

Saturday 19 June 2021

Amateur



Sony Alpha 1

A pro sports tog takes the **world's best mirrorless** camera for a spin

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"X-S10 makes a
lot of sense for
a lot of people"

-Photography Blog



"If you own an APS-C DSLR and want to
switch to a smaller, lighter mirrorless system,
quite simply this is the camera for you."

-Amateur Photographer



"The X-S10 is an easy
camera to recommend for
photographers of all kinds"

-DP Review

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Any photographer waking up from a 30-year coma and being handed one of the latest mirrorless cameras would be amazed and confused in equal measure, especially when it comes to the focusing options available. They would be blown away by the effectiveness of the eye detection for example, but figuring out how to find it and set it up on some cameras is like trying to solve a Rubik's Cube. So we offer a brand by

brand guide to optimising the camera's AF in order to get the best results. Also this week, we gave the world's most sophisticated mirrorless camera (this week, at any rate) to pro sports photographer Nick Dungan to see how he got on, and for those with more modest budgets we revisit the many charms of the Olympus E-M10 Mark II as a great used buy.

We also present a selection of winning images from the world's greatest food photography competition, which may inspire you to have a go yourself. **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

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This week's cover image

Our cover was shot by Ian Pack. Thanks to Park Cameras for the loan of the Fujifilm X-T4

In this issue

- 3 7 days
- 15 Mirrorless AF systems
- 22 Inbox
- 26 Reader portfolio
- 28 How to take scrumptious images
- 34 Photo stories
- 36 Behind the picture
- 40 Sony Alpha 1 field test
- 47 Second-hand classic
- 50 Accessories
- 52 Tech talk
- 54 Buying Guide: Mirrorless lenses
- 66 Final analysis

This week in 1950

TREASURES FROM THE HULTON ARCHIVE

Six-Year-Old Speedway Rider by George Konig

As Father's Day this year is on 20 June, we thought we'd take a look at this touching image of the British motorcycle builder Howard Cole, and his son, British motorcycle speedway rider also called Howard Cole. The pair were better known as George Cole and Kid Bodie. Here, Cole Junior is seen aged six in a leather jacket, while the duo inspect a scaled-down speedway bike at the family workshop in Wolverhampton, West Midlands. Kid Bodie went on to win the New Zealand Championship in Christchurch in 1967. He also rode in the 1969 World Final at Wembley, before racing in three British Championship finals from 1969-1971. He retired from racing in 1974.



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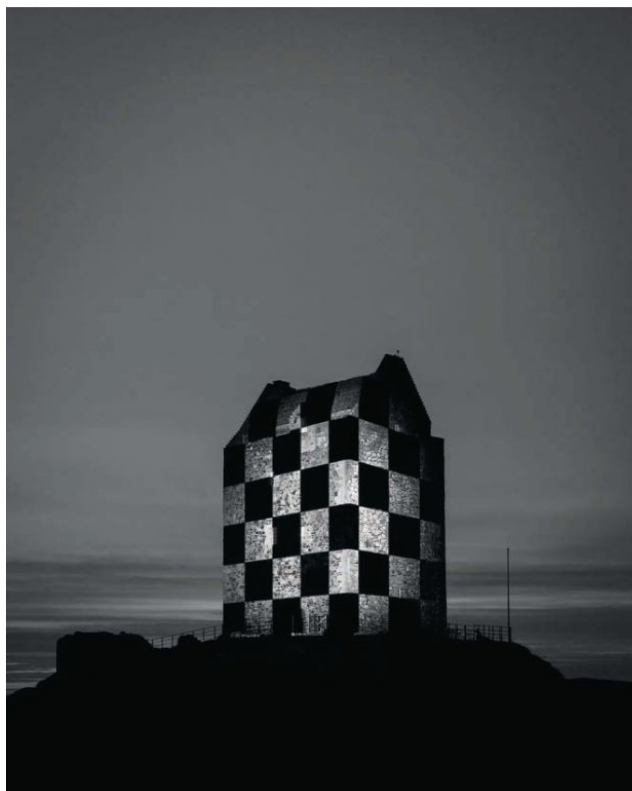
See page 38 for details

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It's good to share

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



Smailholm Light Show by James Elliot

Sony A7, 50mm f/1.8 lens, 1/5sec at f/5.6, ISO 400

James, a 28-year-old from the Scottish Borders, took up photography two years ago. 'I was lucky enough to be invited along to Smailholm Tower in Scotland to photograph the light show created by Andy McGregor to celebrate 250 years of Sir Walter Scott,' he tells us. 'It was amazing to witness and photograph in person. To learn more about Sir Walter Scott or watch the light show, visit walterscott250.com.' Instagram: @james.e_photo.





AP picture of the week

Angela by Miguel Oliveira

Nikon Z 50, Nikkor 85mm f/1.8G AF-S,
1/125sec at f/2.8, ISO 500

'Me and a fellow photographer and friend Angela have a routine of going out for photo walks around London every time we can', says Miguel, a Portuguese photographer based in London specialising in street, portrait and concert photography. 'When the light faded we decided it was time to head home but, while walking through Exchange Square next to Liverpool Street Station, I noticed this quiet staircase inside one of the office buildings nearby and I decided it was the perfect opportunity to use the Godox Speedlight I had brought along with me, which was set to 1/128 power. Angela's serene expression and pose screamed for a black & white edit.' Follow Miguel on Instagram @ miguelolivieraphotographer.

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**It's good
to share**

We also liked...

Milky Way Over Sky Train by Todor Tilev

Fujifilm X-T10, Samyang 12mm lens, 30sec at f/2, ISO 1600

Todor is from Bulgaria but lives in Athlone, in Ireland. 'The weather forecast was for clear skies so I decided to go to Lough Boora Discovery Park in County Offaly,' he tells us. 'The Sky Train is an old motionless "Rustin" train and wagons celebrating the machinery and people who once worked on them. I used a long exposure to capture the Milky Way over it, and to make the picture more interesting I went inside the train and pointed a torch towards the sky. Todor's website is www.todortilev.com.





The Seven Sisters by Bill Daniels

Fujifilm X-T3, XF16-80mm F4 R
OIS WR, 1/400sec at f/8, ISO 160

'I took this picture of the iconic white cliffs of The Seven Sisters on the Sussex coast on a stormy afternoon, a couple of hours before golden hour,' explains Bill, who is based in Norfolk. 'I actually had a b&w picture in mind, using the "Acros" monochrome mode on my camera. However, back at the computer (having shot in raw) I decided to experiment with a colour version, as the light was creating some striking colours in the turbulent sea, presumably where the chalky sea-bed was getting disturbed by the motion in the ocean.' This is a much-photographed scene but we love the painterly colour palette of Bill's version. 'Norfolk is a lovely place but famously flat and low-lying,' Bill continues. 'Now that I'm semi-retired, and lockdown seems to be easing, I'm looking forward to getting out and photographing more of the UK's incredibly diverse and beautiful scenery.' Bill is on Instagram @billdanielsphoto.

Weeping Willows by Bozena Gomolka

Sony A7 III, 28-70mm, 1/500sec at
f/6.3, ISO 640

'I am a keen landscape photographer and am blessed to live close to the sea and so many wonderful parks', says Bozena, who lives in Poole, Dorset. 'One of my favourite places is Coy Pond Gardens. Thanks to residents and volunteers, this garden is so well maintained and it looks absolutely stunning with a wide range of flowers and trees, especially the weeping willows which I captured in my image. It is a lovely place to wander and enjoy the sound of birds. This was taken early one morning in spring, which has always been my favourite season for taking photographs.' Instagram: @banoobosh.




Want to see your pictures here? Share them with our Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the hashtag #apicoftheweek.

Or email your best shot to us at ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. See page 3 for how to find us.




Joel Meyerowitz, one of the tutors

Online training discount for AP readers

 MASTERS of Photography (nothing to do with the TV series) is offering online training courses with some big names, including Joel Meyerowitz, Steve McCurry and David Yarrow. We've negotiated a 10% discount for AP readers, using the online code APMAG10. 'These are filmed sets of lessons, not "live" classes,' explained founder Chris Ryan. 'Each masterclass is between four and eight hours long, divided into bite-sized lessons, and once you enrol in a class, you have lifetime access.' The closing date for the offer is 2 July. See bit.ly/mopdiscount.




'Mind bending' shot wins wildlife prize

 THE WINNERS of the Nature TTL Photographer of the Year 2021 competition have been unveiled, with a highly original image of an orangutan taking the grand prize.

Canadian photographer Thomas Vijayan took the winning picture (see image above), called 'The World is Going Upside Down'. The orangutan is not a reflection, but the sky around it is – look at the base of the tree and you can see the tree is coming out of water, so you're looking at the ground as the orangutan is climbing up. See the full list of winners at bit.ly/ttlwinners.

Canon EOS R3: more details revealed

 CANON has teased a few more details about its upcoming pro-spec full-frame mirrorless EOS R3. It'll be the first Canon camera capable of specifically recognising and tracking focus on cars and motorcycles, while Eye Control AF will allow photographers to select the subject by looking at it in the viewfinder. In addition, it's said to be capable of shooting raw files at 30 frames per second with AF and AE tracking, and of autofocus in light as low as -7EV.

A brand-new back-illuminated stacked CMOS sensor promises both minimal rolling-shutter distortion and flash sync with external Speedlites. In-body image stabilisation is touted to work together with in-lens IS for up to eight stops of shake reduction, and Canon has also revealed that the camera can record oversampled 4K video.


The EOS R3 sports a fully articulated screen, three customisable control dials, and both a multi-controller and a smart controller for

moving the focus point. It employs the same high-capacity LP-E19 battery as the EOS-1D X Mark III professional DSLR and promises an equal level of weather-resistance. Dual card slots will accept SD and CFexpress media, while wired LAN and 5GHz Wi-Fi connectivity are included. There are as yet no details on a launch date, but it's likely to be in time for the Tokyo Olympics towards the end of July.



Canon's EOS R3 will be a high-speed sports camera

Nikon reveals two Z-mount macro lenses

 NIKON has announced a pair of macro lenses for its full-frame Z-series mirrorless cameras. The Nikkor Z MC 50mm f/2.8 is relatively compact and affordable, at £649, and can double-up as an everyday standard lens. Meanwhile the Nikkor Z MC 105mm f/2.8 VR S is a higher-end optically stabilised option that should also be suitable for

portrait photography. It'll cost £999, with both lenses due to go on sale at the end of June.

Looking first at the 105mm f/2.8, this provides 1:1 magnification at its minimum focus distance of 29cm. It has a 9-bladed aperture for attractive bokeh and accepts 62mm filters. The manual focus ring features customisable control, with an adjustable focus throw and reversible focusing direction, while a focus limiter switch is on the side of the weather-sealed barrel. The front element has a fluorine coating to repel water and grease.

The 50mm f/2.8 offers life-size reproduction with a focus distance of just 16cm. It also boasts a 9-bladed aperture and a focus limiter switch. It's not weather-sealed but has fluorine coating on the front element.

Alongside the new macro lenses, Nikon has confirmed that it's developing two compact, lightweight primes. Due out later this year, the Nikkor Z 28mm f/2.8 and Nikkor Z 40mm f/2 are designed for full-frame cameras but should also be a good match to the DX-format Z 50.



Both the new macro lenses should be on sale at the end of June





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Sony A7 III Body	9+ Like New	£1,464

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OM Digital Solutions releases PEN E-P7...

IN ITS first round of releases since parting ways with Olympus Corporation, OM Digital Solutions has released the PEN E-P7. It's a flat-bodied rangefinder-style camera with a 20MP sensor and tilting rear screen, but no viewfinder. This is a higher-end model than the entry-level E-PL10, boasting dual control dials and borrowing creative image-processing options from the cult classic PEN-F.

Like other Olympus cameras, the E-P7 features 5-axis in-body image stabilisation. This promises up to 4.5 stops of shake correction for stills, along with smooth handheld 4K video

recording. Its lightweight body weighs a mere 337g on its own, and 430g when fitted with the compact 14-42mm EZ kit zoom. The rear LCD screen hinges down to face forwards beneath the camera for selfies, while face and eye detection are available for people pictures. Meanwhile Wi-Fi and Bluetooth are built in for sharing images via a smartphone using the Olympus OI Share app, and USB charging allows the battery to be easily topped-up on the move.

Due to go on sale in mid-June, the E-P7 will cost £749 body-only. Alternatively, it will be sold in a kit with the 14-42mm EZ zoom for £849.

...and launches 8-25mm F4 Pro lens

ALSO unveiled alongside the E-P7 is the Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 8-25mm F4 Pro wideangle zoom for Micro Four Thirds cameras. With a relatively compact retracting design and the ability to accept 72mm filters, it looks set to be a more practical alternative for landscape photographers than the firm's 7-14mm f/2.8 Pro. Its unusually long 16-50mm equivalent range also promises to make it a more versatile option than other wide zooms such as the Panasonic 8-18mm F2.8-4.

Optically the lens employs 16 elements in 10 groups, with an array of special elements on board

to suppress aberrations. It's built to the same standard as other Olympus PRO-series lenses, with weather-sealed construction to the IPX1 grade, freeze-proofing to -10°C and a fluorine coating on the front element for easy cleaning.

Other features include a customisable L-Fn button and a push-pull manual focus clutch complete with a focus distance scale, while a hood is supplied in the box. The lens weighs in at 411g and can focus as close as 23cm throughout the zoom range. It's due to go on sale at the start of July for £899.



The Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 8-25mm F4 Pro

Books & exhibitions

The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography



Last of their Kind by Joachim Schmeisser

Foreword by Djimon Hounsou, £45, teNeues, hardback, 208 pages, ISBN: 9783961712793



Joachim Schmeisser showcases his extraordinarily powerful black & white images, a tribute to the last remaining black rhinos (of which there are only two left in the world) and other endangered animals.

Found in the Amboseli National Park in Kenya, the local Maasai tribespeople ensure that nobody endangers the special rhinos. The photos in the book also get us up close and personal with the other animals from Africa's 'Big Five', the lion, the leopard, the elephant and African buffalo.

It's not a typical choice to photograph wildlife in monochrome, but here, the imagery being in black & white brings an extra poignancy and dignity to these stunning animal portraits.

Island Life: Photographs from the Martin Parr Foundation

Until 31 October 2021, Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Bristol. Pay What You Can, see bristolphotofestival.org

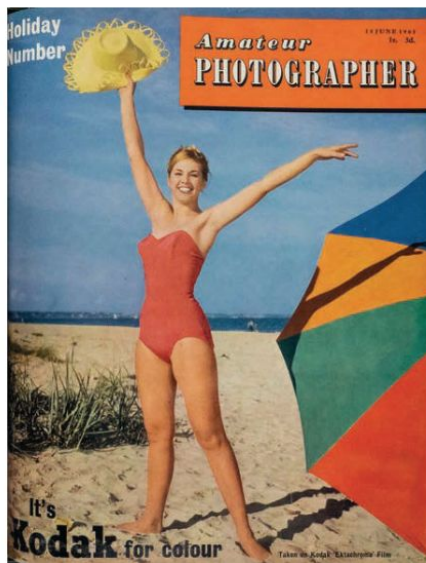
The inaugural Bristol Photo Festival has kicked off, providing an extensive array of exhibitions and events over the next few months at venues across the city.

One of the longest-running exhibitions is at the Bristol Museum & Art Gallery. Island Life draws upon images usually housed in the Martin Parr Foundation (also found in Bristol). The show explores the changing fabric of our cities, society and collective identities. More than 60 photographers are featured, including Sian Davey, Chris Killip, David Hurn, Markéta Luskacová, Graham Smith and Tom Wood. There are photos from historically significant events, such as the poll tax riot, the Aberfan disaster and more recently, the Black Lives Matter movement.

The museum is free to visit, with Island Life operating under a 'pay what you can' system. Tickets need to be pre-booked – see the website above.

From the archive

Nigel Atherton looks back at past AP issues



14 June 1961

THE IDEA of green and amber list countries could scarcely have been imagined when AP was producing its 1961 'Holiday Number' though readers would probably have been bemused to be told that their breaks in Britain were not in fact holidays but 'staycations'. Once such trip was made by RS Turner when he blagged his way onto the May, a spirit-sail barge sailing solely by wind power from Ipswich. 'The voyage was to convey 126 tons of flour to a store in Strood, on the Medway, and from there to sail light to the Victoria Dock on the Thames to pick up a load of wheat for Ipswich.' A fine set of photographs was accompanied by a fascinating travelogue. 'During conversation with the skipper,' he told us, 'I learned it was not necessary for a master of a barge to have a certificate permitting him to take the vessel to sea, as any person thought fit to do so by the owners could be put in charge.' The vast majority of features focused on the British seaside, with Zoltan Glass among those offering tips on capturing engaging images. Just one single page was dedicated to 'Travelling Abroad' and even then the pictures were of Paris. As to what camera to take with you, a text-heavy guide covered every available option, though browsers of the ads may have been tempted by auto-exposure technology of the Rollei Magic (£76 14s 6d, or £1,785 in today's money) or the girl-impressing powers of the Contaflex (£105 15s 9d, or £2,460 today).



Zoltan Glass offered tips on capturing 'the holiday mood' on a trip to the seaside



A different era: a journey by sail barge carrying cargo between Ipswich and London



The auto exposure Rollei Magic TLR



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Mirrorless focus

Mirrorless cameras have introduced new autofocus systems, so **Angela Nicholson** explains the good, the bad and the downright amazing

As mirrorless cameras don't have a mirror to bounce light into a viewfinder or onto a dedicated autofocus sensor, they use the imaging sensor to gather the focusing information to drive the lens. The first mirrorless cameras used contrast detection autofocus, and although some manufacturers have stuck with it, most use phase detection or a hybrid system that combines phase and contrast detection.

Contrast detection is a very accurate method that looks at the edges of the subject and moves the focus until the point of highest contrast is found. Its problem is that the camera has no way of knowing which direction to adjust the focus initially, so it can go the wrong way. It can also overshoot the point of highest contrast, and have to back up for perfect focus.

Phase detection is usually faster, as the camera knows which way to adjust the

focus group and how far. Mirrorless cameras that use phase detection have on-sensor pixels for assessing the focus and driving the lens to get the subject sharp.

While the earliest mirrorless cameras weren't able to match DSLRs for autofocus, they're now generally very good. In fact, you can shoot fast-moving sport and action with most enthusiast and pro-level mirrorless cameras, but naturally, some make it a bit easier than others.

As a rule, mirrorless cameras have some advantages over DSLRs with regards to focusing. The AF points, for example, usually go closer to the edge of the frame, and the increasing availability of face and eye detection makes getting the most important part of a portrait sharp a cinch.

Selecting the right AF modes

As with a DSLR, one of the first decisions you have to make when shooting with a

mirrorless camera is which focusing mode you want to use: single or continuous. Single-AF or One-Shot AF mode is designed for photographing stationary subjects while Continuous-AF is for moving subjects and is often combined with burst shooting.

Some cameras also have an Auto-AF setting in which the camera switches automatically between Single-AF and Continuous-AF depending upon whether it detects any subject movement. That can be handy, but generally, it's best to opt for Single-AF or Continuous-AF according to your subject.

Nikon's mirrorless cameras have an extra AF mode available in video mode called Full-time AF. When this mode is selected, the camera focuses continuously without the need to half-press the shutter release.

Now that cameras have more than one AF point there are modes to help with their selection. These allow you to specify whether you want to select individual AF points or groups of AF points to target the subject. Understanding the options and how they work is an integral part of getting the best from a camera's AF system.



Canon

Canon's mirrorless camera autofocus system has evolved into one of the best available

CANON'S current mirrorless cameras use Dual Pixel CMOS AF which means all of the pixels on their sensors have two photodiodes and microlenses rather than just one and they can be used for phase-detection focusing. Consequently, there are focusing points across most of the imaging area.

Getting started

Before you start shooting with a Canon mirrorless camera you need to select the 'AF method' via the main or Quick menus to determine how the active AF point is selected. The modes available vary by the camera but the list encompasses 1-point AF, Spot AF, Zone AF, Expand AF area, Expand AF area:

Around and Face+Tracking AF.

Spot AF mode and 1-point AF mode are similar, allowing you to select a single point from all of those available, but the area is smaller in Spot AF mode. They are useful for targeting small subjects, with Spot AF being especially useful when there are other objects close to your subject.

Zone AF, Expand AF area, Expand AF area: Around are especially useful with moving subjects. With the Expand area modes, you select a single AF point, but the camera also uses the four or six surrounding points to keep it sharp.

Some cameras have more than one Zone AF mode, giving you a choice of sizes and orientations (vertical or horizontal). In these modes, you select a fairly large area of the frame, and the camera selects the points to use within it. This is very useful with subjects that move unpredictably.



AF Configuration Tool

Canon's most advanced mirrorless cameras have a series of Servo AF 'Cases' listed in the AF section of their menu. These control aspects such as the tracking sensitivity and how the camera responds to things like changes in the speed of the subject and when objects come between it and the target. Case 1 is a good general-purpose setting, but if it's available, Case A is great as it adjusts to the subject's movement automatically.

USING CANON EYE DETECTION



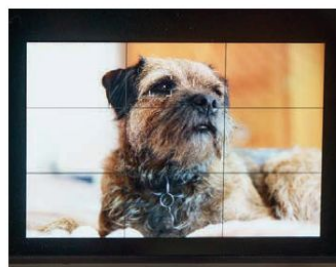
AF Method

The EOS R was the first Canon camera to feature Eye detection, but it's been developed further for the R5 and R6 where it can be set for human or animal eyes. It works brilliantly and is a major bonus for pet, wildlife and portrait photography. Press the menu button and find 'AF method' in the AF tab. Tap on 'AF method' followed by the 'Face+Tracking' icon.



Subject to detect

Still in the AF tab, tap 'Subject to detect' followed by 'People', 'Animals' or 'No Priority'. If the latter is selected, the camera will look for any eyes in the scene. Find 'Eye detection' in the AF section of the menu and set it to 'Enable'. Alternatively, when Face+Tracking is active, you can activate and deactivate Eye detection by pressing the Info button.



Select focus point

If the camera detects an eye in the frame, it will put a white square around it; when you half-press the shutter release it will focus on it and the square will turn green. If there's more than one eye detected, arrows appear on either side of the selected eye – you can use the joystick to select another eye as the focus point.



Fujifilm

Fujifilm's autofocus system lets you target subjects precisely and track moving objects

MOST of Fujifilm's current X-series cameras have its fourth-generation X-Trans CMOS sensor paired with the X Process 4. This 26.1MP APS-C format sensor has phase detection pixels that combine with a contrast-detection system to facilitate the Intelligent Hybrid AF system which has 425 user-selectable AF points.

With so many points, you might think that it would be difficult or time-consuming to select the one that you want to use, but Fujifilm makes it easy and quick. Also, Fujifilm cameras like the X-S10 and X-T4 have a section of the menu that's dedicated to focusing, so you can access the settings all from one place, but there are also some neat shortcuts.

Getting started

One of the first things that you may want to decide when setting up your Fujifilm camera is how many AF points you want to select from. There's an option in the menu that lets you swap between 117 points in a 9x13 grid and 425 in a 17x25 grid. I usually go for 425 because it gives you more scope to target exactly the point that you want in the scene.

With that decided, you can then choose to use the points individually or in groups. You can do this using the Focus Area options in the main menu, but the quickest and easiest way is to set the AF mode in the Menu to 'All', then nudge the joystick on the back of the camera as if you're going to select a point and rotate one of the command dials. Going one way makes the area bigger while going the other makes it smaller. As the size of the area changes, you'll see the name of the Focus Area mode change from Wide (Tracking in Continuous AF mode) to Zone and then to Single Point.

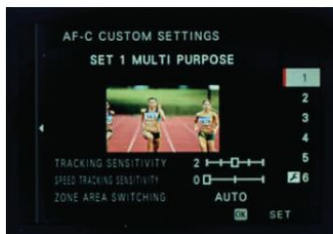


When you've selected the size of the area you want to use, tap the screen or use the joystick to move it to cover your subject in the viewfinder or on the screen.

If Face/Eye Detection is turned on in the AF/MF section of the main or Quick menu, the camera will look for eyes and/or faces in the whole scene – not just within the selected AF area. You can even specify which eye should be targeted if you want. It's well worth turning on the Eye Detection if you're in a social setting or you're photographing a portrait; however, with street scenes and the like, it's prone to latching onto eyes in advertisements and statues – that issue isn't exclusive to Fujifilm though.



Some of Fujifilm's cameras allow you to change focus mode as well as AF area via the Quick menu



AF-C Custom Settings

Fujifilm's enthusiast-level cameras have a selection of AF-C Custom Settings that dictate how the camera responds to certain subjects and situations. These can be tweaked, but it's worth scrolling through the options and looking at the type of subjects they're designed for and giving them a try before you start making adjustments.



Focus Mode

While the focus mode is set via the Quick or Main menu on Fujifilm cameras such as the X-E4 and X-S10, others like the X-T4 have a switch on their front near the lens mount to swap between Single AF, Continuous AF and Manual Focus mode. The switch makes it quicker to change the setting.



Nikon

Nikon's Z-series cameras have AF points covering 90% of the frame so you can compose with ease

NIKON'S mirrorless cameras have on-sensor phase detection pixels and use a hybrid AF system with between 209 and 493 AF points depending upon the model. All the cameras have AF points covering 90% of the imaging surface, which is great news for focusing on off-centre subjects.

Nikon AF-Area modes

Nikon's AF-Area modes allow you to select the focus point you want to use individually or in groups. The options available change depending on whether you have Single AF or Continuous AF mode selected. Here's a breakdown of how the main AF-Area modes function:

Pinpoint AF and Single-point AF (AF-S)

These modes are great for targeting small stationary subjects but it takes a long time to move the point around the scene with the joystick in Pinpoint mode. But it's a great choice when the camera is on a tripod and you can tap the screen to set the point.

Dynamic-area AF (AF-C)

This mode is ideal for moving subjects. It lets you select a point for focusing and the camera looks at it and the surrounding points to keep it sharp. As the AF area is larger than in Single-point AF mode, it's easier to keep it over the subject.

Wide-area AF (Small) and Wide-area AF (Large)

These modes are useful when it's hard to keep a single AF point or Dynamic Area AF point over a subject.

The Large Wide-area AF is great when you have a rough idea of where the subject will be in the frame but it's likely to move unpredictably, so you need a bigger area than the small version to keep the subject covered as it moves.



Having AF points across 90% of the frame makes focusing on off-centre subjects a doddle



The Z6 II and Z7 II have AF-Area modes for people and animals with options for wider coverage

Wide-area AF (Large-people), Wide-area AF (Large-animals), Auto-area AF (people) and Auto-area AF (animals)

In these modes, the Z6 II or Z7 II look for the appropriate eyes within the frame, which is the majority of the imaging area with Auto-area mode and more targeted areas in the Wide-area modes. When multiple eyes are detected, use the joystick to select the one you want to focus on.

These are great modes for portrait or pet photography. But they're not so great for fast-moving subjects.

Auto-area AF (and Subject Tracking)

In this mode the camera selects the subject automatically, looking for objects close to the centre of the frame and near to the camera. If you press the 'OK' button, a white box appears at the centre of the frame. You then need to move the camera so that the box covers the subject and press 'OK' again. The box will turn yellow and track the subject.

The Subject Tracking works very well, and it's great for keeping moving subjects sharp provided that you have time to set the point at the beginning.



Selecting the AF-area options

Eye Detection AF needs to be activated via the Custom Setting Menu on the Nikon Z 50, Z 5, Z 6 and Z 7. You also need to set 'Face detection on' or 'Face and eye detection on' to detect and focus on human subjects or 'Animal detection on' for animals.

The Focus mode and AF-area mode can be set via the main or 'i' menus, but it's faster to press the FN2 button on the front of the camera while rotating the front and rear command dials.



Olympus

Olympus was quick to embrace subject recognition for focusing with its most advanced camera

INITIALLY, only the OM-D E-M1 cameras in Olympus's lineup featured hybrid focusing and used phase detection as well as contrast detection, but this was extended to the E-M5 series with the OM-D E-M5 Mark III. This means that the OM-D E-M10 line is the only one in Olympus's interchangeable lens range to feature just contrast-detection focusing.

Nevertheless, all of Olympus's most recent cameras have 121 AF points available for selection and, as usual, you can set the point you want to use by tapping on the screen or using the navigation pad.

All of the most important settings, including the AF mode and AF area options, on Olympus cameras can be accessed via the Super Control Panel (SCP)



The OM-D E-M5 Mark III features hybrid focusing and uses phase detection as well as contrast detection



AF mode and AF area options can be easily accessed via the Super Control Panel (SCP)

which is accessed by pressing the 'OK' button. Once the panel appears on screen, you just double-tap on the feature that you want to adjust to reveal the available options and then use a control dial or the

navigation pad to select the option you want before pressing 'OK'.

The Olympus OM-D E-M1 and E-M1X also have dedicated buttons to give a direct route to the focus mode options.

Much of the imaging area of Olympus's latest cameras are covered by AF points, so you can focus close to the edges of the frame. You can also adjust the size of the AF area you want to use by pressing the dedicated AF area button or tapping the option in the Super Control Panel and then rotating the front control dial to toggle through the different-sized areas.

Face Priority and Face & Eye Priority can be activated and deactivated similarly, via the SCP or by pressing the AF area button and rotating the rear control dial to toggle through the options.



Olympus OM-D E-M1X

The OM-D E-M1X has a Subject Tracking mode that uses AI to identify specific objects then track them, keeping them sharp. At launch, the options under this mode included trains, motorsports and aeroplanes, but a firmware update has added birds. When the mode is active, the camera doesn't just look for front-on shots of cars in motorsports mode, it can also find and track objects associated with motorsports such as crash helmets and the like. It's activated as follows:



- 1 Press 'Menu' and then go to Custom Menu A3:AF/MF
- 2 Tap on 'Tracking Subject'.
- 3 Select the type of subject you want to track and press the 'OK' button.
- 4 Exit the menu and press the 'OK' button again to open the Super Control Panel.
- 5 Tap on the Focus mode option and select C-AF + TR. The Continuous AF + Tracking works as normal until your chosen subject comes into the frame when the camera will put a box around it and start tracking it.



Continuous AF + Tracking

In addition to the usual focus modes, Single AF, Continuous AF and Manual, Olympus cameras also have a Continuous AF + Tracking mode. When this mode is selected, tap on the subject on the screen of your camera to track it around the frame. It can be very useful, but as a rule, it's better to use C-AF and select an area large enough to cover your subject, then keep it over the subject as you shoot.

Olympus's cameras with phase detection show their mettle with faster focus and much better subject-tracking than those that just rely on contrast detection.



Panasonic

Panasonic has stuck with contrast-detection AF but it has a trick to make it faster

PANASONIC uses contrast-detection focusing in all its full-frame (S-series) and Micro Four Thirds (G-series) cameras. However, in 2014 it introduced its DFD (Depth From Defocus) technology to help to make it faster than usual.

The DFD system works by analysing the sharpness of two images taken at different focus distances. This enables the camera to understand which direction and how far to adjust the focus to render the subject sharp.

Faster sensor readout speeds in Panasonic's most advanced and recent cameras help to make the DFD technology even more effective, so the focusing is faster and more assured. It might not be the choice of professional sports photographers, but I've photographed fast-paced sport like rugby and cycling with the likes of the Panasonic Lumix G9 and G90 and achieved a high hit rate.

Because DFD technology needs to use detailed information about the lens's image quality, it is only compatible with Panasonic's lenses.

Getting started

Panasonic's most photo enthusiast-centric mirrorless cameras, the Lumix G9, G90, S5 S1 and S1R, have a switch for selecting between manual, single, continuous and automatic AF (Auto Focus Flexible or AFF), which is quicker than dipping into a menu.

There's also a dedicated button to access the autofocus point selection modes, which include Pinpoint, 1-Area, Custom Multi, 255-Area, Tracking and Face/Eye Detection. The full-frame S-series cameras work in a similar way but they add a few additional modes to the mix, Face/Eye/Body/Animal Detection, Zone (Vertical, Horizontal or Oval) and 1-Area+.

Custom Multi and Zone are interesting options that enable you to define the shape



For action and sports photography, the Zone (Oval) mode is useful for fast-moving subjects



The Lumix G90 has a handy switch for selecting different AF settings quickly

and location of the active AF area. For example, on the S1R, if you press the AF point selection button and highlight Zone (Vert./Horiz.) then nudge the joystick on the back of the camera down, you'll see a grid of AF points with selected area in yellow. Rotating the front or rear control dial will increase and decrease the size of the band of selected focus points, while the joystick moves them and flips their orientation.

While a line or band of AF might be useful on occasion – for example, if you're photographing a running race looking down the track – I've found the Zone (Oval) to be the most useful for fast-moving subjects, but you have to keep the active area over the subject.

Face/Eye/Body/Animal Detection

Panasonic makes it easy to select Face/Eye/Body/Animal Detection mode on its advanced cameras as it's amongst the AF point selection modes. When it's highlighted in the AF mode list, nudging the joystick on the back of the camera upwards toggles Animal detection on and off. Once that's done, pushing the joystick down enables you to set the starting position for the AF point and begin taking photographs.

The human eye detection is very good, and it's certainly an asset for portrait photography. The Animal Detection, however, doesn't impress in comparison with Canon's and Sony's most recent versions of the function because it only identifies their bodies, not their eyes. If you're shooting wide-aperture portraits of animals, you will need to use a single AF point to target the eyes.

AF Custom Setting

Panasonic's enthusiast- and professional-level cameras have a selection of four customisation settings for the autofocus system in continuous AF mode. These control aspects such as how responsive the camera is to changes in the subject speed and distance and the speed with which it changes between AF areas.

As usual, the parameters can be adjusted, but it's best to scroll through the four sets of settings first to find the one that best matches your situation.



Sony

Sony's focusing system is simply superb at tracking moving subjects

SONY uses a hybrid AF system in its mirrorless cameras and they have hundreds of AF points. The popular full-frame A7 III, for example, has 693 phase detection points and 425 contrast detection points while the APS-C format A6600 has 425 points of each type, and they cover the majority of the imaging area.

While the Eye Detection system in Canon's EOS R5 and R6 has a slight edge over Sony's Eye AF system, it's still very good and Sony's 'Real-Time' AF Tracking in its most recent cameras leads the way for tracking moving subjects.

As usual, Sony cameras have a large collection of modes that aim to make selecting the active AF point easier. Here's how they operate:

Wide

In this mode, every focus point is available for automatic selection by the camera. When used with continuous autofocus mode (Sony calls it AF-C), Sony's current cameras do a great job of spotting a moving subject and activating the right points as it moves around the frame. It's a great choice for photographing subjects that move unpredictably.

Zone

This is more targeted than Wide area AF and it's a great choice for moving subjects if you know roughly where they will be in the frame. Unlike Wide mode, however, you need to keep the box over the subject in the frame.

Center

This mode puts a rectangular focus area at the centre of the frame. This is handy if you like to focus and recompose as with an old-school SLR.



Sony's A7R IV has 'Real-Time' autofocus tracking, which is excellent for sport photography

Flexible Spot

The go-to setting for stationary subjects, this can be set to small, medium or large as necessary to suit your subject. I tend to opt for small or medium.

Expand Flexible Spot

This is similar to Flexible Spot but the camera also uses the surrounding points if it needs to, so it's helpful when the subject has low contrast.

Lock-on AF

Lock-on AF mode is only available in continuous autofocus mode. When it's active, you set the starting focus point and, after the shutter button is half-pressed, the camera tracks the subject around the frame. The focus area can be set to several different sizes and starting points.

This is a useful mode for photographing moving subjects, but generally, Wide and Zone AF work so well, it's not required.

Tracking AF

Sony's most recent mirrorless cameras like the A1, A7R IV, A7S III, A7C, A6600 and A6400, have 'Real-Time' autofocus tracking. This has been developed using artificial intelligence (AI) to help the camera seamlessly track a subject, looking for eyes, faces and objects in that order of priority when Face/Eye Priority AF is activated via the menu. If this option is available on your camera, it's brilliant for portrait, pet, sport, wedding and social photography.

As with Lock-on AF mode, this can be set to Tracking: Wide, Zone, Center, Spot (S, M, L) or Expand Spot to help you to target the most important area of the scene if necessary. You can also tap on the subject in the screen on your camera to target it for tracking.

Face Registration

At weddings and celebrations there are usually a few people who take priority in any photographs. Sony's 'Face Registration' system in cameras such as the A7 III, can help with this by enabling up to eight faces to be registered and prioritised for focusing. Once set, the camera will always target the person in the frame with the highest priority for focusing.



Using Eye AF

'Face/Eye Priority in AF' needs to be set to 'on' in a Sony camera's main menu before it will scan for faces and eyes in the scene. Beneath that menu option, there's 'Face/Eye Subject', which can be set to 'Human' or 'Animal' on some Sony cameras, and 'Human', 'Animal' or 'Bird' on the Alpha 1. If you frequently swap between the different subject types, it's worth customising a button to reach these options quickly, or at least adding 'Face/Eye Subject' to the 'My Menu', so you can find it quickly.

If the Eye AF is active and a small AF area such as Center or Zone is selected, the camera will only focus on eyes within the selected AF area. However, if 'Face/Eye Frame Display' is on, the camera will indicate when it has spotted a face in the frame, even if it's outside of the AF area.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

One card

I would like to tell you about a club competition we at Long Eaton Camera Club have run for 30 years or more. It used to be called the 'One Roll Competition'. With a roll of slide film on a given night in, say, Derby, you'd take a picture of a clock at 7pm in the adjudicator's car. Then you had two hours to take 20 pictures. You returned by 9pm and handed in the processed paid films, which were returned to the adjudicator. The first time we'd see them was on the

night of the competition itself.

Today we still run the competition, which is now called the 'One Card competition' but it's the same principle: the first 20 photographs on your card are in the competition, and you do not see them till the night of the competition.

I suggest other clubs try it – it's a great night to see how good pictures are straight out of the camera.

Roy Maddison

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.co.uk/memory-cards.



Remotely interesting

Your article on remote shooting (AP 1 May) was both timely and inspiring, and I can confirm that my own boredom at being largely stuck at home for several months has been lightened by being able to book a few remote shoots. Mine started at a distance of less than ten miles, and have since included models in the South of France and in Cyprus.

Natasha J Bella makes good points about separating communication channels to maximise the use of bandwidth: not everyone can afford two Wi-Fi connections, but it definitely pays to work at finding and removing bottlenecks in the process. This matters particularly in terms of lag

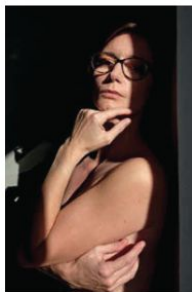
between hitting the button and shutter release.

I've now shot with a variety of cameras that I haven't used in real life, and an important piece of learning, for me, was that it's not worthwhile to be sniffy about lower-spec equipment (I'm used to 42MP of Sony sensor). The pictures are the thing, unless you plan very, very big prints.

A fine session with Amarutta, a Ukrainian circus performer and model who lives near Marseilles, has only been topped by working with Stephanie Dubois in Cyprus (see image, right). I've known Stephanie for several years, and have photographed her in real life. Her choice of hardware was impeccable (a Fujifilm X-T2, thoroughly

responsive and giving excellent quality) and a background in IT made things work seamlessly.

The only downside of remote shooting is the lack of finesse in camera angle, and the inability to use manual focus lenses, which I use a lot in real life. But soon, that will be



Remote shoot: Stephanie Dubois in Cyprus, by John

possible again. I have even done a session using the model's iPhone and the CLOS app, with remarkably good results (and I love Laura Skye's tip about rubber bands and a tin of beans as a makeshift tripod!)

Thanks, yet again, for keeping the week lively with each new edition of **AP John Duder**

Book it

I am an amateur photographer who works for an emergency service. Inspired by the *Portrait of Britain* published by the British Journal of Photography, I recently put forward an idea to produce a high-quality photo book of our volunteer first responders. I am just waiting for restrictions to end so that I can start visiting the amazing volunteers who every day save lives by their selfless contribution to their own communities. It will be a year-long project, juggling it with my day job, but I hope will be a fitting legacy to the invaluable and vital work that they do.

Although confident in my photography skills, I've never produced a book before, so decided to do a pilot and create a book of my own photographs. I've just taken receipt of said book and am more delighted than I imagined. I read reviews from past issues of AP and articles about how to structure the book for maximum impact. I had to do quite a bit of searching for advice and it made me think that an article in your magazine would be really useful, pulling together quality advice on book layout and structure together with



Bill is over the moon with his recently purchased Fujifilm X-T200 and sent us this shot

recommendations on a range of providers.

This personal book was a lockdown project for me, using my best photos over the past ten years. If any readers have never produced a photo book before, I would wholeheartedly recommend it. It is something to keep, to show family and friends and who knows, may generate additional interest in your work. I went for A4 and I'm glad that I did, as it has more impact than the smaller versions. It has made me even more determined to produce a high-quality book of our wonderful NHS volunteers that does them justice.

Rick Corbishley

Taken over my life

In March I took delivery of a new Fujifilm X-T200 camera for £600 from John Lewis, with the 15-45mm lens. It's already taken over my life.

I have uploaded six movies on YouTube that have been a mix of just photos, just movies, a mixture of both, black & white, colour, sound and text. The fold-out and tilt screen has been a revelation. I have many expanded options with this camera but mainly I love one twist for colour or black & white. And

having the camera in my pocket. As yet I can only think of YouTube to present and share. I uploaded this photo (see above) on the only John Lewis review of the X-T200 simply because I was so pleased with it.

Bill Rodick

Nice shot, Bill, but I'd turn off the date and time print-out in the corner. It spoils every photo and is unnecessary because that info is stored in the EXIF data anyway.

Nikon build quality

Visiting my local charity shop recently, I happened upon a box overflowing with photographic paraphernalia.

Delving through the contents I discovered a grubby canvas bag which was home to a Nikon F401S with a 50mm lens covered in cobwebs and dust. The battery compartment was a mess with four leaking batteries. A film reminder taped to the back of the camera told me the film inside expired in 2008. I was looking at a Nikon that

had not been used for more than a decade. On the plus side the shutter, mirror, and screen were clean, while a worn UV filter and a cracked lens cap protected the front of the lens.

This camera needed rescuing. I bought it for £12 and a cash donation. After a thorough and careful cleaning session, and with fresh batteries installed, I pressed the shutter release and re-animated this neglected SLR model. A tribute to Nikon build quality.

The F401S feels robust and comfortable to hold thanks to the substantial handgrip; the viewfinder is large and bright, and a pleasure to use; the AF system was a little noisy but locked on to a subject quickly, and the Image Master Control metering turned in a decent set of transparencies, regardless of which mode I was using. I can also use my Series E lenses, albeit with restricted metering, which has only added to the enjoyment I have had using this camera.

Pat Whelan

YOUR FREE ENTRY CODE

APOY Round 6 - Motion - is open! Enter the code below via Photocrowd to get one free entry

APOY40229176

In next week's issue



Shoot on a budget

Expert Ian Pack guides you on how to create successful portraits on a shoestring



NiSi V6 Filter Holder

Andy Westlake tests the V6, NiSi's latest 100mm filter holder system

All that glisters

Film photographer Nima Elm on how he shoots beautifully natural images

Digital stars

John Wade on the heyday of digital 3D cameras a decade ago

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Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them



1

Beth Wylie, UK

About Beth

Beth is a recruitment and social-media coordinator from Kent.

Favourite subjects

Having worked for the RSPCA and also as a trainer, I feel most confident when photographing animals, because I understand their behaviour.

How did you get into photography?

I always enjoyed taking photos on my phone; however, during lockdown I used some savings to buy my first camera and attended some free online courses, which sparked this passion.

What do you love about photography?

Capturing small, precious moments that might otherwise be missed. I also love being creative when it comes to animal photography and often theme my shoots for occasions.

First camera

My first and only camera is a very old and beaten-up, second-hand Canon EOS 1300D but it's still very reliable!

Current kit

My EOS 1300D, a Sigma 105mm, Canon 50mm and an 85mm f/1.8.

Favourite lens

Sigma 105mm F1.4 DG HSM | Art.

Dream purchase

A Canon EOS 90D, which is more of an enthusiast DSLR. And I'd love to add a Sigma 35mm F1.4 DG HSM | Art to my lens collection.

What software do you use?

Adobe Photoshop.

Favourite photographers

My top animal photographers are Alexandra Evang and Dog Breath Photography.

Favourite tips

Find your 'thing', be it something that interests you, or what you are most confident at, and go for it! Don't doubt yourself or overanalyse things. In every shoot I do, I find an extra few minutes at the end to try something new. It's okay to have some images on your camera that don't work – but what if one does?

Tell us about your pictures

These images were all taken within the past year. I am proud of all I have learned during this time, as I didn't own a camera until 2020. I simply try to capture what my eye sees, in a way that hopefully shows the true magic and personality of animals.

Find out more

www.bethanygracephotographs.com;
Instagram @bethanygracephotography.

Bertie's Valentine

1 This is an image

I created for

Valentine's Day of

Bertie, a retired and

retrained racehorse

who has a fabulous

life with my friend

Rosie. It took a while

to get him used to

his flower necklace!

Canon EOS 1300D,

105mm, 1/400sec at

f/2, ISO 400



3

Old Friends

3 Two old chaps,

who are still the best

of friends. I wanted

to capture a

timeless and

beautiful image.

Canon EOS 1300D,

105mm, 1/640sec at

f/3.6, ISO 200



SKYLUM
software

The **Reader Portfolio** winner chosen will receive a copy of **Skylum Luminar AI**, worth £79. See www.skylum.com

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!



Snow Dog

2 Woody is ten years old, so likes to sit and watch, which made for the perfect photo opportunity. Blurred, snow-covered hedges made a lovely green background.

Canon EOS 1300D, 105mm, 1/400sec at f/2, ISO 400

50 Shades of Grey

5 Kenny is a huge 17.1hh horse, and is still growing. I wanted to capture a pose that showed how powerful a horse can be.

Canon EOS 1300D, 105mm, 1/320sec at f/2.2, ISO 200



Enchanted Rose

4 I only had a few chances to get this image before Gilly, one of our rescue dogs, lost interest in the scent of the rose. Canon EOS 1300D, 105mm, 1/250sec at f/2, ISO 100



Judge's thoughts

'Although I've been on the advisory panel and helped with the shortlisting for a few years, this was the first time that I've been on the main judging panel and it was great to be involved in making the final selection. The standard seems to go up every year and there were lots of great images to choose from. However, I was immediately drawn to Huaifeng Li's winning image.

Initially it was the atmospheric light that attracted me but I love the interaction between the child and her mother. It's a joyous image of one of the smaller moments in life that we can all identify with. I also particularly like Marina Spironetti's image which won The Claire Aho Award for Women Photographers. The colours all work well together and I love the powerful, confident stance and expression of the subject.' **Angela Nicholson**

People and food

✓ Marina Spironetti (www.marinaspironetti.com) took first place in the brand new Claire Aho Award for Women Photographers, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021, and she tells us all about her winning image. 'This image was part of a reportage project about the female butchers of Panzano in Chianti, Italy. Dario Cecchini, the world-famous butcher, has been training a team of young women who come to Tuscany from all over the world to learn the art of deboning. Food and wine photography has always been an important part of my work as a photographer, especially in recent years. Whenever working on a food story I am always intrigued by the human element. The main role of food is to nourish our bodies, a basic need for human beings, and I love to investigate the role it plays in our world. I am incredibly happy to have been the first winner of the Claire Aho Award, and to win with a shot of another woman. We all do different jobs, but our passion and strength are the same.'

© LI HUAIFENG/PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021



Shoot scrum

Claire Gillo selects her favourite images from this year's Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year awards and speaks to the winning photographers

Food is such a delicious and wonderful subject to photograph, and there are a whole number of ways you can capture the subject as this year's Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year awards (www.pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com) reveals. From those delicious close-ups, to a more political and wider view of the subject, this feature shares the cream of the crop in food photography from a number of viewpoints and different cultures. Enjoy.



Nikon D3s with
24-70mm lens, 1/80sec
at f/5, ISO 1600

© MARINA SPIRONETTI/PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021



Tell a story

With just one frame you can reveal a whole story as Li Huaifeng's overall winning image called 'Taste', from this year's Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year, shows. This photo was taken in Licheng County, Shanxi Province, China, during the National Holiday of 2016 as part of his project on earth cave dwellings. 'On the fourth day of the National Day holiday, the old couple's daughter and son-in-law had come with their little girl to celebrate the old man's birthday. It was amid the harvest season so the man had to return to the crops after a quick lunch, but his family stayed at home to make dumplings.' To capture the opportune moment Li Huaifeng waited until the lid was removed from the steaming pot to enable the cascading light to pick up the steam. 'During the process I tried not to interrupt them and captured the interactions between the mother and daughter so as to present a lively, natural and heartwarming picture. I made the most of the natural light as it backlights the people, but also forms a diagonal line from the stove, which in turn leads the viewer's eye to the centre of the image. The composition is also strong as the symmetry of the door and window offers visual beauty.'

ptious shots

Old props

Photographer Wesley Dombrecht (www.foodshot.be) tells us the idea behind his project *Reminisce* had been on his mind for some time, however it wasn't until the lockdown that it started to take shape. 'I was looking in an old photo book and I got an impulsive idea to also use old kitchen appliances that I had found at my grandmother's barn,' he tells us. This picture of vanilla pudding is one image from his series of six, and came highly commended in the Fujifilm Award for Innovation, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021.

Wesley prefers to work in the studio setting and for this set-up used his Nikon D800 with a Nikon 85mm manual tilt-shift lens and Profoto lighting. 'I like to have the same lighting consistency in my images, so for that a lot of tests are done in advance. I have a fixed routine in making this type of image. I always photograph the different elements of the image, and I often work with stackings that I later combine together in Photoshop.'



Nikon D800 with tilt-shift 85mm lens, 1/250sec at f/8, ISO 200

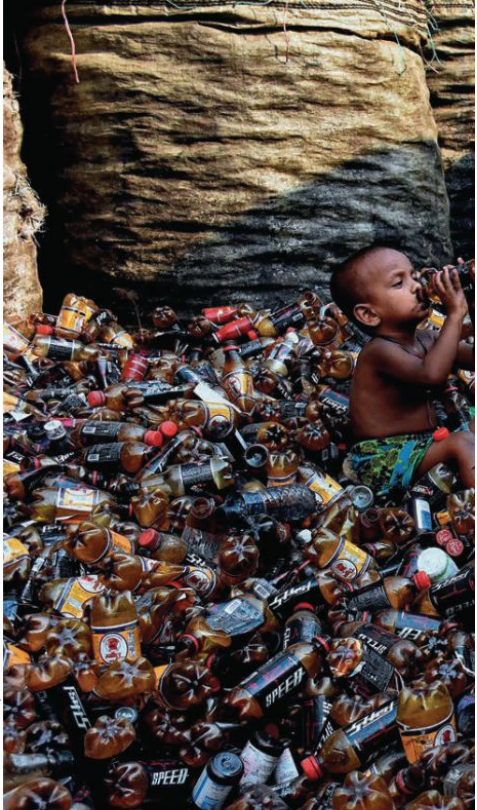
© WESLEY DOMBRECHT / PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021

Reflect and connect

➤ Danish food and drink photographer Manja Wachsmuth (manjawachsmuth.com) is based in New Zealand, and her award-winning image titled 'Octopus' was taken for top chef Monique Fiso's book, *Hiakai: Modern Maori Cuisine* (Penguin Random House NZ). Manja says, "Styling" the octopus was a fiddly, time-consuming and slimy task. In food photography, an octopus is usually presented inside out to expose the suction cups on the arms. I wanted to get this guy looking a bit more like a monstrous beast, pushing the boundaries of the camera frame. I wanted to honour the importance of this creature and get it looking the part it plays in the Maori legend of Te Wheke-a-Muturangi. In this story, the famous explorer Kupe battles with a monstrous wheke (octopus) across the Pacific Ocean and this leads him to discover Aotearoa.' Manja finishes by saying, 'My goal is always to create images that are beautiful in their detail and that serve as pockets of beauty and order amid the chaos of everyday life, and creates a safe space for reflection and connection.'



© MANJA WACHSMUTH/PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021



© AP MANABUB ROSMAN/WHAI PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021

It's all a trick!

➤ For the Pink Lady® Apple a Day, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021, Anastasiya Malinovska's (www.instagram.com/anastasija_food and www.anastasijaphotography.com) action image, 'Magic Birds' took second place. Anastasiya tells AP 'When I'm taking images, I always try to use a tripod to fix my camera for a better image quality, and I'm also tethering my camera and smartphone to the Camera Connect app (for Canon users only, but other manufacturers also offer similar functionality). This helps me control everything remotely without having to be in front of the camera.' Despite the fact that it looks like the toffee apples are falling through the air, Anastasiya reveals this isn't actually the case. 'Most of my levitating images rarely actually involve objects flying in the air... if ever! And to achieve the best image quality and sharpness, levitating objects need to be fixed/fastened in some way. For this particular image I used a helping hand, which was a table clip tool.'

Canon EOS 6D with EF 24-105mm f/4 IS II USM. 1/160sec at f/5.6, ISO 125

© ANASTASIYA MALINOVSKA/PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021



Nikon D7200, 40mm lens, 1/1000sec at f/7.1, ISO 2000

Reveal the scene

☛ Md Mahabub Hossain Khan's heartbreaking image of a child drinking from a rubbish pile in Bangladesh took first place in the World Food Programme Food for Life, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021. Mahabub Hossain tells us, 'A little child is drinking from the plastic bottle, as her mother works in the bottle recycling factory. When the little child feels thirsty she has to search for drinks from empty bottles. I used a Nikon DSLR to take this photograph.' Mahabub Hossain's important yet saddening photograph got several awards including the Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021, and we can see why. What he reveals in one image raises important questions about our basic human rights to resources such as clean drinking water and what happens to those who are vulnerable when these are denied.



Be in the right place

☛ Photographer Oscar Oliveras (follow him on Instagram @wineographic, www.wineographic.com) took overall first place in the Errazuriz Wine Photographer of the Year 2021, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021, with his image 'A Grape View'. 'One of the most exciting days for a winemaker is the first day of harvest and to taste the first juice of the year,' Oscar tells us. 'The image was taken in Chateau des Ganfards, France, where I have worked as winemaker and viticulturist since

2018. On the 26th of August, 2020, we decided to start picking our first grapes for our white wines,' he continues. 'It was a chilly morning, and at 7am I prepared the press for the receipt of the fruit.' It was after this point Oscar grabbed his camera and went down to the vineyards. With the perfect sunrise setting as his backdrop, Oscar got ready for the harvest machine to unload the grapes. 'I was lucky enough that a sharp ray of sun was illuminating the spot where the grapes were gracefully falling into the trailer, with the focused look of Jean Claude Géraud driving the tractor behind.'

Sony A7 with Zeiss 55mm lens, 1/1600sec at f/2, ISO 320



© OSCAR OLIVERAS/PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021



Nikon D850 with 24-70mm f/2.8 lens, 1/160sec at f/2.8, ISO 3200

Always have your camera

Not many expectant mothers pack heavy camera kit in their hospital bag, however they aren't photographer Laura Chase de Formigny (www.laurachase.com and follow on Instagram @laurachasedeformigny). 'This shot was heavily pre-planned! I brought my Nikon D850 and my 24-70mm f/2.8 lens with me to the hospital. My husband thought I was insane for standing on the bed because of how hard the birth was on my body, but I wasn't about to miss this shot for anything in the world.' Laura Chase wanted a creative way to announce to her Instagram followers the birth of her baby daughter. 'I know people follow me for food, not babies, so I had to think of a way to keep it on topic. I think my favourite part of the shot is actually the breast pump on the right, just peeking in. That's what made it feel like it really was a photo of food for the whole family.' Laura Chase's image came Highly Commended in the Food for the Family, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021.



Canon EOS 5D Mark II with 17-40mm lens, 1/125sec at f/4, ISO 200



Canon EOS R5 with 24-105mm f/4 lens,
1/100sec at f/4, ISO 100

© PHOTOMARKET/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/ALAMY/PAUL ZWIRNER/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

Find your focus

Emma Sheldrake's (www.emmasheldrake.com and follow on Instagram @emma_jane_sheldrake) image of a chicken called Cinnamon came in first place in the One Vision Imaging Cream of the Crop, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021. Emma tells us that the image was taken on her new Canon EOS R5 and the fast tracking focus feature really helped her considerably on the shoot. 'As still as Cinnamon looked, she was not the most well behaved that day I can assure you. Patience and a good set-up prior was really the key to this shot.' Despite looking like this image was shot with soft natural light Emma found it easier to use artificial light to reduce Cinnamon's movements but also to get the effect she desired. 'I wanted this to have an old Rembrandt feel with light and it's appeal to be like a painting.'

It's all about style (and collaboration)

When it comes to food looking its finest, a food stylist knows a thing or two about how to make this possible. Martin Grünwald (foodstyling-gruenwald.de and follow on Instagram @lilalewisia) is a food stylist from Germany, and took first place in the Food Stylist Award, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021. The image pictured here called 'Winteropulenz' goes with five other images to showcase his skills as a stylist. He tells AP 'This picture is a collaboration, between the photographer Frank Weinert and myself, and shows a broad range of winter harvest in a contemporary, and organic way.' For this image Martin ensured that each object was carefully selected and placed, but not 'styled' in a technical way. 'In pictures like these, food styling is about creating an image from imagination, not on demand, so we have to have a very playful and spontaneous attitude in composing. Sometimes you throw in objects and they fit so they stay. The books (centre) are a great stand for some veggies but they also serve as a tongue-in-cheek reference to old masters.'

Food on the go

'In the northern mountainous regions of Vietnam, one of the best cultural features is the weekly market,' photographer Thong Nguyen (thongnguyengallery.com) tells us. 'The market at the commune or district centre, is a place for cultural and culinary exchanges of many different ethnic groups.' Thong's image, 'Breakfast at the Weekly', saw him win first place in the Food at the Table, a category of Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2021. It shows people enjoying Pho (beef or chicken noodle) for breakfast. 'I captured the photo on an early spring morning,' he says. 'The weather was cold but sunny. As I walked around the market and the Pho restaurant, people were enjoying noodles while the sunlight caught the steam from hot bowls.'

© STYLIST: MARTIN GRÜNWARD. PHOTOGRAPHER: FRANK WEINERT/PINK LADY® FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2021

Phase One IQ1 100MP, 1/90sec, ISO 100



Pregnant pause

Dr James Clifford Kent's project explores pregnancy, childbirth and early parenthood during the pandemic. He tells **Amy Davies** more

The impact of Covid-19 has been felt by everybody, but some will have understandably felt it more keenly. Pregnancy, childbirth and new parenthood during these strange times has been particularly tricky. Dr James Clifford Kent's project – *Pregnant in a Pandemic* – has highlighted a number of poignant stories.

It all started with his own personal experiences. He explains, 'Charley [James's partner] and I found out she was pregnant at Christmas 2019. I started researching how different photographers have created a visual record of pregnancy, birth and early parenthood. A friend recommended checking out work by Harry Callahan and W Eugene Smith's photo essay, 'Nurse Midwife', which was published in *Life* magazine in December 1951. Smith's essay celebrated the work of Maude Callen – a 51-year-old healthcare worker caring for people in rural South Carolina in harsh conditions.

Strength and bravery

'Because of the fast-changing global situation, my plan to document the story of Charley's pregnancy quickly turned into an extended essay exploring the impact of Covid-19. Owing to the restrictions, Charley laboured on her own, with the midwife and I arriving just in time to witness her birthing our baby on the antenatal ward. I took a photo of Charley with the baby and our midwife moments after. I wanted to capture a photo of her that encapsulated the strength and bravery other pregnant women have shown during the pandemic. As soon as I took it I knew I was documenting the final moments of a powerful journey that was just beginning.'

As anyone who has been through it will know, becoming a parent for the first time is a pretty daunting experience. Throw in an overstretched health service, global uncertainty and strict restrictions, and you can see why stories are in abundance. The project features all sorts of experiences, from a woman whose waters broke at 22 weeks pregnant to another whose entire household contracted Covid-19 during Christmas 2020. Through these stories, the project explores a broad range of themes, including mental health, pregnancy loss, fertility or trying to conceive, and survival in the face of adversity.

It wasn't long before the project began to garner attention. 'The project has been shared widely by maternity organisations and healthcare professionals – many of whom have praised its capacity to drive change,' James says. 'The pandemic's ongoing impact on pregnancy means this project is timely, as it has created a platform for families to document their stories and share them widely while there is still time to change policy. I am working in collaboration with Make Birth Better – a collective of experts including chartered, clinical and perinatal psychologists. Consultant midwife Dr Sheena Byrom OBE has commented how the project will "portray a story that needs telling, to help all who feel their voice is unheard or absent and potentially help to heal those affected".'

After the first subject, James launched the project on Instagram. He describes the response as incredible. 'I received hundreds of messages from people all over the world but owing to Covid restrictions and being on shared parental leave I had to focus on London and organised shoots around baby duties.' There have been many challenges too. For example, because of the restrictions, many shoots took place outdoors. He now plans to expand the project, exploring stories from partners and healthcare professionals.

Deep impact

For the images, James has been using a Fujifilm X-T3, but says he'll use a Mamiya 7II for the next set of shots, which should leave him with an interesting mixture of results.

James has been a photographer for many years, but says this project has resonated most strongly with people. It's clear the project has also had a deep personal impact on him. 'Many of the people involved with the project have become friends. Without access to the usual support groups due to Covid restrictions, the project has been an opportunity to compare notes on becoming a parent and I'm forever grateful for that.'

While things are now improving in the UK, the situation is not the same elsewhere. As the project develops, James hopes to explore differences across the world as well as continuing to tell stories closer to home. He's hopeful of a book and an exhibition next year, too.





© JOHN KENNEDY

Dr James Clifford Kent

Dr James Clifford Kent is a London-based documentary and portrait photographer. He lectures on creative practice and visual culture at Royal Holloway, University of London. Visit jckent.com for more information and see [Instagram.com/jckfoto](https://www.instagram.com/jckfoto) for more images from the project.

Clockwise from top left: Emily and Cleo; Bisma and Azlan; Nadine and Mamie; Charley, the baby and the midwife; Izzy



BEHIND THE PICTURE

The stories and the kit behind APOY winning images

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Nightlight

By Emma Phipps

Benedict Brain discovers the story behind the winner of APOY's 'Home' round

Emma Phipps's winning image, 'Nightlight', is steeped in nostalgia, narrative and history. The idea for the image came from the chamberstick featured in the image. 'It is extremely old and well used and has had a lot of repairs,' discloses Emma, who continues, 'It made me think about its history and who else had used it as their nightlight.'

Emma has created a few images at home over this last lockdown with a similar style, however this is not part of a bigger project. She had a vision in her mind of what she wanted to create and used a rough sketch to work out the idea and composition, making decisions about the model's clothing and the candle's position in the frame before setting up the shot. Emma's inspiration comes from fine art, especially artists such as Norman Rockwell and photographers such as Gemmy Woud-Binnendijk. 'I'm inspired by her work,' reveals Emma. 'Her creativity is amazing.'

As anyone who has photographed children (and adults for that matter) will

know, perhaps the biggest challenge is the cooperation, attention span and patience of the model. Preparation is key and it's vital to avoid fiddling with camera settings, scrolling through menus and adjusting lights while the model is waiting in position. For this image, Emma enlisted the help of her daughter, Hannah. 'Asking her [Hannah] to sit for more than five minutes is difficult as she gets so bored. I have to make sure everything is worked out and set up before I ask her to sit for me – she is only five, after all.'

Nostalgic vibe

The mixed and complex lighting was the main technical challenge for Emma who has done a wonderful job of creating a rich, warm and nostalgic vibe through deliberate, skilful and creative use of lighting. 'I wanted to create a nighttime image and I tried to use off-camera flash but the images were not turning out how I wanted them to, so instead, I shot the image with natural light, late on a gloomy Sunday afternoon. To turn day into the night I had to use

Emma Phipps



Emma is a full-time wife and mother of two, living in North Wales. Her interest in photography came about because she wanted to capture her children's childhood as it goes too fast. Her two children feature in a lot of her work. She also enjoys wildlife, nature and portrait photography. See lifelightphoto.co.uk for more of her pictures.

Emma did a lot of preparation, and carefully set up this gorgeous image

Nikon D780 with Sigma 35mm f/1.4 lens, 1/250sec at f/1.4, ISO 1000





Adobe Lightroom, using various combinations of gradient and radial filters and by using the colour grading tools I was able to cool the shadows and warm up the highlights – candlelight gives off a very yellow light so I used blues in the shadows to balance it out. I originally wasn't going to light the candle, I was just going to add a flame in post but the image just looked flat and I wanted to see the light reflected in her eyes.'

As the image was captured in daylight, Emma had to fix some anomalies that just wouldn't be there at night. 'My windows are very old and have a lot of scratches and marks on the glass,' explains Emma, 'so these had to be removed. I did a clean-up on the glass in Adobe Photoshop. The light shining off her face from the window also needed a light source so I decided to create a moon and moonlight using radial filters and the brush tool in Adobe Lightroom.'

Camera settings

Emma used a Nikon D780 with a 35mm F1.4 DG HSM | Art. 'I had to shoot wide open (f/1.4) due to the poor light and as my subject couldn't be relied upon to stay still I didn't want to risk dropping my shutter speed too much,' explains Emma. 'I wanted to keep noise to a minimum and I knew my camera could handle ISO 1000 without too much trouble. I use my Sigma 35mm 1.4mm Art lens the most at home, it is just great for indoor smaller, less-well-lit spaces. I shot this handheld and no other equipment was used. I love my Nikon D780, I have only owned it for six months. It has been a significant upgrade from my old Nikon D7100. I wanted a camera that could handle low light well and the Nikon D780 is just incredible in these challenging situations. I also like the fact that it uses mirrorless technology when used in live view mode. I will probably move to a mirrorless system for my next upgrade but I am so happy with the Nikon D780 I don't think that will be for at least a couple more years.'

Nikon D780



At a glance

£1,739

body only (in Like New condition)

- 24.5MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 100-12,800 (ISO 50-204,800 extended)
- Hybrid AF system
- 3.2in, 2,360k-dot tilting touchscreen
- 12fps cont. shooting in live view (7fps via OVF)

Succeeding the Nikon D750, the D780 is possibly the company's most versatile DSLR ever. It profits from some of the things Nikon has learnt from mirrorless to make it an even better all-rounder and the D780 excels in both stills and video. It has a 24.5MP full-frame CMOS sensor and a sensitivity range of ISO 100-51,200 which can be expanded to ISO 50-204,800, along with a quick 7fps shooting rate with the viewfinder or 12fps in live view.

What we said

'The Nikon D780 is a blend of what we liked about the D750, with innards adopted from the Nikon Z 6 and a few other improvements added.'

'Operating the camera in live view mode is a completely transformed experience. Autofocus speed and response is much improved. This, combined with touch focusing via the screen, makes it a pleasure to use when you want to work quickly from shooting angles that aren't best suited to using the viewfinder.'

What to pay

When we reviewed the Nikon D780 back in February 2020, it cost £2,199 (body only). Since our review, a used D780 in like new condition can be picked up for around £1,739 (body only).

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Pushing the limits

Pro motorsports photographer **Nick Dungan** puts Sony's remarkable Alpha 1 through its paces on race day in Belgium

At a glance

£6,500 body only

- 50.1MP full-frame BSI CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-102,400
- 30fps shooting with AF tracking
- 9.44m-dot EVF, 0.9x magnification
- 3in, 1.44m-dot tilting LCD
- 8K video recording at 30fps

I first saw the rumours of a Sony Alpha 1 online and quickly discounted them. It looked like someone had just written down a load of unachievable numbers to generate some attention for their website. Just a few days later, in late January, Sony ended the speculation when it officially announced the impending launch of the camera.

With the Alpha 9 II still a fairly recent addition to the range, it was surprising to see Sony launching another new camera seemingly aimed at the pro

market. Although it is built largely on the same body and ergonomics as the A9 II and Alpha 7R IV, the A1 is a 50MP camera that can achieve 30 frames per second shooting in raw and boasts a viewfinder with more than double the resolution of my original Sony Alpha 9s. The high specification is impressive, but the £6,500 price tag tempered my enthusiasm slightly.

About the Alpha 1

In terms of design, the A1 will be instantly familiar to those who use an A9 II or A7R IV and invites

natural comparison with these models. Indeed aesthetically the A1 is nearly identical to the A9 II, with the only visible differences being a modified dial for adjusting the AF modes, a new memory card door and a modified viewfinder housing.

When you first power up the camera, Sony's brand-new menu system is immediately apparent. The previous Sony menu system has been something of a steep learning curve for those moving to Sony from other brands, as it had little in common with others. Although I have now become



The 50MP, 30fps Alpha 1 was tested at the World Endurance Championship season opener in Belgium
Sony FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM at 76mm,
1/5sec at f/22, ISO 50



Nick Dungan with the Alpha 1 at the Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps

accustomed to it, there are still times when I struggle to find some of the options I use less frequently, like remote settings, FTP transfer or Wi-Fi – all of which strike me as being hidden in illogical sub-menus.

The new menu is much more akin to that of Nikon or Fujifilm. It follows broadly the same colour-coded system as before but offers better visibility for settings without having to dive deeper into sub-menus. It will still take some getting used to, but it feels like an easier starting point than before.

These changes to the exterior and menus are a positive step forward, but the internal technology is where this camera takes a big leap ahead. Its party piece is the twinning of the 50MP Exmor RS stacked CMOS sensor with a 30fps continuous burst frame rate. The combination of these numbers would have been unattainable just a few years ago – yet here we are! It is worth mentioning that to obtain the 30fps you must be shooting JPG or compressed raw. When shooting uncompressed or lossless compressed raw





A panning shot taken at the Bus Stop Chicane

Sony FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM at 200mm, 1/10sec at f/13, ISO 100

the rate is limited to a still excellent 20fps.

The A1 is the first stills-focused Sony camera to include CFexpress Type A card slots, a real game-changer enabling data transfer at a much higher rate and a must-have when the camera is shooting twenty or thirty 50MP frames per second. CFexpress Type A cards are still relatively new to the market and it's worth considering that they are a pricey option when compared with the much more common SD cards.

The new CFexpress slots sit neatly behind a revised memory card door. This now has a latch

on it that you must slide down before opening the door towards you. It works really well and should be more secure than the A9 II and A7R IV which were prone to sliding open. This improvement should also contribute to better dust and moisture resistance, though time will tell whether this is enough to help the Sony to keep pace with its Canon and Nikon competitors in this respect.

Testing the A1

I arranged to test the A1 during my first international event of the year, the World Endurance

Championship season opener at the stunning Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium. One of the privileges of working within elite sport is still being able to travel during these peculiar times, although the realities of working in a Covid-secure environment are fairly restrictive and the events certainly lack something with no crowds present. Nevertheless, it was nice to finally be back trackside.

The first day at the circuit was a media day, starting with lots of team photos and finishing up late with a big group photo of all the cars pushed onto the track at

sunset. This was the perfect opportunity to get to know the A1 in some tricky lighting conditions. Looking through the new 9.44-million-dot, 0.9x magnification viewfinder I could clearly see the increase in resolution and the improved colour range of the display. The detail available in the highlights and shadows really is a big step up from the viewfinder found in the A7 and A9 models, making it much easier to judge the exposure in challenging lighting conditions; one of the key reasons why so many of us choose to use mirrorless



Sony's autofocus is particularly impressive, with Eye AF a highlight
Sigma 105mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art, 1/320sec at f/1.4, ISO 2000

'I could clearly see the increased resolution and colour range of the viewfinder'

speed that you are shooting at, meaning that if you are shooting at 1/15th sec then the viewfinder will be trying to show you a preview at 1/15th, resulting in a lag effect. This can be very off-putting and makes it very challenging to track your subject if it is changing direction or changing speed.

Sony has introduced a new feature to help with low-speed panning called 'Low Frame Limit'.

This works by inserting a black frame whilst the image is being taken much like a DSLR camera would when the mirror is up. The idea behind this is to remove the blurred preview thus preventing you from trying to pan a preview image that is not actually 100% accurate. It certainly works but for me personally, having not shot with a mirrored camera in three years it feels old-fashioned not having an image preview to work

with and I found that I got better results with the traditional mode.

Another new feature for the improved viewfinder is the option to increase the display frame rate. The viewfinder has three modes – 60fps, 120fps and 240fps – with each increment exchanging viewfinder resolution for an improved refresh rate. The 240fps option is great for fast-paced photography but does have the drawback of a reduced 0.7x magnification, diminished from the 0.9x that can be achieved at 60fps and 120fps. It's worth noting that to reap the benefit of the increased refresh rates you need to be shooting at a shutter speed that's greater than or equal to the viewfinder refresh rate. The option to increase the rate could prove really useful when shooting something like hockey but for a motorsport photographer like myself, I prefer to work with the incredible viewfinder at its full resolution.

Whilst testing the high FPS mode I spent some time shooting at Eau Rouge: a corner where the cars come within 4ft of you, doing around 120mph before heading up a steep right-hand corner and out of sight. It is one of the best corners to photograph of any track in the world and



A bird's-eye view of the pit lane action on race day
Sony FE 70-200mm F2.8 GM at 168mm, 1/1250sec at f/3.5, ISO 800



cameras instead of DSLRs.

The next four days at the track were testing (yes, you read that right). These are typically long days without much action as the teams use the time to test new set-ups, check tyre pressures, measure fuel economy and make final preparations before the season begins. This did however give me plenty of time to test the A1 and in particular, its ability to pan at slow shutter speeds, something of a bugbear on my A9s. All Sony mirrorless cameras display an image preview as you look through the viewfinder. This will be displayed at the shutter

'It's a seriously good camera for close-up, super-fast shutter speed photos'

▶ the high speeds make it an ideal spot for testing for 'rolling shutter' effect. When shooting a fast-moving object with a mirrorless camera using its electronic shutter, the time taken for the camera to read the sensor from top to bottom can result in the effect of a 'lean' to the subject. The A9 II was already impressive at keeping this effect to a minimum but the A1 takes this to the next level with no perceptible rolling shutter effect whatsoever. Given that the electronic shutter also allows you to shoot at speeds that no SLR can achieve (up to $1/32,000\text{sec}$), this makes it a seriously good camera for close-up, super-fast shutter speed photos.

Having spent plenty of time getting to know the A1 on track it was time to spend some time in the pit lane with some shorter lenses. Contrary to popular belief, shooting in the pit lane can be more of a test for a camera than photographing trackside. Despite the vehicles moving at slower speeds, the action can happen just as quickly and you're even closer to it. There's also the challenge of balancing the lighting between the pit lane and garages, although on this occasion, Covid restrictions meant I could only access the pit lane and not inside the garages. Thus it was a waiting game, trying to predict who would emerge when – giving me the perfect opportunity to test how quickly this camera can work. I spent the afternoon testing with a whole range of lenses and it didn't put a foot wrong. The autofocus was particularly impressive, a hallmark of the current Sony range, with the Eye AF being quick to activate (and perhaps marginally quicker than the A9 II) though still understandably struggling with the challenge of people wearing a helmet.

I also experimented with some of the subject-tracking AF modes which all worked well and

seemed to stay locked better than the equivalent A9 II modes when the subject changed direction quickly. I really couldn't throw anything at the Alpha 1 that it couldn't handle!

When it was time to download the images onto the computer, I was impressed by the time saved using the CFexpress card. The A1 adds the option of lossless raw files and in the name of testing, I shot a mix of lossless, compressed and uncompressed raw files and JPG files. I found that as with previous Sony cameras, there is very little real-world difference in quality between the uncompressed and compressed files, which will make the addition of lossless raw an appealing option to many. Indeed,

unless you are shooting commercial-grade studio images then the compressed or lossless files will be the way to go, with minimal trade-off in quality for the ease of use. It's worth considering that with the ability to capture 50MP images at up to 30fps, you will need to have enough storage capability if you plan to shoot a significant amount of images – particularly uncompressed raws.

Now that I had the files downloaded, another benefit of the A1 quickly became apparent. It embeds a full-size preview JPEG in the raw file, which is ideal for professional sports photographers, who will use software like Photo Mechanic to narrow down image selections

using the embedded preview images in the raw files. Having a full resolution preview enabled me to quickly judge sharpness; an improvement from the A9 models where the preview size was insufficient at 1440 pixels, creating the need to capture both raw and JPG files separately, increasing memory card usage and download times. This improvement may be small but is significant if you rely on this kind of software.

Reviewing the files on my computer revealed the usual traits that I have come to expect from Sony – sharp and clean files and great noise control, even with the 50MP resolution and expected introduction of image noise that comes with that. To my





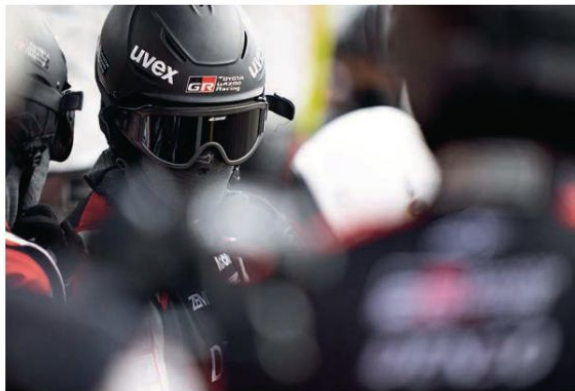
In practice, the extra resolution isn't always apparent with long telephoto lenses
 Sony FE 400mm F2.8 GM + 1.4xTC,
 1/1250sec at f/4, ISO 400

eye it seemed as though the tones of the files were more neutral than those produced by my Alpha 9s; more akin to a Canon file, than some of the more saturated files typically associated with Sony sensors. As you would expect, there is plenty of dynamic range in the raws enabling you to pull the files around as you require.

Of course, the most apparent difference between the A1 files and those of my A9s is the resolution. At nearly twice the pixel count, there is a lot more data to work with, which can be great if you need to crop in a bit or are shooting for a particularly high-resolution end use.

One of the side effects of increasing resolution is that you

will be able to see any optical shortcomings better, whether it be low-quality filters, lenses or even environmental artefacts such as heat haze. The nature of motorsport photography means a lot of shots are taken with a long lens of 400mm or more. These upshot of this is that the enhanced sensor resolution of the A1 was not as evident in these images, given the nature of shooting across large amounts of ground, especially tarmac or gravel, and the associated potential for heat haze even on cool days. As such, the images taken with my 400mm lens often didn't benefit from the same perceptible quality jump that was noticeable when using shorter lenses.



A big advantage of the improved EVF lies with judging tricky exposures
 Sony FE 400mm F2.8 GM, 1/800sec at f/2.8, ISO 800



The camera performed flawlessly using a wide range of lenses
 Sony FE 24mm F1.8 GM, 1/3200sec at f/1.8, ISO 200

Conclusion

Overall, it's hard to fault the A1 and it was certainly an agreeable companion at this event. My only minor gripe about the product is that Sony hasn't taken the opportunity to move to a full-size pro body, meaning it still has a screw-on grip rather than an integrated vertical grip. This leaves the ergonomics slightly lacking when compared with a Canon EOS-1D X Mark III, Nikon D6 or similar, which is noticeable when holding the camera for hours at a time.

The A1 represents a significant step forward from Sony. It challenges the conventional wisdom that you must choose between resolution and speed and effectively combines the best

features of the A7R and A9 ranges into one body. If, like me, you have a distinct requirement for speed in preference to resolution (or vice versa), or if you are hesitant about the price tag, it will be worth waiting to see which features of the A1 are introduced to the next A7R and A9 generations. Personally, I will be holding out for a lower-resolution Alpha 9 III and hoping the Alpha 1's amazing viewfinder and CFexpress cards make their way into that model!



Nick Dungan is a professional motorsports photographer based in the UK. His profession takes him all over the world working with clients like Aston Martin, McLaren, Jaguar and Porsche.



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SECOND-HAND CLASSIC

Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II

We pay homage to Olympus's entry-level mirrorless model from 2015

The E-M10 Mark II, which was launched in August 2015, benefited from a good number of changes to make it significantly different to the original OM-D E-M10. It gained a similar 5-axis image stabilisation system to the version seen in Olympus's more advanced OM-D E-M1 and E-M5 Mark II models and received improvements to its electronic viewfinder and video functionality. It combines a 16.1MP Four Thirds sensor with a TruePic VII image processor, culminating in an ISO range of 100-25,600 and burst shooting at up to 8.5fps. Its electronic shutter permits silent shooting and the battery lasts for up to 320 shots.

What we said

- 'Despite being a junior model in the OM-D lineup, it defies its billing by offering many of the key features found in its more advanced siblings'
- 'Detail is well preserved up to ISO 1600, beyond which it slowly starts to tail off'
- 'It's undeniably a handsome, well-built and highly specified camera that's capable of taking fine images'

What to pay

The camera cost £550 (body only) new when we reviewed it. Since then the price of used examples has dropped gradually to the point where excellent condition cameras with their original packaging, battery and caps can be picked up for £189. Like-new used examples cost £200-220, with those deemed to be in good condition with a few scuffs to the body being sold for £170.

How it fares today

Despite many of today's APS-C and full-frame cameras being capable of resolving finer detail and outperforming the E-M10 Mark II at high ISO, the image quality output from the Micro Four Thirds sensor is good enough for amateurs and casual users. If it's dual card slots, weather-resistance and a faster burst you're after, you'll want to look at more expensive models in the OM-D lineup.

New alternatives

The E-M10 III arrived two years after the E-M10 Mark II, and was superseded by the E-M10 Mark IV in 2020. Updates to the latter include a new 20MP sensor, improved handgrip, 15fps burst shooting and built-in Bluetooth. It forgoes on-chip phase detection and relies on a 121-point contrast detection system for autofocus. A simplified menu also makes it more approachable to novices.



Shutter speeds are 60-1/4000sec using the mechanical shutter and can be pushed as high as 1/16,000sec using the electronic shutter



The E-M10 Mark II shoots 22 raw files, or an unlimited number of JPEGs at its maximum 8.5fps continuous shooting speed



At a glance

£189 (excellent used condition)

- 16.1MP Four Thirds sensor
- ISO 100-25,600 (extended)
- 2.36-million-dot EVF
- 3in, 1.04m-dot fully articulated touchscreen
- 390g (body only)

For and against

- + Robust body and attractive design
- + 5-axis in-body image stabilisation
- + Huge selection of MFT lenses
- + Available in all-black or silver and black finishes
- Lacks input for a microphone
- No weather-sealing
- No 40MP High Res Shot mode
- Lacks 4K video (Full HD at 60fps)

See over to find out what Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II owners have to say

What the owners think

Three Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark II users give their verdict



As Maria has discovered, the highly effective in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) can save you having to carry a tripod
Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm f/4-5.6 R, 1/125sec at f/9, ISO 500

Maria Nikolouzou

In 2016, I decided I'd try and improve my Facebook page with higher-quality photos. The camera I upgraded to was the OM-D E-M10 II. I purchased the silver edition at an affordable price and instantly fell in love with its beautiful retro design. Compact and very well constructed, but unfortunately not weather-sealed, it fits nicely in my hands without being too cumbersome. Buttons and controls are well positioned across the body, it offers good customisation, but is let down slightly by its menu, which isn't particularly intuitive. Being lightweight was an advantage for my off-road hiking trips and the most valuable feature has been its in-body image stabilisation. I rarely find myself using a tripod any more. The focus bracketing has helped with my macro photography and I've been impressed with its electronic viewfinder and the touch-enabled screen that lets me tilt it and shoot easily from low angles. The camera has a wide range of available lenses, creating pictures with recognisable Olympus colours. The battery life isn't the best, however that is easily solved by packing a few spares. My overall experience with the camera has resulted in a deeper passion for photography. More of my images can be viewed on Instagram @mnikolouzou.

For and against

- ✚ 5-axis in-body image stabilisation
- ✚ No weather-sealing

Nick Barber

A combination of GAS (gear acquisition syndrome), favourable exchange rate with the Canadian dollar and discounting of the Mark II after the release of the OM-D E-M10 Mark III saw me hand over my cash. I love its raised and tactile controls which compensate for its small form factor. On its first challenging run out, it performed solidly paired with the 12-40mm F2.8 Pro lens and various fast primes. While it's not the best in low light in the Olympus, or indeed Micro Four Thirds, range, its raw files hold up enough detail to rely on it to get acceptable shots in the kind of poorly lit music venues I often visit. More of my images can be found by visiting www.nickbarberphotography.co.uk. He's also on Instagram @efsb.

For and against

- ✚ Small form factor
- ✚ Battery life



Nick likes how compact and portable the OM-D E-M10 Mark II is for gig photography
Olympus M.Zuiko Digital 45mm f/1.8, 1/100sec at f/1.8, ISO 400



An example showing how the OM-D E-M10 II handles noise at ISO 1600
Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 75-300mm f/4.8-6.7 II,
1/6sec at f/4.8, ISO 1600

Menegatos Christos

I bought the OM-D E-M10 Mark II in 2018. It is a beautiful silver retro-like, small and lightweight camera that's supported by a vast number of Micro Four Thirds lenses from Olympus, Panasonic and other manufacturers. It has a 16MP sensor, IBIS, an excellent viewfinder, Wi-Fi, Full HD video at 60p, a 4K time-lapse mode and a flexible touchscreen. It can shoot as high as ISO 25,600, but I've learnt its low-light performance isn't its strong point. I love street photography and use it with my 40-150mm zoom lens most of the time. Autofocus is fast and accurate and it returns nice and crisp images. I like the fact the camera feels light yet stable in my hands, which makes me want to pick it up and use it. I get around 280 shots on a single charge. To sum up, the E-M10 II is a camera that I thoroughly enjoy using outdoors and would highly recommend it to others.



For and against

- + No shortage of MFT lenses
- Lacks 4K video and microphone input

Menegatos finds the size of the OM-D E-M10 Mark II complements his love of street photography
Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 40-150mm f/4-5.6 R, 1/800sec at f/4.5, ISO 200

Benro Bat 03C Tripod with VX20 Head

Benro's new Bat series has a clever feature that **Richard Sibley** hasn't seen before

● £195 ● www.benroeu.com

IT'S A rare thing to see a feature on a tripod that you have never seen before. I've scoured the internet and asked my peers, and no one has seen the main feature of the Benro Bat, yet it seems so obvious. You see, the Benro Bat range has five leg positions, three of which that angle downwards as you would expect, but two that actually lock upwards, so you can make your tripod look like a bat. It all makes sense.

'But why would I want to angle the legs upwards?' Being able to tilt the leg up also opens up a whole host of opportunities when shooting in very uneven locations, such as rocky riverbanks – which was one location I found this tiny Benro Bat tripod extremely useful. Interior shooters will now be able to get their camera even closer to a wall on a tripod by positioning that awkward leg upright at a steep incline.

As a glance at its key specs suggests, the Benro Bat 03C is the smallest in the range, but it has most of the features of the larger versions, including carbon-fibre construction. This is a table-top tripod that has three leg sections that can be extended using nice large rubber twist locks. The feet are a grippy rubber and can be swapped out for metal spikes, which aren't included, and as you would expect there is a sprung hook in the centre for adding some extra ballast. One thing that is missing is a centre column, which does feature on the full-size tripods in the Bat range.

The VX20 head is Arca Swiss compatible, and the plates have bumpers at either end to prevent your camera slipping off when the plate isn't fully clamped. The loosening knob has two stages, requiring it to be pulled out before making the final twist that will completely loosen the plate for removal. The head also pans in two places; at the base like a conventional ball head, but also where the stalk meets the plate holder. It's a little unnecessary, but a nice feature all the same.

Verdict

I love the idea of the Bat range and being able to position the legs and lock them upright. However, I have been particularly taken with this tiny version of the design. For tabletop, still-life, product, macro and wildlife photography it could be a really useful tripod to have with you.



Dual screw

The spider has a sprung $\frac{3}{4}$ in thread that reveals a $\frac{1}{4}$ in thread so you can mount a head or a camera directly.

Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
GOLD
★★★★★

Storage

The tiny tripod comes with an equally small shoulder bag for transport and protection.

Accessories

There are three $\frac{1}{4}$ in thread sockets which allow an arm to be mounted so you can attach accessories such as a microphone, monitor or light.

The Bat series has legs that can lock pointing upwards

At a glance

- 41cm maximum height
- 30cm folded length
- 0.83kg weight
- 12kg rated load

ALSO IN THE RANGE

There are eight models in the Bat range, of which the 03C is the smallest. It is joined by three other carbon-fibre tripods and two aluminium ones. The maximum height is found on the snappily named FBAT24CVX25 (above left), which is around 180cm tall and costs £270. The five other tripods all feature a centre column and have VX heads with sizes in relation to the tripod.

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BLAST FROM THE PAST

Robot I

John Wade discovers the first 35mm camera with a built-in motor drive

LAUNCHED: 1934

PRICE AT LAUNCH: According to lens, from £23 10s (£23.50)

GUIDE PRICE NOW: £150-200

ALTHOUGH there had been cameras with built-in clockwork motor drives as far back as 1898, the idea didn't seriously come together until the arrival of the Robot I. The camera was designed by Heinz Kilfitt, a German watch maker and photographic inventor. After his design had been turned down by both Kodak and Agfa, a company called Otto Berning & Co was set up in Düsseldorf specifically to manufacture the camera.

The Robot I measures only 10x6.5x4.5cm, but at 600 grams it is surprisingly heavy for its size. It takes 35mm film, but not in conventional cassettes. Instead, the film must be preloaded into specially designed cassettes whose jaws automatically open as the camera is closed and



close again as it is opened. Film runs from supply cassette to take-up cassette to shoot 50 24x24mm images. A rotary shutter gives speeds of 1:1/500sec. Lenses are interchangeable and the camera was originally sold with a choice of 3cm f/3.5 Primotar, f/3.5 Tessar or f/2.8 Tessar standards. The viewfinder, mounted on the top plate, can be swung through 90° for shooting candidly side-on to the subject. A range of

The German Robot I, first of a large range of clockwork motor drive cameras

wideangle to telephoto lenses, as well as a significant series of accessories were available for this and subsequent highly-successful Robot cameras.

But it's the motor drive that set the Robot apart from its contemporaries back in 1934 and which makes it so attractive to collectors today. The spring is wound by a large knob in the centre of the top plate. Thereafter, as each exposure is made the film automatically advances, up to 24 frames before rewinding. A pointer on the frame counter dial rotates not quite half a turn with each exposure, which means the dial's numbers are not consecutive. For film users who don't want to preload cassettes, the Robot II from 1939 is more practical because this also has a clockwork motor drive, but accepts regular 35mm cassettes.

What's good Quality build and optics, capable of shooting up to four frames a second.

What's bad Non-standard cassettes, tiny viewfinder, fiddly shutter release.

Inside the Robot, showing its twin cassettes, dedicated to the camera



View from the top, showing the viewfinder swivelled 90° and the unusually complex frame counter



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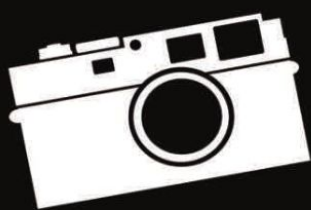
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Buying Guide

305
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Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for mirrorless lenses

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

On the whole, each manufacturer uses its own proprietary lens mount. Notable exceptions are Micro Four Thirds, shared by Olympus and Panasonic, and the full-frame L-mount that's used by Leica, Panasonic and Sigma.

Built-in focus motor

Lenses for mirrorless cameras invariably use built-in motors for autofocus, which are also used for electronic manual focusing. Silent, video-friendly stepper motors are most commonly employed. Manual-focus optics with traditional aperture rings are also widely available.

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 lenses
APD Sigma Apochromatic lenses	DN Sigma lenses for mirrorless cameras	FA Pentax full-frame lenses	PF Nikon Phase Fresnel optics	UMC Nikon Multi Coated
ASPH Aspherical elements	DC 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	DD 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 Samsung lenses for APS-C cropped sensors	DX Nikon's lenses for DX-format digital	HSM Sigma's HiperSonic Motor	S Nikon's premium lenses for mirrorless	VC Tamron's Vibration Compensation
D Nikon lenses that communicate distance info	DS Canon's Delicous 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

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT	DIMENSIONS
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FUJIFILM MIRRORLESS

55

Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY													MOUNT			DIMENSIONS	
LAOWA MIRRORLESS																				
4mm f/2.8 Fisheye	£249		Lightweight fisheye lens for APS-C and Micro Four Thirds offering a circular image with a 210° angle of view	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	n/a	45.2	25.5	135
7.5mm f/2 MFT	£499	4.5★	Tiny but sharp wideangle prime for Micro Four Thirds featuring manual focus and aperture control	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	46	50	55	170
9mm f/2.8 Zero-D	£499		Compact manual-focus prime for APS-C mirrorless cameras promises very low distortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	49	60	53	215
10mm f/2 Zero-D MFT	£399		Tiny wideangle prime for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus and auto aperture control from the camera	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	46	54	41	125
17mm f/1.8 MFT	£189		Inexpensive compact prime for Micro Four Thirds cameras with manual focus and aperture operation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	46	55	50	160
33mm f/0.95 CF APO Argus	£499		Ultra-fast manual-focus standard prime for APS-C cameras that promises minimal colour fringing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	62	71.5	83	590
50mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO MFT	£409		Manual-focus macro lens for Micro Four Thirds with electronic aperture setting and 2x magnification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.6	49	53.5	79	240
65mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro	£499	4.5★	Superb manual-focus macro lens that provides unusually high 2x magnification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	52	57	100	335
9mm f/5.6 FF RL	£869		The world's widest full-frame rectilinear lens is also available in Leica M mount	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	n/a	62.4	63	350
10-18mm f/4.5-5.6	£899		The world's widest zoom for full-frame mirrorless cameras, with manual focus and aperture control	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	37	70	90.9	435
11mm f/4.5 FF RL	£769		Compact, lightweight ultra-wideangle rectilinear prime for full-frame mirrorless accepts 62mm filters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	62	63.5	58	254
14mm f/4 FF RL	£599		Smallest of a trio of manual-focus ultra-wideangle rectilinear RL primes for full-frame mirrorless	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	52	58	59	228
15mm f/2 Zero-D	£899	4.5★	Manual-focus fast ultra-wideangle prime for full-frame mirrorless cameras, with minimal distortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	72	66	82	500
15mm f/4.5 Zero-D Shift	£1249	4★	The world's widest-angle shift lens offers +/-11mm movement in any direction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	n/a	79	103	597
LEICA MIRRORLESS																				
11-23mm f/3.5-4.5 TL	£1450		Wideangle zoom lens for Leica's APS-C mirrorless system	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	67	77	73	368
18-56mm f/3.5-5.6 Vario-Elmar TL	£1280		Relatively large, non-retractable zoom for APS-C mirrorless	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	52	63.5	61	256
18mm f/2.8 Elmarit TL	£1020		Stimline, extremely lightweight pancake prime with fast autofocus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	39	61	21	80
23mm f/2 Summicron TL	£1410		Compact, lightweight fast prime that offers a classic 35mm equivalent view on Leica's APS-C CSCs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	52	63.5	38.1	153
35mm f/1.4 Summilux TL	£1830		High-end fast prime designed to give exceptional image quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	60	70	71	428
55-135mm f/3.5-4.5 APO-Vario-Elmar TL	£1450		Telephoto zoom that eschews image stabilisation in a bid for maximal optical quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	60	68	110	500
60mm f/2.8 APO-Macro-Elmarit TL	£1920		Macro lens for Leica's APS-C mirrorless cameras offers 1:1 life-size magnification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	60	68	89	320
NIKON MIRRORLESS																				
16-50mm f/3.5-6.3 VR Nikkor-Z DX	£329		Extremely compact and lightweight retractable kit zoom for Nikon's DX-format mirrorless	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	46	70	32	135
50-250mm f/4.5-6.3 VR Nikkor-Z DX	£379		Entry-level telephoto zoom for DX mirrorless featuring retractable barrel design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	62	74	110	405
14-24mm f/2.8 S Nikkor-Z	£2499	4.5★	Pro-spec weather-sealed wideangle zoom that can use 112mm filters via the included hood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	112	88.5	124.5	650
14-30mm f/4 S Nikkor-Z	£1349	4.5★	Remarkably compact ultra-wideangle zoom that accepts 82mm screw-in filters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	82	89	85	485
20mm f/1.8 S Nikkor-Z	£1049		Weather-sealed large maximum-aperture prime promises ultra-sharp images	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	77	84.5	108.5	505
24-50mm f/4-6.3 Nikkor-Z	£439		Ultra-compact and lightweight zoom designed to be sold with the entry-level Nikon Z 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	52	73.5	51	195
24-70mm f/2.8 S Nikkor-Z	£2199	5★	Superb fast standard zoom includes OLED display and customisable control dial	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	82	89	126	805
24-70mm f/4 S Nikkor-Z	£999		General-purpose standard zoom for Nikon's full-frame mirrorless system	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	72	77.5	88.5	500
24-200mm f/4-6.3 VR Nikkor-Z	£849		Billed as the perfect ultra-compact travel zoom lens, with dust- and drip-resistant construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	67	76.5	114	570
24mm f/1.8 S Nikkor-Z	£1049		Large-aperture wideangle prime that aims to combine edge-to-edge sharpness with attractive bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	72	78	96.5	450
35mm f/1.8 S Nikkor-Z	£849		Fast, moderate-wideangle prime designed for optimum optical performance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	62	73	86	370
50mm f/1.2 S Nikkor-Z	£2299		Ultra-large aperture weather-sealed standard prime that promises 'elaborate bokeh'	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	82	89.5	150	1090
50mm f/1.8 S Nikkor-Z	£599		Large-aperture prime that promises exceptional edge-to-edge sharpness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	62	76	86.5	415
70-200mm f/2.8 MC Nikkor-Z	£649		Compact, lightweight and relatively affordable macro lens that offers 1:1 magnification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	46	74.5	66	260
70-200mm f/2.8 VR S Nikkor-Z	£2399	5★	Pro-spec large-aperture telezoom with optical image stabilisation and built-in OLED display	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	77	89	220	1360
85mm f/1.8 S Nikkor-Z	£799	4.5★	Portrait prime for Nikon's full-frame mirrorless system that promises beautiful bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	67	75	99	470
105mm f/2.8 VR S MC Nikkor-Z	£999		Professional-spec macro lens that boasts optical stabilisation and offers life-size magnification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	62	85	140	630
OLYMPUS MIRRORLESS																				
7-14mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£999	4.5★	Super-wideangle zoom lens that's dustproof, splashproof and freeze-proof	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	n/a	78.9	105.8	534
8mm f/1.8 Pro Fisheye	£799		Fisheye lens with impressive image quality that's dustproof, splashproof and freeze-proof	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	n/a	62	80	315
8-25mm f/4 ED Pro	£630		Weather-sealed wideangle zoom with premium optics and unusually extended range that accepts 72mm filters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	72	77	88.5	411
9-18mm f/4-5.6 ED	£630		This super-wideangle lens offers an equivalent focal range of 18-36mm in 35mm terms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	52	56.5	49.5	155
9mm f/1.8 Fish-eye Body Cap Lens	£89		Stimline lens in a body cap with 140° angle of view	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	n/a	56	12.8	30
12mm f/2.0 ED	£739	5★	A wideangle fixed lens for the Micro Four Thirds system	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	46	56	43	130
12-40mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£899		Weather-resistant standard zoom with top-notch optics and a constant aperture of f/2.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	62	69.9	84	382
12-55mm f/4 Pro	£599	5★	Excellent compact, lightweight weather-sealed zoom that offers 0.5x magnification at all focal lengths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	58	63.4	70	254
12-100mm f/4 IS ED Pro	£1099	5★	Superb high-end weather-sealed superzoom lens featuring powerful in-lens IS with Sync IS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	72	116.5	116.5	561
12-200mm f/3.5-6.3 ED	£800	4★	24-400mm equivalent superzoom includes weather-sealed construction and decent optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	72	77.5	99.7	455
14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 II R	£269		A redesigned variation of the standard kit lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	37	56.5	50	112
14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 EZ	£329		Compact kit lens for Olympus PEN and OM-D models with powerzoom control	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	37	60.6	22.5	93
14-150mm f/4-5.6 II	£550		High-powered zoom for all your needs - from wideangle to telephoto - plus weather-resistance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	58	63.5	83	295
17mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1300		High-end, large-aperture weather-sealed prime designed for documentary or landscape work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	62	68.2	87	380
17mm f/1.8 MSC	£450	5★	Wide-aperture, wideangle prime boasting excellent peak sharpness and low colour fringing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	46	57	47	350
25mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1099	5★	Large maximum-aperture prime combines impressive sharpness with lovely bokeh and fast, reliable AF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	62	70	87	410
25mm f/1.8	£370		Compact prime lens with ultra-bright f/1.8 aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	46	57.8	42	137
30mm f/3.5 ED Macro	£249		New in the M.Zuiko Premium range, this macro lens features super-fast AF and weighs only 128g	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.5	46	57	60	128
40-150mm f/2.8 ED Pro	£1299	4★	This powerful 80-300mm 35mm-equivalent focal-length lens offers amazing portability for this pro class	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	72	79.4	100	760
40-150mm f/4-5.6 R	£309		This middle-distance zoom lens has an 80-300mm 35mm-equivalent focal length	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	58	63.5	83	190
45mm f/1.2 ED Pro	£1200		Large-aperture lens designed for portrait photography with premium optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	62	70	84.9	410
45mm f/1.8	£279	5★	Fast-aperture lens for taking portrait shots is sharp, quiet and has no colour fringing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	37	56	46	116
60mm f/2.8 Macro	£450		High-precision macro lens that's dustproof and splashproof	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	46	56	82	185
75-300mm f/4-6.3 ED II	£499		Update featuring Zeiss Extra-low Reflection Optical coating said to reduce ghosting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	58	69	117	423
75mm f/1.8 ED	£799	5★	Ultra-fast prime lens ideal for portraits and action shots	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84	58	64	69	305
100-400mm f/5-6.3 ED IS	£1100	4★	Large, weather-sealed optically stabilised ultra-telephoto zoom, compatible with teleconverters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	130	72	86.4	205.7	1220
300mm f/4 IS Pro	£2200		Compact ultra-telephoto prime with optical image stabilisation, compatible with Sync IS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140	77	92.5	227	1270

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Mirrorless Lenses

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Mirrorless Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MAKE	STABILISATION	CANON M	CANON RF	MICRO FOURTHS	SONY E	MOUNT	MIN FOCUS (CM)	FILTER THREAD (MM)	DIAPHRAGM (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
FE 85mm f/1.4 GM	£1889	5★	Stunning image quality from Sony's premium 'G Master' portrait lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	77	89.5	107.5	820
FE 90mm f/2.8 Macro G OSS	£1049	5★	Optically excellent dedicated macro lens for Sony's full-frame E-mount cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	62	79	130.5	602
FE 100mm f/2.8 STF GM OSS	£1700	5★	Innovative portrait lens combines optical stabilisation and an apodisation filter for smooth bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57	72	85.2	118.1	700
FE 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 GM OSS	£2500	5★	Premium optically stabilised, weather-sealed telephoto designed to match the Alpha 9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	77	93.9	205	1395
FE 135mm f/1.8 GM	£1750	5★	Large-aperture portrait prime for full-frame combines exceptional sharpness and attractive bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	82	89.5	127	950
FE 200-600mm f/5.6-6.3 G OSS	£1799	5★	Weather-resistant super-telephoto, with easy-to-use internal zoom design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	240	95	111.5	318	2115
TAMRON MIRRORLESS															
14-150mm f/3.5-5.8 Di III	£370	4★	Micro Four Thirds superzoom is a competent performer, and extremely compact	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	52	63.5	80.4	285
11-20mm f/2.8 Di III-A RXD	£819	4★	Large-aperture wideangle zoom for Sony APS-C mirrorless cameras with moisture-resistant construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	67	73	86.2	335
17-70mm f/2.8 Di III-A VC RXD	£780	4.5★	Provides a uniquely useful combination of 4.1x zoom range, f/2.8 maximum aperture and optical stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	67	74.6	119.3	525
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 Di III VC	£390	5★	Lightweight, compact, all-in-one zoom for mirrorless cameras, to cover practically any shooting situation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	62	68	96.7	460
20mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399	5★	Widest of a trio of lightweight primes offering half life-size magnification and splash-proof build	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	67	73	64	220
24mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399	5★	Compact wideangle prime designed for high-resolution full-frame mirrorless cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	67	73	64	215
35mm f/2.8 Di III OSD M1:2	£399	5★	Optimized Silent Drive (OSD) motor promises full compatibility with advanced autofocus modes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	67	73	64	210
17-28mm f/2.8 Di III RXD	£899	5★	Small and lightweight fast wideangle zoom boasts excellent optics and fast autofocus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	67	73	99	420
28-75mm f/2.8 Di III RXD	£699	4.5★	Fast zoom for full-frame mirrorless is relatively compact and has fine optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	67	73	117.8	550
28-200mm f/2.8-5.6 Di III RXD	£800	4★	All-in-one superzoom with impressive maximum aperture but limited wideangle and no stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	67	74	117	575
70-180mm f/2.8 Di III VXD	£1350	4.5★	Remarkably compact large-aperture telephoto prime includes newly-developed VXD autofocus drive	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	67	81	149	810
70-300mm f/4.5-6.3 Di III VXD	£650	5★	Lightweight, affordable, weather-sealed telephoto zoom, but lacks optical stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	67	77	148	545
150-500mm f/5-6.7 Di III VC VXD	£1379	5★	Long-range telephoto zoom that's similar in packed length to 100-400mm optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	82	93	209.6	1725
TOKINA MIRRORLESS															
atx-m 23mm f/1.4 X	£449	5★	Fast prime for Fujinix X cameras, with clickless aperture ring for smooth control during movie shooting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	52	65	72	276
atx-m 33mm f/1.4 X	£399	4.5★	Affordable large-aperture standard prime for Fujinix X-mount cameras that gives a 50mm equivalent view	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	52	65	72	285
Firin 20mm f/2 FE MF	£699	5★	Impressively sharp fast wideangle prime for Sony mirrorless, with manual focus and aperture ring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	62	69	81.5	490
Firin 20mm f/2 FE AF	£799	5★	Autofocus version of the excellent Firin 20mm f/2 FE MF, featuring ultrasonic focus motor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	62	73.4	81.5	464
atx-m 85mm f/1.8 FE	£489	5★	First in a new range of atx-m lenses for mirrorless cameras is a portrait prime for Sony full-frame	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	72	93.2	80	645
Firin 100mm f/2.8 FE Macro	£579	5★	Relatively affordable autofocus 1:1 macro lens for Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	55	74	123	570
VOIGTLANDER MIRRORLESS															
10.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£999	5★	Ultra-large aperture super-wide prime for Micro Four Thirds with manual focus and aperture setting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	72	77	82.4	585
17.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£799	5★	35mm equivalent wideangle manual-focus prime with exceptionally large aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	58	63.4	80	540
25mm f/0.95 Nokton II	£719	5★	All-metal construction with traditional manual focus and aperture rings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	52	60.6	70	435
25mm f/0.85 Super Nokton	£1599	5★	Currently the world's fastest photographic lens in production	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	62	72.3	88.9	703
42.5mm f/0.95 Nokton	£749	5★	Large aperture short-telephoto portrait lens for Micro Four Thirds cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	58	64.3	74.6	571
60mm f/0.95 Nokton	£1049	5★	Unique super-fast manual-focus medium telephoto for MFT offers a 120mm equivalent view	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	77	82.5	87.7	860
10mm f/5.6 Hyper Wide Heliar	£749	5★	Covers a phenomenal 130° angle of view, with optics designed to minimise distortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	94	67.8	58.7	312
15mm f/4.5 Super Wide Heliar III	£649	5★	Compact, lightweight ultra-wideangle manual-focus prime that still accepts 58mm filters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	58	66.4	62.3	294
21mm f/1.4 Nokton	£1149	5★	Large-aperture wideangle prime specifically designed for Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	62	70.5	79.5	560
21mm f/3.5 Color-Skopar Asph	£549	5★	Compact wideangle prime with manual focus and aperture operation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	52	62.8	39.9	230
35mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£849	5★	Super-fast yet relatively compact prime, with 'Still Edition' design optimised for photography not video	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	58	66.5	59.9	262
35mm f/1.4 Nokton Asph	£639	5★	'Classic' lens based on symmetrical optical design that only uses spherical lens elements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	58	67	39.6	387
35mm f/2 Apo-Lanthar	£899	5★	Promises the highest resolution and colour correction of all of Voigtlander's E-mount lenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	49	62.5	67.3	352
40mm f/1.2 Nokton	£810	5★	World's first full-frame lens with a super-fast f/1.2 aperture, promising pleasing bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	58	70.1	59.3	420
40mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£749	5★	'Slits Edition' version of this fast prime is smaller, lighter and more affordable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	58	66.5	51.9	340
50mm f/1.2 Nokton	£899	5★	Super-fast manual-focus prime boasts 12 aperture blades for attractive background blur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	58	70.1	58.8	434
50mm f/1.2 Nokton SE	£849	5★	SE version does without switchable clicked/clickless aperture mechanism	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	58	66.5	58.5	383
50mm f/2 Apo-Lanthar	£869	5★	Fully manual lens with apochromatic optics designed to completely eliminate colour fringing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	49	62.6	61.3	354
65mm f/2 Macro Apo-Lanthar	£749	5★	High-quality apochromatic macro lens designed for Sony mirrorless offers half life-size reproduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	67	78	91.3	625
110mm f/2.5 Macro Apo-Lanthar	£899	5★	Manual-focus macro lens with 1:1 magnification and premium apochromatic optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	58	78.4	99.7	771
ZEISS MIRRORLESS															
Touit 12mm f/2.8 Distagon T*	£959	5★	Designed specifically for Sony NEX and Fujinix X-series CSC cameras. Very impressive performance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	67	82	68	270
Touit 32mm f/1.8 Planar T*	£700	4.5★	Optimised for use with APS-C format sensors, a fast standard prime for Fujinix X-series cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	52	72	76	200
Touit 50mm f/2.8 Planar T*	£589	5★	Macro 1:1 lens for extreme close-ups, as well as shooting portraits or panoramas as a light tele-lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	52	75	71	290
Batis 18mm f/2.8	£990	5★	The Batis range is for mirrorless full-frame system cameras from Sony	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	77	78	95	330
Loxia 21mm f/2	£1230	5★	Compact manual-focus wideangle prime purpose-designed for Sony Alpha 7-series cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	52	62	72	394
Batis 25mm f/2	£980	5★	A wideangle lens for Sony full-frame users offering unrivalled quality	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	67	81	92	355
Loxia 25mm f/2.4	£1190	5★	Gorgeous but ever-so-pricey compact manual-focus prime, with absolutely stunning optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	52	62	69.5	375
Loxia 35mm f/2	£1015	5★	Small wideangle manual-focus prime intended for Sony Alpha 7 users	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	52	62	59	340
Batis 40mm f/2 CF	£1130	5★	Bridges the gap between Batis 25mm and 85mm lenses and features close-focusing ability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	67	91	93	361
Loxia 50mm f/2	£740	5★	Manual-focus standard prime with premium optics and E-mount for Sony Alpha 7 users	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	52	62	59	320
Batis 85mm f/1.8	£909	5★	A high-quality medium prime for wedding and portrait shooters, developed for Sony's Alpha 7 series	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	67	78	105	475
Loxia 85mm f/2.4	£1199	5★	A compact, manual-focus, short telephoto lens for the mirrorless Sony Alpha series	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	52	62.5	108	594
Batis 135mm f/2.8	£1749	5★	Absolutely stunning, super-sharp image-stabilised portrait lens for Sony full-frame mirrorless	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	87	67	84	120	614

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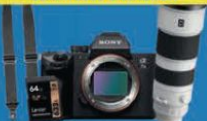
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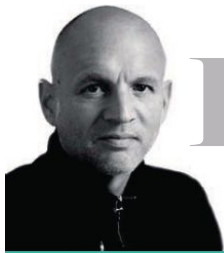
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Final Analysis

Benedict Brain considers...

'The Pitons, St Lucia', 1985, by Nigel Atherton

'Monte Carlo or Nice for lunch today?' was the sort of dilemma my shipmates and I would have to ponder on, on a typical working day as photographers on cruise ships sometime in the 1990s. Seems crazy now, right? I was a cruise ship photographer and now I'm proud of the fact.

It wasn't always like that, I used to be slightly embarrassed by it, especially in fancy photographic circles. I should not have been such a snob. The photography was certainly formulaic and humdrum, but the life experience was second to none. It turns out that quite a few of us in the world of UK-based consumer photo magazines have spent time snapping tourists on the high seas, including AP's very own editor, Nigel Atherton.

Good old days

Nigel posted this scanned transparency of the Pitons in St Lucia on his social feed and I was hit by a wave of nostalgia for the good old days on the high seas when I scrolled upon it. Perhaps lockdown was getting to me and vicariously travelling the world through Nigel's archive hit a chord. 'For me, St Lucia is arguably the most beautiful of all the Caribbean islands,' reveals Nigel when we chatted about his images and life at sea.

He continues, 'The first time I set eyes on the Pitons I thought it was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen. I was virtually moved to tears by it. On various visits I photographed them


from every angle. This isn't that classic view I first saw, but I loved the way the peaks were framed between the palm trees, with the riot of poinsettias in the foreground. It felt like a photographic representation of paradise and that's pretty much how it felt being there.'

Nigel worked on cruise ships for seven years between 1984 and 1992. Our respective ships didn't cross paths back then, but we have plenty of mutual friends from that era. 'While the cruise ship photography job was quite repetitive, it was a passport to travel the world in style,'

Nigel tells me. 'Few things are more glorious than being at sea, or sailing into some exotic port.'

'It was also a great way to meet people from different cultures. As well as those we met in the places we visited, the average cruise ship has a crew of over 30 nationalities. Spending years living, working and socialising with such a melting pot taught me that people are basically the same wherever you go. No country, race or culture has a monopoly on nice people. I made friends from all over the world, many of whom I'm still in touch with today. So I'm not

very tribal and have no time for racism or xenophobia. Working on ships also taught me that the world is surprisingly small, and very fragile. We have a duty to preserve and look after it.'

I couldn't put it better myself and like Nigel, the life lessons that I learned from my time at sea were as valuable if not more so than the years I spent in formal education studying photography. This image from St Lucia captures the spirit of adventure, the allure of exotic far-flung locations and the colourful glamour of life as a cruise ship photographer. 



Benedict Brain, a photographer and award-winning journalist, combines his personal practice with writing about photography and leading workshops. Regularly asked to judge competitions such as the BPA and LPOTY he travels internationally as a public speaker talking about the art and craft of photography. He sits on the distinctions panel for the RPS. www.benedictbrain.com



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