f/4-5.6 smc ED WR	£210		Weather-resistant construction, Quick Shift focus system and an SP coating															•		n/a	49	69	79.5	285		
DA* 55mm f/1.4 smc SDM	£800	4.5★	Despite questions about the particular sample tested, this lens scores highly															•		45	58	70.5	66	375		
DA 55-300mm f/4.5-6.3 ED PLM WR RE	£400		Compact weather resistant telephoto zoom has video-friendly fast and silent autofocus motor															•		95	58	76.5	89	442		
DA 55-300mm f/4-5.8 ED WR	£399		Weatherproof HD telephoto lens featuring quick shift focusing system															•		140	58	71	111.5	466		
DA 60-250mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1450	4.5★	With a constant f/4 aperture and an ultrasonic motor for speedy focusing															•		110	67	167.5	82	1040		
DA 70mm f/2.4 smc AL Limited	£600		Medium telephoto lens with an aluminium construction and a Super Protect coating															•		70	49	63	26	130		
D-FA* 70-200mm f/2.8 ED DCAW	£1850		Fast telephoto zoom in Pentax's high-performance Star (*) series developed for best image rendition															•	•	120	77	91.5	203	1755		
D-FA 70-210mm F4 ED SDM WR	£1199		Compact telephoto zoom with constant f/4 maximum aperture and weather-resistant construction															•	•	95	67	78.5	175	819		
FA 77mm f/1.8 smc Limited	£1050		With Pentax's Fixed Rear Element Extension focusing system for 'sharp, crisp images'															•	•	70	49	48	64	270		
D FA* 85mm f/1.4 SDM AW	£1999		Upcoming large-aperture short telephoto prime promises premium optics and weather-sealing															•	•	85	82	95	123.5	1255		
D-FA 100mm f/2.8 Macro WR	£680	5★	Street price makes this something of a bargain for a true macro offering full-frame coverage															•	•	30	49	65	80.5	340		
FA 150-450mm f/4.5-5.6 ED DCAW	£2000		Super-telephoto lens with weather resistance, designed to produce extra-sharp, high-contrast images															•	•	200	86	241.5	95	2000		
DA* 200mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1000	4.5★	SDM focusing system on the inside, and dirtproof and splashproof on the outside															•		120	77	83	134	825		
DA* 300mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1300		This tele optic promises ultrasonic focus and high image quality thanks to ED glass															•		140	77	83	184	1070		
SAMYANG DSLR																										
8mm f/3.5 UMC Fisheye CS II	£274		Wideangle fisheye lens designed for digital reflex cameras with APS-C sensors											•	•	•	•	•		30	n/a	75	77.8	417		
10mm f/3.5 XP MF	£950		World's widest-angle rectilinear lens promises 130° field of view with minimal distortion												•	•	•	•		26	n/a	95	98.1	731		
10mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS CS	£429		Features a nano crystal anti-reflection coating system and embedded lens hood											•	•	•	•	•		24	n/a	86	77	580		
12mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS Fisheye	£430		Fisheye ultra wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs											•	•	•	•	•	•	20	n/a	77.3	70.2	500		
14mm f/2.4 XP MF	£899		High-end ultra-wideangle prime with premium optics and large maximum aperture												•	•	•		•	28	n/a	95	109.4	791		
AF 14mm f/2.8	£649	4.5★	Samyang's first AF SLR lens features very decent image quality and weather-sealed construction												•	•	•		•	20	n/a	90.5	95.6	485		
14mm f/2.8 ED UMC	£363		Ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens; bulb-like front element means no filters can be used											•	•	•	•	•	•	28	n/a	87	94	552		
14mm f/2.8 MF Mk II	£439		Updated manual focus prime with weather-sealing and de-clickable aperture ring												•	•	•		•	28	n/a	87	96.3	641		
16mm f/2.0 ED AS UMC CS	£389		Fast wideangle lens for digital reflex cameras fitted with APS-C sensors											•	•	•	•	•		20	n/a	89.4	83	583		
20mm f/1.8 ED AS UMC	£430		Large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs											•	•	•	•	•	•	20	77	83	113.2	520		
24mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£499		Fast ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens comprising 13 elements arranged in 12 groups											•	•	•	•	•	•	25	77	95	116	680		
24mm f/3.5 ED AS UMSTS	£949	3★	Tilt-and-shift wideangle lens for a fraction of the price of Canon and Nikon's offerings											•	•	•	•	•	•	20	82	86	110.5	680		

DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	MOUNT						MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
					SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA					
35mm f/1.2 XP MF	£719		Ultra-large aperture, manual focus prime with premium optics			•				•	34	86	93	117.4	1106
35mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£369	4.5★	While manual focus only, this prime impressed us in real-world use, making it something of a bargain		•	•	•	•	•	•	30	77	83	111	660
50mm f/1.2 XP MF	£639		Large aperture manual-focus prime promises 50MP resolution			•				•	45	86	93	117.4	1200
50mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£299		Manual-focus fast standard prime for full-frame DSLRs		•	•	•	•	•	•	45	77	74.7	81.6	575
85mm f/1.2 XP MF	£899		High-end manual focus lens sports an impressively fast maximum aperture			•				•	80	86	93	98.4	1050g
AF 85mm f/1.4	£599	3★	Autofocus fast short telephoto portrait lens for use on Canon or Nikon full-frame DSLRs			•		•		•	90	77	88	72	485
85mm f/1.4 IF MC	£239		Short fast telephoto prime, manual focus, aimed at portrait photographers		•	•	•	•	•	•	100	72	78	72.2	513
85mm f/1.4 MF Mk II	£389		Evolved large-aperture manual focus telephoto is weather-sealed and the aperture can be de-clicked			•		•		•	110	72	78	72.2	541
100mm f/2.8 ED UMC Macro	£389		Full-frame compatible, the Samyang 100mm is a true Macro lens offering 1:1 magnification		•	•	•	•	•	•	30	67	72.5	123.1	720
135mm f/2 ED UMC	£399		Manual focus portrait prime has fast aperture for subject isolation and background blur		•	•	•	•	•	•	80	77	82	122	830

SIGMA DSLR

8mm f/3.5 EX DG	£799		The world's only 8mm lens equipped with autofocus also boasts SLD glass			•		•		•	13	n/a	73.5	68.6	400
8-16mm f/4.5-5.6 DC HSM	£800	4★	Excellent performance at 8mm, which sadly drops at the 16mm end		•	•		•	•	•	24	72	75	105.7	555
10-20mm f/3.5 EX DC HSM	£650	5★	An absolute gem of a lens that deserves a place on every photographer's wish list		•	•		•	•	•	24	82	87.3	88.2	520
12-24mm f/4 DG HSM A	£1649	5★	Premium full-frame wideangle zoom designed to have minimal distortion in its wideangle imagery			•		•		•	24	n/a	101	132	1150
14mm f/1.8 DG HSM A	£1679		World's first f/1.8 ultra-wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs			•		•		•	27	n/a	95.4	126	1170
14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM A	£1399	5★	Pro-specification fast ultra-wide prime for full-frame DSLRs includes weather-sealed construction			•		•		•	26	n/a	96.4	135.1	1150
15mm f/2.8 EX DG	£629	4★	This fisheye optic puts in a very solid performance – not to be dismissed as a gimmick!		•	•		•	•	•	15	n/a	73.5	65	370
17-50mm f/2.8 EX DC OS HSM	£689		FLD and aspherical elements, a constant f/2.8 aperture and Optical Stabilisation	•	•	•		•	•	•	28	77	83.5	92	565
17-70mm f/2.8-4 DC Macro OS HSM	£449		Compact redesign of this well-received lens launches the 'Contemporary' range	•	•	•		•	•	•	22	72	79	82	470
18-35mm f/1.8 DC HSM	£799	5★	Said to be the world's first constant f/1.8 zoom; DoF equivalent of constant f/2.7 on full frame			•		•		•	28	72	78	121	810
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DC OS	£449	4★	Excellent resolution and consistent performance, but control over CA could be a little better	•		•		•		•	45	45	79	100	610
18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 DC Macro OS HSM	£499		Compact and portable high ratio zoom lens offering enhanced features to make it the ideal all-in-one lens		•	•		•	•	•	39	72	79	101.5	585
20mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£799	5★	An outstanding wideangle fixed-focal-length lens			•		•		•	27.6	n/a	90.7	129.8	950
24mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£799	5★	The latest addition to Sigma's 'Art' line of high-quality fast primes			•		•		•	25	77	85	90.2	665
24-35mm f/2 DG HSM A	£949	5★	The world's first large-aperture full-frame zoom offering a wide aperture of f/2 throughout the zoom range			•		•		•	28	82	87.6	122.7	940
24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM A	£1399	5★	Latest premium fast standard zoom for full frame includes optical image stabilisation	•		•		•		•	37	82	88	107.6	1020
24-105mm f/4 DG OS HSM A	£849	4.5★	Serious full-frame alternative to own-brand lenses at a lower price, with no compromises in the build	•	•	•		•		•	45	82	89	109	885
28mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£1099	4.5★	High-quality, weathersealed fast wideangle prime for full-frame DSLRs			•		•		•	28	77	82.8	107.1	865
30mm f/1.4 DC HSM A	£360		Unique fast prime for APS-C DSLRs that gives 45mm equivalent 'normal' angle of view		•	•		•	•	•	30	62	63.3	74.2	435
35mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£799	5★	Superb large-aperture prime; first lens in company's 'Art' series		•	•		•	•	•	30	67	77	94	665
40mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£1100	5★	Large and heavy prime promising natural-looking perspective and top-quality optics			•		•		•	40	82	87.8	131	1200
50mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£849	5★	This lens has a unique design that pays off in truly excellent image quality		•	•		•		•	40	77	85.4	100	815
50-100mm f/1.8 DC HSM A	£829	5★	This APS-C-format lens aims to cover the focal lengths of three prime lenses in one			•		•		•	37.4	82	93.5	170.7	1490
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM S	£1899		Weathersealed 10x zoom encompasses huge range from standard to super-telephoto	•		•		•		•	60	105	120.4	268.9	2700
70mm f/2.8 DG Macro A	£499		The first macro lens in Sigma's Art line-up features an extending-barrel focus-by-wire design			•		•		•	26	49	71	106	515
70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM S	£1349	5★	Superb large-aperture telephoto zoom shows high sharpness and minimal chromatic aberration	•		•		•		•	120	82	94.2	202.9	1805
85mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£1199	5★	Optically stunning fast short telephoto prime is the ultimate portrait lens for DSLR users			•		•		•	85	86	95	126	1130
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C	£799	4.5★	Relatively lightweight telezoom comes with weather-sealing and choice of push-pull or twist zoom	•		•		•		•	160	67	86.4	182.3	1160
105mm f/1.4 DG HSM A	£1499	4.5★	Sigma's 'bokeh monster' super-fast portrait lens is weathersealed and comes with a tripod foot			•		•		•	100	105	115.9	131.5	1645
105mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro	£649	4.5★	An optically stabilised macro lens, this super-sharp lens is one of our favourites	•		•		•		•	31.2	62	78	126.4	725
120-300mm f/2.8 DG HSM S	£3599		First lens in company's 'Sports' series; switch enables adjustment of both focus speed and focus limiter		•	•		•	•	•	150	105	124	291	3390
135mm f/1.8 DG HSM A	£1399	5★	Super-fast portrait prime designed to provide sufficient resolution for 50MP DSLRs			•		•		•	87.5	82	91.4	114.9	1130
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM C	£1199		Budget 'Contemporary' version of Sigma's long-range telephoto zoom is smaller and lighter	•		•		•		•	280	95	105	260.1	1930
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM S	£1599		This portable, high-performance telephoto zoom from Sigma's Sports line is dust and splashproof	•		•		•		•	260	105	121	290.2	2860

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11-18mm f/4.5-5.6 DT	£609	3★	A solid overall performance that simply fails to be outstanding in any way			•					25	77	83	80.5	360
16mm f/2.8 Fisheye	£709		Fisheye lens with a close focusing distance of 20cm and a 180° angle of view			•				•	20	n/a	75	66.5	400
16-35mm f/2.8 ZA SSM IIT*	£1999	4.5★	High-end Zeiss wideangle zoom lens ideal for full-frame Alpha DSLRs and SLTs			•				•	28	77	83	114	900
16-50mm f/2.8 SSM	£569	4★	Bright short-range telephoto lens			•					100	72	81	88	577
16-80mm f/3.5-4.5 ZAT*	£709	4.5★	Carl Zeiss standard zoom lens			•					35	62	72	83	445
18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 DT SAM II	£159		Basic kit zoom for Sony's Apha mount SLT cameras			•					30	55	72	69	222
18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DT SAM	£429		A versatile zoom with Direct Manual Focus	•	•						45	62	76	86	398
18-250mm f/3.5-6.3 DT	£559	3.5★	Good overall, but performance dips at longer focal lengths			•					45	62	75	86	440
20mm f/2.8	£559	3.5★	Wideangle prime lens with rear focusing mechanism and focus range limiter			•				•	25	72	78	53.5	285
24mm f/2 ZA SSM T*	£1119		An impressively bright wideangle Carl Zeiss lens			•				•	19	72	78	76	555

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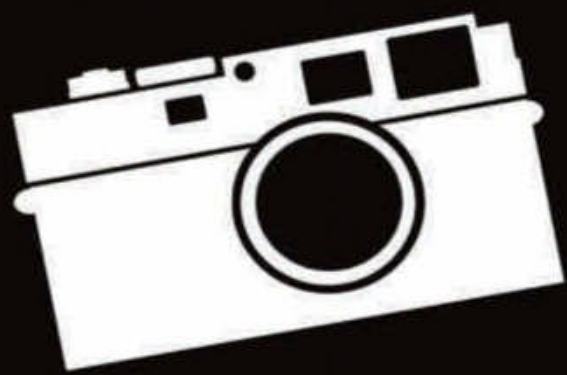
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TIME TO CHANGE?





Final Analysis

Paul Hill considers...

'The Haystack' by William Henry Fox Talbot, 1844

I was giving an illustrated talk recently that included the famous 19th century photograph 'The Haystack' by William Henry Fox Talbot (born 221 years ago) and I was struck by how modern it seems. Though this salt print or calotype, the negative/positive process Talbot pioneered, was made in 1844 it has a contemporary feel to it. Though he was in awe of what he would consider 'proper' artists, little did he think that images like this would influence painters more than any novel developments that might emerge from easel art. In fact, many artists thought that with the coming of photography 'painting was dead'.

Maybe one of the reasons this image looks contemporary is Talbot's use of light and form rather than being an accurate record of a 19th century haystack – a common sight in the fields and farmyards around Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire, where he lived.

From our 21st century perspective it seems strange that he implied in his book *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-46), which was the first commercially published photographic book in the world, that a photograph was an inferior artefact to a painting. '..... no artist would take the trouble to copy faithfully from nature. Contenting himself with a general effect, he would probably deem it beneath his genius to copy every accident of light and shade.'

But there are no 'accidents' of light and shade here. He knew what he was doing.

© WILLIAM HENRY FOX TALBOT (ENGLISH, 1800-1877) THE HAYSTACK, LATE APRIL 1844, VARNISHED SALT PRINT FROM A CALOTYPE NEGATIVE (SCHAAF-2770) (THOMAS WALTHER COLLECTION)



To give paintings a look of reality was the holy grail for artists hundreds of years before the process of photography was discovered. The development of the theory of perspective in the 15th century gave drawings and paintings the illusion of three-dimensionality in the same way that photographs do. The camera obscura, and later the smaller and portable camera lucida, were employed to project a light-reflected image onto a flat surface, which could be traced with a pencil or pen by the artist.

The image became sharper when the aperture allowing the light in was smaller or, better

'Maybe one of the reasons this image looks contemporary is his use of light and form'

still, if the light was focused through a lens and an aperture.

The camera lucida was particularly popular among amateur painters in the 19th century who were eager to find a quick, foolproof way to emulate the work of their professional peers who possessed the accurate draughtsmanship and skill that they lacked.

But many prominent painters, like Canaletto also employed the camera obscura in the 17th century, and in the early 1800s Fox Talbot used

the camera lucida when he went sketching. He was however frustrated by the aid, but it sowed a seed in his mind. He thought: 'How charming it would be if it were possible to cause these natural images to imprint themselves durably, and remain fixed upon the paper.'

That 'charming' thought led to the invention of photography – a medium of art and communication that is now practised and enjoyed globally by more people than any other.



Among many achievements, Paul Hill has written two books on photography, was director of the Creative Photography course at Trent Polytechnic and has been exhibited numerous times. He was the first photographer to receive an MBE for services to photography and the first professor of photographic practice in a British university. hillonphotography.co.uk.



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