

Saturday 14 August 2021

# Amateur Photographer



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Photo Philip Ruopp: 28mm | F/2.8 | 1/500 | ISO 200

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Has there ever been such a great choice of lenses for the serious photographer? Whether you are looking for a brand-new lens for your mirrorless camera or DSLR, or interested in using a much older lens via an adapter, you really are spoiled for choice. In this issue we help you make the wisest decisions when it comes to 'spending it on the glass'. Highlights include a major guide to using

vintage lenses on mirrorless cameras (shop around and you can still find bargains) and the best lenses for video. We also focus on 'quirkier' lens options – testing tsar Andy Westlake looks at some tempting alternative optics, including ultra telephotos and macros, tilt-and-shift lenses, fisheyes and some funky creative options. Keep sharing your shots via our social media (see below) and check out our great new subscription offers too.

**Nigel Atherton, Editor**

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**SOMETHING TO SAY?** Write to us at [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk) with your letters, opinion columns (max 500 words) or article suggestions.

**PICTURES** Send us a link to your website or gallery, or attach a set of low-res sample images (up to a total of 5MB) to [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk).

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## This week in 1940

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### TREASURES FROM THE HULTON ARCHIVE



### Trackside Allotment by Harry Todd

LMS railway employees create a vegetable patch beside a railway track near Harrow during World War II. National Allotments Week this year is from 9 August until 15 August. Organised by the National Allotment Society (NAS), this year's theme is 'Plotting for the Future', celebrating the contribution that

allotments make to a sustainable future. Last year, it was reported that applications for council-run allotments soared. With one in eight of the UK population having no access to a garden, according to the NAS, or one in five in London, it's easy to see why the various lockdowns stimulated the demand.

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



## This week's cover image

The lens photo on our cover is by Getty Images, and this issue we offer you advice for buying and using all types of lenses

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See page 50 for details



# It's good to share

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

## AP picture of the week

### Waiting by Davide Borghi

Canon EOS 6D Mark II, Canon 24-70mm f/2.8L II at 24mm, f/2.8, 1/160sec at ISO 800

'This picture was taken last summer in my house when, following the severe lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was possible to travel in Italy,' recalls Davide, who lives in the beautiful city of Siena, near Florence and Pisa. 'I photographed my daughter behind the window as it conveyed to me a sense of calm, serenity and hope for the future.' This is a nice composition, made more graphic by the black & white treatment. The lines of the window blinds lead nicely to the subject. 'I consider myself really lucky since this region is such a magical and beautiful place,' he adds. Davide is on Instagram at @davide\_borghis30 and facebook as @dborghis3.

## #appicoftheweek



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# We also liked...

## Remi by Rebecca Pitt

Canon EOS 1100D, Sigma 70-300mm, 1/500sec at f/5.6, ISO 400

'I've been a photographer for nearly three years,' says 17-year-old Rebecca. 'I took this image at South Lakes Safari Zoo. Remi the jaguar got a malignant brain tumour and the surgeons at the zoo operated on him to cut the cancerous cells out. You can see the scars on his head. In the wild he would have slowly died as the cancerous cells spread. Animals like this are supposed to be wild but I am happy Remi was in captivity so that they hopefully saved his life. I waited at the enclosure for some time for a good image since I wanted to tell his story. I had to angle my camera against the glass to avoid as much reflection as possible. I couldn't avoid it all due to the rain so I cropped it to remove the remaining reflection.' Rebecca demonstrated patience, skill and initiative to get this shot – all the qualities required of a successful nature photographer. Rebecca is on Instagram @everything\_photogra\_phy.



## Cape Cornwall by Matthew Grey

Canon EOS 6D, EF 17-40mm F4 L, 1/100sec at f/16, ISO 100

'Taken just as a sea fog rolled in over the cape,' says Matthew, a landscape photographer based in Cornwall. 'Just ten minutes later, visibility was down to about 50ft! In hindsight I shouldn't have shot at 17mm as there is distortion noticeable in the bottom edges, but I was excited by the view and rushed it a little to get it all in frame. It was processed in Lightroom, with a bit of Photoshop to remove a parked van.' Matthew is being hard on himself – this is a nice shot, with the colourful flowers providing a pleasing foreground for the view beyond, adding both colour and depth to the image. Matthew is on Instagram @matthewgrey.co.uk and www.matthewgrey.co.uk.

Want to see your pictures here? Share them with our Flickr, Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook communities using the hashtag #apicoftheweek.  
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See page 3 for how to find us.



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# The sun doesn't set in a shoebox. Put kit back in play.

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Research conducted by Opinium on behalf of MPB between 17-21st December 2020, among a sample of 4,000 professional camera kit owners in the UK, US and EU.



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## Photography and well-being survey

MANCHESTER-based photographer Catherine North (shown above) is writing a book and potentially a series of articles on photography and its effects on mood and well-being. She's keen to include the experiences of active photographers of all ages and skill levels across the UK, and has put together an anonymous and confidential survey on the subject. It takes around 15 minutes to complete the multiple choice questions and the survey is open until 31 October 2021. See [bit.ly/mhphotosurvey](https://bit.ly/mhphotosurvey).



## Nikon Z 14-24mm f/2.8 gets LEE filter holder

LEE FILTERS has announced a LEE100 holder for Nikon's Z 14-24mm f/2.8 S lens. Larger than the standard holder, and made from aluminium alloy, it features a compression system for secure placement on the lens barrel. It has been designed to minimise vignetting, with filters held in quick-change frames that let you continue to use existing 100x100mm standard and 100x150mm grad filters. The new holder uses the same interchangeable guide blocks as the standard LEE100 system. The holder kit comes with one square and one rectangular frame and costs £149.99.

# Mental health-themed image wins big prize

THE WINNERS of this year's Wellcome Photography Prize have been announced, selected from 90 shortlisted entrants from 15 countries. UK photographer Jameisha Prescod received the single image prize with her photograph 'Untangling'. It also won the Managing Mental Health single image category. Indonesian photographer Yoppy Pieter won the series image prize with his series 'Trans Woman: Between Colour and Voice'. Both overall winners receive £10,000, plus £1,000 for their category win.

Four other category finalists, each winning £1,000, were also announced. The 2021 prize covers three topics of interest which reflect Wellcome's global health challenge areas, according to the health research

organisation – mental health, global heating and infectious disease.

Jameisha's image, a self-portrait, shows her in her room during the lockdowns. 'It's really hard to talk about mental health and I guess it's especially hard to turn a camera on yourself to expose some of the deepest and darkest, but I'm glad that even taking it, I guess, could touch on something that a lot of us have been going through in this pandemic.'

Jeremy Farrar, director of Wellcome and chair of the judging panel, said, 'Covid-19 and mental health are components in both the winning entries, but what captivated us were the powerful human stories at the very centre – viewed through a lens of compassion.' See all the winners at [bit.ly/wellcomewinners](https://bit.ly/wellcomewinners).

'Untangling' by Jameisha Prescod was a Wellcome Photography Prize winner



## AP-partnered contest seeks best UK images

IN MORE competition news, AP has teamed up with cottages.com, a leading provider of UK self-catering holiday properties, to encourage photographers to send in their best shots of the British Isles. Prizes include a UK break (up to the value of £2,500) and a GoPro bundle. Judges include AP editor Nigel Atherton, eminent travel journalist Simon Calder, and Paul Evans from cottages.com.

Nigel said, 'I'll be looking for pictures that demonstrate excellent technical skill and creative vision. I want to see images imbued with great atmosphere or that demonstrate originality – images that stand out from the hundreds of other competent record shots of

UK photographers have a wide choice of great locations



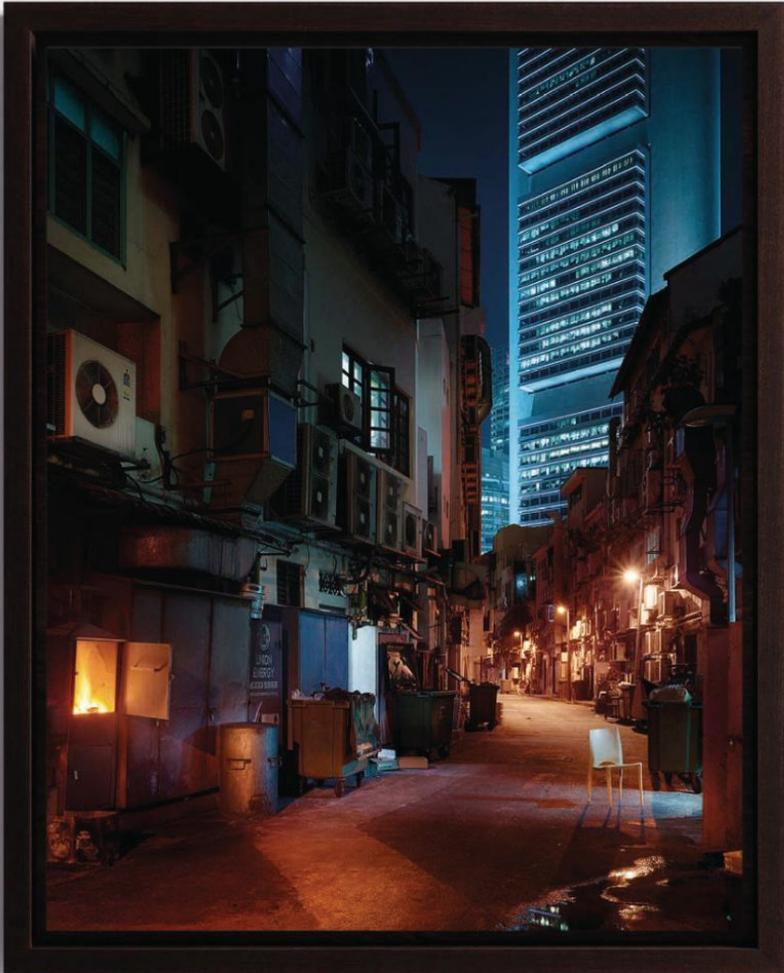
a place.' Open now, the competition is called Viewfinder and closes on 5 September. See [www.cottages.com/viewfinder](https://www.cottages.com/viewfinder).

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## Erik Chmil

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Analogue Wonderland says Marina Llopis will head the new lab



## Analogue Wonderland opens film lab

**FAST-GROWING** film supplier Analogue Wonderland has announced it is opening a new minilab for film development in the Oxfordshire/Buckinghamshire area. The new services are scheduled to commence operation in September.

'Not everyone wants to venture into London with their films, or trust the postal systems with precious negatives, so a local and reliable developing service will be welcomed as the solution to both these concerns,' said co-founder Paul McKay. The lab will be headed up by

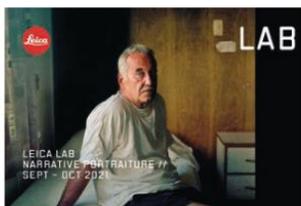
Marina Llopis, who will help to build the processes, train the team, and plan the equipment flow. She also set up the analogue photography website, [www.ifwefilm.com](http://www.ifwefilm.com).

Marina started her photography career in Japan, studying at the Nagoya Visual Arts School before doing stints in photography labs in Tokyo, Mallorca and Bristol. 'With all this under her belt she brings more than seven years of specialist skills and experience to the Analogue Wonderland family,' said Paul. More details at [bit.ly/newwalab](http://bit.ly/newwalab).

## New four-week courses from Leica

LEICA has launched the Leica Lab programme, a series of courses run through its wider Leica Akademie with a focus on creative strategies for building a photographic narrative. Each lab runs for four weeks, and is taught both online and in person by industry experts with backgrounds in commissioning, shooting, editing and curating. The 2021 programme, running from September to November, includes labs on Narrative Portraiture and Landscape & Environment.

Leica said the labs are 'ideal for the professional or aspiring professional who would like to improve and add structure to personal projects or



The first workshop starts on 20 September

commercial work. Participants will be assigned a creative brief, providing inspiration for each workshop's theme.' Each lab costs £1,500 and you can find more details at [bit.ly/newleicalab](http://bit.ly/newleicalab).

## Books & exhibitions

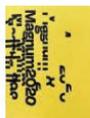
The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography



SHARMA REFUGEE CRISIS, 2020 © BUNN OGDEN

### Magnum 2020

£20, Magnum Photos, softcover, 256 pages, ISBN: 9782952410236



Bringing together a turbulent year of world events through the eyes of the world-renowned Magnum collective, *Magnum 2020* is a yearbook like no other. We may prefer to forget the past 18 months, but nobody can deny the

world-changing events that have taken place. While there has been much pain, suffering and loss, those of us who are still here have demonstrated an enormous amount of resilience and strength – something which should undoubtedly be celebrated.

As Magnum's president, Olivia Arthur, says in the foreword, 'This book commits the year to paper and offers a means for us to try and make sense of it.'

In its pages we find – among other things – global protests against racial injustice, the Syrian refugee crisis, Ethiopia's civil war and a divisive US presidential election. Of course there's the domination of Covid-19 on global headlines, too.

### Girls by Girls

Until 27 August, Little Black Gallery

Showcasing some of the best artworks by female photographers, this online exhibition is being hosted on The Little Black Gallery's Girls! Girls! Girls! platform which celebrates the female form.

It is often assumed that it is only male photographers who have an interest in photographing female nudes, but some of the most interesting examples of the genre come from other women.

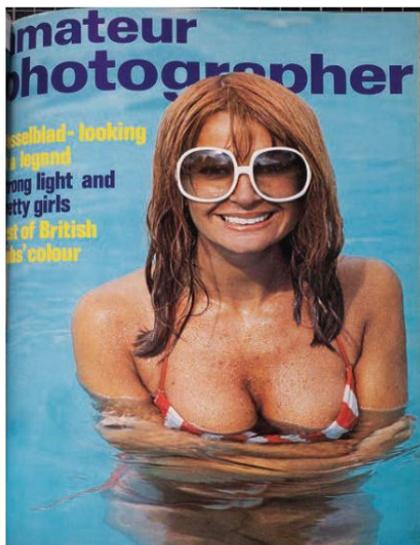
Photographers featured in the online show include Anouska Beckwith, Scarlett Carlos Clarke, Mona Kuhn, Christy Lee Rogers and more.

The Girls! Girls! Girls! platform is a project by the famous Little Black Gallery and includes a huge array of different contributors, including photographic legends, contemporary practitioners and up-and-coming female photographers. There is also a Boys! Boys! project and platform.

Prints from the online display can also be purchased. Visit [girlsgirlsgirls.org](http://girlsgirlsgirls.org) for more information.

# From the archive

Nigel Atherton looks back at past AP issues



17 August 1977

This week in 1977 Elton John discovered who had stolen his sunglasses. While Editor Martin Hodder sought to disprove the adage 'Never photograph a pretty girl in strong direct sunlight', Allan Shriver was more interested in a body of a different kind. *Hasselblad: a legend in its own time* was his guide-cum-tribute to a camera that had been launched seven years previously and which was probably beyond the budgets of most AP readers: £690 with the 80mm standard lens and waist-level finder (£5,091 today). 'The name Hasselblad has become synonymous with quality,' he wrote, adding, 'The manufacturers claim that it takes about one year to make each camera, and that each undergoes about 20,000 checks before it may be offered to a member of the public.' Hasselblad had sold 200,000 500C/Ms to date and, after going into great depth about the features, handling and image quality the only negative thing Shriver could find to say about it was that he couldn't afford one.

Anyone familiar with the gleaming cultural hub that Salford has become would be fascinated by Bob Collins' exploration of the Salford that inspired the painter LS Lowry, who had died the year before. 'The landscape that he walked and recorded for over 60 years is not the one that I visited,' he wrote. 'Gone were the grey back-streets, the burnt sienna terraced houses, leaning church steeples and cringing corner shops. And where were those pale faced little "twig" people that are always so essential a feature of every Lowry landscape? The ones I saw were plump, wore red jeans and carried radios.'



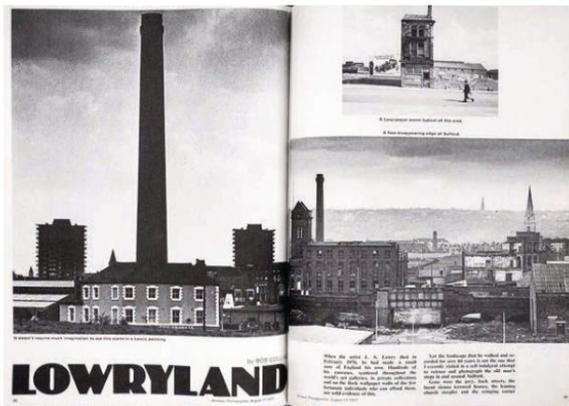
A glowing appraisal of the Hasselblad 500C/M, which cost £690 (£5,091 today)



Tips for photographing girls in direct sun



The Durst M301 enlarger: £150 (£1,100)



Bob Collins went in search of the Salford of LS Lowry and found little surviving

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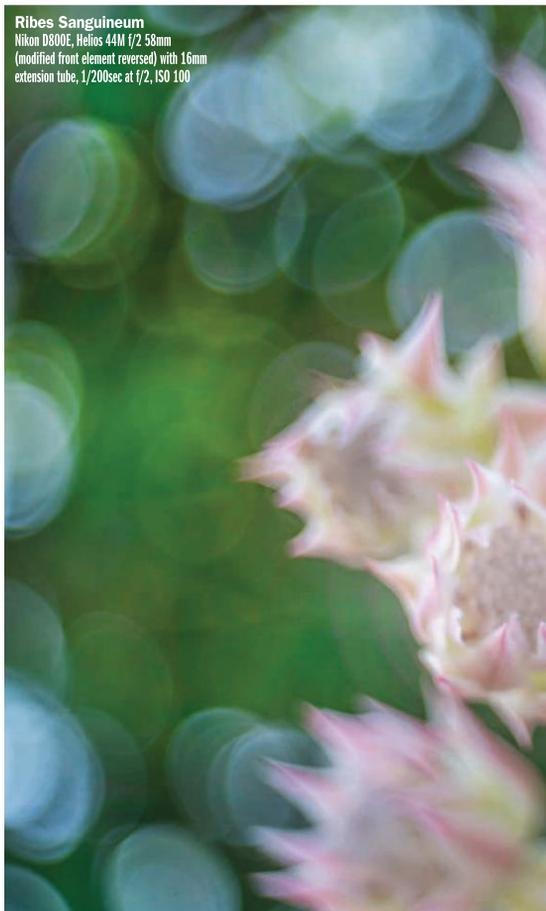


# The true value of vintage

Vintage lenses encourage you to push your creativity to the limits, but which lens should you buy and what do you need to think about when you attach it to your camera? **Tracy Calder** talks to three enthusiasts who've embraced imperfection and mastered the vintage look



**Green Echinacea Green Jewel**  
Nikon D800E, Helios 40 85mm f/1.5 (modified front element reversed), 1/500sec at f/2.9, ISO 125



**Ribes Sanguineum**  
Nikon D800E, Helios 44M f/2.58mm (modified front element reversed) with 16mm extension tube, 1/200sec at f/2, ISO 100



## **Annemarie Farley**

Over the years Annemarie has won numerous awards and regularly appears as a judge and mentor for the British Institute of Professional Photography. Annemarie recently started experimenting with cyanotypes on glass (see Instagram: @cyan\_on\_glass). [www.flowerfoto.com](http://www.flowerfoto.com) and [@flowerfotofineart](https://www.instagram.com/flowerfotofineart).

THERE is something magical about the bokeh that vintage lenses produce. Many people don't notice the background of an image, but to me it's just as important as the foreground. Anamorphic vintage lenses create oval bokeh. It's a subtle effect but it gives a cinematic feel with a sinister undertone. The Helios 44M 58mm produces swirly bokeh, leading to fantastical, ethereal images.

Trioplan and Pentacon lenses add a soap bubble effect, which brings a playful look. Each lens has a different personality, and each lens has its own 'flaws'. When the light hits the optics to create an image it produces blur and flare that changes the intensity of the colour and tone.

I started using vintage lenses about three years ago after reading an article about creative bokeh. My first purchase was a



**Serruria Blushing Bride**  
Nikon D800E, Meyer-optic Gorlitz 50mm with 10mm extension tube, 1/160sec at f/2.9, ISO 50

Helios 44M 58mm from eBay (the Oxfam shop online is also a great place to buy rare and unusual lenses). I was already a fan of the Lensbaby range due to the dream-like effects they produce, but after seeing the swirly bokeh of the Helios I just had to have one! Since then, vintage lenses have become quite an obsession and I now have a sizeable collection.

My Helios 44M is the one I use most often, but I actually have three Helios lenses. I have a 44M 58mm in original condition and a 44mm and 85mm, both of which I have modified by reversing the front glass element. By doing this, I get an impressionistic swirl that

generates depth and distortion – it’s a painterly effect. My anamorphic lens (a Sankor 16C) stretches the image and delivers an oval-shape bokeh that makes everything look strange and confusing. My Trioplan 50mm has soap bubble bokeh that is sharp and playful. I also have a Pentacon 105mm that produces soap-like bokeh, but it’s a bit softer than the Trioplan. Others in my collection include a Jupiter 11 135mm, Industar-69 28mm and Dallmeyer 12 inch f/6 Popular Telephoto. My favourite camera/lens combination is a modified Helios with my Nikon D800E (although the Helios also works well on my Fujifilm X-T2.)

If you’re looking to buy a vintage lens, do your research – lots of advice is available via vintage lens groups on Facebook (I run a group called Modified Camera Lenses), but in short you want a lens with minimal (or preferably no) scratching and fungus. If you’re buying online don’t be afraid to ask to see more pictures of the lens or ask for details of where it might have been stored.

Mounting a vintage lens to your camera is simple, with the help of an adapter you can use them on countless brands and bodies. Be aware, though, that some lenses don’t work on full-frame cameras. Adapters are relatively cheap, but if you

decide to mount a projection lens on your camera you might need a focusing helicoid adapter – this is a metal lens-like device that has no glass inside and extends to two or three times its own length.

When you shoot with vintage lenses you need to focus manually, which can be challenging. What’s more, if you modify lenses like I do, you need to throw everything you know about focusing out of the window! To get the best bokeh you have to set the lens to a wide aperture. Throw an inverted lens into the mix and you soon learn that the only focus spot is in the centre of the lens. To get around this take two shots: one with the lens at f/2 and one at f/8 or f/12 and combine them later. It would be easy to say vintage lenses would be better if they had autofocus and the aperture could be controlled via the camera, but it’s all part of their charm. If your camera offers focus peaking and focus magnification, this is a massive help as it gives you a better idea of what to focus on.

Vintage lenses are fantastic at communicating a feeling, atmosphere or emotion. They have flaws and quirky focusing and they create flare that most photographers would freak out about – but that’s what I like. I don’t want perfectly sharp images; I want to create something more. Vintage lenses help with this as they tap into my imagination.



The result of experimenting with digital medium format and projector lenses  
Sony A7II, Mir 18 37mm f2.8, 1/50sec at f/2.8, ISO 1000

## Mathieu Stern



Mathieu Stern is a professional photographer and filmmaker. His passion for experimenting with vintage

lenses has resulted in the nickname 'weird lens guru' on the internet. He hosts a YouTube channel and is a photography and Photoshop teacher in three Parisian design schools. **www.mathieustern.com**, Instagram: @mathieustern, YouTube: Mathieu Stern.

THERE'S something unique about most lenses made before 1900. Swirly bokeh, crazy colours and flare all add a charm to your images that modern lenses lack in their bid to produce a clinical, perfect image. The first vintage lens I owned was the one my father gave me with his 35mm camera. It was a 50mm f/2.8 from an unknown brand. Now, of course, I know it was a pretty bad lens, but it was my first step towards discovering something magical. At the last count I had more than 200 vintage and experimental lenses, so it's hard

to say which are my favourites. I do, however, have certain brands and lenses that I like more than others: Konica, Canon FD, Minolta and Pentax Takumar are all on this list. Most of my lenses come from eBay, yard sales or recommendations from family and friends, but now that I've got a large YouTube following I also get sent lenses to review.

If you're in the market for a vintage or experimental lens be aware that fungus can be cleaned, dirt and grease can be removed, but scratches or a bent helicoid are much bigger problems and would be a big no-no for me. On the plus side, I've bought many lenses showing signs of fungus for a fraction of the price and cleaned them up in less than ten minutes.

I shoot all of my experiments for YouTube on a Sony A7 III and A7 II. I have almost every adapter ever made for the Sony E-mount, which means that I can attach almost any lens from any era to one of my cameras. If you like a brand, it's a good idea to have a full set of lenses from

the same era – that way you can maintain the same quality across all of your images. I've tried many unusual bits of kit over the years – I own lenses designed for X-ray machines and medical cameras, for instance, but one of the most unusual lenses I've tested was designed to be installed on a camera on board a space shuttle!

When it comes to buying adapters, avoid super-cheap ones – these can break quickly and even damage the sensor on your camera. A fair price for an adapter would be around the £20 mark. Before attaching a vintage lens to your camera be aware of any potential weight issues – a very heavy or long lens can damage the mount on your digital camera, so in this instance it's a good idea to use a lens collar and tripod.

Some people worry that there might be a steep learning curve when using vintage lenses, but like any lens they are made of metal and glass – there is nothing magical or extra-difficult to understand. If you know how to focus manually then you can use a vintage lens!

Playing with a modified vintage lens to create explosive bokeh  
Sony A7II, Mir 18 37mm f2.8, 1/50sec at f/2.8, ISO 1000





**Experiment with digital processes to create a wet plate look** Sony A7II, Canon FD 85mm f/1.8, 1/100sec at f/2, ISO 100



**A vintage-looking portrait created with trial and error** Sony A7II, Canon FD 85mm f/1.8, 1/100sec at f/1.8, ISO 100

Having said that, using a camera with focus peaking is very important and image stabilisation is also good when you're shooting videos with vintage lenses. I like to shoot portraits, but you can shoot pretty much anything with a vintage lens – there are plenty of focal lengths to choose from. One of the greatest challenges is finding vintage and experimental lenses at a fair price: I started collecting when no one really cared about them and I was picking them up for less than £10, but they are now becoming more expensive.

I don't own any modern lenses and I don't feel like I'm missing out. Vintage lenses encourage me to be more experimental – I love the way they bend light, create crazy bokeh and produce truly unique images.

## Marc Sirisi



Marc Sirisi is a videographer/filmmaker for RV Films – a film production company based in Barcelona, which he set up with a colleague. Marc loves to experiment and has been using vintage lenses since the beginning of his journey with photography and now shoots commercial projects with them. Visit [www.rvfilms.cat](http://www.rvfilms.cat) and Instagram: [@marcsirisi](https://www.instagram.com/marcsirisi).

IT'S HARD to describe what I like about vintage lenses, but when I shoot with them I get the feeling that the pictures will be special in some way. Each lens offers something different: sometimes it's unusual bokeh, sometimes it's interesting colour tones, flare or contrast. Basically, it's the joy of imperfection. As a portrait photographer, I feel that vintage lenses play a significant role in capturing the essence of a person. There is also a certain romance when you consider that you're using a lens that is 30 years old or more and will have captured many moments and experiences over the years.

My passion for photography only began a few years ago, but I was instantly drawn to the retro/film look – especially the bokeh. I was so used to seeing



I love the IQ, sharpness, bokeh, colours, contrast and tones achieved with this lens  
Fujifilm GFX 50 R, Canon FD 85mm f/1.2 L, 1/250sec at f/2, ISO 160

digital images that when I first saw the swirly bokeh and low contrast created by the Helios 44M 58mm it shocked me! I knew I had to have one.

The Helios was my first vintage lens. I now have eight more: a Minolta MD Rokkor 45mm (lots of contrast and nervous bokeh), a Minolta MC Rokkor 55mm (very sharp, even wide open), a Minolta MC Rokkor-PG 58mm (optically very good with an almost creamy bokeh), a Minolta MC Tele Rokkor 135mm (sharp with good contrast), a Canon FD 50mm f/1.4 SSC (this was given to me by a relative and I think it has some haze inside because the final image is too soft so I'm saving it for a possible future project), a Canon FD 50mm (without haze! I like the contrast and colours of the FD series), a Canon FD 85mm f/1.2 L (my favourite) and a Leica Macro Elmarit 60mm f/2.8 (which I bought a few days ago). The Canon FD 85mm f/1.2 L is attached to my camera most of the time – I love the IQ, sharpness, bokeh, colours, contrast and tones. My favourite combination of camera and lens is the Canon FD 85mm f/1.2 L with a Fujifilm GFX 50R.

I buy most of my vintage lenses online from sites such as

eBay and Wallapop. I like eBay because it's reliable and you can find some rare lenses for sale. I like Wallapop because you can meet the owner and test the lens. Where possible, I like to visit flea markets to get some good deals. When you're buying a vintage lens, check that the aperture blades work properly and look for fungus, haze and scratches, as well as checking the overall body condition. Some old lenses are known to contain radioactive components, but I don't have any of those. I have heard some people say the level of radioactivity is so small that it doesn't pose a problem, and others who sound very alarmed by it. When you're buying an adapter read the reviews and make sure that it's compatible with your camera. I bought a cheap adapter a while ago and I had to keep tightening the screws – one day the lens almost fell on the floor.

If you're not used to shooting in manual, then using a vintage lens can be a challenge to start with. You have to accept (and embrace) imperfections. Vintage lenses encourage you to explore and when I shoot I'm not looking for a perfect image; my goal is to create a shot that gets the viewer's attention and expresses an emotion.

For me, vintage lenses play a significant role in capturing the essence of a person

Fujifilm GFX 50 R, Minolta MC Rokkor-PG 58mm f/1.2, 1/125sec at f/2, ISO 100



The original picture was zoomed about 90% and cropped Fujifilm GFX 50 R, Canon FD 85mm f/1.2 L, 1/1000sec at f/1.2, ISO 200



## Five vintage lenses to try

Mathieu Stern (otherwise known as the weird lens guru) has a wealth of knowledge about rare and vintage lenses and he shares his wisdom via The Weird Lens Museum at [www.mathieustern.com](http://www.mathieustern.com). Here are five excellent optics from his cabinet of curiosities.

### Jupiter 11 135mm f/4

It looks like a rocket ship, but the Jupiter 11 135mm f/4 is certainly not a novelty lens – it offers amazing image quality, super sharpness and lovely warm colours. It's also a great lens for video because the aperture ring doesn't make a clicking sound.



### Helios 40 85mm f/1.5

Mathieu describes the Helios 40 85mm f/1.5 as the 'legendary swirly bokeh king' and it's easy to see why. When used wide open this lens will create a swirly effect around your subject that will give your images an attractive dreamlike quality. It's a great lens for portraits.



### Canon FD 50mm f/1.4 SSC

The contrast and colours produced by the FD series are a big draw, but the Canon FD 50mm f/1.4 SSC deserves a special mention. You'll get some spectacular flare when shooting towards the sun with this lens, but the results can be pleasingly cinematic.



### Minolta 50mm f/1.4

The Minolta 50mm f/1.4 is a cinematic lens, which makes it easy for you to isolate your main subject from the background. It has been described as 'Minolta's sharpest prime lens' and doesn't disappoint on that front. Its resolution and contrast are exceptional and the bokeh is beautiful.



### Pentax Super Takumar 50mm f/1.4

You'll find several versions of the Pentax Super Takumar 50mm f/1.4 on the market (some of which are radioactive due to the thorium glass used in their construction). It's a fast, high-quality lens with sharpness maintained well throughout the aperture range.



LENS PICTURES: © MATHIEU STERN

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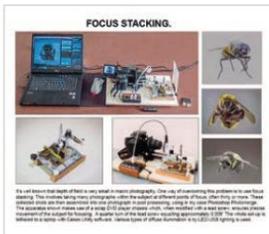
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## LETTER OF THE WEEK

### Do it yourself

It was good to see another slide copier, this time from Manuel Robles, in *Inbox* this week. Much more elaborate than my effort, published in AP's 6 August 2011 issue. But I'm sure Manuel's set-up works well. It will not have escaped your notice that a great resurgence in DIY has taken place during the pandemic lockdowns, with people discovering they have all sorts of new talents.

I am old enough, aged 94, to remember the days of 'make do and mend' so grew up with the habit and made an eventual successful transition to DIY. As a reader of AP since 1947, I also remember that DIY articles often appeared in those early magazines, particularly in the post-war years when ex-war photographic items were converted. My scrapbook holds the many articles I've had published since the sixties; however, I realise we are now in the days of 'buy it now'



Clifford's DIY book goes back to 1948

and the number of DIY enthusiasts is not great, nevertheless you may be interested to see what a DIYer has been up to in recent years.

The attached image is taken from the pages of my 78-page DIY Miscellany book, a simple record of my DIY from the making of my first enlarger in 1948, which set me on the path to an LRPS and DPAGB, to my present-day retirement from the habit. I hope the book will be of interest to my two sons: one is an FRPS. **Clifford Brown**

the sorts of tried and tested (did someone say 'bland'?) images of which I'm sure Lord Heaps would be proud.  
**Dave Watkins**

### Left to right

In the 27 July *Viewpoint*, Jon Bentley queried why some images are flipped. He admitted that sometimes the composition is improved by doing so but he could not see why.

I would suggest it is because we scan images from left to right, so any leads on the left side are more effective than those on the right.

Whether we scan this way because our text runs left to right, or we run the text that way because we scan, I do not know. Traditional Chinese script is from right to left, and my knowledge of Chinese art and photography is not sufficient to tell if they are similarly reversed. If so, it will be interesting to see how long this lasts, as the Chinese government decreed some years ago that script must run from left to right – which, of course, is now the case.  
**Dave Humble**

### Weight loss

So your correspondent Michael Sparrow doesn't want to use a full-frame Nikon DSLR, due to the weight? I had a similar problem with my Nikon D700 with 50mm F1.4 which I just had to drag along on my travels. I sold my Nikon a few years ago, and now use a Canon RP with matching 50mm. This gives me full-frame quality, without the weight. It's a shame the batteries don't last that long though!  
**Andrew S Redding**

## Win!

### SAMSUNG

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

### Perfect 10

This is my first time writing to your mag after some 60 years. I have just been reading your article on the OM-D E-M10 Mark II and found it very interesting, a good read. Over the years I have used a variety of cameras but have now decided that my Olympus is about as good as it gets. I still use an OM-D E-M5 along with a Canon EOS 550D but the E-M10 Mark II is my go-to

camera. It's light, well made, and gives extremely good results so it is ideal for me. Thank you to all the team both past and present for making AP such a great and informative read all these years. Long may you reign.  
**Terry Bussey**

### Something different

Well done for your reply to Lord Charles Heaps OBE for his comments about your *Frankly mindblowing*

article. Personally, the photos didn't do too much for me and aren't the sort of thing that I'd be looking to replicate myself. However, absolute credit should go to those who like to try something a little different and who like to push the boundaries. Please keep these articles coming and keep encouraging today's photographers to strive for something new. Without them we would be left with



© LETH BRIDGES

carries the same name must perform change that name to avoid confusion.

However the Marine Society was a civilian as opposed to Naval organisation and so the normal rules did not apply and they were free to use the name 'Warspite' which also commemorated a previous vessel of the same name in their ownership destroyed by fire in 1919. Hence the confusion.

**Simon C Bromwich**

We received a large number of emails pointing out the error in the caption to this image. As penance the team have been given copies of *A History of the British Navy* to read and memorise.

Readers point out this is *TS Warspite* not *HMS Warspite*

### Warspite confusion

In your *Treasures from the Hulton Archive* image (AP 17 July) you have confused *T.S. Warspite* with the Queen Elizabeth-class Dreadnought battleship *HMS Warspite*. The ship depicted was owned by the Marine Society that ran children's homes since the 1800s. One of these was based in the former Napoleonic Wars-era wooden warship *HMS Warspite*. It was destroyed in a fire in January 1918 and replaced by the cruiser *HMS Hermione* (depicted in the photograph) which assumed the name *Warspite*. The ship finally closed in 1940.

**Dr N R Ferguson ARPS**

I enjoyed the splendid photograph of *T.S. Warspite* in your 17 July issue. Unfortunately your description is amiss! This is certainly not the famous battleship *HMS Warspite* which took part in many naval battles in both world wars. In reality it is

the former protected cruiser *HMS Hermione*, a small ship of only 4,360 tons which was built in 1895. Armed with 2.6-inch and 8-4.7-inch guns she was already obsolete by the start of the First World War and suffered the ignominy of being downgraded to a depot ship in 1914.

In 1929 she was offered to the Marine Society for use as a boys' training vessel on the Thames and it is in this guise that your photograph depicts her. Sadly her new career was a short one as she had to be taken out of service abruptly in 1939 for fear that the Luftwaffe might mistake her for a military target.

Normally when a new warship is commissioned into the Royal Navy any obsolete ship which

### Thinking small

There will always be discussions on the respective merits of different sensor sizes in photography and, for many people, full frame appears to be the automatic answer.

For me though, Micro Four Thirds is the answer. It's more affordable and doesn't require as much physical strength to carry it over long distances. The bigger sensor naturally has more potential if you want flawless A1 size or bigger enlargements, but what a waste if all you need is an A4 and an occasional A3.

I'm hoping one day to stand with my Panasonic G90 alongside a friendly Sony A7R IV user and both shoot the same view at the same instant. The comparison would be interesting.

**Barnabas Wilson**

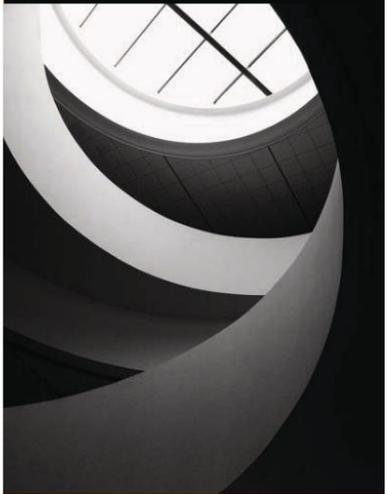
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## In next week's issue



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## Out of the shadows

Tracy Calder shows you how to shoot shadows creatively, for powerful images



### Panasonic Lumix GH5 II

Does this upgrade of the popular GH5 impress? Jon Devo takes a closer look

### Step away from the pixels

A fashion photographer tells us why he moved away from digital

### Icon to icon

Harry Benson on his new book about the life of Paul McCartney

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## At an Upwards Glance

By Hugo Begg

**Benedict Brain** discovers the story behind a Young APOY award-winner

**H**ugo Begg's winning photo in Young APOY, Architecture round, was taken in the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne, Australia. 'The image was taken looking upwards to the roof through the centre of the main spiral staircase on the ground floor, showing the spiral, upper floors, and roof in an abstract swirl,' explains Hugo. 'I'd seen some photos of this building while looking for interesting architecture in Melbourne and just had to photograph it for myself. The spiral staircase, in the main foyer, is quite eye-catching and walking underneath it revealed an interesting frame filled with more features of the building as I looked upwards.'

He waited for a mostly cloudy day so it would provide a more diffused light through the glass ceiling. 'I wanted more of a flat look. To capture the entire frame with a 24mm equivalent lens, the widest I have, meant I had to crouch down with the camera barely off the floor. As it was the main thoroughfare, lying on the floor was not really an option. Ideally, I would

have brought my tripod and controlled the camera remotely. Another challenge was nailing the exposure, as there was a lot of dynamic range to deal with, the underside of the staircase was very dark and the glass roof very bright. As the main focus of the image were the upper levels and the glass roof, I underexposed slightly to preserve some of the highlights which were quite prominent on the white walls high up close to the light source. This made sure the detail wasn't blown out so I could bring it back later in Adobe Lightroom.'

Hugo enjoys working in black & white and believes that the colour in the image can distract the viewer from the subject or doesn't add any value to the picture he's trying to create. 'Black & white can draw more attention to the textures and shapes in the image which is often an integral part of the architecture,' confirms Hugo. 'In this image, the colour palette was mainly off whites, beiges, and greys, none of which provided any additional value. I found that by doing this, immediately the layers within the photo separated and

### Hugo Begg



Hugo Begg is an award-winning photographer based in Melbourne, Australia. His work expresses a curiosity for people, place and movement through a diverse range of photographic styles. When not behind the lens, Hugo enjoys playing the trumpet and life as an engineering student. Instagram: @hugobegg.

Hugo chose b&w to draw the attention to the lines and shapes in the image

Panasonic Lumix G9, 12-40mm f/2.8 at 12mm, 1/160sec at f/5, ISO 320





attention was drawn more towards the shapes and lines.'

Hugo used an Olympus 12-40mm f/2.8 Pro lens on his Panasonic G9. 'This is my main lens as it covers a nice focal range all the way from an equivalent 24mm wideangle to an equivalent 80mm telephoto with a fast f/2.8 aperture. As I wanted to capture the underside of the spiral staircase to frame the layers above, I needed a wideangle lens, hence my use of the 12mm. Ideally, I'd have used a wider lens like an 8mm (16mm equivalent) so I didn't have to crouch down to get the shot. I used aperture priority, f/5, 1/160sec, ISO 320, 12mm.'

### Small wonder

The small size of the Micro Four Thirds Panasonic G9 appeals to Hugo. 'It gives it an edge in terms of gear size and cost which really sets it apart from large APS-C and full-frame cameras. The 2x sensor crop factor means that the lenses are significantly smaller and lighter than full-frame equivalent lenses, making them more portable, convenient and – more often than not – cheaper.'

'The camera is packed full of physical features including my favourite, the high-resolution viewfinder which makes viewing compositions and focus areas extremely easy and pleasant to use. I find the thirds grid overlay on the viewfinder one of the most useful features. It's such a simple feature, but it can make a huge difference when lining up a composition, especially when the rule of thirds can be applied, as the grid can offer guidance and allow for a well-composed shot.'

'I frequently use manual focus when working for a long time on a single composition. It gives me time to focus perfectly on the subject in the frame and lock it in rather than the camera taking control. In this shot, the main subject is the upper levels of the building and the glass roof, so I made sure to push the focus higher up the building. As the aperture was closed enough, the underside of the stairs remained in focus when the image was taken.'

## Panasonic Lumix G9



### At a glance

£684-794

body only (used condition)

- 20.3MP Micro Four Thirds Live MOS sensor
- 12fps burst shooting
- 5-axis Dual I.S. II image stabiliser (effective to 6.5 stops)
- ISO 200-25,600 (100-25,600 extended)

The Lumix G9 is a sound mirrorless camera with an impressive specification, including 4K video recording up to 60fps and a 3,680k-dot EVF. It backs this all up with an admirable performance out in the field. With so much to like and so little to fault, it's hard to think of a reason why anyone after an insanely fast, lightweight and versatile camera considering to a budget wouldn't seriously consider the Lumix G9.

### What we said

'The Panasonic Lumix G9 is more than just a master of speed. Like many cameras we've seen, it sells itself on being highly versatile for all subjects and is supported by a vast selection of Micro Four Thirds lenses for which there's a lens for any imaginable purpose.'

'The Lumix G9 is, by some margin, the finest stills camera the manufacturer has ever produced – and it's exceeded all expectations and then some during challenging and demanding tests.'

### What to pay

When we reviewed the Panasonic Lumix G9 back in December 2017, it cost £1,499 (body only). Today, a used G9 in excellent condition can be picked up for around £775 (body only).

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# Who loves ya, Lensbaby?

If you're looking to spend more time in the moment and less at a computer, perhaps it's time to try a Lensbaby.

**Angela Nicholson** has the lowdown

**L**ensbaby may have started out with one simple bendy lens that had a plastic optic, but these days it offers an extensive array of lenses, optics and housings to enable a range of effects on just about any camera. They're not for everyone, but there are legions of photographers who love them for their creative results.

Lensbaby lenses produce four main effects called sweet, edge, velvet and swirl. Although some create more than one of these effects, most Lensbaby lenses or optics create just one and deciding which one you want is key to selecting the right Lensbaby.

## Lenses and optics

Lensbaby makes two types of lenses: standalone lenses that are similar in design to 'normal' lenses, and the optic-swap system that comprises a separate housing or barrel and an interchangeable optic. The standalone lenses and housings come in a wide range of mounts, so it's essential to buy the correct one for your camera, but the optics can be swapped between different housings.

There are no electrical contacts on any Lensbaby lenses or housings, which means that they are manual focus only and the aperture setting (when adjustable) is controlled by way of a lens ring.

## Standalone lenses

The Velvet is perhaps the most widely known of Lensbaby's standalone lenses. It's a full-frame lens and it comes in three focal lengths, 28mm, 56mm and 85mm. As you can guess from their name, the Velvet 28, 56 and 85 produce the velvet effect, but the

impact of the Burnside 35 is less obvious. In fact, the Burnside Lensbaby is very similar to the Twist 60 optic for the optic swap system, because it produces swirling bokeh around the edges of the image. This means that the Twist and Burnside aren't recommended for Micro Four Thirds cameras, since much of the effect is cropped out by the smaller sensor. However, another standalone lens, the Trio 28, is specifically designed for sub-full-frame cameras including Micro Four Thirds models.

The Trio 28 is a 28mm standalone lens with three optics built in to enable the velvet, sweet or twist effect. It's a great choice for first-time Lensbaby users with a sub-full-frame camera.

Alternatively, there's the Sol 22 which is a good choice for Micro Four Thirds cameras; and the Sol 45 that's suitable for APS-C and full-frame models. These neat lenses combine the sweet effect with a little tilt and the ability to add swirl by moving aperture blades across the front element.

## Optic swap system

There are two main optic swap housings: the Composer Pro II, which has a ball joint to enable some tilt to move the focus plane; and the Spark 2.0 that is reminiscent of the original Lensbaby. The Spark 2.0 can be bent and squeezed to move the point of focus.

These housings or barrels can be used with any of the optics such as the Edge 35, Edge 50, Edge 80, Sweet 35, Sweet 50, Sweet 80, Twist 60 or the new Obscura pinhole optic.

The Twist 60 is often sold with a straight lens barrel, which can also be used with other optics but it doesn't allow the plane of focus to be moved.

## The Lensbaby effects

**Sweet** A round spot of sharp focus at the centre of soft blur. The effect is suitable for a wide range of photography.

**Edge** A band of sharp focus with blur either side, this works well with landscape scenes.

**Velvet** A soft glow or diffusion effect that is popular for portraits and flower images.

**Swirl** Twisting, swirling bokeh and vignetting that works well for portraits with a busy background.

## Buying a Lensbaby

Lensbaby lenses can be purchased directly from the company's website [lensbaby.com](http://lensbaby.com), but in the UK, it's best to buy them from Wex Photo Video which has exclusive distribution rights. They can also be found second-hand.

Janet shot this image using the Velvet 56 at f/4 and applied one of her textures at the processing stage to enhance the atmosphere





Using a Velvet lens has given this image a soft glow which Janet enhanced further with a texture

## Janet Broughton

<https://definitelydreaming.com>



JANET BROUGHTON switched from life as an accountant to that of a professional photographer in 2012 and she's developed a sideline in texture creation ([www.texture-shop.co.uk](http://www.texture-shop.co.uk)). She's a fan of vintage lenses and Lensbabies, especially the Velvet 85 on her full-frame Sony Alpha 99 and the Velvet 56 or Sol 45 on her Fujifilm X-T20 (84mm and 67.5mm effective focal lengths respectively).

Janet was first attracted to try a Lensbaby after treatment for an eye problem left her with blurred vision for a couple of weeks – the blur and softness of the original Lensbaby replicated how she saw the world for a while and it enabled her to take different images from other photographers. She says, 'What I really like about using a Lensbaby though, is the slower pace of photography, and how it makes you feel more connected to what you're shooting, whatever it might be. That's because you've got to slow down and think about it more than just snap, snap, snap and hope something works. You still need to get the basics of photography right and using a Lensbaby to add a bit of blur won't automatically result in a nice picture, you still have to make sure there's an interesting subject and the image is well composed.'



This image was created with the Velvet 85, a lens designed for use with full-frame cameras such as the Sony Alpha 99



The Sweet 35 has a central area of sharpness surrounded by soft blur and attractive bokeh effects

# Glenys Garnett

[www.ggcreativeimages.co.uk](http://www.ggcreativeimages.co.uk)



GLENYS GARNETT, a freelance photographer, artist and graphic designer based in Wakefield, has been interested in photography for as long as she can remember. She says, 'I'm all about trying to get as much right in camera as I can, so I don't like to rely on apps and software, although I do use them. I prefer to do as much as I possibly can in camera and for me, it's the look and feel that's important in an image.'

Inspired by images she'd seen from some Lensbaby users, Glenys bought a Trio 28 a few years ago to see how she got on with it, and she loved it. She says, 'It's a single focal length (28mm) and it's got a single f-stop, so if I go out with it on my camera, I just have to think about the composition and exposure. My camera's viewfinder is good but I recommend using the histogram view to make sure you get the highlights just right.'

While Glenys still uses the Trio on a frequent basis, she tends to use its 'sweet' optic the most often so she also bought a Composer Pro II with a Sweet 35 optic to get some flexibility. She explains, 'I really like the sweet spot effect and the way it lets me create lovely bokeh effects around the edges - it's the sort of thing you can't do with software.'

Wanting to recreate a lo-fi retro look in the digital age, Glenys often uses the Toy Camera filter setting on her Fujifilm X-T4 and selects a square aspect ratio while shooting with the Composer Pro II and Sweet 35 or the Trio. She even has a small polarising filter that she can use to cut down reflections and boost the colours in some of her images to get rich, warm tones without having to do much on her computer.

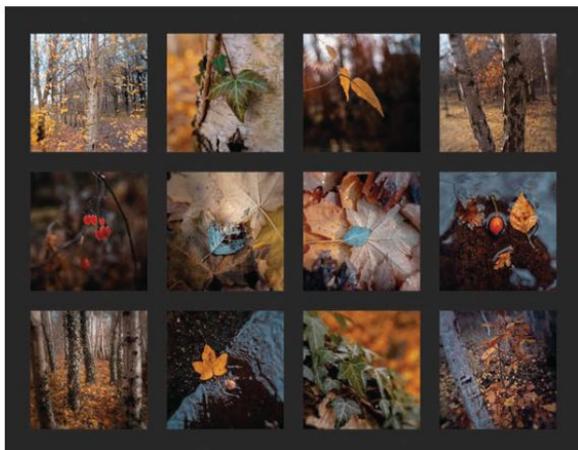


Above: Glenys likes to use her Fujifilm X-T4's multiple exposure mode when shooting with a Lensbaby



Below: Part of Glenys' autumnal series shot using the Trio's Sweet optic

Above: Shot using the Lensbaby Sweet 35 at f/2.5 in the Composer Pro II on the Fujifilm X-T4



# Robert Pugh

[www.rpphotographybydesign.co.uk](http://www.rpphotographybydesign.co.uk)



ROBERT PUGH is a professional wedding and portrait photographer, who often uses the Lensbaby Twist 60 for engagement shoots to create more interesting images. He's also been known to use a Sweet 50 to get more exciting detail shots at weddings, but as speed is often of the essence, there's not always time. Engagement shoots, however, tend to be more relaxed and there's more opportunity to be creative.

As the Lensbaby creates swirl around the edges of the frame, Robert uses quite wide framing in his images so the blurred background creates a frame around his subjects. It's also important to have some detail in the background as the twisted, swirl effect won't show with a plain scene. He explains, 'I look for a bush or tree with flowers or blossom on it – just plain leaves don't look very good, so there needs to be something with a bit of colour and contrast.'

Although Robert has the straight barrel for the Twist 60, he generally uses it in the Composer Pro II because this enables him to move the location of the sharp area within the frame. It also means he can quickly swap to using another of his favourite optics such as the Edge 35 to capture a strip of sharpness, or the Sweet to have a sharp spot in the frame.

Robert likes to get the look he wants in-camera to save time at the processing stage, but he also finds that being able to show his clients near-final images on the screen on the back of his camera helps get them 'into' the shoot and keen to pose for more shots.

As a seasoned Lensbaby user on mirrorless cameras, Robert's top tip is to customise a button to activate the magnified view to make it easier to focus. He also recommends using focus peaking to ensure that the focus is where you want it to be.



**Above: The yellow flowers accentuated the swirl effect in the background**



**Right: Lensbaby's Twist optic is often sold with a 'straight' housing**

**Below: The swirl effect occurs in out of focus areas towards the edges of the frame**



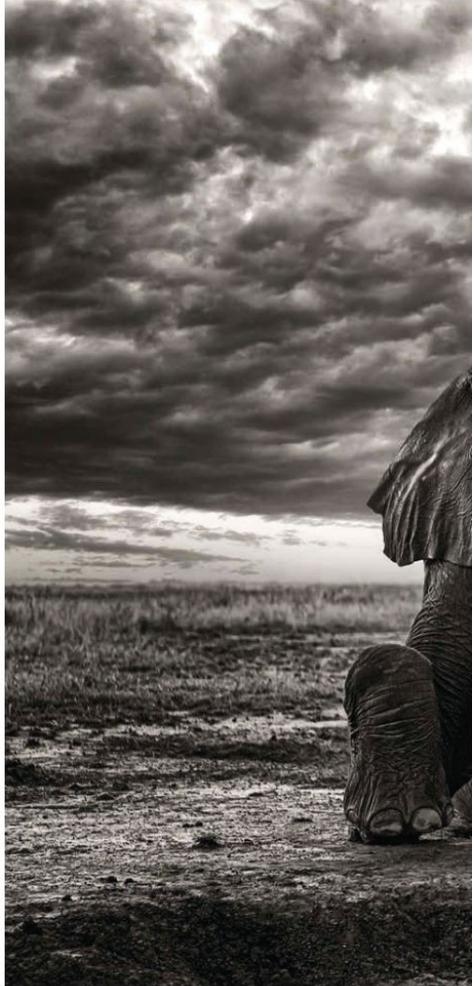
# Reconnecting to nature

Five years after their first *Sacred Nature* book, Jonathan and Angela Scott have a renewed energy to use their photography to inspire change. **Keith Wilson** finds out about the couple's quest and new book

Not by choice, the Covid-19 pandemic has given people across the world unexpected moments of reflection to contemplate their lives and re-evaluate priorities. Weeks of imposed lockdowns, quarantine and self-isolation have forced many of us to seek out green space and parkland to exercise the body and refresh the mind. As a result, we have taken greater notice of our natural surroundings, and reconsidered the value of the flora and fauna, woodland and water that we had blithely taken for granted. 'If there's a silver lining to come out of the pandemic,' says wildlife photographer and TV presenter

Jonathan Scott, 'it is that people are being reminded of the vital importance of nature to their lives. Nature creates us. We can't survive without nature. We used to be connected to nature in a way that made us feel that it was not just essential, but something to glorify.'

For Jonathan and his wife Angie, nature is sacred, but in over 40 years of photographing the world's wild animals and places, with a primary focus on the vast savannahs of East Africa's Mara-Serengeti ecosystem, the Scotts have witnessed humanity defile the nature they have sought to glorify through their images. With 40 per cent of the world's wildlife wiped out in the past 50 years, the Scotts know that time is running



out. To help save what's left, they believe their photography must do more than glorify, it needs to provoke. And so, their Sacred Nature Initiative was born.

## A global view

Key to this project is the forthcoming publication of their new book, *Sacred Nature Volume 2: Reconnecting People To Our Planet*. Coming five years after publication of *Sacred Nature 1: Life's Eternal Dance*, the new book adopts a more global view than the first volume, which focused almost entirely on the Mara-Serengeti. 'There were a few images from Namibia,' Jonathan explains, 'but we basically looked at the wonder of the Mara-Serengeti to say, 'look at what is going to disappear if we don't think it's of value'. We basically



**Above: Elephants at salt lick, Musiara Marsh, Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya**

**Left: Young female tiger hunting, Bandhavgarh National Park, Madhya Pradesh, India**

looked at how life was from a place and a time when humanity was so connected to nature, and we cherished it. Hence, sacred.'

Over time that connection has been lost, Jonathan argues, so the key objective of the Sacred Nature Initiative has been spelt out on the cover of the new 288-page volume: 'reconnecting people to our planet'. He explains: '*Sacred Nature 2* has taken the ethos of *Sacred Nature 1*, that is to take an ecosystem-landscape approach by covering the whole globe. Angie said, "Let's break it up into savannahs, mountains, forests, deserts, polar regions, and let's look at the beauty and wonder of each of those areas, and then point out the importance of them and the reasons for concern." The climate crisis is one thing, but it's hand in hand with our other big

impact, which is there's one million species at risk, and we're in the Anthropocene, and in just 50 years over 40 per cent of life on Earth is gone. And we will be next.'

#### Images that connect

As you would expect from the Scotts, the new book is packed with images that are brazenly spectacular, such as Angie's perfectly timed shot of an airborne sprinting cheetah. But there are many others that require greater attention to the scene, inducing an almost meditative response from the viewer. It is these photographs, notably Angie's symmetrically framed study of a tiger stepping into the water while hunting, or Jonathan's pensive portrait of a silverback mountain gorilla sitting by a stream in a rainforest, that succeed in connecting the viewer to

the subject's vulnerability. In the case of Jonathan's photo of Handsome (the name given by rangers to this placid mountain gorilla contemplating his jungle home), death is never far away.

'Handsome was a part of the group led by another silverback, Rafiki,' he says. 'Rafiki was killed, stabbed, in June 2020. Now Handsome has since disappeared.' The photograph was taken on a visit to Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, one of the last strongholds of the world's mountain gorillas. Barely a thousand survive in the wild, so the loss of one to human conflict is significant for the whole group. 'If we're going to do well by these creatures, if we're going to really love them, then we have to ensure that they remain wild, and the only way to do that is to protect the habitat.'

▶ Aply, it was the setting rather than the animal itself that provided the inspiration for this photograph. Jonathan had crossed this stream several times when he realised its potential. 'I think this is the key to good photography – you're always visualising the picture that you hope you'll get. Every time we went into the forest and crossed that stream, there was light, the very thing you hope for and want as a photographer, and of course there was the water itself and this wonderful setting. You enter a rainforest, you don't just step into it, you immerse yourself in it. It's like a cathedral, it's the most incredible piece of architecture.'

### Great iconic cats

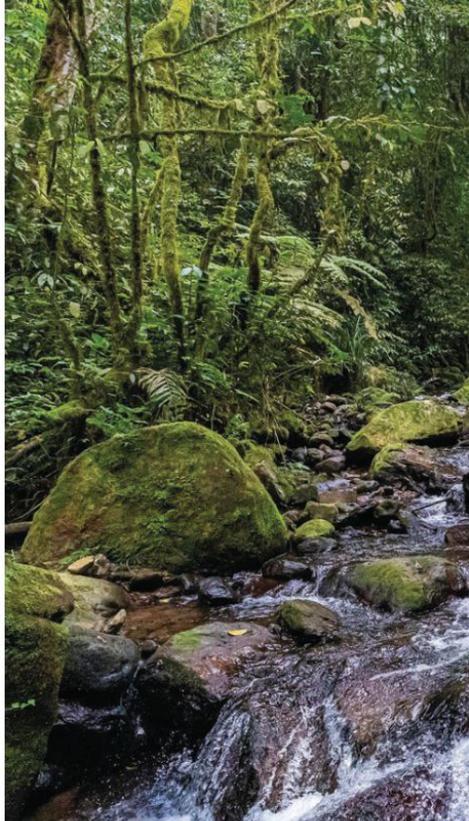
Like the first book, *Sacred Nature 2* is a large, heavyweight hardback, beautifully designed by their son, US-based creative director David John Scott, whose clients include Netflix, Sony, Apple and Google. Through their previous books, exhibitions and TV programmes, especially the globally popular TV series, *Big Cat Diary*, Jonathan and Angela are synonymous with African wildlife. But it is not a lion, leopard or cheetah that takes star billing on the cover of *Sacred Nature 2*; instead, India's regal predator, the Bengal tiger, stares menacingly out from the cover.

'It's a picture taken by Angie. I remember when she brought it up on screen and instantly I thought, "that's it!" It works because one, it's the most endangered of the big cats, and two, it took us out of Africa which we very

much wanted to do with this book. Straightaway, we wanted to transport people out of Africa, and we wanted to have a picture of an animal which is iconic, which is a universal symbol of how enthralled we are with nature and in particular with these great iconic cats. Also, the patterns mean it works so well as a black & white.'

There are many other powerful black & white images in the book, and remarkably no photograph jars as a result of the change from colour to black & white, or vice versa. Such seamless image sequencing is a mark of first-class visual story-telling and editing.

Unsurprisingly, books such as this are expensive to create. The first volume was privately funded; this time the Scotts supplemented donations from a network of individuals and companies, including Canon (one of the backers of the first book), with a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign that raised in excess of \$130,000. Some of the money was used to establish the Sacred Nature website, 'so we could really be a force for good and actually create projects and put money towards them,' says Jonathan. 'I think the reason why the Kickstarter was so successful was because we've worked hard to build our social media presence, and the reason we have that level of interest is because of our television work. After the success of 12 years of *Big Cat Diary*, and to create with Abraham Joffe two seasons of *Big Cat Tales* recently for television, and to have other television projects now in the pipeline, these all resonate



**Above:** Silverback, Nkuringo mountain gorilla family, Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park  
**Below:** Young black-tipped reef shark, Velassaru, Maldives

with the message of the Sacred Nature Initiative.'

### Pictures with purpose

The idea of taking the message of the first book, published in 2016, and expanding it into a global multiplatform conservation initiative, was taken three years later.

## How does the Sacred Nature Initiative work?

'SNI is a new entity incorporated in the UK and dedicated to conserving the planet's natural wonders. Its approach is holistic and targeted, committed to rigorously analysing needs and feasible interventions in areas of concern. To achieve this, it will assess likely outcomes and create or support donor-funded projects with designated results, time frames and accountabilities. Solutions in ecosystem restoration and maintenance must be sustainable and significant.

'It is essential that everyone – children, parents, teachers, business leaders, politicians – understands the importance of nature, that the natural environment sustains all life. Equally, we must adopt a new convention that says we do not own nature, that land isn't a commodity to be used as we please. Nature is something to be respected and nurtured, held in trust by each generation for the benefit of future generations. Something sacred.

'Though the SNI is global in its scope and ideals, Phase 1 will focus on the place we know best: the Mara-Serengeti ecosystem spanning the border between Kenya and Tanzania. By purchasing the book, you have already supported SNI because a percentage of the profits from the sale will be donated to projects supported by the Initiative.'

To learn more about SNI and how you can reconnect to nature please visit: [www.sacrednatureinitiative.com](http://www.sacrednatureinitiative.com).





## Home of the mountain gorilla

While hiking in the mountainous jungle terrain of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda, Jonathan saw the picture potential of this jungle setting. 'From the moment we saw the location, we began thinking, "imagine this with a gorilla!"' Luckily, the opportunity arose on another visit when he saw the gorilla heading down to the water's edge. Having already imagined the scene, and camera ready, he composed the picture at the wide end of a 24-105mm zoom. 'I wanted to capture the sense of this extraordinary piece of forest and to have a silverback sitting there, and to feel that he was just in his world and you weren't unduly affecting his behaviour. It's so important if you're a photographer to capture a sense of where the animal lives. What is its natural setting? What would the world look like from that animal's perspective in terms of its home? This silverback was perfectly relaxed and he was at home.'

By then, the couple felt a renewed urgency about the need to use their photography as a means to inform the public about the value of nature and to inspire the changes needed to conserve what remains. 'We want to be out with a purpose and a mission,' says Jonathan, 'and to use our photography, our voice –

**Below: Female cheetah, Maasai Mara National Reserve, Kenya**

whether it's in lectures, social media or on television, we want to use it for the good of the planet and join everybody else who's beginning to realise that we can't take it for granted any more.'

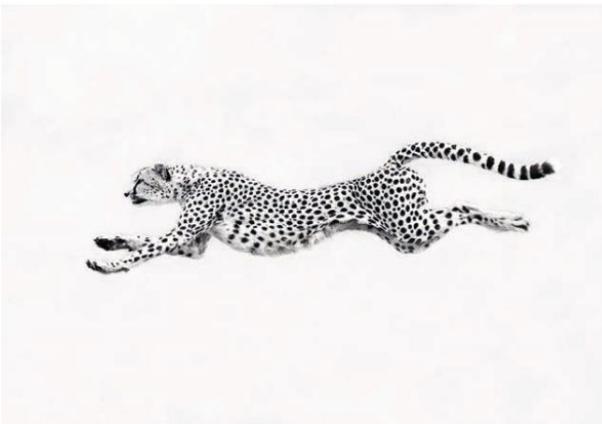
The Scotts have identified 'three pillars' to define the ethos and objectives of the Initiative. Jonathan

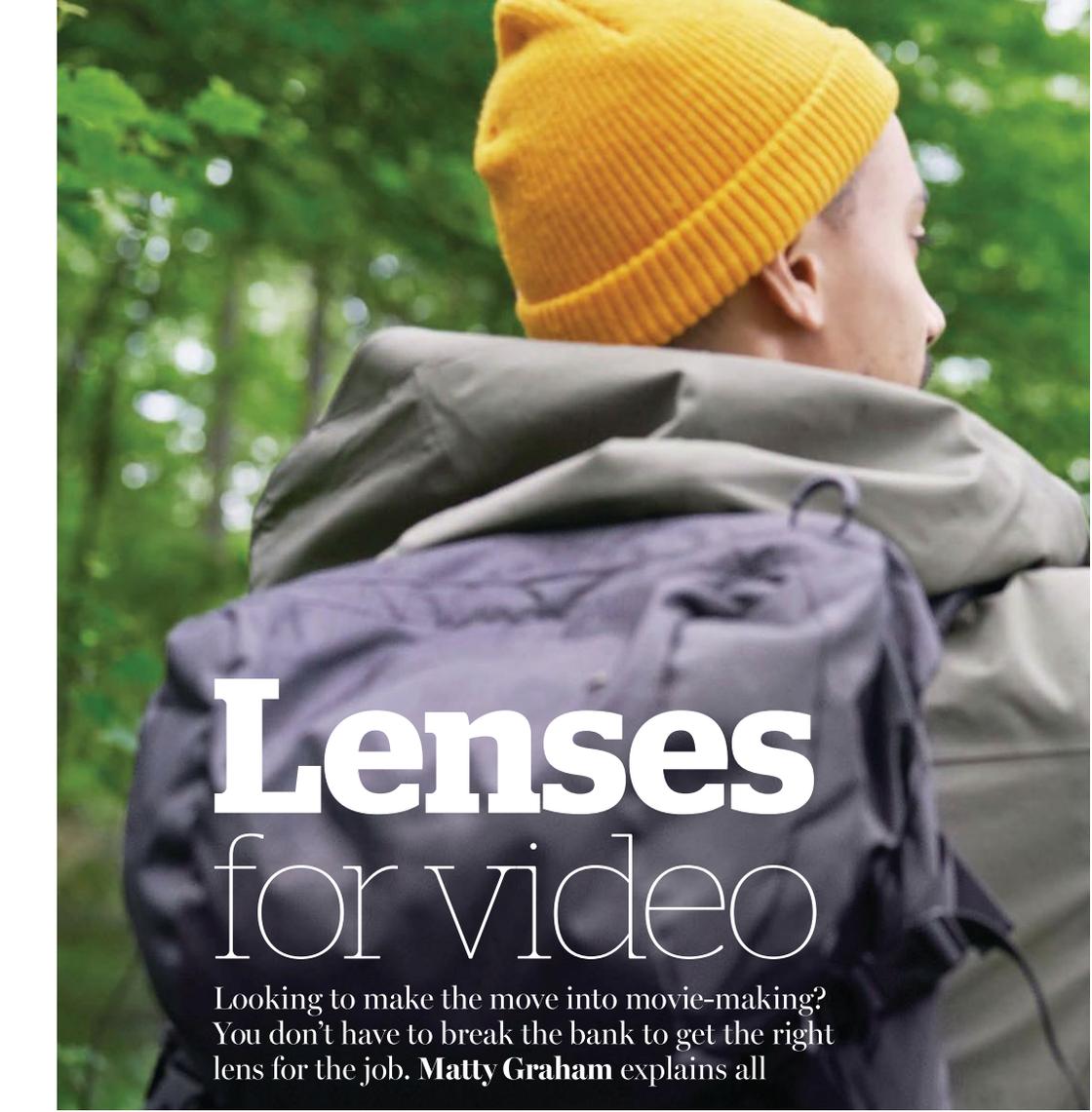
explains: 'The three pillars are to inspire, which we hope we do through our work; to educate, because so many kids now are disconnected from nature. They used to run around and had the freedom to have adventures in nature, but parents are too scared, or the kids are too much into a virtual world where they're frightened of losing battery power or not being plugged into their device!'

Yes, I think to myself, the question on everyone's lips these days seems to be, 'what is the Wi-Fi password?'

Jonathan continues: 'What you don't know about, you can't care about. How can you care if you don't know? This is an alert, a way to wake people up, but wake them up in a way in which we can say there are still things of wonder out there.'

And the third pillar? 'Conserve. Inspire, educate and conserve. Nature creates us. You won't conserve it if you don't know about it and you're not feeling good about it. The photographer Yann-Arthus Bertrand said, "Look, it's not the planet that needs saving, it's humanity".'





# Lenses for video

Looking to make the move into movie-making? You don't have to break the bank to get the right lens for the job. **Matty Graham** explains all

**A**s brands launch a steady stream of cameras packed with high-resolution video modes, more photographers than ever are testing the waters and taking tentative steps into the world of movie-making – not only as an additional stream of revenue but also to capture precious moments of friends and family. While the camera bodies have features on hand such as 4K video, Log Profiles and ports to capture enhanced audio, it's often down to lens choice where problems with results and quality can occur. Quite simply, not every lens you own will be up to the job but before you rush out and spend big money on a pricey cine lens designed solely for video use, take a moment to read this feature. There are plenty of stills lenses out there that include features which are advantageous for video use and do a great job of helping videographers capture impressive footage.

## Anatomy of a

### Wide focus ring

There'll be times when filming scenes with a shallow depth of field that you'll want to take more control over the focusing system and instead switch to Manual Focus (MF). In these scenarios, you want to have as much physical control over the lens as possible and the lenses to avoid are ones that have impossibly thin focus rings that are very unergonomic and hard to get precise control over. Instead, look out for optics with a big, wide focus ring that you



## good lens for video

can get a good hold of. Better still, focus rings with a pronounced rubberised texture will further aid your hold and prevent your digits slipping off the focus ring.

### Declicked aperture ring

An aperture control ring enables users to change the aperture setting via the ring on the lens, rather than needing to fiddle about with the camera body dials or menu. This is important because when you are capturing footage, you'll be using a set

shutter speed, such as 1/100sec, so in order to balance an exposure level, you'll want to adjust the aperture instead (although you can also use ISO and ND filters to balance exposure too). Some aperture rings are 'clicked' meaning you feel a physical click or step as you turn the ring. It's more advantageous for a video-friendly lens to have a declicked aperture ring, that will turn freely without resistance, allowing you to balance the exposure more easily.

### Stabilisation

Shaky footage is no good to anybody and while there are other options to stabilise footage – namely IBIS (in-body image stabilisation) inside the camera body or the use of a gimbal so the videographer can move around while keeping the camera steady – using a lens with Image Stabilisation technology adds to the photographer's ability to keep things steady. Most IS-enabled lenses offer the user the ability to switch the



Plenty of stills lenses have features that will help you capture great video footage

stabilisation off and on, giving the user even more control. For the ultimate in stabilisation, pairing an IS lens with a camera body with IBIS will extend the compensation limits.

### Lightweight dimensions

Big, heavy lenses are okay for video as long as you are happy to lock off the camera on a tripod, but this delivers static and uneventful footage. If you are going to capture motion by using the camera on a gimbal or other device then you want to reduce the load on the gimbal motors and this means using a lightweight and compact lens. Pancake optics are ideal – for example, Sony's 16mm f/1.8 not only measures just 62x22.5mm but it tips the scales at a mere 67g, making it a gimbal-friendly choice for videographers on a budget.

### Advanced coating

When shooting video, you'll more than likely want to shoot a lot of contre-jour shots when you shoot into the light to capture backlit subjects. These high-contrast lighting situations can flummox inferior lenses and produce huge amounts of flare and specular highlights. When looking for a lens that you can use for stills and video, make sure it has a decent level of coating to protect against these issues.

### Fast maximum aperture

For those beautiful, shallow-depth-of-field shots that add a heavy layer of cinematic style to your footage, you'll need a lens that offers a fast maximum aperture. Regular kit lenses often have a variable aperture so at best, you may be able to use f/3.5, but if you zoom in, you're more likely to have a maximum aperture of

f/5.6, which won't give you the shallow depth of field you're looking for. Instead, look for lenses that have a maximum aperture of f/2.8 or faster.

### Mid-telephoto focal length

One common mistake many photographers make when moving into video for the first time is to select a lens that's too wide. Of course, there will be times when a wider angle view will suit the scene, but going too wide all the time can leave subjects in the frame looking too small and generally lost. A mid-telephoto focal length such as 50mm is a great place to start as this focal length is similar to the natural perspective of the human eye.

### Fast motor

Picking a lens with the right motor system is crucial when selecting a video-friendly optic. Sluggish motor systems will not just struggle to keep up with a moving subject in the frame, but they will also create 'lens hum', which can be picked up on your microphone and ruin your audio. By contrast, a lens with a fast, modern motor system will be quiet, fast and accurate, leading to more usable footage.

### Familiar filter thread size

ND filters can prove useful when shooting video as well as stills. With your shutter speed locked in at 1/50sec or 1/100sec, it can be easy to overexpose a frame, particularly if you wish to employ a fast aperture like f/1.4 to create a shallow depth of field. A video-friendly lens with a familiar filter thread size (such as 67mm, 72mm or 77mm) will mean you probably already have a ND filter (whether it be a screw-on or via a filter holder) that you can use to balance your exposure level.

# Four video-fri



## Canon RF 50mm F1.8 STM

● £210 ● [canon.co.uk](http://canon.co.uk)

Canon's 'nifty fifty' lenses have been highly acclaimed for years by photographers using the brand's DSLRs to shoot stills and video, but with Canon's introducing a full-frame mirrorless range with cameras like the R6 and RP a new version was needed. The result is the RF 50mm f/1.8 STM – a lens that balances price, size and a fast maximum aperture beautifully to produce a must-have optic for Canon video shooters.

Measuring 69.2x40.5mm and tipping the scales at only 160g, this lens will balance nicely with cameras like the EOS R6 when paired with a gimbal like the Ronin-SC. The 50mm will give a natural perspective close to that of the human eye and the lens features Canon's STM motor technology for fast autofocus that will be quiet and won't pick up on your audio track. The RF 50mm enables videographers to capture frame-filling footage of smaller subjects thanks to a closest focusing distance of 30cm and features Canon's Super Spectra Coating to enhance quality.

**Focal length** 50mm

**Lens construction (Elements/Groups)** 6/5

**Max aperture** f/1.8

**Minimum aperture** f/22

**Closest focusing distance** 30cm

## endly lenses



### Sony E 16mm F2.8

● £229 ● [sony.co.uk](http://sony.co.uk)

While longer focal lengths can provide tighter framing, there are times when you will also want to shoot wider scenes and a great choice for these occasions is Sony's 16mm pancake lens, which is designed for use with the brand's APS-C cameras such as the Alpha 6600 where it takes on an equivalent focal length of 24mm thanks to the sensor's 1.5x crop factor. Make no mistake, this is a tiny lens, measuring just 62x22.5mm and tipping the scales at only 67g, but there's still room for a 5-elements-in-5-groups design and a 7-bladed aperture.

What's more, the tiny Sony optic offers Direct Manual Focus with non-rotating focus ring for when videographers want to take more control over their focus point in the frame. The barrel is made from aluminium and if you need to go wider, the 16mm f/2.8 is compatible with Sony's VCL-ECU1 ultra-wide converter and VCL-EFC1 fisheye converter accessories.

**Focal length** 16mm

**Lens construction (Elements/Groups)** 5/5

**Max aperture** f/2.8

**Minimum aperture** f/22

**Closest focusing distance** 24cm



### Samyang 85mm T1.5 AS IF UMC II VDSLR

● £295 ● [wexphotovideo.com](http://wexphotovideo.com)

A purpose-built cine lens for less than £300? You'd better believe it and if you are starting to take video seriously, it could well be worth taking a good look at this Samyang optic. Available for Nikon F, Canon EF, Pentax K, Sony E, Sony A, Fujifilm X and Micro Four Thirds mounts, the Samyang 85mm is a manual focus optic that features 9 elements in 7 groups including an aspherical element. The lens features an aperture (A) ring, although on a cine lens the aperture is prefixed with T instead (for example T/1.5) and there's also a wide geared focusing ring, that will allow videographers to pair this up with a follow focus system, enabling precise adjustments to the focus setting.

Sporting a dust-proof design, the lens also offers Samyang's Ultra Multi Coating (UMC) technology for better image quality and to provide protection from flare. Other features include an 8-bladed aperture to make the most of the bokeh created from that fast T/1.5 maximum aperture and a 72mm filter thread.

**Focal length** 85mm

**Lens construction (Elements/Groups)** 9/7

**Max aperture** T/1.5

**Minimum aperture** T/22

**Closest focusing distance** 110cm



### Sigma 85mm F1.4

● £999 ● [sigma-imaging-uk.com](http://sigma-imaging-uk.com)

The exceptional optical performance of Sigma's Art series has been well known for a while now, but what you may not be aware of is that the Art series shares a lot in common with the construction of Sigma's Cine lenses, making them perfect for filming video without the additional price-tag. The 85mm F1.4 DG DN Art gives videographers a lens that can capture tighter scenes and the maximum f/1.4 aperture will create an incredibly shallow depth of field that'll bring a cinematic feel and a higher production value to your movies.

The 85mm f/1.4 Art lens packs in no less than five SLD (Special Low Dispersion) elements to deliver that optical quality but there's far more to this lens than the glass because the lens also features a de-clicked aperture ring, enabling users to change aperture and balance exposure levels during a live take. The AF system employs a stepping motor, which is optimised for both phase and contrast detection. Despite these pro features, the 85mm isn't a lump and weighs in at 630g while offering a familiar filter thread of 77mm, which allows users to add ND filters to further control exposure levels. Boasting dust and splash resistance, the 85mm f/1.4 Art also features an oil-repellent coating and the build features a mix of aluminium and TSC (Thermally Stable Composite) to keep the construction strong yet light.

**Focal length** 85mm

**Lens construction (Elements/Groups)** 15/11

**Max aperture** f/1.4

**Minimum aperture** f/16

**Closest focusing distance** 85cm



Choosing an unusual lens such as a fisheye can add impact to familiar scenes  
 Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II, Samyang 7.5mm f/3.5 UMC Fisheye MFT, 1/800sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

# Optical exotica

Looking for a lens that will deliver images that are out of the ordinary? **Andy Westlake** is your guide to some of the most unusual and interesting lenses on the market

Look in most photographers' kit bags, and chances are you'll find a similar set of lenses. The majority will likely spend much of their time shooting with a standard zoom: either the kit lens that came with their camera, or for more advanced users, a higher-end optic along the lines of a 24-70mm f/2.8 or a 24-105mm f/4 (or their equivalents). Eventually, photographers will probably add telephoto and wideangle zooms alongside, for getting closer in to subjects or taking a broader view of the world. Next come fast primes for shooting in low light or for shallow depth of field, with 50mm and 85mm being the most

popular options. Then for close-ups there's the macro lens, most likely in the 90mm to 105mm range. Together, such a lens set should cover most types of photography.

However if you want to try something different and make your photos stand out from the crowd, it might be time to seek out something more exotic. In this article I'll look at some of the most unusual and interesting lenses on the market and explain what they can be used for. And while you might think that such optics will inevitably be ruinously expensive, that's not necessarily true. What's more, even the pricier ones can be hired for a one-off occasion without breaking the bank.

## Fisheyes

With their vast angle of view and extreme curvature of lines that conventional lenses would draw as straight, fisheye lenses are not for the faint-hearted. But this is exactly the kind of challenge that might get your creative juices flowing and inspire you to look at the world in different ways.

If you'd like to experiment with this look, Samyang offers a broad range of affordable fisheyes for all types of camera, ranging from a 7.5mm f/3.5 for Micro Four Thirds for £249, to a full-frame 12mm f/2.8 for £399. Micro Four Thirds users can also experiment with the Olympus 9mm f/8 Body Cap Lens (£89), while Pentax DSLR users can play with the 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 zoom (£449). At the other end of the scale, Canon and Nikon both offer full-frame 8-15mm fisheye zooms for around £1,250.





Ultra-large-aperture lenses can deliver strikingly shallow slices of sharp focus  
Fujifilm X-T4, Fujifilm XF 50mm F1.0 R WR, 1/950sec at f/1, ISO 160

## Ultra-fast lenses

Want shallow depth of field and a lovely blurred background? Try an ultra-large-aperture lens

ONE OF the biggest differentiators between smartphone photos and those taken with 'proper' cameras lies with the ability to focus selectively on your subject and blur away the background using a large-aperture lens. In a bid to imitate this, 'fake bokeh' modes are now commonplace on smartphones, but even the best are unconvincing and don't provide such attractive results. If you want to take this look to an extreme, you'll need the largest-aperture lens you can get your hands on, and it also makes most sense to work with a full-frame system.

It's not so long ago that anything faster than  $f/1.4$  was considered extremely rare and expensive (not to mention barely possible to focus), but that's all changed with the emergence of mirrorless cameras. One of the big advantages of these systems lies with lens design; freed from the constraints of leaving space for a mirror box, designers have more freedom to optimise the optics. This allows ultra-fast lenses to be designed much more readily, while accurate focusing is also much easier as it directly employs the image sensor.

As a result, you'll find plenty of large-aperture manual-focus lenses from emerging Chinese makers for surprisingly low prices. But in general, you get what you pay for, with more expensive optics from longer-established names likely to yield technically better results.

### Sony FE 50mm F1.2 GM

● £2,100 ● [www.sony.co.uk](http://www.sony.co.uk)

This isn't the world's fastest lens for full-frame mirrorless; that's the Nikon Nikkor Z 58mm  $f/0.95$  S Noct. But weighing in at fully 2kg and costing £8,300 for a manual-focus design, it has limited real-world appeal. Instead, the most practical ultra-large-aperture full-frame lenses are  $f/1.2$ , with Canon, Nikon and Sony all making autofocus 50mm designs, and Canon adding a pair of 85mm portrait lenses. The Sony 50mm  $f/1.2$  manages to be the smallest, lightest and least expensive, while still being optically fabulous. It delivers a giddy combination of impressive sharpness and lovely bokeh, backed up by rapid, reliable, and silent autofocus.



### Voigtländer Super-Nokton 29mm $f/0.8$ ASPH MFT

● £1,599 ● [www.voigtlaender.de](http://www.voigtlaender.de)

Not content with making a series of  $f/0.95$  manual focus primes for Micro Four Thirds cameras, Voigtländer has gone a step further with this remarkable optic. Offering a field of view equivalent to 58mm on full frame, the 29mm  $f/0.8$  is the world's largest-aperture production lens. This comes at a price, though, with the half-stop increase in brightness over the firm's 25mm  $f/0.95$  commanding more than double the price. This manual focus lens employs a mechanical ring to set its 12-bladed aperture, while its 11-element, 7-group design employs two aspherical elements to suppress the aberrations typical of such lenses.



### Fujifilm XF 50mm F1.0 R WR

● £1,499 ● [www.fujifilm.com/uk/en](http://www.fujifilm.com/uk/en)

The world's largest-aperture autofocus lens has engendered plenty of debate among Fujifilm fans, in part because it commands a huge premium over the firm's much-loved 56mm  $f/1.2$  that's a particularly fine portrait lens in its own right. It's also been optimised to deliver attractive background blur ahead of outright wide-open sharpness, which has divided opinion amongst commentators. However, despite its  $f/1$  aperture, it offers perfectly practical autofocus that, while not the quickest, is fine if you're not shooting fast-moving action. The optics really make portrait images sing, with a dreamy softness to defocused backgrounds at maximum aperture.





## Ultra macros

Most macro lenses provide life-size magnification, but a range of specialist optics get in even closer

THERE'S something addictive about close-up photography. It allows you to see the world in a whole new way, revealing tiny details that are usually invisible to the human eye. But this inevitably requires specialist optics. Typically, most camera and third-party lens manufacturers produce specialist macro lenses that are designed to deliver life-size magnification; in other words, the image is projected onto the sensor at the same size as the subject is in real life. But for the most striking close-up images, some lenses are available that let you focus in even closer. Over the past few years, Chinese maker

Venus Optics has blazed a trail in this sector, with an array of specialist optics in its Laowa lineup.

At this point it's worth considering how the magnification provided by the lens interacts with sensor size and resolution. A 1:1 macro will fill the frame with a subject measuring 36x24mm on full frame, 24x16mm on APS-C, and 17x13mm on Micro Four Thirds, so the smaller the sensor, the higher the equivalent magnification becomes. But when it comes to the tiniest detail that can be captured, the resolution of the sensor also needs to be considered. When we look at the highest-resolution cameras on the market, Canon's 32.5MP APS-C EOS 90D and EOS M6 Mark II slightly surpass 20MP Four Thirds models, with both beating 61MP full-frame ones in this regard.

### Canon MP-E 65mm f/2.5 1-5x Macro Photo

● £1,069 ● [www.canon.co.uk](http://www.canon.co.uk)

One of the most unusual lenses of all, this full-frame manual-focus optic is designed exclusively for macro shooting at extremely high magnifications. It's not even capable of focusing to infinity; instead it takes over where other macros leave off, offering 1x magnification at a working distance of around 10cm. Turning the large ring around the barrel extends the lens dramatically, focusing closer and increasing the magnification, with a maximum of 5x on offer at a 4cm working distance. At such

levels the slightest camera movement will blur the image, so the lens is equipped with a collar for fixing it to a tripod.



© RICHARD BARTZ

### Laowa 24mm f/14 Macro Probe Lens

● £1,599 ● [www.venuslens.net](http://www.venuslens.net)

Available in Canon EF, Nikon F, Sony FE, and Pentax K mounts, this bizarre-looking optic has gained a cult following for its unique capabilities. It focuses from infinity all the way to 2:1 magnification, with an unusual wideangle perspective and extensive depth of field. The long, slim barrel provides access to awkward locations that wouldn't be accessible using a normal macro lens, while a USB-powered LED ring light surrounds the front element to provide additional illumination. The front section of the lens can even be safely immersed in water for shooting aquatic wildlife. There's nothing else on the market remotely like it.



### Laowa 100mm f/2.8 2x Ultra Macro APO

● £469 ● [www.venuslens.net](http://www.venuslens.net)

Venus Optics also produces a whole family of Ultra Macro lenses that offer 2x magnification while still focusing to infinity. The 100mm f/2.8 is for full-frame cameras and available in a wide range of mounts for both DSLR and mirrorless, while the 65mm f/2.8 is about half the weight and available in Nikon Z, Sony E and Fujifilm X mounts for APS-C mirrorless cameras. Finally, there's a 50mm f/2.8 Ultra Macro for Micro Four Thirds that's smaller and lighter still. All three use a similar optical design, and I was extremely impressed by the 65mm when I reviewed it in Fujifilm X mount.



## Ultra telephotos

Using a 100-400mm on Micro Four Thirds, I was able to capture this as a quick handheld grab shot  
Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark III, Panasonic Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark III, Panasonic Leica DG 100-400mm f/4-6.3 ASPH OIS, 1/160sec at f/6.3, ISO 200

If you're trying to photograph something off in the distance, there's little alternative but to use a long focal length

WHILE macro lenses allow you to photograph subjects that are very small and close, long telephotos are required for those that are far away. For example, serious bird or aviation photographers routinely use large, expensive telephoto primes. It's not our intention to cover lenses with five-figure price tags here, though, so instead we've picked out some more affordable and practical alternatives.

If you want to be able to shoot with long telephoto reach but without

breaking either the bank or your back, there's a lot to be said for ignoring the current obsession with full frame, and adopting a camera with a smaller sensor. If you're focal-length limited and can't get any closer to your subject, so are going to be cropping your files, then having a sensor with smaller pixels should deliver more detail.

However, this does come with caveats. Lightweight long telephotos will inevitably have small apertures, which means that you will often need to shoot at high ISOs, and this inevitably limits image quality. Atmospheric distortions can also cause significant degradation with telephoto shots, sometimes across surprisingly short distances.

### Canon RF 800mm F11 IS STM

● £999 ● [www.canon.co.uk](http://www.canon.co.uk)

Designed for Canon's full-frame EOS R-series mirrorless cameras, this remarkable lens employs an array of technologies to keep its size and price down. It has a fixed f/11 aperture, exploits diffractive optics to shorten its physical length, boasts optical stabilisation to help keep images sharp and employs a retracting barrel design for additional portability. As a result, it measures just 35.2cm in length when collapsed and weighs 1.26kg, which makes it a tempting option for enthusiast wildlife photographers. The main catch is its 6m minimum focus distance. The firm also makes the even smaller RF 600mm F11 IS STM (£769) with a similar design.



### Sigma 60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM

● £1,699 ● [www.sigma-imaging-uk.com](http://www.sigma-imaging-uk.com)

For DSLR users, this is arguably the most versatile ultra-telephoto zoom available. It's a development of the firm's 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG DN OS design, which itself comes in two different versions. This lens, though, widens the short end to 60mm, giving a 10x zoom ratio. This might seem counter-intuitive, but it expands the ability to keep shooting as a distant subject gets closer, in effect negating the need to carry an additional 70-200mm zoom. This is useful when the action can occur across a broad range of distances, such as airshows and field sports.



### Panasonic Leica DG 100-400mm f/4-6.3 ASPH OIS

● £1,199 ● [www.panasonic.com/uk](http://www.panasonic.com/uk)

At first sight, this lens looks like any other 100-400mm zoom. But because it's made for Micro Four Thirds, it gives a 200-800mm equivalent range, while being smaller and lighter than any of its peers. It also boasts premium glass and extremely effective optical image stabilisation. The result is an ultra-telephoto zoom that's easy to carry around and can readily be used handheld. Indeed MFT users are well-served in this department; Olympus also makes a similar, although bulkier lens, while for serious wildlife photographers it offers the incredible 150-400mm F4.5 TC 1.25x IS Pro, which delivers a 1000mm equivalent range but costs £6,500.





## Tilt-Shift lenses

Shift lenses let you keep verticals straight without sacrificing image resolution  
 Sony Alpha 7 II, Samyang T-S 24mm f/3.5 ED AS UMC, 1/10sec at f/11, ISO 1600

Get your architectural shots right in-camera using these specialist technical lenses

ANYBODY who's photographed buildings using a wideangle lens will be familiar with the converging verticals effect, which makes them look like they're falling over backwards. While this so-called keystone distortion is straightforward to correct in software such as Photoshop, this comes at the cost of a severe drop in image resolution. As a result, there's still an argument for doing things the old-fashioned way, using a perspective control lens.

Such lenses allow the optical unit to be moved relative to the camera in two different ways. Lateral shift movements enable the correction of converging verticals, while angular tilt movements can be used to manipulate depth of field. All the tilt-and-shift lenses on the market are designed for use on full-frame DSLRs, with Canon offering 17mm, 24mm, 50mm, 90mm and 135mm focal lengths, while Nikon's range covers 19mm, 24mm, 45mm and 85mm. The wider options are ideal for architecture, while the longer ones tend to be used more for close-up and product photography. For photographers on a tighter budget, some interesting third-party optics are available.

### Samyang T-S 24mm F3.5 ED AS UMC

● £689 ● [www.samyanglens.com](http://www.samyanglens.com)

For photographers looking to exploit both tilt and shift movements for architectural photography, this is pretty much the only third-party option available. Designed principally for use on full-frame DSLRs, it has been made in a wide range of mounts. Its control arrangement and operational principles are very similar to Canon's TS-E 24mm f/3.5 L II, but it's less than half the price. Not surprisingly, this means it doesn't provide the same optical quality or smoothness of operation, but used carefully it'll deliver decent results. It provides +/-12mm shift and +/-8° tilt, with both movements being independently rotatable relative to the camera. Both focusing and aperture operation are manual.



### Laowa 15mm f/4.5 Zero-D Shift

● £1,249 ● [www.venuslens.net](http://www.venuslens.net)

The world's widest-angle perspective control lens provides +/-11mm shift via a unique dial mechanism that allows smooth, precise adjustment. However it lacks a tilt facility, which enables a smaller and lighter design. The direction of shift can be rotated freely relative to the camera, allowing the correction of either converging verticals or horizontals, or a mixture of both. Focusing and aperture operation are both manual, controlled by traditional rings around the lens barrel. The Zero-D designation indicates extremely low barrel distortion, which is highly desirable from this kind of lens. It's an impressive tool for serious architectural photographers, especially those who regularly shoot interiors.



## Tilt lens adapters

If you use a mirrorless camera and would like to experiment with lens tilt for manipulating depth of field, mount adapters can be bought for the purpose for as little as £30 from Amazon and eBay. They work best with vintage lenses for 35mm film SLRs that have mechanical focus and aperture control, and provide a highly controllable means of either increasing depth-of-field for close-ups, or producing 'fake miniature' effects. More complex (and expensive) versions include both tilt and shift movements, but are harder to find.



Lensbaby's creative optics allow you to blur away your subject's surroundings that would normally be in focus  
Sony Alpha 7 III, Lensbaby Edge 80, 1/680sec at f/2.8, ISO 100



## Creative lenses

If you're prepared to embrace optical imperfection as a creative tool, these lenses might inspire you to take a new direction

THE STORY of digital photography, in terms of hardware, has been generally one of ever-increasing technical quality. The search for imaging perfection has seen sensor resolutions increase, while noise has simultaneously been driven to a minimum. Similarly lenses have grown ever sharper, especially at large apertures and towards the edges of the frame, although this means they've become larger and more expensive too. But a few companies have fought stubbornly

against this trend, including Lensbaby, Lomography and Meyer Optik Görlitz. Their quirky, technically imperfect lenses aren't every photographer's cup of tea, but in the hands of the right user, they can give great results.

All three firms produce a range of lenses, with Lensbaby and Lomography's offerings in particular being imaginative and varied. A common thread that they all embrace is the idea of using blur for creative effect. However, they do so in a number of different ways. Some render eye-catching bokeh across the entire frame, while others give a swirly look to the background around a sharp central subject.

You can read more about Lensbaby users and see their work in our feature on pages 26-29.

### Lensbaby Composer Pro II with Edge 80

● £409 ● [www.lensbaby.com](http://www.lensbaby.com)

In general, Lensbaby's optics are all about creatively exploiting selective focus effects and surrounding the subject with blur. The firm has moved on dramatically since its earliest, distinctly lo-fi efforts, and now produces several types of lens with different characteristics. Its Composer Pro II housing can accept an array of swappable optics, with its tilting design allowing the user to move a 'sweet spot' of focus over the subject. The Edge 80 optic is a short telephoto that's fairly conventionally corrected, which means that when tilted, it produces an edge-to-edge slice of sharp focus. It's particularly well suited to portrait and close-up photography.



### Lomography Petzval 55 mm f/1.7 MKII

● £349 ● [shop.lomography.com](http://shop.lomography.com)

Lomography specialises in re-imagining vintage lenses for modern cameras. Its Petzval 55 mm f/1.7 MKII is based on a 19th-century optical design, with a relatively small region of central sharpness and characteristic 'swirly bokeh'. However it's specially designed for the latest full-frame mirrorless cameras, being available in Sony E, Canon RF and Nikon Z mounts. This manual-focus optic employs an unusual dual aperture system; along with a stepless 8-bladed diaphragm, it also takes drop-in Waterhouse stops allowing creatively shaped out-of-focus highlights. In addition, a Bokeh Control Ring provides further control over the way backgrounds are rendered.



### Meyer Optik Görlitz Trioplan 100 f2.8 II

● Approx. £880 inc postage and VAT  
● [www.meyer-optik-goerlitz.com/en](http://www.meyer-optik-goerlitz.com/en)

Meyer Optik Görlitz is a reincarnation of a famous old name, and its tag-line is 'Unique lenses with character'. Its lenses are based on vintage optical formulae, but the latest versions boast improved, up-to-date mechanical designs. The Trioplan 100mm f/2.8 typifies the line, with its triplet optical design delivering distinctive 'soap bubble' bokeh in out-of-focus backgrounds. It's available in a wide range of mounts, not only for DSLR and mirrorless cameras, but also Leica M (although without rangefinder coupling, meaning it has to be used in live view). Just be aware that 20% VAT is payable on imports from the EU.



# Amy Davies

AP staff member Amy Davies reveals why the Nikon Z 20mm f/1.8 S has become a firm favourite



Amy Davies has been taking photographs for almost 20 years and lives in Cardiff. See more of her work at [www.walksof2021.com](http://www.walksof2021.com), or on Instagram @amydavies

**AP: Tell us a little about your photography background**

AD: I've been the Features Editor at *Amateur Photographer* for the past three years. Previously I've worked for other photography and technology magazines and websites. I've been interested in photography since I got my first camera aged 15, but I studied journalism at university. To this day, I continue to be amazed that I'm able to combine my hobby with my career to make a living. This year I have also started a new project and blog called Walks of 2021. It's pretty self-explanatory, but started as a way to document the many, many lockdown walks I was carrying out. In Wales, we were restricted to walks which started and ended from your front door in the early part of 2021, so I wanted to challenge myself. As lockdown restrictions eased, I've carried on with the project. Now my walks take place in various locations in England and Wales, and I've thoroughly enjoyed exploring various new destinations in the UK.

**AP: What does your standard set-up/kit consist of?**

AD: Being in the privileged position that I am, my kit varies, often depending on what I'm working on. That said, I've been lucky enough

this year to have a long-term loan of the Nikon Z 7II. I also have the 24-70mm f/4 lens, along with a 70-200mm f/2.8, 35mm f/1.8, 50mm f/1.8 and the one I am perhaps most keen on, the 20mm f/1.8. Similarly, I also have a long-term loan of the Panasonic LX100 II, a fantastic little compact that I take with me when I don't want to carry too much.

**AP: If you had to pick a favourite item in your kitbag what would it be?**

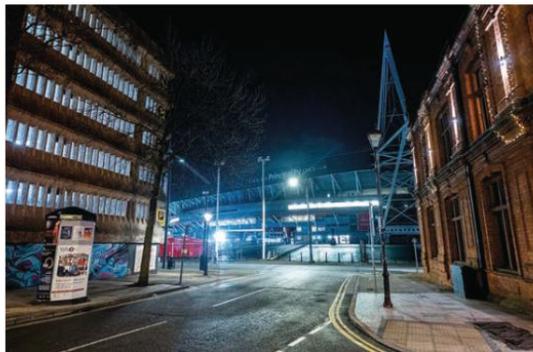
AD: If pushed to choose just one lens it would reluctantly have to be the 24-70mm. I use this most often thanks to its flexibility. However, in terms of the one I enjoy using the most, it's the 20mm f/1.8, which I've found to be surprisingly versatile for the subjects I shoot.

**AP: What is it about the lens you're so fond of and why?**

AD: I've been using this lens as part of the long-term loan of the Z 7II, and prior to that I used it with the Z 7. I was keen to try it as I'm a big fan of landscape photography and very wide-angles in particular. There are occasions when 24mm isn't quite wide enough, and having that little bit of extra width really comes in handy. It's not so wide though as to create unnatural-looking shots, such



as you might get with 14mm and beyond. I was also keen on the lens because of the f/1.8 aperture. I started using the lens in the winter and would often be photographing in the dark. Being able to open up the lens nice and wide meant I was able to photograph scenes without ramping up the ISO too much.





This shot of Clifton Suspension Bridge was one of Amy's first photos after the easing of lockdown restrictions in Wales

**AP: Can you elaborate about how you find the lens performs in use?**

AD: Just like other Nikon Z lenses in the system, the 20mm f/1.8 lens performs incredibly well. It focuses quickly and quietly, and produces extremely sharp results, with very few problems such as flare.

**Below from left: Long-term loan Nikon Z7 II and Z 20mm f/1.8 S, the Principality Stadium in Cardiff, and Amy's beloved dachshund, Lola**



Distortion is kept to a minimum too. Occasionally I do apply distortion correction in ACR, but mostly find that it produces very natural results. Primarily I use it for landscape scenes, but I've also found it works well for environmental portrait shots – particularly of my dog. The wide aperture helps to create a shallow depth of field effect while also giving an idea of where you are – crucial when I'm trying to show off a location on my blog.

**AP: Is there a memorable photograph you've taken using the Nikon Z 20mm f/1.8 S?**

AD: I really like the one of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, because it was taken on the first day we'd been permitted to travel outside of Wales for several months. This location is only a 45-minute drive from my house, but the regulations had been so severe that it was out of bounds for what felt like the longest time. It got me thinking about all of the

other places I was keen to visit this year. I also love all the pictures of my dog, because, well, she's my dog.

**AP: If it could be improved in any way, how would this be?**

AD: It would perhaps be good to include hard stops at either end of the focusing ring to help you to know when you've reached the closest focusing distance when manually focusing. The barrel size is a little bit awkward and larger than other prime lenses I'm used to.

**AP: Tell us how you think your set-up/kitbag might look ten years from now?**

AD: I think it's safe to say that DSLRs in 2031 will be probably be a distant memory – I haven't used one regularly myself for some time now. I'd be quite keen for camera kit to be smaller and lighter so that I can carry more of it for longer, so hopefully we will continue to see improvements in this area.



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**Amateur  
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# Thingyfy Pinhole Pro

**Andy Westlake** tries out a unique optic with pinholes of multiple sizes

● Approx £85 including shipping ● thingyfy.com

IN AN issue that's all about lenses, here we're looking at an optical device that isn't a lens at all. Pinholes can project an image onto a sensor or film without using any glass, simply because light travels in straight lines. The effective focal length is defined by the distance between the pinhole and the sensor, while the image resolution is determined by their relative sizes. However, it's impossible to get truly sharp results because tiny holes become subject to diffraction blurring, while letting in too little light to be practically usable. As a result, pinhole photography tends to be impressionist in nature.

It's possible to make a simple pinhole lens by punching a hole in a thin sheet of metal, and then fixing it to a body cap that's had a larger hole drilled in its centre. Theoretically, though, you'll get the best results from a precision-machined, perfectly circular hole. With its Pinhole Pro, Thingyfy has gone a step further by providing a choice of eight pinhole diameters, selected using a ring around the barrel. To a first approximation, there are one-stop steps between each, aside from the trio of 0.3mm, 0.25mm and 0.2mm where the difference is more like half a stop. The largest 0.8mm pinhole gives decidedly broad-brush images, and you'll generally get the sharpest results at 0.2mm, if that's what you want. With pinhole photography, though, the sharpest images aren't always the most pleasing.

On a DSLR, the device provides a focal length of 50mm, while the mirrorless version is 26mm. Unfortunately it vignettes on Sony full-frame mirrorless cameras due to its mechanical design, but this can be fixed by inserting a cheap 10mm extension tube, which results in about the same angle of view as on APS-C. With a DSLR you'll need to engage live view, and if you prefer to shoot at low ISOs, exposure times will be measured in seconds, necessitating the use of a tripod. If on the other hand you have a camera with good high-ISO capabilities and in-body stabilisation, you can often shoot handheld in daylight.

## Verdict

Thanks to its aluminium construction, the Thingyfy Pinhole Pro is a beautifully made device that's a pleasure to use. Offering a choice of pinholes may appear gimmicky but provides interesting scope for experimentation, not just by finding out which size best suits any particular scene, but also by creatively layering shots taken with different pinholes. It won't be for everyone, but if you'd like to try taking your photography in a different direction it's certainly worth a try.

**Zoom**  
The effective focal length can be increased by the simple expedient of adding extension tubes.

**Aperture ring**  
This allows click-stopped selection between eight different pinholes ranging from 0.8mm to 0.1mm in diameter.



Amateur Photographer  
Testbench Recommended  
★★★★★

**Filter thread**  
The device sports a 58mm thread for attaching filters such as a polariser.

**Mount**  
Thingyfy offers the Pinhole Pro in Canon, Nikon, Pentax and Sony A DSLR mounts, and Micro Four Thirds, Fujifilm X, and Sony E mirrorless mounts.



I shot this summer landscape handheld using the Pinhole Pro on the Sony A7 II

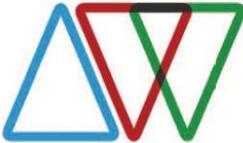
**At a glance**

- Multi-aperture pinhole lens
- Available in most major mounts
- 50mm focal length on DSLRs
- 26mm focal length on mirrorless

**THE PINHOLE PRO RANGE**

Thingyfy also offers a fixed-aperture, wideangle Pinhole Pro S that offers a 37mm focal length on DSLRs, and 11mm on mirrorless, for about £60. In addition, it makes the unique zoom Pinhole Pro X (approx. £102), with the DSLR version providing a 40-60mm range and the mirrorless version, 18-36mm. They can be bought either from its website or via photospecialist.co.uk.

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The Photo-Jumelle Binocular Camera, made in France by Jules Carpentier

BLAST FROM THE PAST

# Photo-Jumelle Binocular Camera

John Wade discovers an antique camera that isn't quite what it seems

**LAUNCHED:** 1892

**PRICE AT LAUNCH:** £5 5s (£5.25)

**GUIDE PRICE NOW:** £150-200

IT'S ALWAYS good to find a classic camera that can still be used today. But just sometimes, it's interesting to find one that is totally impractical, but which is nevertheless really rather fascinating. This is one such. It looks like a stereo camera, but it isn't – even though it was sold in the UK by the London Stereoscopic Company.

In fact, the lens on the right, as you face the camera, takes the pictures; the one on the left is the viewfinder, through which the subject is viewed via an eye-level round aperture in the back of the body. The viewfinder takes up half the body. The other half contains a holder for 12 plates positioned behind the lens. The shutter is tensioned by a sliding catch on the front of the body and

released by a tiny button on top.

Now comes the tricky bit: changing the plate for the next exposure. First the camera is turned on its back with the lenses pointing upwards, then a rod on the side of the body is pulled. The action leaves the just-exposed plate in position behind the lens, while the other 11 are pulled sideways into the viewfinder compartment. Once those plates come to rest, the exposed plate is free to fall to the base of the camera. The rod is then pressed back into the body, moving the rest of the plates into position again behind the lens. The exposed plate is now at the bottom of the stack and a fresh one is on top ready for the next exposure. To prevent the stack of plates being exposed to light when they are pulled into the viewfinder compartment, the viewfinder's front lens has a metal cover over it which only moves aside when the shutter is



How a gentleman used his Binocular Camera, as demonstrated in an 1892 advertisement

tensioned, and the eyepiece has a red filter permanently over it.

The photo-jumelle style of camera was almost, though not entirely, exclusive to France around this time. 'Jumelles' is French for binoculars.

**What's good** An interesting piece of photographic history.

**What's bad** Red viewfinder image, plate changing prone to jamming, unusable today.



The rear of the camera, showing the back open with a stack of plates inside and the red-filtered viewfinder

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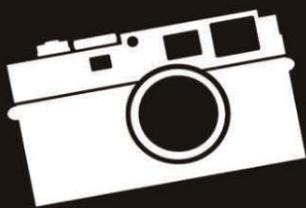
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# Buying Guide

**299**  
lenses  
listed &  
rated

Our comprehensive listing of key specifications for DSLR lenses

## DSLR Lenses

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

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



### Lens mounts

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

### Built-in focus motor

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

### Filter thread

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

### Maximum aperture

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

## OUR GUIDE TO THE SUFFIXES USED BY LENS MANUFACTURERS

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

# DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MAKE	SUBSYSTEM	SONY/ALPHA	CANON	NIKON	FOUR THIRDS	MICRO FOUR THIRDS	PERKIN	SIGNIA	MINI FRAME	MINI FRAME (2/3)	FEELER THREAD (MM)	DIAMETER (MM)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)
<b>CANON DSLR</b>																		
EF 8-15mm f/4 L USM	£1499		Impressive-looking fisheye zoom lens from Canon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	n/a	78.5	83	540
EF-S 10-18mm f/4.5-5.6 IS STM	£299	4★	A superb ultra-wideangle that's a must-have for anyone shooting landscapes and cityscapes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	67	74.6	72	240
EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£990	4★	A good performer, with solid MTF curves and minimal chromatic aberration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	77	83.5	89.8	385
EF 11-24mm f/4 L USM	£2799	5★	Long-awaited by Canon full-frame users, this is the world's widest-angle rectilinear zoom lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	n/a	108	132	1180
EF 14mm f/2.8 L II USM	£2810	4.5★	Impressive resolution at f/8 but less so wide open	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	n/a	80	94	645
EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L III USM	£2150		Revamped wideangle zoom includes new optics in a weather-sealed lens barrel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	82	89.5	127.5	790
EF 16-35mm f/4 L IS USM	£1199	4★	Versatile and with a useful IS system, this is a very good ultra-wideangle zoom for full-frame cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	77	82.6	112.8	615
TS-E 17mm f/4 L	£2920		Tilt-and-shift optic with independent tilt-and-shift rotation and redesigned coatings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	77	88.9	106.9	820
EF 17-40mm f/4 L USM	£940	4★	Designed to match the needs of demanding professionals - and does so with ease	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	77	83.5	96.8	500
EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 IS USM	£795	4★	Very capable lens with three-stop image stabilisation, Super Spectra coating and a circular aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	77	83.5	110.6	645
EF-S 18-55mm f/4.5-6.3 IS STM	£200		Latest standard zoom from Canon's APS-C EOS DSLRs, with compact design and updated optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	58	66.5	61.8	215
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£478		Uses stepper motor for silent and fast autofocus that's also well suited to video work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	67	76.6	96	480
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£500		Versatile zoom with new Nano USM focus technology and optional power zoom adapter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	67	77.4	96	515
EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS	£740	4★	Automatic panning detection (for image stabilisation) and a useful 11x zoom range	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	72	78.6	102	595
EF 24mm f/1.4 L II USM	£2010		Subwavelength structure coating, together with UD and aspherical elements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	77	83.5	86.9	650
EF 24mm f/2.8 IS USM	£750	4★	Small wideangle optic with image stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	58	68.4	55.7	280
TS-E 24mm f/2.8 STM	£185	4★	Bargain price, tiny carry-everywhere size and a highly competent imaging performance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	52	68.2	22.8	125
TS-E 24mm f/3.5 L II	£2550		Tilt-and-shift optic with independent tilt-and-shift rotation and redesigned coatings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	82	88.5	106.9	780
EF 24-70mm f/2.8 L II USM	£2300	5★	Professional-quality standard zoom lens with a fast aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	82	88.5	113	805
EF 24-70mm f/4 L IS USM	£1499		L-series zoom said to be compact, portable and aimed at both professionals and amateurs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	77	83.4	93	600
EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS II USM	£1129	4★	Reworked workhorse zoom for full-frame cameras uses an all-new optical design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	77	83.5	118	795
EF 24-105mm f/3.5-5.6 IS STM	£479	3.5★	A versatile standard zoom lens that's an ideal route into full-frame photography	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	77	83.4	104	525
EF 28mm f/2.8 IS USM	£330	3.5★	Lightweight and inexpensive lens, with a single aspherical element	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	52	67.4	42.5	185
EF 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 L IS USM	£790		L-series optic with expansive range, image stabilisation and a circular aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	77	92.4	184	1670
EF-S 35mm f/1.8 Macro IS STM	£399		Features an innovative built-in dual-LED light for close-up shooting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	49	69.2	55.8	190
EF 35mm f/2 IS USM	£999		First 35mm prime from Canon to feature an optical stabilisation system	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	67	62.6	77.9	335
EF 35mm f/1.4 L II USM	£1799	5★	An outstanding addition to the L-series line-up	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	72	80.4	104.4	760
EF 40mm f/2.8 STM	£230		A portable and versatile compact pancake lens. A fast maximum aperture enables low-light shooting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	52	68.2	22.8	130
TS-E 45mm f/2.8	£1200		Tilt-and-shift lens designed for studio product photography	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	72	81	90.1	645
EF 50mm f/1.2 L USM	£1910		Very wide maximum aperture and Super Spectra coatings, and a circular aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	72	85.8	65.5	580
EF 50mm f/1.4 USM	£450	5★	Brilliant performer, with a highly consistent set of MTF curves. AF motor is a tad noisy, though	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	58	73.8	50.5	290
EF 50mm f/1.8 STM	£130	5★	Lightest EF lens in the range, with wide maximum aperture and a Micro Motor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	49	69.2	39.3	130
TS-E 50mm f/2.8 Macro	£2500		One of a trio of tilt-and-shift macro lenses, this replaces the TS-E 45mm f/2.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	77	86.9	114.9	945
EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS STM	£285		A compact telephoto lens featuring smooth, quiet STM focusing when shooting movies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	110	58	70	111.2	375
EF-S 50mm f/2.8 Macro USM	£540	4★	Great build and optical quality, with fast, accurate and near-silent focusing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	52	73	69.8	335
MP-E 65mm f/2.8 1:5x Macro	£1250		Macro lens designed to achieve a magnification greater than 1x without accessories	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	58	81	98	710
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L USM	£1540		Non-stabilised L-series optic, with rear focusing and four UD elements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	77	84.6	193.6	1310
EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS III USM	£2150		Updates Canon's excellent pro workhorse zoom with water-repellent fluorine coatings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	77	88.8	199	1480
EF 70-200mm f/4 L USM	£790		A cheaper L-series alternative to the f/2.8 versions available	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	67	76	172	705
EF 70-200mm f/4L IS II USM	£1490		Upgraded premium telephoto zoom promises five stops of image stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	72	80	176	780
EF 70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS II USM	£999	4.5★	Mid-range telephoto zoom offers really good optics and fast, silent autofocus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	67	80	145.5	710
EF 70-300mm f/4.5-6.3 L IS USM	£1600	5★	An L-series lens with a highly durable outer shell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	67	89	143	1050
EF 75-300mm f/4.5-6.3 III	£300		Essentially the same lens as the 75-300mm f/4.5-6.3 III USM but with no USM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	58	71	122	480
EF 85mm f/1.2 L II USM	£2640	4★	A well-crafted lens, with fast and quiet AF with good vignetting and distortion control	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	72	91.5	84.0	1025
EF 85mm f/1.4L IS USM	£1570	5★	Sublime, highly desirable portrait lens combines large aperture and optical image stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	77	88.6	105.4	950
EF 85mm f/1.8 USM	£470	5★	Non-rotating front ring thanks to rear-focusing system, as well as USM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	58	75	71.5	425
TS-E 90mm f/2.8	£1870		Said to be the world's first 35mm-format telephoto lens with tilt-and-shift movements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	58	73.6	88	565
TS-E 90mm f/2.8 Macro	£2500		One of a trio of tilt-and-shift macro lenses, this replaces the TS-E 90mm f/2.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	77	86.9	116.5	915
EF 100mm f/2.8 Macro USM	£650	4★	A solid performer, but weak at f/2.8 (which is potentially good for portraits)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	58	79	119	600
EF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM	£1060	5★	Stunning MTF figures from this pro-grade macro optic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	67	77.7	123	825
EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS II USM	£1999	4.5★	L-series construction and optics, including fluorite and Super UD elements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	77	85	193	1640
EF 135mm f/2 L USM	£1360		L-series construction with two UD elements and wide maximum aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	72	82.5	112	750
TS-E 135mm f/4L Macro	£2500		One of a trio of tilt-and-shift macro lenses, with 1:2 magnification	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49	82	88.5	139.1	1110
EF 180mm f/3.5 L Macro USM	£1870		L-series macro lens with inner focusing system and USM technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	72	82.5	186.6	1090
EF 200mm f/2.8 L II USM	£960		Two UD elements and a rear-focusing system in this L-series optic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	72	83.2	136.2	765
EF 300mm f/4 L IS USM	£1940		Two-stop image stabilisation with separate mode for panning moving subjects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	77	90	221	1190
EF 400mm f/5.6 L USM	£1660		Super UD and UD elements, as well as a detachable tripod mount and built-in hood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	350	77	90	256.5	1250
<b>LAOWA DSLR</b>																		
12mm f/2.8 Zero D	£899		Ultra-wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs that exhibits minimal distortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	77	74.8	82.8	609
14mm f/4 Zero-D DSLR	£499		Relatively compact and lightweight ultra-wideangle manual focus prime that promises low distortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	67	72.5	75	320
15mm f/4.1: Macro	£490	4★	Unusual wideangle lens that offers 1:4 Macro together with vertical shift movements on APS-C cameras	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	77	83.8	64.7	410
14mm 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
24mm F14 2x Macro Probe	£1599		Unique specialist macro lens with submersible front barrel and built-in LED lights	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47	n/a	78	408	474
25mm f/2.8 Ultra Macro 2.5x - 5x	£399		Unusual lens designed solely for ultra-close-up shooting, with magnification from 2.5x to 5x	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.3	n/a	65	82	400
60mm f/2.8 2X Ultra Macro	£319	3.5★	With 2:1 Macro, an all-in-one option for normal portrait photography as well as ultra-macro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.5	62	95	70	503
100mm f/2.8 2:1 Ultra Macro APO	£469		Full-frame macro lens with twice-life-size magnification and apochromatic design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24.7	67	125	72	638
105mm f/2 (13.2) STF	£649	4★	Designed for full-frame DSLRs, and features an apodisation element that renders lovely bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	67	98.9	76	745

ALL PRICES ARE RRP'S. STREET PRICES MAY VARY

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing [ap@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap@kelsey.co.uk). Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**



# DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	MOUNT	MIN. FOCUS (CM)	MAX. APERTURE (F)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)		
85mm f/1.4 G AF-S	£1532	5★	Fast mid-tele lens with an internal focusing system and rounded diaphragm	-	-	-	-	-	85	f/1.4	86.5	84	595	
85mm f/1.8 G AF-S	£470	5★	Rear-focusing system and distance window in this medium telephoto lens	-	-	-	-	-	80	f/1.8	80	73	350	
85mm f/2.8D PC E Micro	£1299		Respective Control (PC E) telephoto, designed to be ideal for portraits and product photography	-	-	-	-	-	39	f/2.8	83.5	107	635	
105mm f/1.4 E ED AF-S	£2049		A 105mm FX-format prime lens with bright f/1.4 aperture, ideal for portraiture	-	-	-	-	-	100	f/1.4	82	94.5	106	985
105mm f/2.8 G AF-S VR II Micro	£782	4.5★	A very sharp lens, with swift and quiet focusing and consistent MFT results	-	-	-	-	-	31	f/2.8	83	116	720	
105mm f/2 D AF DC	£980		A portrait lens with defocus control	-	-	-	-	-	90	f/2	79	111	640	
135mm f/2 D AF DC	£1232		Defocus-Image Control and a rounded diaphragm in this telephoto optic	-	-	-	-	-	110	f/2	79	120	815	
200-500mm f/5.6 E ED VR AF-S	£1179		A super-telephoto zoom lens compatible with Nikon FX-format DSLR cameras	-	-	-	-	-	220	f/5.6	108	267.5	2300	
300mm f/4 E PF ED VR AF-S	£1230	5★	Light, compact AF-S full-frame telephoto lens with ED glass elements	-	-	-	-	-	140	f/4	77	89	147.5	755

## PENTAX DSLR

DA 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 HD Fisheye ED	£499		Updated fisheye zoom lens gains refreshed cosmetic design, new optical coatings and removable hood	-	-	-	-	-	14	n/a	70	67.5	317	
DA* 11-18mm f/2.8 ED DC AW HD	£1399		Premium fast ultra-wide-angle zoom, includes all-weather construction and innovative focus clamp	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/2.8	90	100	704	
DA 12-24mm f/4 smc ED AL IF	£1050		Two aspherical elements, ELD glass and a constant aperture of f/4 in this wide zoom	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/4	77	83.5	87.5	430
DA 15mm f/4 smc ED AL Limited	£820		Limited-edition lens with hybrid aspherical and extra-low-dispersion elements	-	-	-	-	-	18	f/4	49	39.5	63	212
FA 15-30mm f/2.8 ED SM WR HD	£1500		Weather-resistant ultra-wide-angle zoom with fast maximum aperture and fixed petal-type hood	-	-	-	-	-	28	n/a	98.5	143.5	1040	
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 smc ED AL IF SDM	£950	3.5★	A nice balance and robust feel, but poor sharpness at f/2.8 (which significantly improves from f/4 onwards)	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/2.8	84	98.5	600	
DA* 16-50mm f/2.8 ED PLM AW HD	£1500		All-new premium large-aperture standard zoom with updated optics and electromagnetic aperture control	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/2.8	84	117	712	
DA 18-85mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC WR	£600		Weather-resistant, this zoom features a round-shaped diaphragm to produce beautiful bokeh	-	-	-	-	-	35	f/3.5-5.6	78	94	488	
DA 17-70mm f/4 smc AL IF SDM	£630		Featuring Pentax's Supersonic Direct-drive (SDM) focusing system	-	-	-	-	-	28	f/7	75	93.5	485	
DA 18-50mm f/4-5.6 DC WR RE	£230		Super-thin standard zoom that's weather-resistant and features a round-shaped diaphragm	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/4	58	71	41	158
DA 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 smc AL WR	£229		A weather-resistant construction and an aspherical element, as well as SP coating	-	-	-	-	-	25	f/3.5-5.6	68.5	67.5	230	
DA 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DA ED DC WR	£600	3.5★	A weather-resistant mid-range zoom lens	-	-	-	-	-	40	f/3.5-5.6	62	73	60	400
DA 18-270mm f/3.5-6.3 smc ED SDM	£699		15x superzoom for company's K-mount DSLRs featuring two extra-low-dispersion (ED) elements	-	-	-	-	-	49	f/3.5-6.3	62	76	89	453
DA 20-40mm f/2.8-4 ED Limited DC WR	£829		With state-of-the-art HD coating, a completely round-shaped diaphragm, and weather resistant	-	-	-	-	-	28	f/2.8	58	68.5	71	283
DA 21mm f/3.2 smc AL Limited	£600		This limited-edition optic offers a floating element for extra-close focusing	-	-	-	-	-	20	f/3.2	49	63	25	140
FA 24-70mm f/2.8 ED SDM WR	£1149		Full-frame compatible premium standard zoom - includes a HD coating to minimise flare and ghosting	-	-	-	-	-	38	f/2.8	82	109.5	88.5	787
FA 28-105mm f/3.5-5.6 ED DC HD	£549		Standard zoom lens for the K-1 full-frame DSLR that's much more affordable than the 24-70mm f/2.8	-	-	-	-	-	50	f/3.5-5.6	62	73	86.5	440
FA 31mm f/1.8 smc AL Limited	£1149		Premium aluminium-bodied wide-angle prime boasts full-frame compatibility and an aperture ring	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/1.8	58	68.5	65	345
HD-FA 31mm f/1.8 Limited	£1100		Updated version of classic fast wide-angle prime with HD and fluorine coatings	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/1.8	58	69	65	341
FA 35mm f/2 HD	£399		Latest version of venerable Pentax fast prime features a multi-layer HD coating	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/2	49	64	44.5	193
DA 35mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£640	4.5★	Despite slight edge softness, this lens performs excellently and is a pleasure to use	-	-	-	-	-	14	f/2.8	49	46.5	63	215
DA 35mm f/2.4 smc DS AL	£380	5★	A budget-priced prime lens for beginners	-	-	-	-	-	40	f/2.4	49	63	45	124
DA 40mm f/2.8 smc SDAL	£450		Pancake lens with SMC coating and Quick Shift focusing system	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/2.8	49	63	15	90
FA 43mm f/1.9 smc Limited	£729		Classic full-frame fast prime with perfect focal length for everyday use	-	-	-	-	-	45	f/1.9	64	27	155	
HD-FA 43mm f/1.9 Limited	£650		Revised standard prime for full-frame cameras gains improved coatings for higher contrast	-	-	-	-	-	45	f/1.9	64	27	155	
FA* 50mm f/1.4 SDM AW HD	£1200		Premium fast prime with dustproof, weather-resistant design and electromagnetic aperture	-	-	-	-	-	40	f/1.4	72	80	106	910
FA 50mm f/1.4 smc	£399		Compact fast prime with film-era double-Gauss optics and traditional aperture ring	-	-	-	-	-	45	f/1.4	69	63.5	38	220
DA 50mm f/1.8 smc DA	£249	4★	Affordable short telephoto lens ideal for portraits	-	-	-	-	-	45	f/1.8	52	38.5	63	122
D-FA 50mm f/2.8 smc Macro	£550		Macro lens capable of 1:1 reproduction and with a Quick Shift focus mechanism	-	-	-	-	-	19	f/2.8	60	67.5	265	
DA* 50-135mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1200	4★	Constant f/2.8 aperture; well suited to portraiture and mid-range action subjects	-	-	-	-	-	100	f/2.8	67	76.5	136	765
DA 50-200mm f/4-5.6 smc ED WR	£210		Weather-resistant construction, Quick Shift focus system and an SP coating	-	-	-	-	-	n/a	f/4-5.6	49	69	79.5	285
DA* 55mm f/1.4 smc SDM	£800	4.5★	Despite questions about the particular sample tested, this lens scores highly	-	-	-	-	-	45	f/1.4	58	70.5	66	375
DA 55-300mm f/4.5-6.3 ED PLM WR RE	£400		Compact weather resistant telephoto zoom has video-friendly fast and silent autofocus motor	-	-	-	-	-	95	f/4.5-6.3	78.5	89	442	
DA 55-300mm f/4-5.8 ED WR	£399		Weatherproof HD telephoto lens featuring quick shift focusing system	-	-	-	-	-	140	f/4-5.8	71	111.5	466	
DA 60-250mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1450	4.5★	With a constant f/4 aperture and an ultrasonic motor for speedy focusing	-	-	-	-	-	110	f/4	67	167.5	82	1040
DA 70mm f/2.4 smc AL Limited	£600		Medium telephoto lens with an aluminium construction and a Super Protect coating	-	-	-	-	-	70	f/2.4	49	63	26	130
D-FA* 70-200mm f/2.8 ED DC AW	£1850		Fast telephoto zoom in Pentax's high-performance Star (*) series developed for best image rendition	-	-	-	-	-	120	f/2.8	77	91.5	203	1755
D-FA 70-210mm F4 ED SDM WR	£1199		Compact telephoto zoom with constant f/4 maximum aperture and weather-resistant construction	-	-	-	-	-	95	f/4	67	78.5	175	819
FA 77mm f/1.8 smc Limited	£1050		With Pentax's Fixed Rear Element Extension focusing system for 'sharp, crisp images'	-	-	-	-	-	70	f/1.8	49	48	64	270
HD-FA 77mm f/1.8 Limited	£800		Renewed version of short telephoto portrait prime that features a traditional aperture ring	-	-	-	-	-	70	f/1.8	49	48	64	270
D FA* 85mm f/1.4 SDM AW	£1999		Upcoming large-aperture short telephoto prime promises premium optics and weather-sealing	-	-	-	-	-	85	f/1.4	82	95	123.5	1255
D-FA 100mm f/2.8 Macro WR	£680	5★	Street price makes this something of a bargain for a true macro offering full-frame coverage	-	-	-	-	-	30	f/2.8	49	65	80.5	340
FA 150-450mm f/4.5-5.6 ED DC AW	£2000		Super-telephoto lens with weather resistance, designed to produce extra-sharp, high-contrast images	-	-	-	-	-	200	f/4.5-5.6	86	241.5	95	2000
DA* 200mm f/2.8 smc ED IF SDM	£1000	4.5★	SDM focusing system on the inside, and dirtproof and splashproof on the outside	-	-	-	-	-	120	f/2.8	77	83	134	825
DA* 300mm f/4 smc ED IF SDM	£1300		This tele optic promises ultrasonic focus and high image quality thanks to ED glass	-	-	-	-	-	140	f/4	77	83	184	1070

## Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8 IS III USM



£2,199.00

SPREAD THE COST  
Pay £82.48 a month for 36 months.  
Deposit 10%. 12.9% APR.

Test drive this lens for FREE for 48 hours! Scan here to learn more

## Canon EF 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6L IS II USM



£2,279.00

SPREAD THE COST  
Pay £69.97 a month for 36 months.  
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Test drive this lens for FREE for 48 hours! Scan here to learn more

# DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT							DIMENSIONS				
				MINI (mm)	FLUOR (mm)	PERDIA	SEBIA	FLUOR (mm)	MINI (mm)	FLUOR (mm)	DIAMETER (mm)	LENGTH (mm)	WEIGHT (g)		
<b>SAMYANG DSLR</b>															
8mm f/3.5 UMC Fisheye CS II	£274		Wideangle fisheye lens designed for digital reflex cameras with APS-C sensors								30	n/a	75	77.8	417
10mm f/3.5 XP MF	£950		World's widest-angle rectilinear lenses promises 130° field of view with minimal distortion								26	n/a	95	98.1	731
10mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS CS	£429		Features a nano crystal anti-reflection coating system and embedded lens hood								24	n/a	86	77	580
12mm f/2.8 ED AS NCS Fisheye	£430		Fisheye ultra wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs								20	n/a	77.3	70.2	500
14mm f/2.4 XP MF	£899		High-end ultra-wideangle prime with premium optics and large maximum aperture								28	n/a	95	109.4	791
AF 14mm f/2.8	£649	4.5★	Samyang's first AF SLR lens features very decent image quality and weather-sealed construction								20	n/a	90.5	95.6	485
14mm f/2.8 ED UMC	£363		Ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens; bulb-like front element means no filters can be used								28	n/a	87	94	552
14mm f/2.8 MF Mk II	£439		Updated manual focus prime with weather-sealing and de-clickable aperture ring								28	n/a	87	96.3	641
16mm f/2.0 ED AS UMC CS	£389		Fast wideangle lens for digital reflex cameras fitted with APS-C sensors								20	n/a	89.4	83	583
20mm f/1.8 ED AS UMC	£430		Large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens for full-frame DSLRs								20	77	83	113.2	520
24mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£499		Fast ultra-wideangle manual-focus lens comprising 13 elements arranged in 12 groups								25	77	95	116	680
24mm f/3.5 ED AS UMSTS	£949	3★	Tilt-and-shift wideangle lens for a fraction of the price of Canon and Nikon's offerings								20	82	86	110.5	680
35mm f/1.2 XP MF	£719		Ultra-large aperture, manual focus prime with premium optics								34	86	93	117.4	1106
35mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£369	4.5★	While manual focus only, this prime impressed us in real-world use, making it something of a bargain								30	77	83	111	660
50mm f/1.2 XP MF	£639		Large aperture manual-focus prime promises 50MP resolution								45	86	93	117.4	1200
50mm f/1.4 AS UMC	£299		Manual-focus fast standard prime for full-frame DSLRs								45	77	74.7	81.6	575
85mm f/1.2 XP MF	£899		High-end manual focus lens sports an impressively fast maximum aperture								80	86	93	98.4	1050g
AF 85mm f/1.4	£599	3★	Autofocus fast short telephoto portrait lens for use on Canon or Nikon full-frame DSLRs								90	77	88	72	485
85mm f/1.4 IF MC	£239		Short fast telephoto prime, manual focus, aimed at portrait photographers								100	72	78	72.2	513
85mm f/1.4 MF Mk II	£389		Evolved large-aperture manual focus telephoto is weather-sealed and the aperture can be de-clicked								110	72	78	72.2	541
100mm f/2.8 ED UMC Macro	£389		Full-frame compatible, the Samyang 100mm is a true Macro lens offering 1:1 magnification								30	67	72.5	123.1	720
135mm f/2 ED UMC	£399		Manual focus portrait prime has fast aperture for subject isolation and background blur								80	77	82	122	830
<b>SIGMA DSLR</b>															
8mm f/3.5 EX DG	£799		The world's only 8mm lens equipped with autofocus also boasts SLD glass								13	n/a	73.5	68.6	400
8-16mm f/4.5-5.6 DC HSM	£800	4★	Excellent performance at 8mm, which sadly drops at the 16mm end								24	72	75	105.7	555
10-20mm f/3.5 EX DC HSM	£650	5★	An absolute gem of a lens that deserves a place on every photographer's wish list								24	82	87.3	88.2	520
12-24mm f/4 DG HSM   A	£1649	5★	Premium full-frame wideangle zoom designed to have minimal distortion in its wideangle imagery								24	n/a	101	132	1150
14mm f/1.8 DG HSM   A	£1679	5★	World's first f/1.8 ultra-wideangle prime lens for full-frame DSLRs								27	n/a	95.4	126	1170
14-24mm f/2.8 DG HSM   A	£1399	5★	Pro-specification fast ultra-wide prime for full-frame DSLRs includes weather-sealed construction								26	n/a	96.4	135.1	1150
15mm f/2.8 EX DG	£629	4★	This fisheye optic puts in a very solid performance - not to be dismissed as a gimmick!								15	73.4	65	65	370
17-50mm f/2.8 EX DC OS HSM	£689		FLD and aspherical elements, a constant f/2.8 aperture and Optical Stabilisation								28	77	83.5	92	565
17mm f/2.8-4 DC Macro OS HSM	£449		Compact redesign of this well-received lens launches the 'Contemporary' range								22	72	79	82	470
18-35mm f/1.8 DC HSM	£799	5★	Said to be the world's first constant f/1.8 zoom; DoF equivalent of constant f/2.7 on full frame								28	72	78	121	810
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DC OS	£449	4★	Excellent resolution and consistent performance, but control over CA could be a little better								45	79	109	100	610
18-300mm f/3.5-6.3 DC Macro OS HSM	£499		Compact and portable high zoom lens offering enhanced features to make it the ideal all-in-one lens								39	72	79	101.5	585
20mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£799	5★	An outstanding wideangle fixed-focal-length lens								27.6	n/a	90.7	92.8	950
24mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£799	5★	The latest addition to Sigma's 'Art' line of high-quality fast primes								25	75	85	90.2	665
24-35mm f/2 DG HSM   A	£949	5★	The world's first large-aperture full-frame zoom offering a wide aperture of f/2 throughout the zoom range								28	82	87.6	122.7	940
24-70mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM   A	£1399	5★	Latest premium fast standard zoom for full frame includes optical image stabilisation								37	82	88	107.6	1020
24-105mm f/4 DG OS HSM   A	£849	4.5★	Serious full-frame alternative to own-brand lenses at a lower price, with no compromises in the build								45	82	89	109	885
28mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£1099	4.5★	High-quality, weathersealed fast wideangle prime for full-frame DSLRs								28	77	82.8	107.1	865
30mm f/1.4 DC HSM   A	£360		Unique fast prime for APS-C DSLRs that gives 45mm equivalent 'normal' angle of view								30	62	63.3	74.2	435
35mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£799	5★	Superb large-aperture prime; first lens in company's 'Art' series								40	67	77	94	660
40mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£1100	5★	Large and heavy prime promising natural-looking perspective and top-quality optics								40	82	87.8	131	1200
50mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£849	5★	This lens has a unique design that pays off in truly excellent image quality								47	85.4	100	81.5	1645
50-100mm f/1.8 DC HSM   A	£829	5★	This APS-C format lens aims to cover the focal lengths of three prime lenses in one								37.4	82	93.5	170.7	1490
60-600mm f/4.5-6.3 DG OS HSM   S	£1899		Weathersealed 10x zoom encompasses huge range from standard to super-telephoto								60	105	120.4	268.9	2700
70mm f/2.8 DG Macro   A	£499		The first macro lens in Sigma's Art line-up features an extending-barrel focus-by-wire design								26	49	71	106	515
70-200mm f/2.8 DG OS HSM   S	£1349	5★	Superb large-aperture telephoto zoom shows high sharpness and minimal chromatic aberration								120	82	94.2	202.9	1805
85mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£1199	5★	Optically stunning fast short telephoto prime is the ultimate portrait lens for DSLR users								85	86	95	126	1310
100-400mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM   C	£799	4.5★	Relatively lightweight telezoom comes with weather-sealing and choice of push-pull or twist zoom								160	67	86.4	182.3	1160
105mm f/1.4 DG HSM   A	£1499	4.5★	Sigma's 'hokeh monster' super-fast portrait lens is weathersealed and comes with a tripod foot								100	105	115.9	131.5	1645
105mm f/2.8 EX DG OS HSM Macro	£649	4.5★	An optically stabilised macro lens, this super-sharp lens is one of our favourites								31.2	62	78	126.4	725
120-300mm f/2.8 DG HSM   S	£3599		First lens in company's 'Sports' series; switch enables adjustment of both focus speed and focus limiter								150	105	124	291	3390
135mm f/1.8 DG HSM   A	£1399	5★	Super-fast portrait prime designed to provide sufficient resolution for 50MP DSLRs								82	82	91.4	114.9	1130
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM   C	£1199		'Budget' contemporary version of Sigma's long-range telephoto zoom is smaller and lighter								28.5	95	105	260.1	1930
150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM   S	£1599		This portable, high-performance telephoto zoom from Sigma's Sports line is dust and splashproof								260	105	121	290.2	2860
<b>SONY DSLR</b>															
11-18mm f/4.5-5.6 DT	£609	3★	A solid overall performance that simply fails to be outstanding in any way								25	77	83	80.5	360
16mm f/2.8 Fisheye	£709		Fisheye lens with a close focusing distance of 20cm and a 180° angle of view								20	n/a	75	65.5	400
16-35mm f/2.8 ZA SSM II*	£1999	4.5★	High-end Zeiss wideangle zoom lens ideal for full-frame Alpha DSLRs and SLTs								28	77	83	114	900
16-50mm f/2.8 SSM	£569	4★	Bright short-range telephoto lens								100	72	81	88	577
16-80mm f/3.5-4.5 ZA T*	£709	4.5★	Carl Zeiss standard zoom lens								35	62	72	83	445
18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 DT SAM II	£159		Basic kit zoom for Sony's Alpha mount SLT cameras								30	55	72	89	222
18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 DT SAM	£429		A versatile zoom with Direct Manual Focus								45	62	76	86	398
18-250mm f/3.5-6.3 DT	£559	3.5★	Good overall, but performance dips at longer focal lengths								45	62	75	86	440

ALL PRICES ARE RRP'S. CHECK PRICES MANUALLY

# DSLR Lenses

LENS	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY	MOUNT										DIMENSIONS					
				IMAGE STABILISATION	SONY ALPHA	CANON	FOUR THIRDS	NIKON	PENTAX	SIGMA	MINI FRAME	MINI FRAME (D)	MINI FRAME (M)	MINI FRAME (M)	LENGTH (MM)	WEIGHT (G)			
20mm f/2.8	£559	3.5 ★	Wideangle prime lens with rear focusing mechanism and focus range limiter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	72	78	53.5	285
24mm f/2 ZA SSM T*	£1119		An impressively bright wideangle Carl Zeiss lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	72	78	76	555
24-70mm f/2.8 ZA SSM II*	£1899	5 ★	Carl Zeiss mid-range zoom lens with superb optics ideal for full-frame Alpha DSLRs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	77	83	111	955
28-75mm f/2.8 SAM	£709		A constant f/2.8 aperture and a Smooth Autofocus Motor (SAM) in this standard zoom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	67	77.5	94	565
30mm f/2.8 DT SAM Macro	£179	4 ★	Macro lens designed for digital with 1.1 magnification and Smooth Autofocus Motor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	49	70	45	150
35mm f/1.4 G	£1369		With an equivalent focal length of 52.5mm, a wide aperture and aspherical glass	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	55	69	76	510
35mm f/1.8 DT SAM	£179		Budget-price indoor portrait lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	55	70	52	170
50mm f/1.8 DT SAM	£159	4.5 ★	A very useful lens that performs well and carries a rock-bottom price tag	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	49	70	45	170
50mm f/1.4	£369	5 ★	While this lens performs well overall, performance at f/1.4 could be better	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	55	65.5	43	220
50mm f/1.4 ZA SSM	£1300	4 ★	Carl Zeiss design said to be ideal for quality-critical portraiture and low-light shooting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	72	81	71.5	518
50mm f/2.8 Macro	£529		A macro lens with a floating lens element	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	55	71.5	60	295
55-200mm f/4-5.6 DT SAM	£219		Designed for cropped-sensor cameras, with a Smooth Autofocus Motor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	55	115.5	85	305
55-300mm f/4.5-5.6 DT SAM	£309		Compact, lightweight telephoto zoom offering smooth, silent operation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140	62	77	116.5	460
70-200mm f/2.8 G SSM II	£2799		High-performance G Series telephoto zoom lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	77	87	196.5	1340
70-300mm f/4.5-5.6 G SSM	£869	3.5 ★	G-series lens with ED elements, Super Sonic wave Motor and a circular aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	62	82.5	95.5	1360
70-400mm f/4-5.6 G SSM II	£1799		Redesign of original features a new ISl drive circuit and promises faster autofocus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	77	95	126	1500
85mm f/1.4 ZA Planar T*	£1369		Fixed-focal-length lens aimed at indoor portraiture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	72	81.5	72.5	560
85mm f/2.8 SAM	£219		A light, low-price portraiture lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	55	70	52	175
100mm f/2.8 Macro	£659		Macro lens with circular aperture, double floating element and wide aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	55	75	98.5	505
135mm f/1.8 ZA Sonnar T*	£1429		A bright, Carl Zeiss portrait telephoto lens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72	77	84	115	1004
135mm f/2.8 STF	£1119		Telephoto lens fitted with apodisation element to give attractive defocus effects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	87	80	80	99	730

## TAMRON DSLR

10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 Di II VC HLD	£580	4.5 ★	Wideangle zoom of APS-C with dust and splashproofing and optical stabilisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	77	83.6	84.6	440	
15-30mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1279		Second-generation image-stabilised fast wide zoom includes weather-sealing and faster AF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	n/a	98.4	145	1110
16-300mm f/4-5.6 G Di II VC PZD Macro	£600	4 ★	Versatile mega-zoom, a very good all-in-one solution, as long as you won't need to enlarge to A2 size	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	67	92.5	75	540
17-35mm f/2.8 Di OSD	£629	4 ★	Most compact and lightest full-frame ultra-wideangle zoom in its class	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	77	83.6	90	460
17-50mm f/2.8 SP AF XR Di VC LD Asph IF	£541	4.5 ★	Very strong performance at longer focal lengths but weaker at the other end	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	72	79.6	94.5	570
18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 AF Di II VC	£169	4 ★	Lightweight all-in-one lens for APS-C DSLRs with Vibration Compensation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49	62	75	96.6	400
18-400mm f/3.5-6.3 Di II VC HLD	£650	4 ★	The longest-ranging telephoto zoom yet made turns in a surprisingly decent performance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	72	79	123.9	910
24-70mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1249		Upgraded fast zoom with improved image stabilisation and moisture-resistant construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	82	88.4	111	905
28-75mm f/2.8 SP AF XR Di LD Asph IF Macro	£460		Standard zoom with constant f/2.8 aperture and minimum focusing distance of 33cm	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	67	73	92	510
28-300mm f/3.5-6.3 Di VC PZD	£529		A new, full-frame, high-power zoom incorporating PZD (Piezo Drive)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49	67	75	99.5	540
35mm f/1.4 SP Di USD	£930		Premium large-aperture prime with moisture-resistant, image stabilisation and as fast aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	72	80.9	104.8	815
35mm f/1.8 SP Di VC USD	£580	4.5 ★	Moderately wide prime combines ultrasonic focusing, image stabilisation and a fast aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	67	80.4	80.8	480
35-150mm f2.8 Di VC USD	£799		Unusual image-stabilised full-frame zoom designed for portraits, with large maximum aperture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	77	84	126.8	796
70-200mm f/2.8 SP Di VC USD G2	£1350	5 ★	Excellent telephoto zoom with updated autofocus and image stabilisation plus sealed construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	77	88	193.8	1500
70-210mm f/4 Di VC USD	£699	4.5 ★	Lightweight telezoom promises high optical performance, image stabilisation and weather-sealing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	67	76	176.5	860
70-300mm f/4-5.6 SP VC USD	£300	4 ★	Ultrasonic Silent Drive (USD) technology for focusing and Vibration Compensation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	62	81.5	142.7	765
70-300mm f/4-5.6 AF Di LD Macro	£170	3.5 ★	Low-dispersion glass and compatible with both full-frame and cropped-sensor DSLRs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95	62	76.6	116.5	435
85mm f/1.8 SP Di VC USD	£749	5 ★	The first full-frame 85mm f/1.8 lens with image stabilisation, that's also moisture resistant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	67	85	91	700
90mm f/2.8 SP AF Di Macro	£470	4 ★	A very nice macro lens that is capable of producing some fine images	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	55	71.5	97	405
90mm f/2.8 Di Macro 1:1 VC USD	£579		Redesign of the 90mm f/2.8 SP AF Di Macro; comes with vibration compensation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	58	115	76.4	550
100-400mm f/4.5-6.3 Di VC USD	£789	5 ★	Relatively compact and lightweight telephoto zoom with moisture-resistant construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150	67	199	86.2	1135
150-600mm f/5-6.3 SP Di VC USD G2	£1340		Updated version of Tamron's popular long telezoom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	220	95	108.4	260.2	2010
150-600mm f/5-6.3 SP VC USD	£1150	4 ★	Longest focal length of any affordable enthusiast zoom on the market and produces excellent results	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	270	95	105.6	257.8	1951

## TOKINA DSLR

AT-X 11-16mm f/2.8 CF	£449		Gains a new waterproof top coating for the front element and updated cosmetic design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	77	84	89	555	
AT-X 11-20mm f/2.8 PRO DX	£499	4 ★	Compact, ultra-wideangle lens with a fast maximum aperture and decent optical performance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	82	89	92	600
AT-X 12-28mm f/4 PRO DX	£529		Replacement for 12-24mm f/4 wideangle zoom; for Nikon DX DSLRs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	77	84	90	560
AT-X 14-20mm f/2 PRO DX	£849		Wideangle zoom with super-fast, super-bright, constant f/2 aperture for shooting in very low light	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	82	89	106	725
Opera 16-28mm f/2.8 FF	£699	4 ★	This large-aperture wide zoom for full-frame DSLRs is an updated version of the AT-X 16-28mm f/2.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	n/a	89	133.5	940
Opera 50mm f/1.4 FF	£900		Premium fast prime designed for high-resolution DSLRs, with dust and weather-resistant construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	72	80	107.5	950
AT-X 100mm f/2.8 AF PRO D Macro	£360	4 ★	Some weaknesses wide open, but reasonable MTF curves make this a decent optic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	55	73	95.1	540

## ZEISS DSLR

15mm f/2.8 Milvus	£2329		This super-wideangle lens has an angle of view of 110° and uses an advanced retrofocus design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	95	102.3	100.2	947
18mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1999		Compact super-wideangle lens with premium optics including a floating focus system for close-ups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	77	90	93	721
21mm f/2.8 Milvus	£1299		Premium wideangle lens with complex optics designed to be free of distortion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	82	95.5	95	851
25mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1999	5 ★	Optically excellent, large-aperture manual focus wideangle lens with weather-sealed construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	82	95.2	123	1225
35mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1699		Large aperture, premium-quality manual-focus prime with weather-sealed construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	72	84.8	124.8	1174
35mm f/2 Milvus	£829		Compact, moderate wideangle manual focus prime	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	58	77	83	702
50mm f/1.4 Planar T*	£559		Classic double-Gauss design manual focus standard prime for full-frame SLRs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	58	71	71	380
50mm f/1.4 Milvus	£949	5 ★	An exceptionally good lens offering sharpness, detail, clean edges and a great user experience	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	67	82.5	94	922
50mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£949		Manual-focus macro lens with half-life-size magnification and stunning optics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	67	81	75.3	730
85mm f/1.4 Planar T*	£989		Classic portrait prime designed to give smooth, rounded bokeh effects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	72	78	88	670
85mm f/1.4 Milvus	£1379	5 ★	Fast 85mm manual-focus prime lens that's perfect for portraiture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	77	90	113	1280
100mm f/2 Milvus Macro	£1299		A manual-focus macro lens with absolutely superb optics and half-life-size reproduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88	67	80.5	104	843
135mm f/2 Milvus	£1899		Telephoto lens with a large aperture and smooth bokeh, ideal for medium-distance portrait photography	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	77	129	132	1123

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# Final Analysis

**Benedict Brain considers...** 'Richard Kearton inside the Kearton's taxidermy ox hide, 1890s' by Richard and Cherry Kearton

A few months ago I wrote about an image called 'Biker Practising Yoga in Kensington Gardens, London, 1976' by Patrick Ward. It's a wonderful image in which a biker appears to have his head lodged in the ground after a nasty, albeit peculiar, biking accident. It doesn't immediately make 'sense' what's really going on and as a consequence has, to me at least, surreal undertones.

I've loved that photograph for many years. And then I stumbled upon 'Richard Kearton inside the Kearton's taxidermy ox hide, 1890s' in a proof copy of Gemma Padley's new book about wildlife photography – just when I didn't think 'Biker Practising Yoga' could be trumped for sheer bizarreness. I fell in love with Kearton's taxidermy ox hide image the moment I saw it. It really was love at first sight.

This does make me question my developing affection for images of upturned folk, but I'll worry about that later. It's the surreal element that I think I find so appealing. I am a surrealist sympathiser, I sense. The truth of the matter, as was the case with 'Biker Practising Yoga', is that the reality is much less surreal.

This wonderful image is actually a picture of one of the world's first-ever hides made for wildlife photography. It was created by Richard and Cherry Kearton. The idea was that the camera lens was positioned so that the photographer could shoot through a hole in the animal's 'head'.

On this occasion, Richard



**'This wonderful image is virtually impossible to figure out and make sense of until reading the title or caption'**

Kearton, who was inside the taxidermy ox, fainted and fell over. Cherry – quick to seize the moment – grabbed a shot and we are presented with an image in which we see all six legs pointing directly skyward. It's bizarre, and a virtually impossible image to figure out and make sense of until reading the title or caption. It appears that Cherry and Richard Kearton were pioneers in many aspects of wildlife photography that we take for granted today, not least the hide. Over a

hundred years after this image was made I fondly recall helping Barney Britton put a review of the best wildlife hides together for this very magazine in the mid-noughties, and that too had a surreal twist; six hides all hidden in the foliage at Richmond Park. You couldn't see the hides for looking as they were so well camouflaged. Made me laugh anyway. Cherry and Richard claimed other firsts too including the first-ever photograph of birds' eggs in a nest photographed by Cherry.

They also created the first nature book illustrated with photographs, namely *British Birds' Nests: How, Where and When to Find and Identify Them* (1895). Gemma Padley's book, *Into The Wild*, features this story and many other delights from the history of wildlife photography – it really is a fascinating read.

*Into The Wild: The Story of The World's Greatest Wildlife Photography* by Gemma Padley will be published by Laurence King at £40 on 16 September.

AP

Photographer and journalist Benedict Brain combines his personal practice with writing about photography and leading workshops. Regularly asked to judge competitions such as the BPA, in 2020 he founded Potato Photographer of the Year. He travels as a public speaker talking about photography, and he sits on the distinctions panel for the RPS. [www.benedictbrain.com](http://www.benedictbrain.com)



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