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Can the final  
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SINGLE LIGHT SET-UPS MAXIMUM VARIETY WITH THE MINIMUM OF KIT

# We have a lot to say, so we made a video...



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# CVP





# Welcome

THERE'S SOMETHING of a travel feel about the cover of this month's Digital Issue, not surprising perhaps since this characterful portrait hails from Cuba, a country US-based photographer Michael Chinnici has visited 25 times in the past nine years. In that time he's accumulated a fabulous set of images, and he's sharing a selection from his *Vanishing Cuba* book in our Project feature.

There's a set of pictures of a different kind to be found in our regular Portfolio slot, where we've caught up with French art photographer Umbertha Richeux, who has spent the past ten years travelling Europe searching for grand and decaying buildings that would serve as the backdrop for a unique collection of provocative self portraits. The work is remarkable and the story behind the pictures is similarly tantalising and our interview will give you the full story.

I've always been a fan of keeping things simple, and Chris Ord is using his excellent column to show what can be achieved with one strobe and a softbox. The variety of shots he's produced is astonishing, and proves you don't need to overcomplicate things to get results.

We've got two great camera reviews lined up for you this month, focusing on the return of the Olympus OM-1 in digital form and the Panasonic Lumix GH6. Both MFT they might be, but you couldn't really get two more different models, one looking at the sport and wildlife specialist, the other aimed at filmmakers. A great contrast and very much horses for courses. See what you think and enjoy the read this month!



**TERRY HOPE**  
EDITOR



## ON THE COVER

Our cover shot this month is a striking and characterful portrait by Michael Chinnici, which is also the cover image from his *Vanishing Cuba* book. For more information read our interview with Michael, which starts on page 24.



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PROFESSIONAL  
**PHOTO**

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**Email:** subs@professionalphoto.online  
**Online:** <https://professionalphoto.online/magazine-subscription>

### NEWSSTAND DISTRIBUTION

Warners Group Distribution, West Street,  
Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9PH.  
[www.warnersgroup.co.uk](http://www.warnersgroup.co.uk)

### PRINTED IN THE UK BY LAVENHAM PRESS

[www.lavenhampress.com](http://www.lavenhampress.com)

**SMART  
MEDIA**

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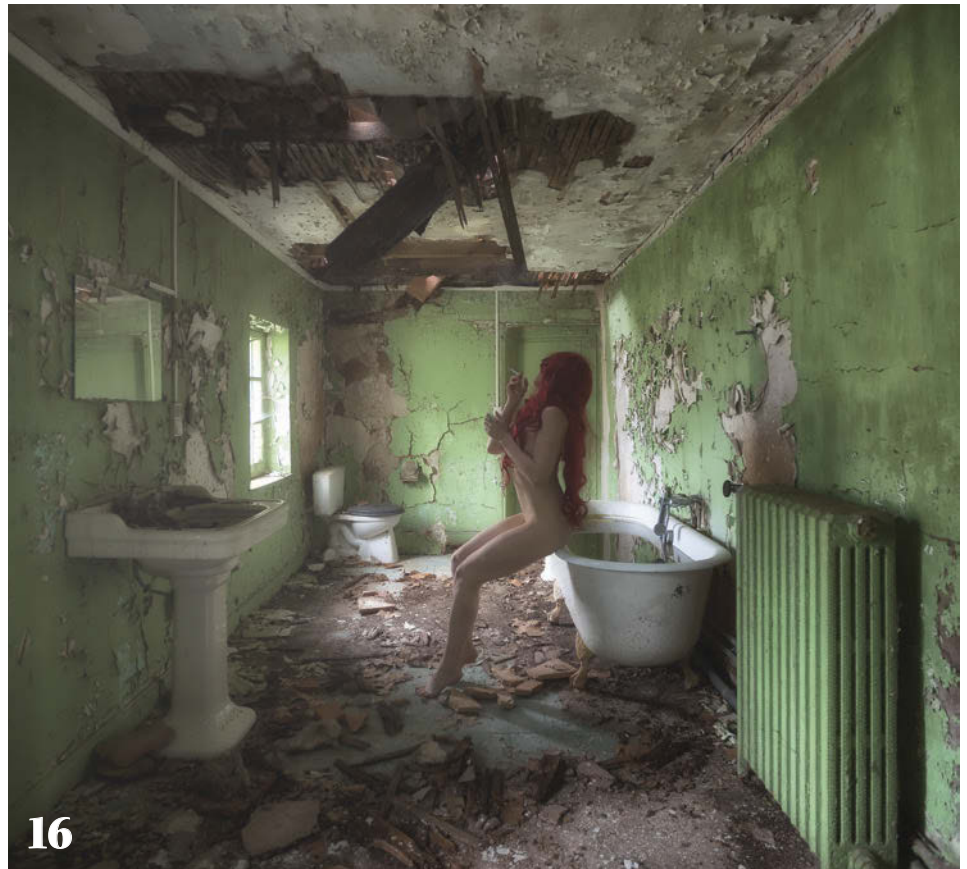
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## PRO TALK

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## Why it pays to always be pushing yourself harder

DON'T KNOW about you, but I never feel that I've achieved it all when I've completed a job. I always have that sense that I could have perhaps done better, and that I still have a lot to learn. In short, I'm never fully satisfied and I've always been my own worst critic.

That doesn't mean I'm not proud of some of the things I've achieved, but I do believe that the learning process should never stop and that there's no room for complacency if you want to stay on point and continue to improve. Looking back at my career so far I can see that I've had to re-invent myself numerous times, and all of us face the same ongoing challenge.

One of the best ways to gauge where you're at is to seek

validation from those whose opinions you respect, which is where competitions come in. These can be a great way to make sure that you're heading in the right direction, and even better is to get an honest and positive critique that will give you pointers on how you can move yourself forward.

These things have come to mind in the wake of the recent SWPP Convention, where so many photographers were putting themselves up for awards and qualifications, while in our News pages this month we're reporting on the World Press Photo Competition and announcing the fact that the Taylor-Wessing Awards are now open. Alongside, there are numerous other events to be part of, once you look around.

**“ The learning process never stops, and there no room for complacency if you want to continue to improve. ”**

Don't do it for the glory - although it's always a boost if you do win something - but rather make a point of pushing yourself to enter your best work, and set yourself the highest possible benchmark.

**Terry Hope - Editor**

**■ David Pritchard's stunning work won the 2021 Taylor-Wessing Award: Page 12**



© DAVID PRITCHARD/NPG

# FRANCO BARESI RECEIVES HIS WORLD





# CUP RUNNERS-UP MEDAL, JULY 1994



The expression says it all, as Italian captain Franco Baresi lines up to receive his Runners-Up medal in the aftermath of the penalty shoot-out defeat to Brazil in the 1994 World Cup Final.

HERE'S A THIN line between joy and the agony of defeat, and this was perfectly illustrated in the World Cup Final that took place between Brazil and Italy in the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena on July 17, 1994. The match finished goalless and went to penalties and Brazil triumphed 3-2, with Italy's captain Franco Baresi blazing his effort over the bar.

Peter Robinson, covering the game for FIFA, had already left his position before the tense end to the game to make sure he was in a prime place to shoot the post-match presentation and, having done his prep by scouting out where this was going to take place the previous day, he knew exactly where to go and had secured potentially the very best position from which to shoot by the time the rest of the press corp caught up with him.

"I was shooting film of course," he recalls, "and was working with my Nikon F4, paired with a 17-35mm f/2.8 zoom, used at its widest focal length setting. By the time the presentations were about to take place it was a complete scrum, with photographers jostling for position."

"I decided for once to work with a small flashgun on the camera since I was shooting into the sun and needed to lift the shadows, and you can see the glint of this reflected from the World Cup itself. Given that I had only 36-exposures to play with, I decided to shoot just one picture of the Italian team. Baresi was first up and the captain of the side, and so I decided this would be the shot."

"You can see he wants to be anywhere but here at this moment and he's determined not to actually look at the trophy itself. It's a really bitter moment for him, compounded by the happy face of the girl in the middle of the frame."

PP

thesaturdayman.com

Images on The Saturday Man website are scans from original prints or negatives, all prepared and finished using Affinity Photo. It's Peter's choice of imaging software, selected due to its intuitive nature, comprehensive tool set, competitive pricing and the fact that it doesn't require a monthly fee. Available from [affinity.serif.com/en-gb/photo/](https://affinity.serif.com/en-gb/photo/) price £47.99.



## LENS ROUND-UP

# NEW LENS ARRIVALS FROM SIGMA, LEICA AND SAMYANG

A FLURRY OF NEW LENS announcements have been made in recent weeks, with **Sigma** leading the way with the news that three of the products from its existing f/1.4 DC DN Contemporary line will now be available for the first time in the Fujifilm X Mount fitting. These are the 16mm, 30mm and 56mm, which will cost £359, £289 and £379 respectively, and the trio is already available in Sony E Mount, Canon EF-M mount, MFT and the L-Mount.



Now that Sigma has developed the control algorithms that are necessary for such actions as AF drive and communication speed optimisation, the intention is to add more Sigma lenses to the X Mount range down the line. In addition to supporting high-speed AF, the new range of lenses will also support AF-C (Continuous AF) and in-camera aberration correction (supported cameras only), while the mount is rubber-sealed for use in a

variety of environments.

**Leica** meanwhile is making its popular Summicron-M 28mm f/2 ASPH lens available in a particularly robust form. The specialist-paint finish is said to offer extremely scratch-resistant properties, along with a discrete appearance that's ideally suited to classic reportage photography. By way of contrast to the standard version, the upgrade comes with an integrated lens hood, which extends via one quick twist.

Available from specialist retailers along with Leica Camera in Duke Street, London, cost of the lens is £4000.

The latest lens to be introduced by **Samyang** is a fast 35mm f/1.4 prime that's designed for full frame Sony mirrorless models. A second-generation model, the new lens incorporates two key



innovations, namely a Focus Hold button and a Custom Switch, and it's following in the footsteps of Samyang's 50mm, which has been similarly updated.

Key features of the lens, which is priced at £636, include two aspherical elements, fast, precise and quiet AF performance thanks to Samyang's Linear Stepping Motor (STM) technology, high quality bokeh, a short minimum focus distance of just 29cm and advanced weather sealing.

Meanwhile the new Focus Hold Button can be used to keep the lens locked to a particular focusing distance, while the Custom Switch can be set to

allow silent adjustment of the aperture through the rotation of the focusing ring. More functions will be added down the line via firmware updates.

■ [sigma-imaging-uk.com](http://sigma-imaging-uk.com)

■ [store.leica-camera.com/uk](http://store.leica-camera.com/uk)

■ [samyanglens.com](http://samyanglens.com)



## LAUNCH

# SONY UPGRADES ITS MIC OFFERING

FRESH FROM SONY is the new URX-P41D two-channel portable receiver, which boasts all of the key benefits of the 4th Generation UWP-D Series along with a host of appetising new features.

Improved specs include Sony's Digital Audio Processing, which upgrades sound quality by optimising a time-constant range between the transmitter and receiver, and compatibility with the SMAD-P5 MI shoe, that carries power as well as audio signals, with automatic power synchronisation between camera and receiver. This technology can be found on a wide range of Sony's XDCAM camcorders



and Alpha interchangeable lens cameras.

Other benefits include an NFC Sync function to allow quick and easy channel setting, a compact form factor with

improved ergonomics, an external microphone input and three-channel mixing function, stable RF reception and an auto gain mode and output level control to ensure that audio levels are correct when working out in the field.

The new arrival will also work with all UWP-D transmitters (backwards compatible with previous generations) and will be available as a stand-alone receiver or as part of a new kit, the UWP-D27, which is expected to be priced at around £1000 and will include two UTX-B40 Bodypack Transmitters.

■ [pro.sony/uwpd](http://pro.sony/uwpd)



# Win the Latest Kenro RGB Compact LED Video Light!

We're testing out Kenro's brand new Smart Lites in this issue, and here's your chance to win the exciting new RGB Compact LED Video Light in our easy-to-enter competition.

**T**HE COMING OF AGE OF LED lighting has given photographers and videographers a brilliant new set of tools that are lightweight, versatile, ultra-flexible and highly affordable, and the new family of Smart Lites freshly introduced by Kenro is tapping into this rapidly evolving technology. The first two products are already available with more additions set to arrive imminently, and they're solidly made and packed with features that pro photographers and filmmakers are going to hugely appreciate.

We're testing out the Bi-Colour Compact LED Video Light and its higher spec sibling the RGB Compact LED Video Light in our Mini Test on page 73 of this issue, so head there to take a look to find out more about what they have to offer. In the meantime, we've got the RGB light to give away in our simple-to-enter competition, and so you could be in with a chance of trying it out for yourself!

For its remarkable £84.99 price tag the RGB Compact LED Video Light comes packed with features, including an integrated 4040mAh battery and 10W output, which will deliver around 1.6 hours of light on a full charge. It comes with a CRI (Ra) of 96+ and a CCT colour temperature range of 7500-3200K, and can produce 720 LM of brightness. Furthermore, it provides up to 1050 Lux of illumination



(7500K at 0.5m) and even boasts nine built-in special lighting effects.

The key feature of this fixture, however, is its RGB capability, and it comes with a full 360-degree RGB colour spectrum, with 1-100% controls for both brightness and saturation, offering millions of colours to choose from. Controls are ultra-simple: an on/off switch and separate wheels on the side to control colour and intensity, with a



## How to Enter

The competition is open to UK-based photographers and entering couldn't be easier. Simply head to the Professional Photo website at **professionalphoto.online/kenrocompetition** and answer this one simple question:



## Q What's the CRI rating of the new Kenro RGB Compact LED Video Light?

The competition will be open up until midnight on Friday June 3, 2022, and we'll then pick a winner out at random.

panel on the back that will ensure you have a visual check on your settings.

There's also a tripod bush on board and an included ball head adaptor to enable the light to be attached to a camera's hot shoe. Furthermore, the light can be controlled by a smartphone app, so remote control for functions such as colour temperature, RGB colour, saturation, brightness and special effects is also easily manageable.

■ Visit **kenro.co.uk** to find out more about the company's extensive line-up of products designed for professionals.



## VIDEO

This introductory film demonstrates what's in the package when you order up a Kenro RGB Compact LED Video Light.

**Terms and Conditions:** Entries must be received by midnight, June 3, 2022 and the winner will be notified within seven days. The winner will be chosen at random from all of the correct entries. The competition is open to UK residents and employees of So Smart Media

and the prize provider and their immediate families and agents may not enter. The prize must be taken as offered with no alternative. Entries not in accordance with these rules will be disqualified: by entering the competition you'll be deemed to be bound by these rules.

## PRIZE WINNER

## WORLD PRESS PHOTO WINNERS ANNOUNCED

CANADIAN PHOTOGRAPHER Amber Bracken has won the Photo of the Year section of the 2022 World Press Photo Global Awards with a striking image taken for The New York Times. Red dresses hung on crosses along a roadside commemorate children who died at the Kamloops Indian Residential School, an institution created to assimilate Indigenous children, following the detection of up to 215 unmarked graves.

Meanwhile the Story of the Year was awarded to Australian Matthew Abbott for his series of images depicting indigenous Australians strategically burning land in a practice known as cool burning, in which fires move slowly, burn only the undergrowth and remove the build-up of fuel that feeds bigger blazes. Warddeken rangers combine traditional knowledge with contemporary technologies to prevent wildfires, decreasing climate-heating CO2.

Other top awards went to Lalo de Almeida from Brazil, who won the Long-Term Project prize for a photo essay on the threat to the Amazon rainforest and Isadora



Romero, who won the Open Format Award with a video project on the disappearance of seeds, forced migration, colonisation and subsequent loss of ancestral knowledge.

[worldpressphoto.org](https://worldpressphoto.org)

ABOVE: One of Amber Bracken's images from her winning Photo of the Year submission.

Tap here to watch a presentation about the four Global Winners.

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Powerbase™ Edge Link  
70wh V-mount pack

Powerbase™ Edge Lite  
49wh Base Pack

**CORE** SWX  
[www.coreswx.com](http://www.coreswx.com)



# SIGMA

Sigma's macro line-up delivers the ultimate in optical quality, functionality and versatility. The range has options for mirrorless and DSLR users, covering five lens mounts.

## A Art 70mm F2.8 DG MACRO

Protective Cover, Hood (LH708-01) supplied.  
Available mounts: L-Mount, Sony E-mount,  
Canon EF and SIGMA SA.

\*L-Mount is a registered trademark of Leica Camera AG



## A Art 105mm F2.8 DG DN MACRO

Protective Cover, Hood (LH653-01) supplied.  
Available mounts: L-Mount and Sony E-mount.

\*L-Mount is a registered trademark of Leica Camera AG



## 105mm F2.8 MACRO EX DG OS HSM

Protective Cover, Hood (LH680-03) supplied.  
Available mounts: Canon EF, Nikon F and SIGMA SA.



## NEW PRODUCTS

## CORE'S POWERFUL NEW SOLUTIONS!

CORE SWX HAS ADDED two new products to its Powerbase Edge battery pack range, which has proved so popular with those working with pro-spec DSLR, mirrorless cameras and camcorders.

The Powerbase Edge Link is being touted as the most premier base pack on the market today. Stand-out new features include a USB-C PD output, a robust dovetail-style quick release plate and a new linking platform that allows multiple packs to be attached together to double or even triple runtime. When used as a V-mount pack, multiple packs linked together in this way can provide 140wh or 210wh of power, while still meeting air travel safety standards when separated.

The pack features a slimmer profile than the other Edge models while having an increased capacity of 70wh.

The Powerbase Edge Lite meanwhile is said to be the ideal pack for those already invested in the Powerbase system or who don't utilise the V-mount connection and who want a base pack only. Similar to the original Edge, the Edge Lite has nearly all of its features, minus a runtime LCD and the V-mount connection.

As it's often so difficult to approximate



runtime when powering the camera as well as multiple devices, the Powerbase Edge has a built-in runtime LCD to deliver exact battery expectancy, while the Lite includes a 4-stage LED gauge that provides a capacity estimate.

The new packs are available from now, and they're priced at £123 for the no frills Powerbase Edge Lite and £215 for the more fully featured Edge Link version.

coreswx.com

## BAG UPDATE

## BILLINGHAM LAUNCHES THE EVENTER MKII

PROUDLY MADE IN England, family firm Billingham has announced the launch of a new camera bag to join its much-loved photographic range. The Eventer MKII is touted as being perfect for carrying and protecting mirrorless system cameras, rangefinders and mid-sized DSLRs. The bag includes an SP50 Shoulder Pad and a removable padded insert, with a 14in dedicated laptop slip sewn in.

An upgraded version of the previous



Eventer, which is now discontinued, the bag has several additional features that are designed to assist photographers and

frequent travellers alike. It's highly weather resistant, comfortable to carry and easy to travel with, all the while retaining the original Eventer's cherished longevity and timelessly classic aesthetics.

The new bag is available in five colour combinations, which includes the distinctive Khaki Canvas/Tan Leather option, and it's available through the Billingham's website, priced at £560.

billingham.co.uk

## COMPETITION

## TAYLOR-WESSING OPENS FOR BUSINESS

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY has announced that entries are open to its annual Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize. The international competition, which celebrates and promotes the best in contemporary portrait photography, is inviting submissions from now until 5pm on May 31, 2022 via a brand-new digital platform.

Following the success of 2021's display, which featured 54 portraits from 25 artists, works submitted in 2022 will again be exhibited at the South Kensington-based arts hub, Cromwell Place, while the Gallery's own building in St Martin's Place undergoes a major transformation. The exhibition will open in London on 27 October and will run until 18 December.



The competition is open to everyone aged 18 and over from around the world, and photographers are encouraged to interpret 'portrait' in its widest sense, with 'photography focused on portraying people with an emphasis on their identity as individuals.' The winner of the competition will receive £15,000, with second prize

receiving £3,000 and third prize £2,000. Entrants to the competition are encouraged to submit works as a series, either a group of individual portraits based on a particular theme, or two or more photographs that form a single portrait when shown together. One series of photographs submitted to the competition may be chosen by the judges to be exhibited in its entirety.

To enter the 2022 competition, upload your image(s) via the NPG's competition platform. It's £20 per image to enter, and full information can be found online.

competitions.npg.org.uk





© All images by Martin Higgs

# ROTOLIGHT AEOS 2 & NEO 3

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TICKET TO THE UK'S PREMIERE IMMERSIVE  
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PORTFOLIO **WORTH £400**



[ROTOLIGHT.COM/CREATIVITYHUB](https://rotolight.com/creativityhub)



Andy Kruczek took himself along to a workshop day held near Birmingham to try out the latest Rotolight NEO 3 and AEOS 2 fixtures, and its 1920s theme felt like a trip back in time.

WORDS AND PICTURES ANDY KRUCZEK



# BACK TO THE FUTURE

**T**OWARDS THE end of March I travelled back in time. With a malfunctioning chameleon circuit that disguised my Tardis as a beaten up 12-year-old Nissan Note, I was transported to 1922 and, like all good episodes of Dr Who, there I discovered gadgets that appeared to come from another time and dimension.

Ok, in truth I'd landed myself an invite to the press launch of the NEO 3 and AEOS 2 LED lights from Rotolight. In an event organised by the aptly named Creativity Hub, I found myself in Knowle Hall, a wonderful Grade II\* listed building on the southern edge of Birmingham, where I pitched up in the middle of an almost perfect facsimile of the Roaring Twenties.

The event itself was an exceptional piece of theatre, which highlighted Creativity Hub's skills in terms of bringing together an array of talented stylists, make-up artists and models to give both aspiring and established photographers an opportunity to add to their portfolios, learn new skills or simply enjoy the company of a like-minded group of fellow snappers for a few hours, a day or perhaps even an entire weekend.

The quality of what was on offer was a revelation, a world away from the sometimes downmarket and downbeat offerings that can be associated with the idea of 'Portfolio Building.' There was certainly nothing remotely tawdry to be found here, rather we were treated to a raft of Haute Couture costumed, professional models and dancers that perfectly complemented the atmosphere and splendour of this atmospheric venue.

Photographers had been able to book places on the sold-out courses that had run across the previous weekend, but I was here for a special event run in tandem with Rotolight to showcase the latest offerings from this innovative lighting manufacturer. After the company's CEO Rod Gammons had given us his introduction along with a brief guided tour of the NEO 3 and AEOS 2, we were split into groups and it was explained that we would be moving from one area to the next around the building.

Each location housed a model and a staged scenario and, on arrival, we were given a brief overview of the intention of that set and were then free to interpret the scene as we wished, while also being encouraged to experiment with lighting settings and positioning. Everything we needed at each location was already on

hand by the time we got there, together with additional lights and props, while it was even possible for a smoke machine to be rustled up at a moment's notice.

We were given around 50 minutes at each location, which was plenty of time to have a play with things and to get a decent feel for the two new lights. A professional photographer and Rotolight user, Sam Nash, was also on hand throughout the day should anyone have had the need for technical or creative advice.

What we were all here to see, of course, were the two new lights, and they turned out to be something of a revelation. Their clever programmable, touch screen interface is easy to get to grips with, while their RGB qualities enable the user to mimic the effects of over 2500 lighting gels from the likes of Rosco and



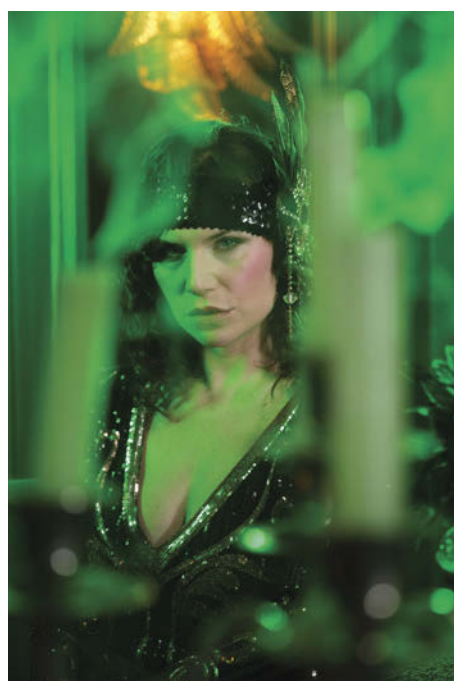


Delegates at the Creativity Hub event were given the opportunity to use the NEO 3 and AEOS 2 lights to set up their own pictures.



Lee filters, together with special effects, such as fire glow, lightning or the flicker of a television screen. And then there's one of the key features of the units, the ability to deliver a bright pulse flash of light that's instantly recyclable, meaning that, unlike a traditional flash, there's never any downtime in-between shots, however fast your drive might be. Meanwhile, because of the RGB nature of the lights, you can also use this flash in any one of 16.7 million colours or 2500 digital filters.

Optional extras include an adaptor for Bowens reflectors and a very impressive LCD diffusion device that fits to the front of the company's AEOS 2 lamp, giving Rotolight a rounded and impressive



product portfolio. From their small, hotshoe mountable NEO through to their broadcast TV studio capable Titan range, Rotolight appears to be a force to be reckoned with in the field of LED lighting solutions. But now for the key question: how did the new units fare in a real-world shooting situation?

## The Lights in Action

My personal history of lighting solutions is inextricably linked to flash. The first professional lighting product I bought was a Strobe Magnaflash 5K console, a beast that's legendary in the world of studio lighting. In the following thirty plus years I've used flash from pretty much every manufacturer while, in terms of motion, I'm steeped in years of use of HMI, tungsten, fluorescent and, yes even daylight. However, up until now, the only product I'd used that employed LED technology, was the ringlight my daughter happens to use when shooting for her YouTube account.

The first thing that struck me about Rotolight's products is how incredibly simple they are to use. I like the fact that the touch screen is so intuitive. I didn't need a manual or any instruction, yet at the same time it felt as though there is a depth to the design which will, like all great products, allow the user to grow and extend their creative reach with familiarity.

The What You See Is What You Get ethos of the small, but powerful NEO 3 and its bigger and more versatile sibling, the AEOS 2, together with their inbuilt array of filters, creates a system that positively encourages experimentation and fosters creativity.

They are powerful enough to be used

in a surprising range of situations, while also being lightweight and compact and built well enough to stand the rigours of professional use. Clever touches, such as an adaptor that allows two NEO batteries to be used on one AEOS unit, make the system feel integrated and well thought out. I feel that for hybrid shooters and also those that wish to supplement and extend their current kit, be it flash or continuous lighting, the Rotolight range of products has much to recommend it and, for those that invest, it would doubtless prove to be a much-valued piece of equipment.

At a very competitive price point of around £514 for the NEO 3 and £1200 for the AEOS 2, photographers from a range of disciplines – but especially those working in the fields of still-life, portrait, studio and video – could benefit from the addition of a Rotolight (or two). Indeed, in the week that followed this event I found myself in the studio with a client that wanted a red highlight reflecting in the skin of our model. A particular red that was a part of their brand identity. Of course, I didn't have that gel. What did I need? The Rotolight AEOS 2 would have been a perfect solution.

My main take away from my day in the 1920s is that the Rotolight NEO 3 and AEOS 2 are fun, capable, intuitive, affordable and highly effective fixtures. The only question is which one do I need? Right now I have to say I'm thinking both.

PP

### More information:

■ [andykruczek.com](http://andykruczek.com)

■ [rotolight.com](http://rotolight.com)

■ [creativityhubevents.com](http://creativityhubevents.com)

# Broken Dreams

French photographer Umbertha Richeux followed her art by staging a revealing series of self-portraits, all set against a rich tableau of sumptuous yet slowly decaying abandoned buildings.

**WORDS** TERRY HOPE **IMAGES** UMBERTHA RICHEUX

**W**E'VE NOTED BEFORE that there is a strong urban explorer-style movement out there that's dedicated itself to discovering and celebrating abandoned structures. And there's no doubt that there certainly is something highly pictorial about the ongoing decay of a once grand building as nature slowly but surely begins its inevitable process of reclamation. Surprisingly, perhaps, when you scratch the surface, it emerges there appears to be a virtually endless supply of extraordinary locations out there, with intense competition amongst those invested in this genre to see who can come up with the next big discovery.

We caught up last year with one of the leading exponents in this field, the enigmatically-named Jonk, but the latest set of images we're featuring that tap into this culture don't actually come from his camera this time around, but were shot instead by a French photographer, Umbertha Richeux. There is a strong connection, however, since, while Jonk might not have actually pressed the shutter on this occasion, he is the publisher of the book they have recently appeared in, and it's all a reflection of his ongoing fascination for the whole world of abandoned buildings.

The approach taken by Umbertha, however, is a world away from the more pictorial interpretation Jonk adopts. Instead, here the broken buildings are acting as a dystopian backdrop to a series of self-portraits where the face of the subject is never fully shown, and each image represents the telling of a story woven around a series of imaginary characters, with all the roles played out by the photographer. As a project the work is very much art-based, with the viewer left to ponder what exactly is going on, while the unwavering

stench of decay adds an unsettling sub-text.

Umbertha's book, *Appât de loup*, is the first publication Jonk has put out that doesn't feature his own work, and he's keen to promote the projects of others to his established audience. "We actually got to know each other through our shared love for abandoned places," he says. "I launched my publishing house to release my own projects but, once the machine started, I thought it would be a shame not to also publish artists whose work I like and, in the case of Umbertha, I've been following her work for years.

"The motto of my publishing house Jonk Editions is 'Towards other worlds.' I'm looking for stories that have never been published before, and books on the theme of models in abandoned places can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The fact that, in this case, the model happens to be the photographer herself, just never happened before. So, it's the first of its kind, and I'm happy and proud to contribute to the diffusion of the stories told by Umbertha!"

## Artistic Approach

As can so often be the case, Umbertha arrived as a photographer by a somewhat circuitous route. She always had yearnings to be an artist, but fate stepped in to send her in an altogether different direction.

"Images always fascinated me as a child," she says. "I could spend hours looking at drawings, comics and paintings. I considered going to art school to give shape to images myself, but a road accident at the age of 17 broke my spine and made me lose the dexterity in my right hand. So, I left the drawings and didn't go to art school, but went to law school instead."

Following her gaining of a PhD in 2001 she

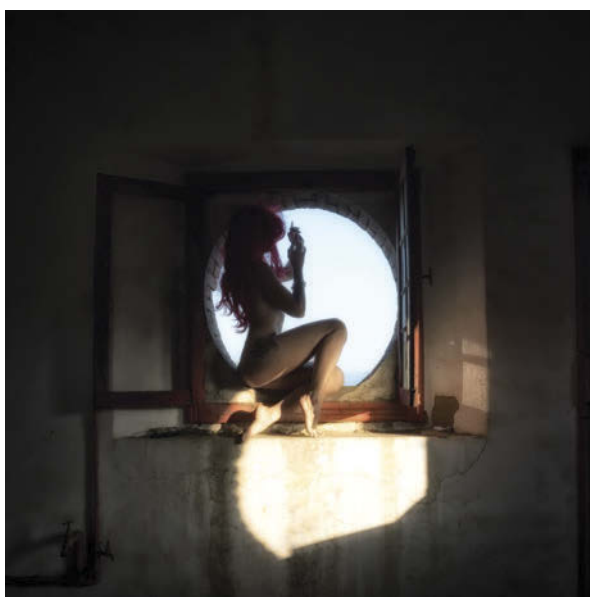








**IMAGES:** Umbertha works entirely with natural light since she wants to travel with the bare minimum of photo equipment.



became a lawyer and, two years later, moved to Versailles. But although she'd had her dreams of becoming a traditional artist effectively shattered, thoughts of artistic projects remained with her and she still nourished the notion that, one day, she would work on a project where she would somehow bring to life all the characters that were continually circling around her mind. Photography began to emerge as her chosen way to work and, alongside this, she also started to take inspiration from examples of architectural decay that she encountered around her.

So, where did the fascination with old and crumbling buildings come about, and why are they so inspiring for her as an artist? "I'm attracted to the unreal side," says Umbertha, "something

that resembles an apocalyptic setting, the kind of universe that we find depicted in the work of someone like French comic book creator Enki Billal. There's something special about the abandonment of places, the heartbeat we can perceive there if we listen to these walls and the stories they're telling. I can find myself perfectly in these kinds of places."

Once the lure of derelict buildings takes hold, those who find themselves enthralled then get caught up in the thrill of the chase. In Umbertha's case she started out on a voyage of research, exploration and the following up of leads. The places that are the backdrop to *Appât de loup* were uncovered over ten long and painstaking years of urban exploration, which took place across France, Germany, Belgium and Italy.

So much for the settings, but this was just part of the story. From the outset Umbertha was far more interested in the stories she could weave around the places she had discovered, and how she could tie these in to the various characters in her head that she wanted to explore. In her imagination she always envisaged the person featured being female, and she found herself so close to the project that, ultimately, rather than trying to find a model who could interpret her themes in the way she inexorably knew she wanted, she decided the best way to go was to take on the role of the central character herself.

"I knew that I wanted to work in this way almost from the first trips I made," she says. "Inserting a woman into settings such as those found in these urban settings seemed obvious to me, and the idea tied in perfectly to the images that were taking shape in my mind. Using my own body allows me to always be in tune with my ideas and my image processing















**IMAGES:** Once you know where to search, there are some remarkable abandoned locations out there to work in.



deadlines and, of course, I already knew everything about the characters that I wanted to play.”

### Setting Up the Pictures

At the best of times there are all kinds of challenges facing those looking to shoot pictures inside derelict settings. For a start there are the logistics: while uninhabited it’s not unusual for such places to have security guards checking for intruders, and so there is always the chance of being thrown out or, worse, being arrested. They are also intrinsically dangerous places, not least for the fact that floors might collapse, masonry could fall and, if you’re exploring on your own, no-one else might know you were there so that the alarm could be raised if you didn’t return.

In Umbertha’s case the risk element was being

taken up by several notches, since she was putting herself in an extremely vulnerable position, one where she could find herself in real danger if she didn’t take the necessary care while on her adventures.

“I never travel to an abandoned place alone, because it’s far too dangerous,” she says. “So, I always travel with a teammate. We visit the place, I spot a room and I ask to be alone, otherwise my work is not good. I pose my tripod, install my camera and then I choose a wig and a dress if necessary. Finally, I place myself in front of the lens, fire the shutter with a remote control and try to pretend that the camera is not there. It’s like a play, and it can happen sometimes that I come away with no interesting photos after a visit.

“In terms of the camera I use, this has changed a few times over the years. I started out with a Canon EOS 60D then moved to a 6D and I’m now working with a Canon EOS 5D Mark III. My lens is usually an EF 16–35mm f/ 2.8. I always work with available light since I don’t have enough technical knowledge to set up my own lights and, besides, it would be too much additional equipment for us to take.”

Most of the time things work out well and the shoot is incident free, but there have been moments when things have threatened to turn serious. “On one occasion I visited an abandoned house with two teammates,” she recalls, “and I was left alone on the ground floor so that I could set up a nude self-portrait. Fortunately, my dog was with me as well, because three drunken men suddenly showed up and I could tell immediately their intentions weren’t good. My dog allowed me to take a first step back and then I called my teammates who came immediately.”

None of Umbertha’s images are meticulously planned out in advance since she likes to respond to





each location once she's arrived, and spontaneity is an important element of what she does. Inevitably the pictures that work out the best are those that just arrive in the moment. "It's almost always improvisation," she says, "though it can happen that a place inspires me to imagine an image, and then I might return to actually make it happen."

She's known Jonk for years, and her meeting with him again at an exhibition in 2021 led to him proposing the idea of a book of her best work from the past decade. "Of course I accepted," she says. "*Appât de loup* is one of the nicest projects I have ever had the opportunity to work on, and I can never thank Jonk enough for the trust he has placed in me."

And the name of the book? In English it literally

translates to Wolf Bait, but if you understand the original French then the meaning is deeper and alludes to subjects who are light, airy, moving alone and in silence in wastelands. "But couldn't their loneliness put them in danger?" remarks Jonk. "What if these places weren't really abandoned by everyone? Who knows what might be lurking inside?"

It's the delicious mystery that's suggested by all of this that ties it into the content, and the result is a book that sets out to pose intriguing questions while playfully stretching the imagination.

#### More information:

■ [umbertha.fr](http://umbertha.fr)

■ [jonk-photography.com](http://jonk-photography.com)



*Appât de loup* is published by Jonk Editions, and is available at [jonk-editions.com](http://jonk-editions.com) or through Amazon priced at £25.33.

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# Slipping Away

Little by little the fabric of Cuba is changing, as it emerges from over 60 years of isolation, and Michael Chinnici's pictorial love affair with the island is helping to preserve its memory.

WORDS TERRY HOPE IMAGES MICHAEL CHINNICI

**BELOW:** When I saw this glowing red car in front of these decaying structures, I knew I had to take the shot. In Cuba, new car dealerships are non-existent, as are car repair centres. Parts are hard to find. On occasion, you may see a small repair shop at someone's home. More than sixty years of a declining economy, reliance on foreign subsidies, and the American embargo have forced Cubans to be incredibly resourceful. They learn to repair just about everything. Whether in a small town or big city, the street is often a Cubano's repair shop. Central Havana 2016.

**T**HERE'S DECAY AND THEN there's, well, glorious decay where, despite the fabric of a place being neglected over a prolonged period of time, it remains quietly dignified and there's still enough of its faded charm remaining to act as a reminder of past grandeur. This would very much have described the state of Cuba over the years, as the effect of sixty years or so of isolation resulted in a frozen-in-time infrastructure peppered with symbols of a by-gone age, which have survived not through a sense of nostalgia but simply because no-one could afford to replace them.

Thus the perception of this much-loved destination revolves around such things as period American cars, sun-bleached façades and the sight of crumbling buildings that are clearly now in urgent need of a little TLC. But things as changing as inward investment is now starting to make its mark and, as the brake on development is eased off, the inevitable consequence is that the very nature of the place is changing rapidly, and with it much of the natural charm that acts as such an irresistible magnet for photographers.

One of those who has become besotted with Cuba over the years is New York-based American Italian photographer Michael Chinnici, who has recently returned from his 25th visit to the island. He made his first trip over in 2013 and was so attracted by its photogenic nature that he's been coming back ever

since, usually leading a small group of delegates who have booked on one of his highly popular photography tours. Over that time he's shot tens of thousands of images, recording not just his impressions of an extraordinary place but also its steadily changing nature as modernisation inexorably starts to take hold.

"When I first travelled there I hired a company that had all the connections on the ground since it wasn't easy at that time for an American to just visit the place arbitrarily," he says. "Then over time I made my own connections and created my own team. There are always things to see and do and photograph, but when I'm leading a tour we'll base ourselves in Havana and probably sixty to seventy per cent of what we do will be scripted, with the remainder being things that we'll simply find on the fly. It's a great way to work because there are always so many incredible opportunities that you end up just stumbling across."

An inveterate traveller, Michael was aware of just what a vast collection of imagery devoted to Cuba he was building up but, given that he was away from his New York base for so much of the year, there was just never the opportunity to do anything with the work, despite the fact that so many people would see his pictures and suggest that there had to be a book in there somewhere.

Ironically enough the key to everything finally coming together was the very thing that stopped everyone travelling in their tracks, namely Covid. Forced to stay at home for a while Michael finally decided to turn his thoughts of a book into reality, and the three months he fondly imagined it would take him to pull everything together quickly stretched into nine.

"It was a far bigger project than I'd ever envisaged," he says. "I thought I would feature around 200 or so photographs but when I started to go through everything my first edit threw up a list of 3000! The problem is that, for a photographer, travelling to Cuba is like being a kid in a candy store. Everywhere you

**OPPOSITE:** As you enter La Guarida, Havana's most famous paladar (in-home restaurant), you must pass under a magnificently carved Baroque-style doorway. This grand entrance greets you like a scene out of a 1940s film noir. A decapitated statue at the bottom of a grand but decaying staircase leads up past lines of drying clothes to a wooden door on the third floor, behind which lie many amazing culinary surprises. As you walk up the staircase, you can read Fidel Castro's famous revolutionary rallying cry, "Patria o Muerte" (Homeland or Death). Central Havana 2014.







**RIGHT:** Three young men wait for the barber to return to his Central Havana barbershop. I took this photo on a Sunday morning while the shop was closed to customers but open for his friends. I found a small opening in a window at street level, looked in, and couldn't believe my eyes. They graciously allowed me to take the photo. The image is an excellent example of the austerity and simplicity in Cuban culture. In most developing countries, this would be evident only in the inner cities, but in Cuba it's everywhere. Central Havana 2016.



**RIGHT:** In my twenty-four trips to Cuba, children have always been kind to me. Manners and hospitality are engrained in Cuban culture. These beautiful children always welcome me with smiles and laughter. Education in Cuba is essential. Cuba has a literacy rate of 99.8%. The 1961 Cuban Literacy Campaign increased the country's literacy from 76.4% to 96.1% in just eight months, when a brigade of nearly one million volunteers, mostly young women known as brigadistas, travelled throughout Cuba to teach reading and writing skills. Old Havana 2017.

look, from the people through to the cars, the crumbling architecture, the landscapes and the sunsets, there are pictures literally all around you, and I would come away with thousands of images on every trip I took. I did eventually manage to reduce my choice down to around 300, and I ended up making the book a little larger than I had originally envisaged, at 348 pages. It's a sizeable volume and it weighs in at nine pounds."

### Disappearing World

The process of curating his vast collection of imagery brought home to Michael just how much change he had been recording over the past nine years, and it inspired his book's 'Vanishing Cuba' title. Looking through the work was something of a bitter-sweet experience: on the one hand he's pleased to see the lives of the subjects he's photographing taking an upward turn and rapid modernisation of the country's infrastructure was inevitable after such a long period of neglect, but there is also a touch of sadness, through seeing so much of the faded charm of the place disappearing in front of him.

"The thing is that when land becomes more valuable places tend to get gentrified and things get replaced," he says. "In Cuba this is translating into seeing fewer and fewer classic cars and more development taking place everywhere you go. All of which is wonderful for the Cuban people of course, but photographically you can't help but lose some of the character. So there is a transition going on, and this is where the 'Vanishing Cuba' title comes from, and it's the name I'm giving to some of my tours to the country now.

"And it gives an extra dimension to the pictures, which have become something of an historical record now and there are even institutions out there, including universities such as Stanford, Columbia and Cambridge in England, that have acquired the book for reference



purposes, since it's a time stamp of what's happening.

"Things are getting cleaned up and it's changing the nature of the place. For example, a few years ago I took a picture in a market in Cuba where there was some socialist-style propaganda written on the back wall. If you go back to that same place now it's all been painted white and it looks beautiful and clean, but some of the character that it possessed has gone and now you can't place that photograph any more. The fact is that it could be in any one of the Caribbean countries.

"My aim is to not show before and after style pictures of Cuba. Rather I'm just looking to present a collection of images that depict Cuban life, and people will read different things into what they're seeing. I've had Cubans look at my book and cry with joy, telling me that I'd made their country look so beautiful. And others have cried and told me that they can't believe their country is falling apart so badly! But I'm covering real life, there's nothing in the book that is meant to be political, and people can interpret it any way they wish."

As a regular globetrotter Michael appreciates the opportunity to travel light, and so he chooses to work





**LEFT:** As she gazes out the window reliving her performances in Beijing, Buenos Aires, Paris, Lima, and Cairo, a feeling of happiness fills her heart. Mercy Piedra is a veteran ballerina with the Cuban National Ballet, dancing and travelling internationally for over 20 years. I've had the pleasure of photographing Mercy on numerous occasions, including this early morning sunlight-drenched scene in the Semana Santa bedroom of my friend Josephine's home in Havana. Vedado 2017.

## Photo Workshop Adventures

**MICHAEL RUNS HIS OWN Photo Tour company, Photo Workshop Adventures, which offers a wide range of photo tours and cultural adventures. Cuba is one of the destinations that's hugely popular, but tours to over 150 destinations in more than 50 countries are organised all around the world on a regular basis, so check out the website for a full itinerary of 2022 events.**

■ [photoworkshopadventures.com](http://photoworkshopadventures.com)

these days with Fujifilm X Series cameras, having worked with X-T1, X-T2 and X-T3 cameras on many of his Cuban expeditions. "I generally head out with primes and love to shoot wide," he says, "usually the equivalent of a 20–35mm focal length in full frame terms. For my portraits I'll perhaps go with something a little longer and might use a zoom, and I'll work with something that's the equivalent of perhaps a 24–70mm, which is a great overall lens to use for everything."

## Collectors' Editions

Since Michael's intention was to self-publish *Vanishing Cuba* he had complete control over the way it was put together and finished, and one of the first decisions made was to opt for 10-colour Offset Stochastic Printing, carried by a specialist company in Italy and utilising Italian Museum Quality paper. It cost a fortune of course, but the aim was to reproduce the images in as photographic a way as possible, so that even under a magnifier it's not possible to see any dots that have been created as part of the reproduction process.

The book itself comes in three editions, and is

designed to appeal to a selection of distinctly different markets. There's a Silver Edition, priced at \$150, a Deluxe Edition costing \$225 that's limited to 500 copies, that's signed and numbered and which comes with a handcrafted slipcase, and a Collectors' Book with a Limited-Edition cover that's in a limited edition of 300 and which is available for \$395, a price that includes a custom designed and handcrafted Cuban flag jewel box. As an extra incentive this latter edition also comes with three archival Giclee Prints of the purchaser's choice, which can be made from a catalogue of fifty images.

"We did it ourselves because I knew that there was no publisher out there that would take on the book and produce it to the level that we wanted," says Michael. "As a creative director and designer, I wanted to go beyond just a straightforward production and to give people the opportunity to own the book at a number of different levels. To get it out there we created our own publishing company to promote and market the project, and our idea was to produce something that looks like a collection of photographs rather than a book that's been conventionally printed and produced."

As his tribute to a country that clearly means a great deal to him, *Vanishing Cuba* is homage to a place that's in the midst of fundamental change and yet which clearly still retains its own identity and charm. Through his regular visits and still growing archive of images Michael intends to freeze in time the things he's come across, and which mean something to him, and to make sure that, however much things may change in the future, the spirit of the place is never forgotten.

PP

## More information:

- [michaelchinnici.com](http://michaelchinnici.com)
- [redoctopuspublishing.com](http://redoctopuspublishing.com)
- [@vanishingcuba](https://www.instagram.com/vanishingcuba)



*Vanishing Cuba* is the book Michael has put together that brings together images from his many visits to the island, and it's been made available in three distinctly different editions.

# Tasty Winners!

The results of the 2022 Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year Competition have just been unveiled and, as usual, there's a sumptuous line-up of international winners to feast the eyes on.

**IMAGES PINK LADY® FOOD**  
PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2022

**F**OOD REALLY IS one of those things that can bring the world together, and it's what helps to make the annual Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year competition such an internationally popular event. And it's full of infinite contrasts: whether we're being drawn in by an atmospheric scene as a vendor prepares his wares on the streets ➤

OVERALL WINNER (and Street Food), *Kebabiyana* by Debdatta Chakraborty. Khayyam Chowk is an alleyway in Sri Nagar, which is no different from other streets during daytime. But, in the evening, numerous charcoal ovens are lit up by vendors and the aroma and smoke of wazwan kebabs turn this street into a food-lovers' paradise.







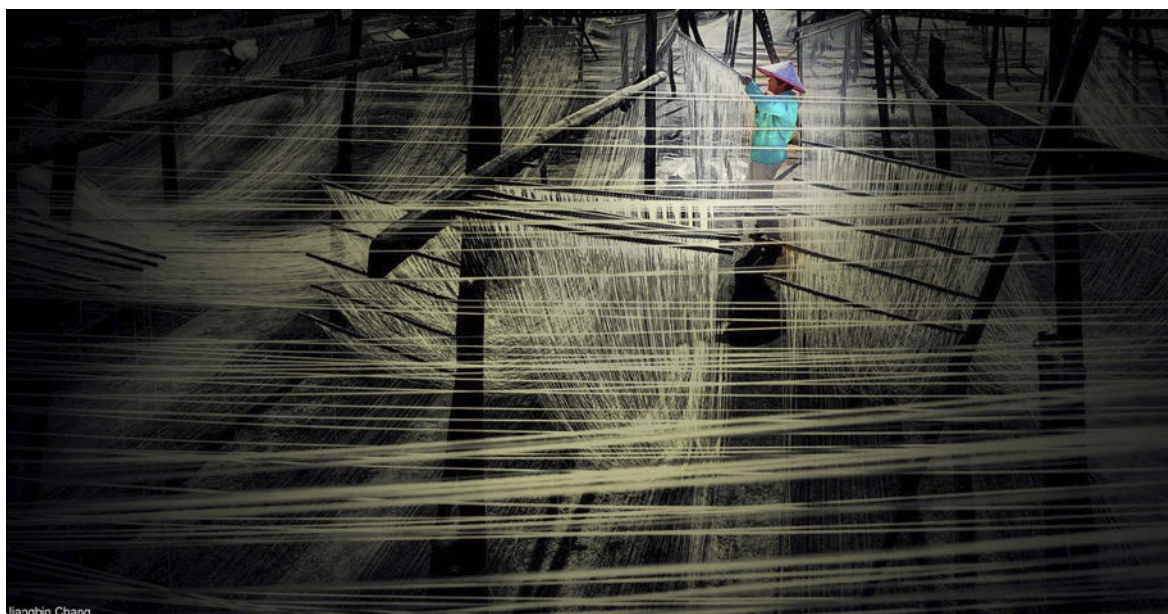


**ABOVE:** Champagne Taittinger Food for Celebration. *Traditional Skill* by Chen Ying, China. Taken in a small farmhouse in Qianlian Village, Xiangyou County, Putian City, Fujian Province. A family gathers around to make rice or mung bean filled dumplings. They use a wooden seal to stamp the word "fortune" or "happiness" into the red dough, and steam the dumplings in a large steamer. This tradition means that the New Year will be welcomed with reunion and the coming year will be prosperous.

**FOLLOWING SPREAD:** Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year (South East Asia). *Anchovy Catching* by Thien Nguyen Ngoc, Vietnam. The soft light of a new day illuminates the smoke from the fishing boat engine and the shape of green nets moving underneath the water surface when local fishermen pull in their nets. Many local fishing families along the coastline of Phu Yen province will follow the near-shore currents to catch anchovy during peak season. Salted anchovy is the most important raw ingredient used to create traditional fish sauce - the spirit of Vietnamese cuisine.

of India, feasting our eyes on the hubbub of a busy market scene bursting with life or simply appreciating the colourful beauty and form of the raw fresh ingredients, there are just so many aspects of food to savour, and this is the event that brings everything together and gives us a chance to enjoy a rich variety of high-class photography that reflects diversity by originating from every corner of the planet.

The overall winner this year is a classic that combines food with humanity, and it was captured



**LEFT:** Bring Home the Harvest. *Movement Of Noodles* by Chang Jiangbin, China. Noodles are a favorite food of people in Southern Fujian, China. The noodles are cooled and made with a unique process. Taken in Fuzhi County, Fujian Province, China.



by Indian photographer Debdatta Chakraborty on Khayyam Chowk, an ordinary Indian street in Srinagar by day that transforms into a buzzing food hub at night. It's a vibrant place full of life as street chefs fire up charcoal ovens and fill the air with the smoky aroma of grilled delights such as wazwan kebabs, the popular Kashmiri street food.

"It is always a source of excitement and wonder when one single image rises to the top," says Caroline Kenyon, Director/Founder of the Awards. "In today's world, more than ever, we feel the need for comfort, for love. There is so much to reassure us in Debdatta's winning image – the beautifully captured billowing embrace of the smoke, the golden light, the subject's expression as he prepares the food for sharing. Sparks fly from the skewers, whose roasting we can almost smell, we imagine the warm, delicious aroma. This image, gentle but powerful, nourishes our soul."

"As Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year enters its second decade, never has the importance of photography and food been so great," says Phil Turnbull, CEO of APAL, owner of Pink Lady®, and

**RIGHT:** Food Stylist Award. *Summer Veg Tart* by Carolin Strothe, Germany. Celebrating summer with this spectacular veg tart – topped with buffalo mozzarella, feta, heirloom tomatoes, pea pods, spring onions and corn flowers.



© Carolin Strothe



© Daniela Gerson

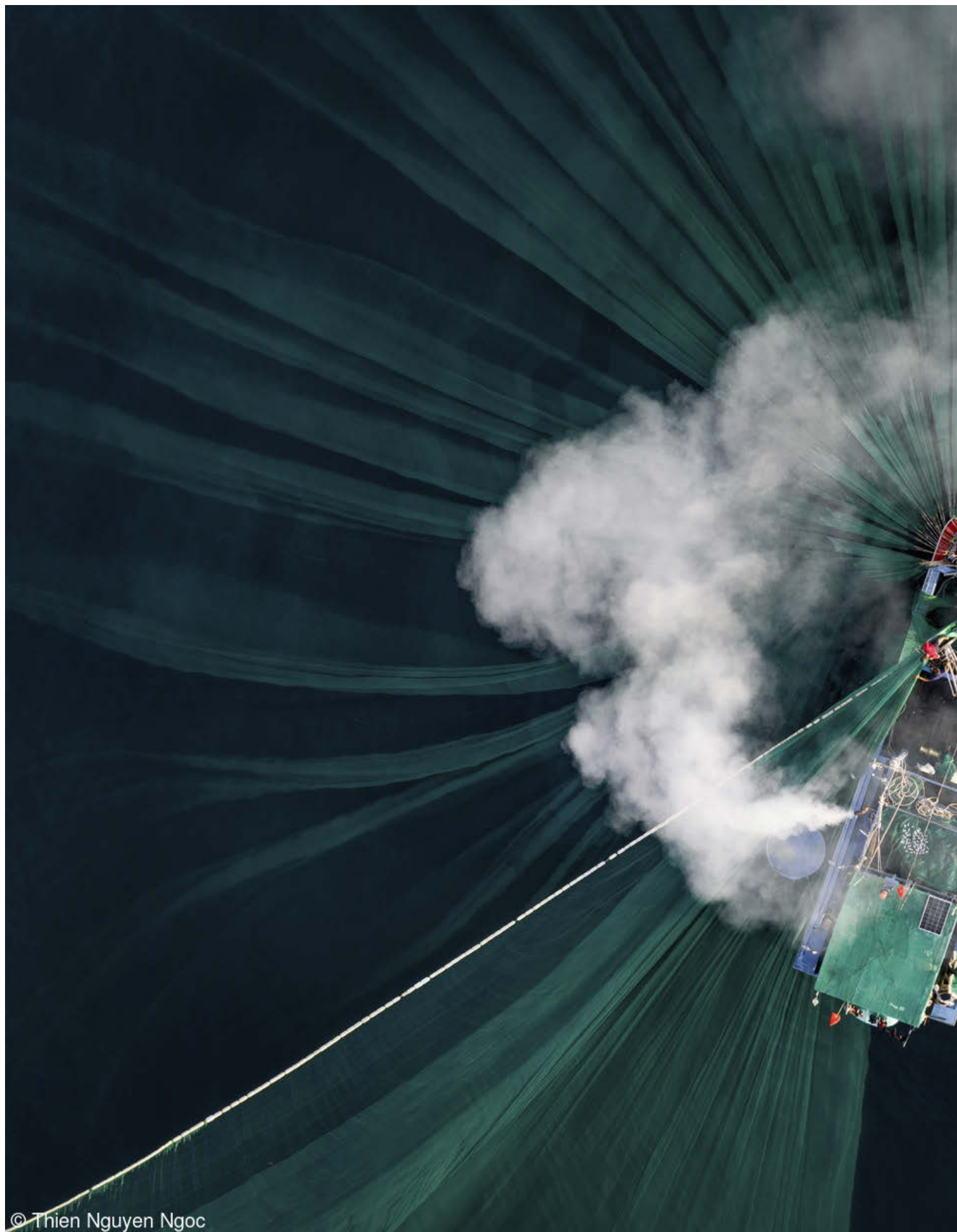


© Manju Jisto

**ABOVE:** Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year (Gulf). *Banana Blossom* by Manju Jisto, United Arab Emirates. This photograph exhibits the beauty of a banana blossom that was gathered in Kerala, India.

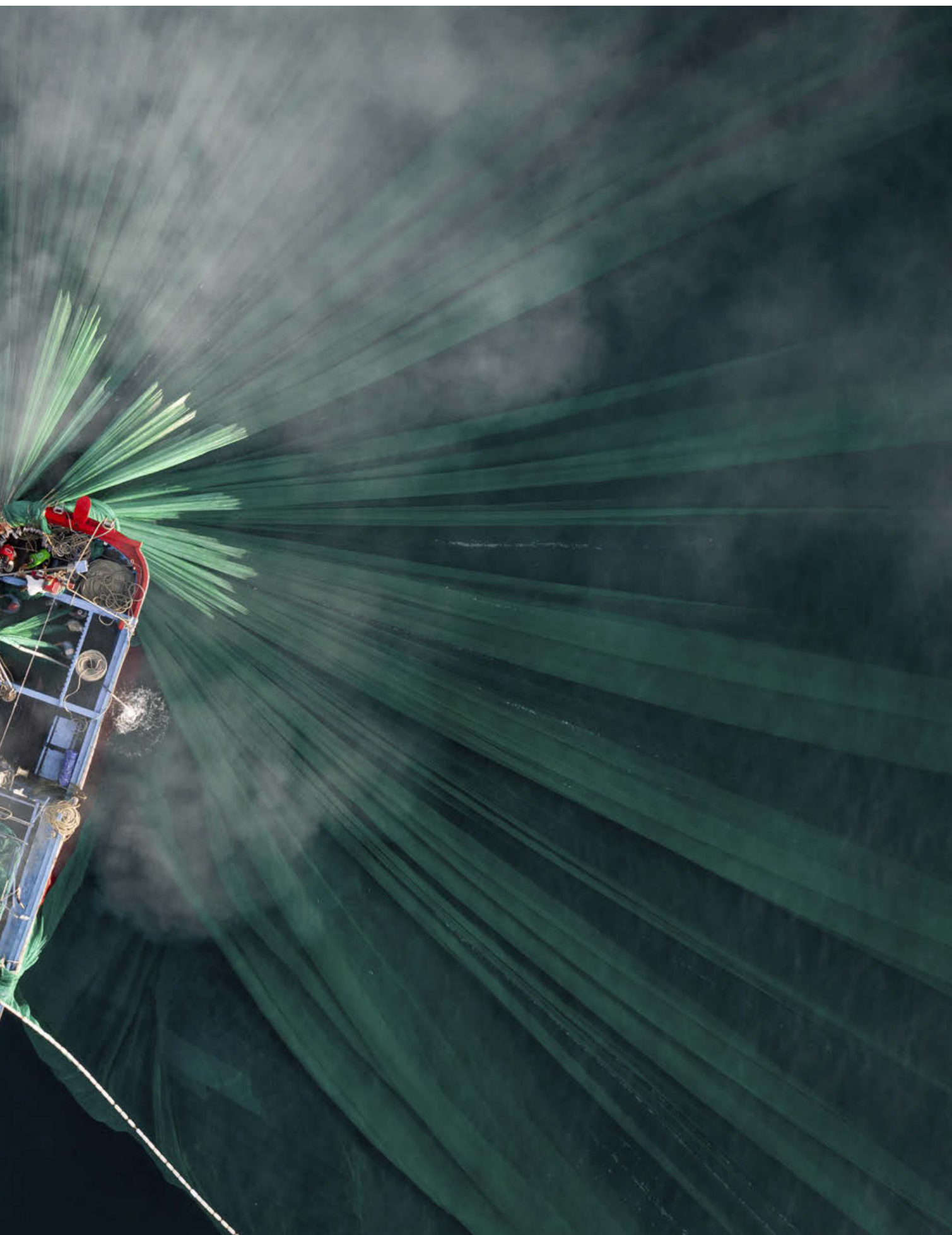
**LEFT:** Marks & Spencer Food Portraiture. *Watermelon & Feta Salad* by Daniela Gerson, United States. Celebrating all the colours of the melon rainbow in cubed salad form, with feta, basil and spices.





© Thien Nguyen Ngoc

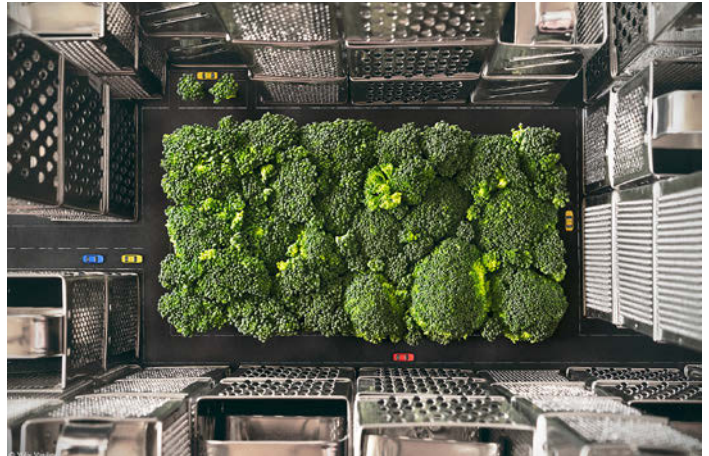








**ABOVE:** unearthed® Food for Sale. *Herbwoman* by Anna Loraine Hartmann, Germany. The lights are dimmed underneath the corrugated roof top, keeping the sunlight out to prevent the harvest from spoiling. In between the dark aisles of the bustling market in Yogyakarta, one only finds welcoming smiles and well-sourced produce.



**LEFT:** Young (15 - 17). *Food-processing* by Joyjit Das, Bangladesh. Eid ahead so a boy is working on drying raw semai in the sun.



**OPPOSITE PAGE:** *On the Phone. Drying Stockfish* by Kasia Ciesielska-Faber, United Kingdom. In Lofoten archipelago, stockfish racks have become part of the landscape. The cod is preserved by drying on large racks with no salt or smoke required as the temperatures are just below freezing. The climate is perfect for outdoor stockfish production.

**TOP RIGHT:** Fujifilm Award for Innovation. *Central Park* by Yuliy Vasilev, Bulgaria. The image is part of my ongoing project called "Foodtopia", a miniature world created with food items.

**RIGHT:** *Food at the Table. Putting On The Ritz* by John Carey, United Kingdom. The 'Arts de la Table' table-side theatre is a big part of The Ritz Restaurant experience.







headline sponsor of the Awards since 2011. "Huge global events – war, famine, the end of lockdowns, the revival of the hospitality industry, the chance to celebrate with friends and family again – all these are recorded in the Awards, which show so vividly how food touches every aspect of our lives. The competition continues to be a truly global celebration of the art of food photography."

The winners were announced by globally acclaimed chef and co-presenter of *UK Masterchef: The*



## VIDEO

Watch the live Pink Lady® Food Photographer of the Year 2022 Awards Ceremony.

*Professionals*, Monica Galetti, in an exciting Awards ceremony that was live streamed on the competition's YouTube channel at the end of April. It was watched by an audience across the globe, including celebrities from the food and photography world.

This year's global judging panel, which was tasked with the formidable job of assessing the thousands of entries submitted from over 60 countries across the world, was chaired by legendary food photographer, David Loftus, and consisted of Fiona Shields, head of photography, Guardian News & Media, Krishna Madhavan Pillai, chief editor, *Better Photography*, NA Risong, art director and curator of Inter Art Center Gallery, Beijing, Nik Sharma, cookbook author, photographer and columnist, Tasneem Alsultan, investigative and *National Geographic* photographer and Rein Skullerud, head of the photo unit, World Food Programme.

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- The exhibition of the 2022 Finalists will be premiering at The Royal Photographic Society in Bristol, and will run from November 20 – December 12, 2022. Entry is free.
- To view the online gallery of all the 2022 finalists, visit [pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com](http://pinkladyfoodphotographeroftheyear.com)
- Instagram ■ Facebook ■ Twitter ■ #FoodPhotoAward22



# The World According to Dench



Strong friendships made over the years have vastly enriched Dench's career, and he recalls two particularly influential colleagues, lost last year, whose presence in his life is sorely missed.

**“Y**OU GET INTO PHOTOGRAPHY because you're into women or you're into kit, and I've never read an instruction manual,” a photographer once inappropriately slurred. By contrast I initially got into photography primarily to travel at someone else's expense. If you could see the world, make people laugh, think and have a few drinks along the way, I thought that didn't seem a bad way to live. Having worked in the industry for over 20 years, if you asked me now why I got into photography, with hindsight, I would say friendship.

Two friends I met through photography died late last year. Both remarkable in different ways. Tom Stoddart (November 28, 1953 – November 17, 2021), who passed away aged 67 after a fight against cancer, is perhaps the one you will be more familiar with. When my wife was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2016, the first person I told was Tom. I'm not sure how he felt about this but it felt the right thing to do. In 2000 I was privileged to join the Independent Photographers Group (IPG) photo-agency which Tom was part of. For some gloriously unfathomable reason, he took an interest in me and my career. He was a constant guide since, edging me onto that path, away from others and personally walking me down some.

I rarely took a photograph of Tom, preferring instead to be photographed with him or too busy enjoying the moment to raise the camera and risk interrupting. He did once hand me his Leica M6 to look through; “Wow everything looks amazing,” I said. “Not everything Peter,” he replied.

Whatever Tom said was poignant, distilled nuggets of knowledge delivered directly to the head and heart. “It's a lot easier when you realise you're not going to be a great photographer,” was harsh but fair. “Photography will give you a champagne lifestyle with a beer salary,” continues to be true. “Photojournalism is about *look at this*, art photography is about *look at me*. Try to show people things that they thought they know about in a different way,” is still something I try to do.

As a source of inspiration, Tom's photograph of Meliha Varešanović walking proudly and defiantly to



**“ Tom's photograph of Meliha Varešanović walking proudly and defiantly to work during the siege of Sarajevo hangs outside my daughter's bedroom. She met Tom as a kid and I was hoping she would meet him many times as an adult. I'll make sure she knows everything about him. ”**

work during the siege of Sarajevo hangs outside my daughter's bedroom. She met Tom as a kid and I was hoping she would meet him many times as an adult. I'll make sure she knows everything about him.

He was to me, and I suspect many others, a Godfather of photography figure. He once modestly remarked: “Pete, there's no such thing as a guardian angel. There's stupidity, experience, and luck, and I got lucky, very, very early.” I am very, very lucky to have known him and utterly devastated to have lost him.

Ben Turner (15th September 1980 – 28th November 2021) died of a brain tumour aged 41 on the day Tom would've turned 68. Both had Neil Young tracks played at their funeral. I first met Ben a few years after Tom when he was interning at IPG. He wasn't

**RIGHT:** Friendship is one of the things that brought Peter into photography, and he recalls the influence the great Tom Stoddart had on his career.

A memorial service celebrating Tom Stoddart's life is being held at St Bride's Church, London EC4Y 8AU on May 26, to commence 12 noon. All are welcome to attend, with the church open from 11am.

## PETER DENCH

An OM System Ambassador, Peter is a highly regarded photographer, writer and commentator, with a wry sense of humour running through his work. [peterdench.com](http://peterdench.com)





a particularly good intern. He'd file away an entire magazine rather than trimming out the relevant article. Negatives were occasionally misplaced, emails unanswered but everyone liked having Ben around and people liked being around him.

Our relationship developed professionally and I'd employ him as an assistant on shoots. He wasn't a particularly good assistant either, always rolling or popping off for a cigarette. Assisting me on a fashion shoot for Condé Nast Traveller in 2007 he left my tripod at Piccadilly Circus. I suggested perhaps he might want to pop back and see if it was still there. He suggested he might do it after he'd finished his sandwich. I didn't mind, it was Ben.

Our professional relationship developed into a personal friendship. We made films together for fun at Cosplay conventions and war re-enactment events. We'd head off on a football away-day to watch teams neither of us particularly supported, grateful of the opportunity for banter, beer and to explore somewhere new. I can't remember any specific quotes from Ben, but he was as much of an influence as Tom. Ben's free spirit bordering on Buddhism, lack of interest in material things and constant interest in others other than himself, resonates.

Once, while waiting on the third floor for the lift outside his flat that overlooked the former site of News International where he was twice a contract photographer, Tom fixed me with his translucent

blue eyes, haloed with a white ring – a hereditary condition from his mother's side – and explained the hardest thing to do as a photographer is to "keep swinging your legs out of bed."

This wasn't a reference to the fact that one of his legs was one and a half inches shorter than the other, a result of a serious injury sustained in heavy fighting around the Bosnian Parliament buildings in Sarajevo during the civil war that was engulfing Yugoslavia (an injury that also saw his shoulder fitted with a titanium plate). If I find it hard (and I do) to keep swinging my legs out of bed, leaving loved ones behind, to spend money I might not have for no tangible reward, I just think of the friends I might meet if I do. It could be you.

PP



*Extraordinary Women* by Tom Stoddart will be exhibited at Photo North Festival May 7-9, 2022 at the Bonded Warehouse, Manchester and Chester Cathedral from June 9 - July 11. [photonorthfestival.co.uk](http://photonorthfestival.co.uk)

**LEFT:** Ben Turner, centre, was another close friend lost last year, and Peter remembers the influence he exerted.

Donations if desired can be made on behalf of Ben for Stray Cat Rescue via [tfs.co.uk/obituary](http://tfs.co.uk/obituary)



## THE ANATOMY OF A SHOOT

# A Taste of England

When a Thai couple came knocking at his door, looking for pictures in a setting that was ‘quintessentially English,’ Paul set up a memorable shoot in the nearby city of Oxford.

WORDS & IMAGES PAUL WILKINSON

**I**T CAN BE AN INTERESTING experience going back to old images and deconstructing them, not just because it can bring back happy memories, but also because it makes me wonder what I would do today if I were to find myself in the same position.

The particular day I shot the images featured here has stuck in my memory a full decade after the event took place, and I remember absolutely everything about it, from the weather we had through to the location and, of course, the lovely clients.

Gib and Geng rang the studio out of the blue. They had been given my details by a previous client – which I always feel is by far the best way of winning work – and they wondered if I might be able to create some engagement images for them?

Sadly for me, it quickly transpired that the wedding itself would be in their home country of Thailand, so there wouldn't be the chance to pitch for that. However, they were both keen photographers, and they were looking for some images that would

celebrate themselves as a couple.

The fact that they were both into their photography gave a theme to the shoot. They wanted it somewhere ‘quintessentially English,’ which I remember was the exact phrase they used. So we picked Oxford, which is just half-an-hour down the road from me and an iconic English university city. Though I have to admit, I suspect the architecture of this incredible place is more Italian Baroque than quintessential English, but that's just me being picky perhaps.

We had arranged to meet in the city centre just outside the Ashmolean

Museum, and so, with little more than a camera and a few ideas going around in my head, I hopped onto a bus and made my way into town. I've always loved working this way: one camera, one lens and a little creativity. No reflectors, no off-camera flash or a crowd of people watching on. Just myself and my clients out on location.

And what a location Oxford is, with its canyon-like alleys and iconic colleges. This is, after all, the place that has inspired so many authors, from C.S. Lewis through to J.R.R. Tolkien and Philip Pullman. It all means that it's not particularly hard to feel creative once you step into the city.

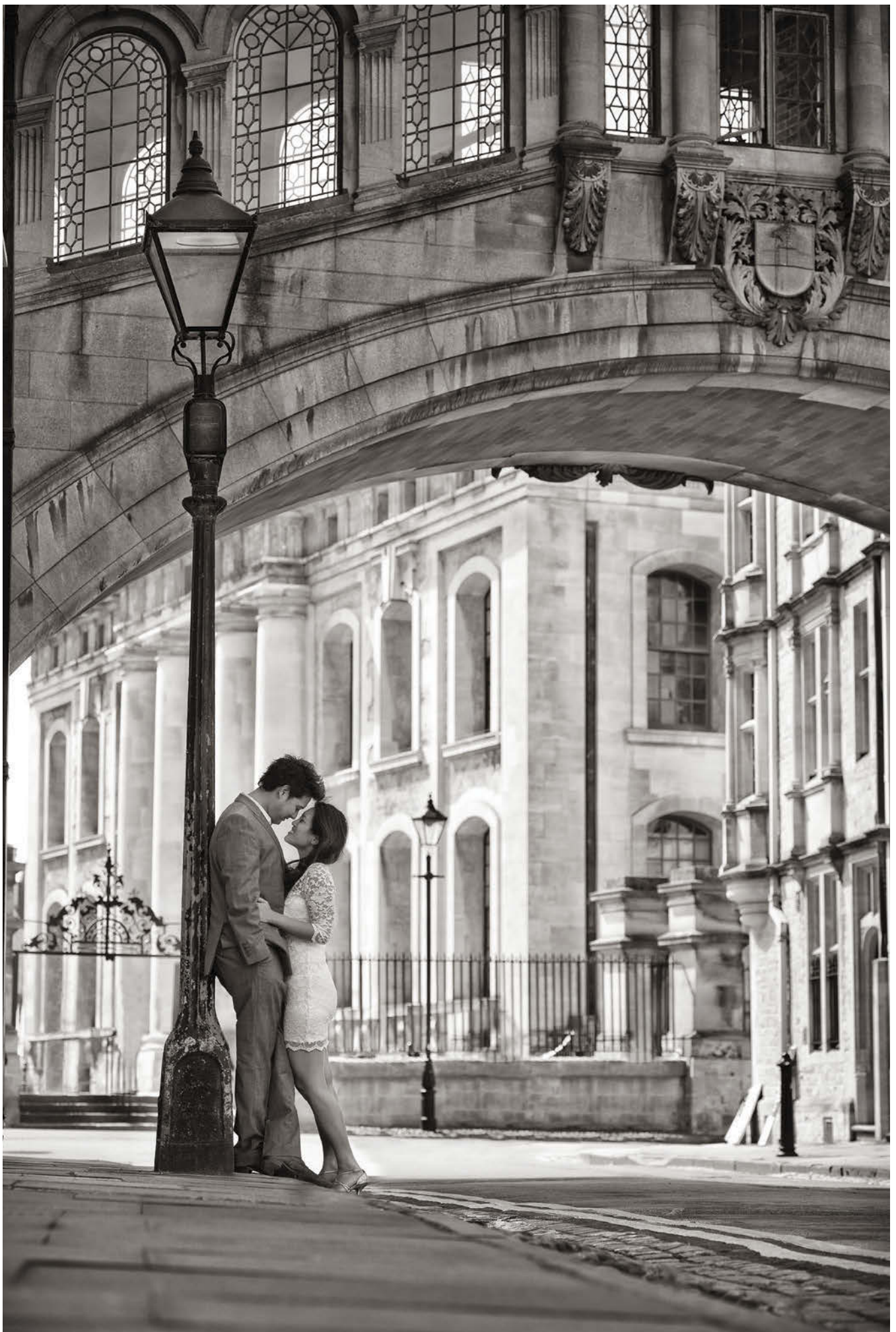
Gib and Geng, on the other hand, weren't travelling quite as light as I was, since they had brought suitcases full of clothes with them to wear during the various set-ups. Of course, we always recommend clients bring along outfit changes for a portrait shoot as it creates the necessary variety in the session, but in Oxford it meant periodic visits to coffee shops so that the couple could dive into a rest room to get changed. ➤

### PRO TIP



**IT'S HELPFUL TO WORK backwards from your idea for the finished image. I knew I wanted an empty background framed by the bridge. Although I couldn't stop the crowds from getting in the way, I figured out how to create the image using a little post-production, but I still needed to capture the necessary composite frames.**





# WHAT IS AVAXHOME?



# AVAXHOME-

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## PLANNING THE SESSION

BEFORE WE PROPERLY got started, we sketched a rough plan for the session and had a rummage through the suitcases. Having found a couple of outfits that we thought would work, off we trundled to create some images. The day flowed really well; we laughed, drank coffee, braved a little rain – well, it is Britain after all – laughed some more and created some beautiful images.

Although we had outlined a rough course through the city, from the buzzing heart of the markets through to the open expanses of Christchurch College's parks, that was as much detail as we had. So, wherever we spotted gorgeous light or exciting textures, we stopped to create an image on the spot.

Oxford is one of those cities where it can be frustrating to shoot, because you leave with the feeling you could have done so much more. But, then again, it's simply impossible to shoot everything.

However, there was one shot I'd envisaged a full year before this session. My assistant and I had been working with a client, and I saw the famous bridge that links two parts of Hertford College. Often misnamed the 'Bridge of Sighs,' due to its resemblance to the Venetian landmark, it only opened in 1914, which is relatively recent by Oxford's standards. With its classic Baroque design, it's now become one of Oxford's most recognisable landmarks.

Most photographers choose to capture the bridge from the Bodleian Library, but I had always wondered if there could be a better view from the other side, framing the Bodleian in the background. There is also a vintage lamppost that's in frame from this direction, which acts as a helpful device for posing someone. I set up a trial shot with my assistant, liked what I achieved and then parked the idea should I ever find myself in the area with a client.

And 12 months later, here I was. It was the only shot I knew I wanted to try in advance, so we forced our way through the heavy midsummer crowds to the famous bridge. In my head, I wanted an image that captured a little of the romance that the architecture evoked, so I posed Geng with his back to the lamppost. Luckily, this is situated near the pavement's edge, so Gib stood on



ABOVE: Paul had set up a test for the shot he eventually took a year previously, using his assistant as a stand in.

the road, a few inches lower. When I asked them to get close, this height difference paid dividends, creating a natural pose, with Gib gazing up at her fiancé.

I lay on the pavement to get the image I was after, peering through the viewfinder to frame the background. You could be mistaken for thinking Oxford was quiet that day from the finished image. That could not have been further from the truth. Oxford is never very quiet in any case – aside from during the height of the pandemic, of course – and on a sunny June day it was positively heaving with tourists from every possible continent.

So there I lay, waiting for a quiet moment that never arrived. Ultimately I steadied the camera, held my breath and shot enough frames to composite an empty background in Photoshop. I know



## PRO TIP



**I RARELY USE A TRIPOD.** With practice I've learned to steady the camera for instances like this, where I need multiple frames. Using a long lens also helps, as there is minimal change in perspective if the camera should move a little. Once I have enough frames, I know I can then use Photoshop to clone things out of the background.

it's something of a cheat perhaps, but needs must and all that.

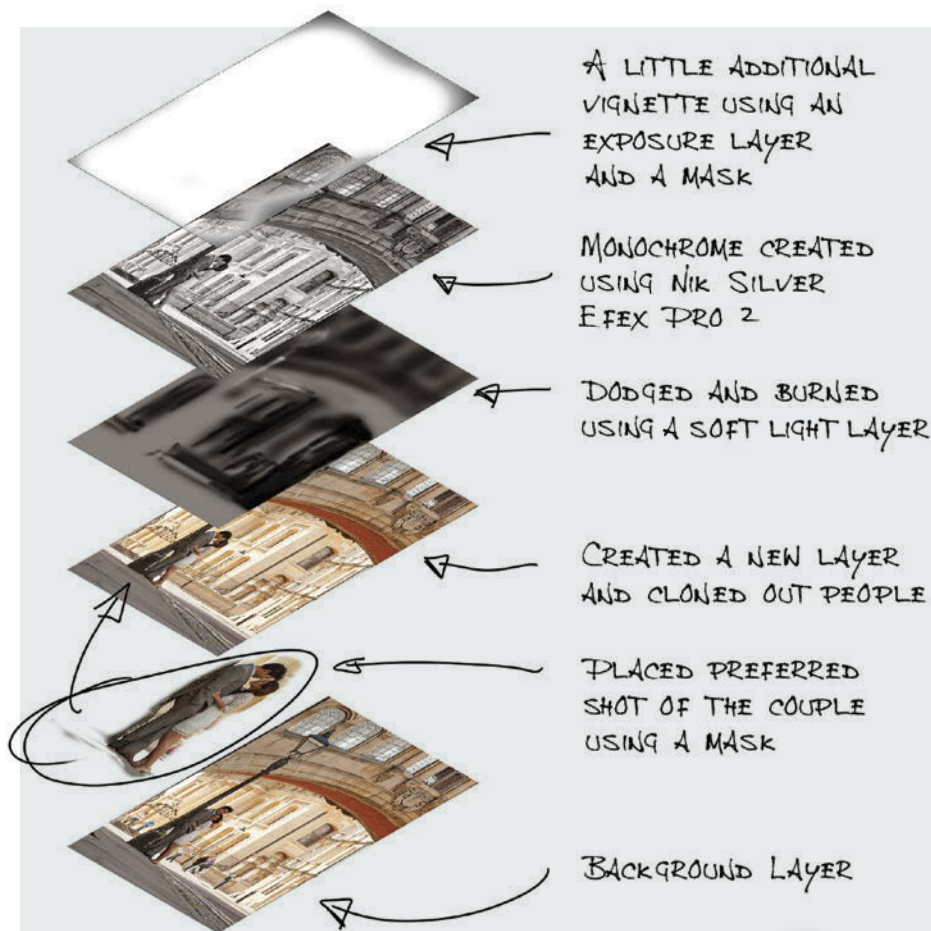
All in all, from the first frame to the last, the image took about two minutes to create. Of course we could have waited longer, but there was always the danger we would lose the real magic – the moments between Gib and Geng. Knowing when you've got what you need and moving on is crucial when working with ordinary people rather than models who can pose to order.

Something about this picture captures the romance of both Oxford and the couple. OK, there is a little trickery in clearing Oxford of its tourists and billboards, but this is still the Oxford I see when I visit: a glorious place resplendent in the sunshine.

I rarely show the image on the back of the camera when I'm working, as it slows the session down and risks losing momentum. However, with both Gib and Geng being photographers, this was one to share as, even with the crowds in the background, you could see instantly it was a lovely image, even before post-production. I just knew we had nailed it.

## FOOTNOTE.

We had such a lovely day that Gib and Geng offered to drop me back at the studio on their way home. However, we were chatting so much in the car I failed miserably to navigate our way off the motorway, incurring an additional 20 miles. Note to self: pay more attention!



## POST-PRODUCTION

1. I picked one of the set of images as the background layer.
2. Then it was a case of selecting my favourite of the interactions between Gib and Geng. Having done that I created a mask to isolate them, and placed them above the background.
3. A new copy of the two layers was created and I then cloned the people I didn't need out of the scene.
4. I added a Soft Light layer to dodge and burn the highlights down and to lift minor detail in one or two shadows.
5. Nik Silver Efex Pro 2 was used for the monochrome conversion.

## PRO TIP



**PLAN YOUR IMAGE.** For example, I could see the background of this scene was in glaring sunlight, while the couple were in the shade. I exposed for the highlights, making sure that nothing blew out to white. This left the image underexposed in the shadows, but it was easy to bring those back in Lightroom. If I had exposed for the couple, the highlights would have blown out completely, leaving the image unusable.

6. A little vignette was required to finish things off. I used an Exposure layer for this, utilising a mask to apply the effect to just the edges of the frame.



## MEET THE PRO

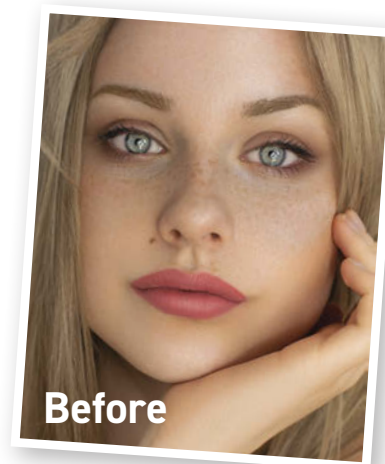
PAUL WILKINSON FMPA FBIPP FSWPP is a multi-award-winning international photographer, with a boutique studio midway between Oxford and London. He is co-author of the best-selling book *Mastering Portrait Photography*, and shares his skills and experience with other photographers through the free companion site [MasteringPortraitPhotography.com](http://MasteringPortraitPhotography.com). As well as running one of the UK's top portrait studios, Paul and his team offer workshops and professional

consulting services to photographers. Details can be found at [paulwilkinsonphotography.co.uk](http://paulwilkinsonphotography.co.uk).

■ *Mastering Portrait Photography* by Paul Wilkinson and Sarah Plater is published by Ammonite Press, priced £19.99. Available from [thegmcgroup.com](http://thegmcgroup.com) and all good bookshops.



# Sharpen Up Your Act!



To create an honest portrait of your subject you need to include the characteristics that make them who they are, and Affinity Photo's High Pass Filter can be the tool to help you here. **WORDS AND ADJUSTED IMAGES** MATTY GRAHAM

**T**ODAY'S PORTRAITS can often look like they've perhaps had a filter too many. Too polished, skin a little too smooth and lacking in true soul and character. Professional photographers know that an excess of editing and polishing of pixels can really ruin a portrait. Instead, revealing people as they genuinely are through enhancing individual facial characteristics they might possess, such as freckles and wrinkles, helps to reveal the soul and persona of the person in the picture.

To do this, some sharpening will be needed, but all professionals know that there is a host of different routes and avenues to travel down when it comes to fine-tuning detail in your portraits. The solution we're going to use on this occasion however is Affinity Photo's High Pass Filter option. Now, a word of warning – this is a potent feature and, if overused, can overpower your portraits and consequently ruin the natural effect you're looking to achieve.

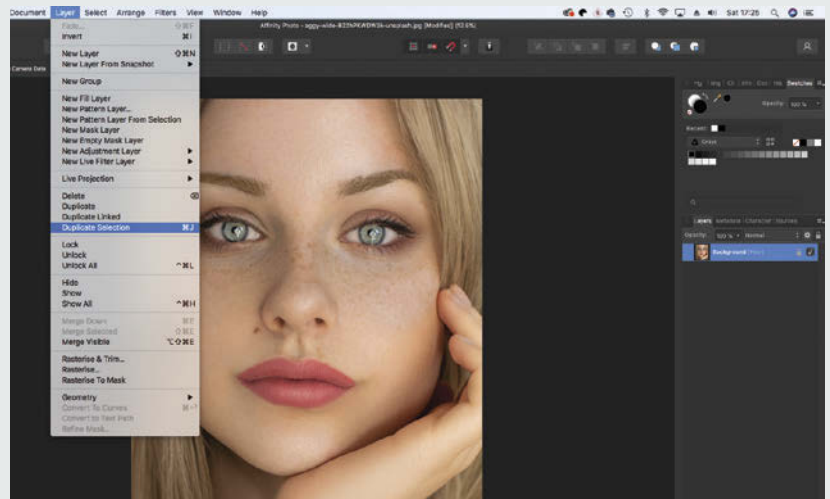
Instead, careful consideration, moderation and application is needed to deliver the perfect result. Introducing the High Pass Filter to your portrait can have a cooling effect, so we'll also be leaning on Affinity Photo's other tools, such as the Lens Filter option, to warm our portrait back up. So, let's crack on and take a look at what this five-minute make-over can help you achieve!



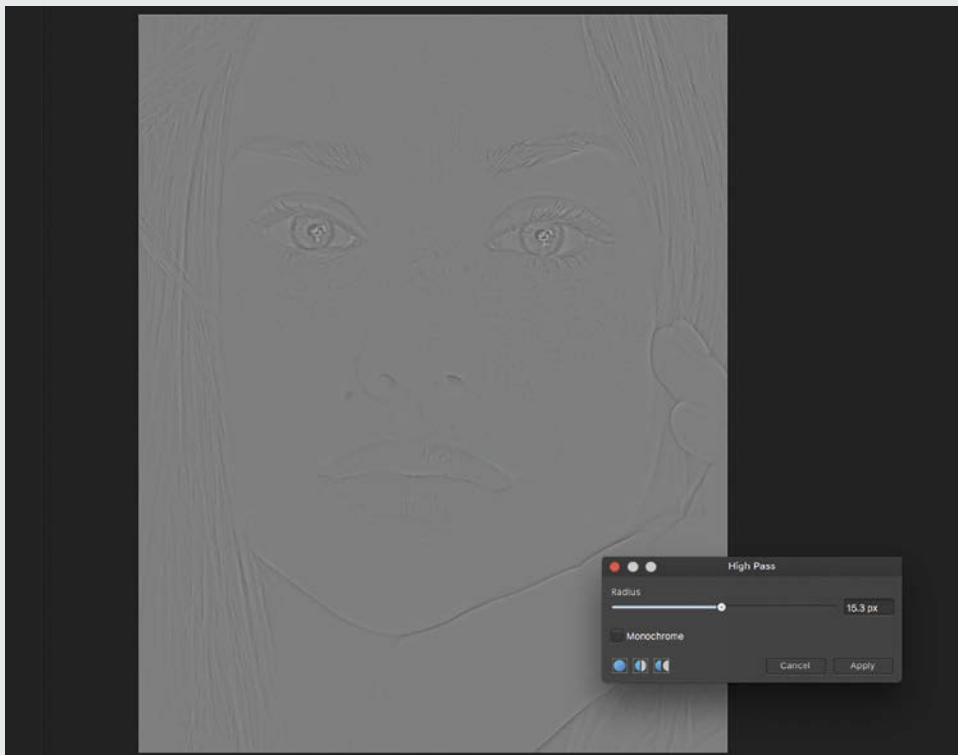
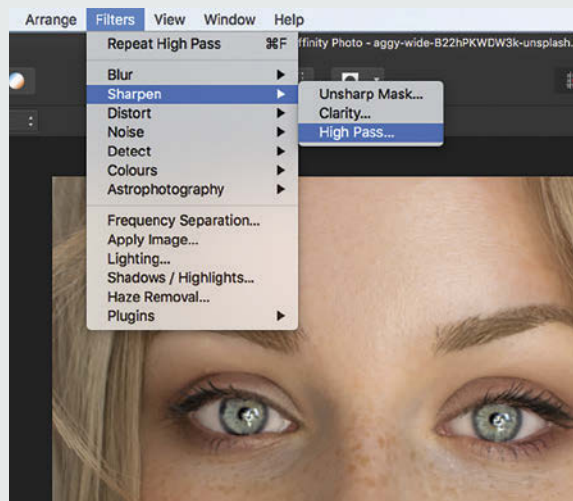


**STEP ONE****MAKE A DUPLICATE LAYER**

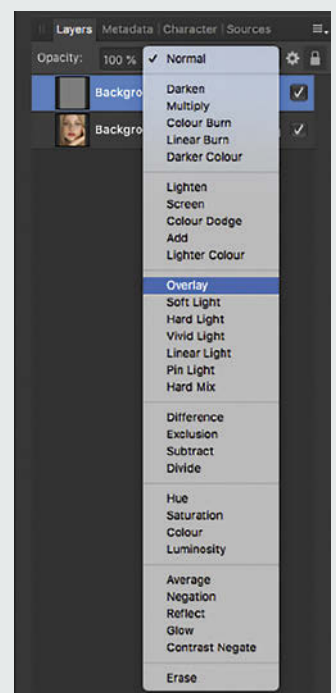
With your portrait open in **Affinity Photo's Photo Persona**, the first job is to make a duplicate of your Layer, as the **High Pass Filter** shouldn't be added directly onto your Background Layer. Head to the **Layer Menu** at the top of the interface and scroll down to **Duplicate**, or you can simply use the keyboard shortcut of **Command & J** (Apple and J if you are using a Mac). The new Duplicate Layer will appear in the Layers Panel and will be automatically selected, ready for you to work on.

**Photo Persona****STEP TWO****APPLY THE HIGH PASS FILTER**

Head to **Filters**, scroll down to **Sharpen** and then across and down to select **High Pass**. A dialogue box will appear, and you then need to drag the **Radius** slider to the right until the grey preview box starts to show the detail/outline of your portrait subject. Remember that you don't want to go too far – a Radius of around 15px should be enough. When you're ready, you can click **Apply**.

**STEP THREE****CHANGE THE BLENDING MODE**

The image at this point will still look grey, but here's where the magic happens. Head back to the **Layers Panel**, and then change the **Blending Mode** from **Normal** to **Overlay**. Your image will instantly change and you'll be able to see the frame sharpen before your eyes. The use of the High Pass Filter will ensure that areas such as freckles, as well as the eyes, will be particularly transformed and should have extra impact.



## STEP FOUR

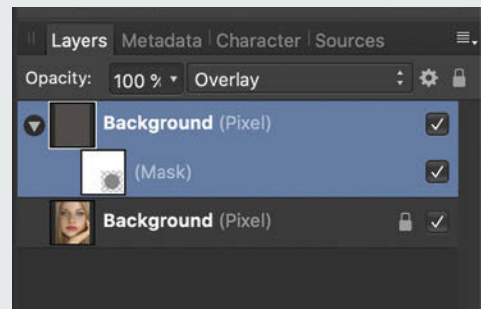
### ADD A MASK

As we've mentioned already, the **High Pass Filter** can be a little overpowering, so we need to add a little precision to ensure that its effect is added to our frame with the right amount of care. Head to the **Layers Panel** and select the **Add Mask** option (circle within a square



Paint  
Brush  
Tool (B)

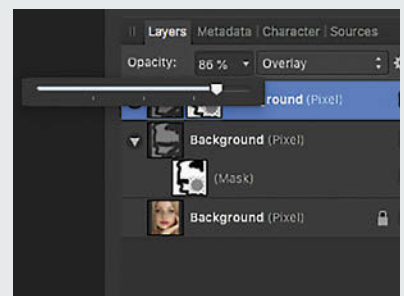
icon). When the Mask is selected, head over to the **Tool Bar** and select the **Paint Brush** tool (keyboard shortcut B). You can now select a black brush (set to 0% Hardness), which will allow you to brush away the High Pass filters in areas where you don't want them to appear.



## STEP FIVE

### DOUBLE THE EFFECT

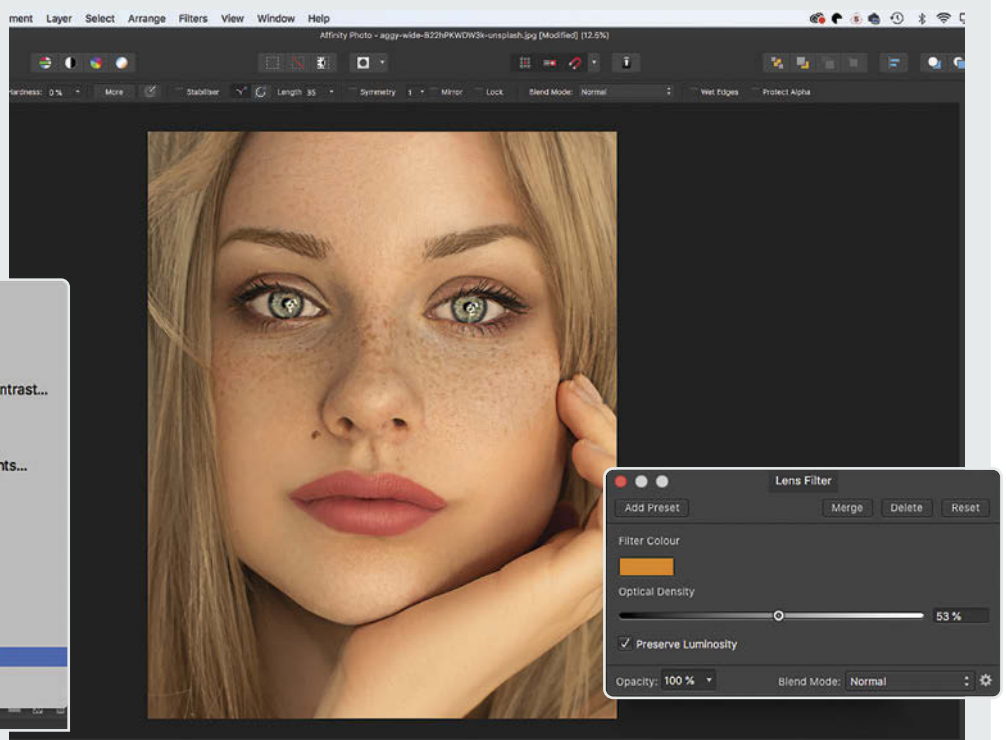
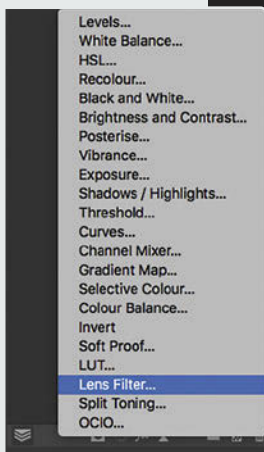
If you really want to crank up the Sharpening to 11, now is the time to do it. Select the **High Pass Filter** and duplicate this by hitting **Command & J**. The effect will increase dramatically, but if you need to tone it down simply lower the Opacity to suit your taste.



## STEP SIX

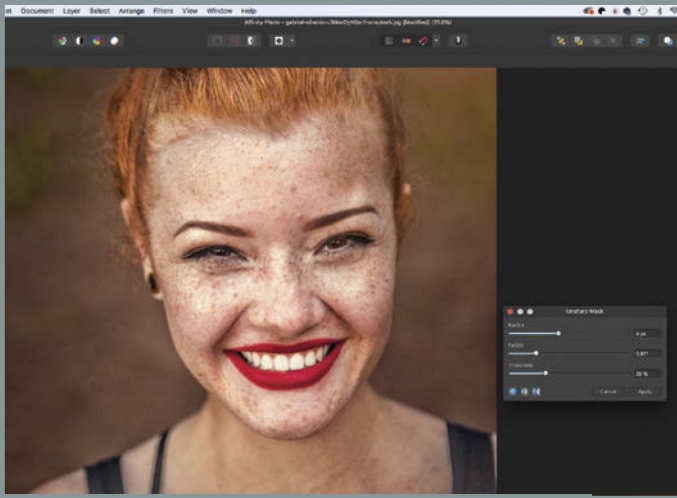
### WARM THE FRAME

The High Pass Filter can sometimes have a cooling effect on the frame so, to counteract this, head back to the Layers panel one more time and hit **Add Adjustment** (the half-white/half-black icon). From the dropdown menu, select **Lens Filter** and, when the dialogue box appears, make sure the colour is set to orange. Finally, click **File** before scrolling down to **Export** and saving the image in your chosen format.





# CHOOSE YOUR SHARPENING WEAPON



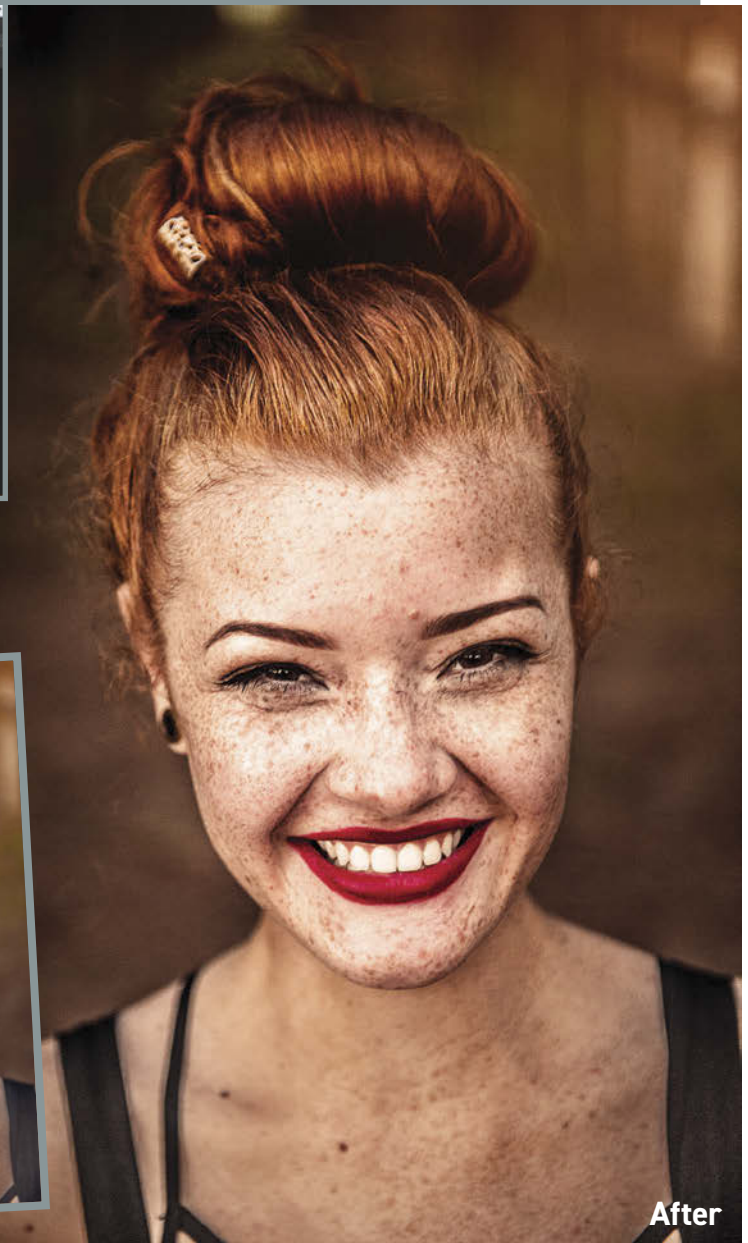
AS WE'VE ALREADY mentioned, Affinity Photo offers pro photographers a number of different options when it comes to fine-tuning the Sharpening in your imagery. We've already covered the High Pass Filter, but you might also wish to give the UnSharp Mask a whirl. When selected, a dialogue box will appear and will give users control over the Radius, Factor and Threshold. A quirk of the Unsharp Mask is that you can use this feature to smooth out skin as well. Simply drag the Threshold slider to the right and the smoothing effect will be increased accordingly.

Your portrait's sharpness can radically change its appeal, so use the Unsharp Mask to achieve the look you want.

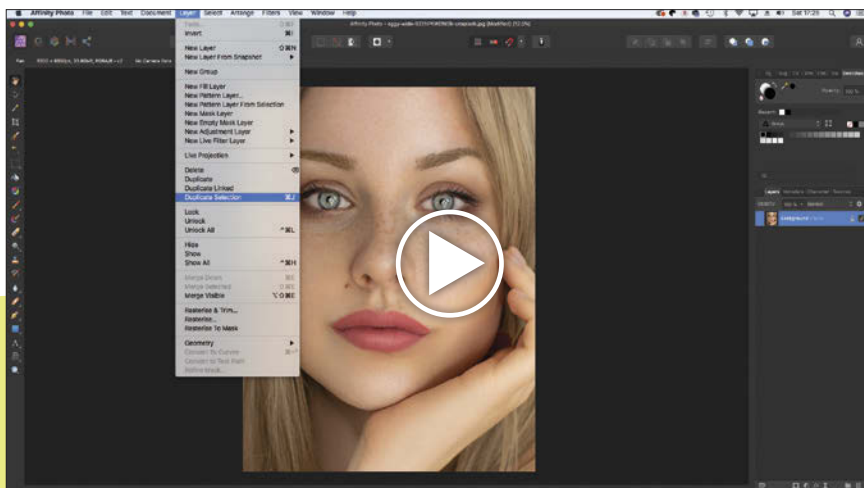


ORIGINAL IMAGE: @EUGABRIELISILVERIO

Before



After



AFFINITY  
**Photo**

More information:  
[affinity.serif.com](http://affinity.serif.com)

## VIDEO

Click here to watch an exclusive video where Matty talks through this and other useful Affinity Photo post-production techniques in real time.

## THE MOVE TOWARDS MOTION

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# A Helping Hand

If you want ultimate flexibility on your Run 'n Gun productions then handholding your camera is the way to go, and the development of image stabilised models is making life easier.



**N**OT SO LONG AGO you would almost never have come across a professional filmmaker who would own up to shooting footage handheld. It would have been seen as the ultimate in shoddy working practice, leading to an unusable end result full of wobbles and a decidedly amateur feel. It might have worked for the *Blair Witch Project* perhaps, but it wouldn't cut the mustard for your average commercial production or pro-level documentary.

It's precisely the reason why stabilisers have long been part and parcel of filmmaking life, of course, and using one of the many varieties available would instantly reduce the shakes and add a more professional touch, without taking away too much of the flexibility that comes with working away from the straitjacket of a fixed tripod. Shoulder rigs in particular are right up there in terms of essential and easy-to-use accessories for those shooting motion, and they can add a great deal to a shoot without breaking the bank.

They're still an indispensable component of many filmmakers' toolkits, but these days things aren't quite so clear cut as once

they were. Where once working handheld was something of a taboo, now, thanks to rapidly evolving image stabilising technology, it's actually totally feasible, and even something that highly respected camera manufacturers such as Blackmagic are turning into a selling point.

The Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera range, for example, with its three models – the Super 35 PCC 4K, PCC 6K and PCC 6K Pro – is promoted as being a 'Next Generation Handheld Digital Film Camera' by the manufacturer, largely on the back of the model's ergonomic design, which makes it particularly easy to hold, its massive 5in LCD viewing screen and the fact that these cameras feature a MFT mount and so can work with a range of image stabilised lenses, making up for the fact

that there's no in-body stabilisation. Prime example of an optic to work with would be the Panasonic 12–35mm f/2.8 and, even given the BPCC's crop factor, this would become a still reasonably wide 24–70mm.

Meanwhile there is now a wide range of hybrid cameras available that boast



Blackmagic is promoting the idea that its Pocket Cinema Camera range is ideal for those wanting to shoot handheld.





Working handheld delivers much in the way of freedom, but image stabilisation isn't a silver bullet that will solve all your stabilisation issues.

IMAGE@KALVISUALS

awesome levels of IBIS – In Body Image Stabilising – the latest being the video-centred new Panasonic Lumix GH6 which, in conjunction with a compatible Panasonic Dual IS2 image-stabilised lens, can deliver up to 7.5 stops of vibration reduction. Meanwhile the new breed of top-end

are now incorporating this fast evolving technology to some degree or other.

So, is this a move that's going to enable professional filmmakers to shoot with ultimate flexibility and with the freedom to pick up their cameras and to start shooting at a moment's notice? Or will the true pro always be looking for the security of something at least to help them smooth

out the bumps? As always, with a matter on which there are bound to be divided opinions it's always good to have the input of someone who's in the know, and so we asked for the thoughts of our regular expert, CVP's Technical Marketing Manager Jake Ratcliffe.

"Shooting handheld is pretty common in video production these days," he confirms, "but it does come with its own set of challenges and choices that you'll need to confront as a camera operator.

IBIS has certainly made life a lot easier for many operators, and lots of filmmakers now swear by it. But at the same time, you also have people who aren't going to want to work with it and, ultimately, it's coming down to personal preference.

"Those who prefer to stick with traditional methods will continue to find that other means of achieving stabilisation are available. This could be by using extra weight on their camera, for example, or by employing third party supports to help prevent shake. Each camera system has its pros and cons in this regard. I would suggest speaking to one of the CVP technician consultants and booking a demo, so that you can get hands on with a camera and try it out for yourself before deciding on which approach suits your shooting style."

## SMOOTH SHOOTING

One thing that you'll need to realise from the outset is that image stabilisation, even when it's at the advanced level we've been talking about so far, isn't some kind of silver bullet that will immediately make all of your handheld footage silky smooth. If you're filming in low light, for example, ➤



Canon EOS R cameras can also offer up to eight stops of image stabilisation when combined with selected optics and pretty much all of the latest models out there



“Weight is an issue. If your camera is too light then you'll have a good chance of shaky footage, especially if there happens to be no IBIS on board.”

you'll immediately be putting more pressure on your ability to hold your camera rock steady, while longer lenses will also naturally pose a greater challenge.

There are also handy techniques to learn that will enable you to get the utmost stability out of your camera, and these will ensure that IBIS is able to do its job as well as it possibly can. For example, it will help to hold your set-up close to your body, so that the weight is taken off the camera. If you hold your kit at arm's length you'll naturally be subjecting it to more natural movement. You can also wrap a strap around the body of your camera so that it's pulled closer towards you, which will again take away some of the shake, and you can

The Zacuto GH6 ACT Recoil Rig (CVP Price £1416.28) is a shoulder rig with a lightweight camera cage.



it, but if it's working then it doesn't matter what you look like!

Another hot tip is to shoot wide, rather than with a longer lens or in macro mode. If you're attempting an extreme close-up or have zoomed right in to a subject then every small element of movement will be magnified, while if you pull further out then everything is less pronounced and any shake will become less noticeable.

“Weight is another really important element,” says Jake. “If a camera is too light then you'll have a good chance of shaky footage, especially if there's no IBIS on board. You will also find it much easier to achieve usable handheld footage if you're shooting in slow motion, since this will naturally smooth out any movement.”

Weight can be added in the form of a camera cage or even a top handle, and the latter is doubly useful since footage shot from a lower angle tends to suffer less from judder. Meanwhile slow motion is a time-honoured favourite of filmmakers everywhere is any case, and it will not only look dramatic but you can pretty much discount camera shake entirely when you shoot in this style since it won't be noticeable once everything slows down.

The Wooden Camera Shoulder Rig V3 Base (CVP price £326.93), can be used for long periods.



The Bright Tangerine KASBAH Shoulder/Handle Kit (CVP Price £1126.80), is versatile and comfortable.



also practice steady, measured breathing so that you're relaxed while filming.

If you do want to follow your subject then use the 'Heel Toe' technique, where you walk with your knees slightly bent and step on your heel, roll onto your foot and then onto your toes. This will enable a nice even walk that minimises the bounce, while you could also sway slowly from side to side as you move, using all your body weight in a nice smooth motion where all of the jerkiness has been eliminated. Some refer to this stance as the 'ninja walk,' since this is how you might look when you practice



If you don't want to rely entirely on handholding then the use of a high-quality shoulder mount will give you the best chance of steady footage, while retaining great flexibility.



## WORKING WITH SHOULDER RIGS

If you visited the CVP stand at the recent BSC Expo Show then you'll have encountered the display of twenty of the latest and most popular small and medium form factor cameras that were rigged in shoulder mounted and handheld configurations. The idea here was to give visitors the opportunity to get hands-on with as wide a selection as possible.

It's a sign of how popular the shoulder rig continues to be, even as IBIS is making waves, and Jake is convinced that this handy accessory has plenty of life left in it yet. "Shoulder rigs have been a staple in filmmaking for decades," he says. "They are

still a really good way of operating if you happen to be shooting over longer periods of time, and they provide a common camera perspective and allow you to be agile while shooting. There's no doubt that they are very good at helping you to achieve really solid, stable footage.

"The reason we had a full-on show at BSC Expo was because what works for one person might not necessarily work for someone else. Each brand does things differently, so there are lots of

pros and cons to consider. Our display featured a range of configurations and we were showcasing brands such as Wooden Camera, Vocas, Shape, SmallRig, Zacuto, ARRI and Bright Tangerine.

"There really is a product to suit the requirements and the budget of all filmmakers, and we're more than happy for people to get in touch and to try out as many as they like without obligation. It's the best way to make sure someone comes away with the solution that fits them and the way they work the best."

PP

**cvp.com**



## VIDEO

In the video below Jake gives an in-depth review of the Blackmagic 6K Pro Pocket Cinema Camera.



## JAKE RATCLIFFE

ONE OF CVP's resident team of technical experts, and a self-confessed camera nerd who gets way too excited over kit, Jake's background mirrors that of so many creatives these days.



After graduating with a degree in photography, he took up a freelance career and found that many of his clients were asking for video services so, rather than turn the work away, he started to teach himself the filmmaking basics. Having been based at CVP for four years now, Jake epitomises the 'equipment agnostic' approach of the company and devotes his time to advising customers who might be looking for impartial feedback on which products to invest in as they look to make the same journey into motion.



## TECHNIQUE: LEARNING TO LIGHT

# Lone Light Set-Ups



It makes sense to walk before you run, and when starting out with lighting you should first of all explore the considerable potential offered by a single strobe set-up.

WORDS & IMAGES CHRIS ORD

ONE OF THE QUESTIONS I get asked the most through my social media is 'what's the best starter set for flash?' While I'm not going to get into brands and power ratings in this particular feature, I am going to share with you what my answer usually is.

To me, light is light: some types will be stronger, others weaker. What's far more important than this, however, is how it's used. So, my response to those who want to know what to start out with is to suggest a single strobe, and to then learn how to partner it with a versatile softbox, such as ➤

## INITIAL SET-UP:

FOR OUR FIRST SHOT we positioned our strobe to the left side of Kayleigh and angled it down on her at 45-degrees, with myself shooting directly in front at 90-degrees. This set-up allowed us to create shadow and definition around the jawline and cheek bones. In images 1-3 you can see we created a beautiful Rembrandt effect, with that 'triangle of light' on the opposite side to our strobe. This is created due to the position and the height of the strobe, and it allows the shadows to form to deliver this effect. As Kayleigh turns her head and looks toward the light in image 4 we move from a Rembrandt to a loop lighting



AD300pro  
120cm Octabox







1

effect, opening that triangle of light so that it effectively loops around her mouth.

Shooting the Rembrandt look can sometimes be difficult if your subject is mobile and happens to be changing their pose regularly, so if you want this effect it's important for you to tell your model exactly where you'd like them to glance.



3



4

## SET-UP TWO:

FOR OUR NEXT ARRANGEMENT we essentially reversed the roles of our strobe and the ambient light. We rotated around so that the strobe was positioned over the right shoulder of Kayleigh, with the ambient light now providing our 'key.' The strobe has added a hair light, which has helped to create separation against the now darker background of the car park.



Spinning the set up around like this is possible for two reasons. First of all, it allows you to balance the flash with the ambient light effectively – and I'll be going into this in a lot more detail in a future issue – and, secondly, because the distance to the subject with the strobe is exactly the same, it means that the impact of the flash is no stronger or weaker.

I love to move around a lighting set up like this, particularly in a location that offers as much as this one did, to discover all the different angles from which I'm able to shoot.

There are times of course when I would prefer to be shooting with three to four strobes because of the extra options this approach gives me. However, it's still worth knowing that



6

a single strobe can also be a fantastic way to deliver a series of images, and this approach comes with minimal need to change of the main variables, namely aperture, shutter speed, flash power and distance to subject.

**“ I’m always telling photographers to slow down. When using a simple lighting set up, there isn’t always just one shot you can achieve. ”**

an octabox. This combination of one strobe and a single modifier in the first instance can be endlessly versatile, particularly when you learn how to use this simple arrangement in a multitude of ways.

A 45-degree lighting set up, for example, is one of the easiest to start with when shooting portraits and, as you’ll see from this workshop, just a turn of the subject’s head can enable you to shoot everything from a Rembrandt effect through to loop lighting and narrow and broad lighting.

This feature will be demonstrating how, by working in this way, I was able to produce a range of different results, without the need to change any settings on my camera.

As a professional you totally need to be adaptable and so, although our prime aim with this shoot had initially been to work outside, when it was clear that it was going to be a rainy day we headed instead into a nearby multi-storey car park. Here the team could keep dry, but there was still some daylight hitting the scene.

The idea for the session was to have a stark contrast between the red dress of our model Kayleigh and the grey of the concrete background. I wanted to show how using flash could help create the ideal lighting conditions, when ambient or available light on its own wasn’t going to be enough.

All of the shots within this feature were produced with exactly the same camera settings and power levels on the strobe. Because we were shooting in a largely controlled environment, once we had our settings in place there was no real need to

change them. I was using high speed sync, and shooting at 1/500sec at f/1.4, at 1/8 power on our Godox AD300 Pro Strobe.

## TRY TO SLOW DOWN

On my workshops and tutorials, I’m always telling photographers to slow down. When using a simple lighting set up, there isn’t always just one shot you can achieve. Imagining that your subject is at the centre of a clock face and working around them in a circle, take a shot from where each hour would be, which is a great way to understand what the light is going to do.

This whole tutorial all started with one really important aspect – balancing the ambient light and the flash to the exposure I wanted. This meant that everything else I did from that point on was about framing, communication and looking for that next shot, and it gave me the flexibility to work in a highly efficient way.

PP

### More information:

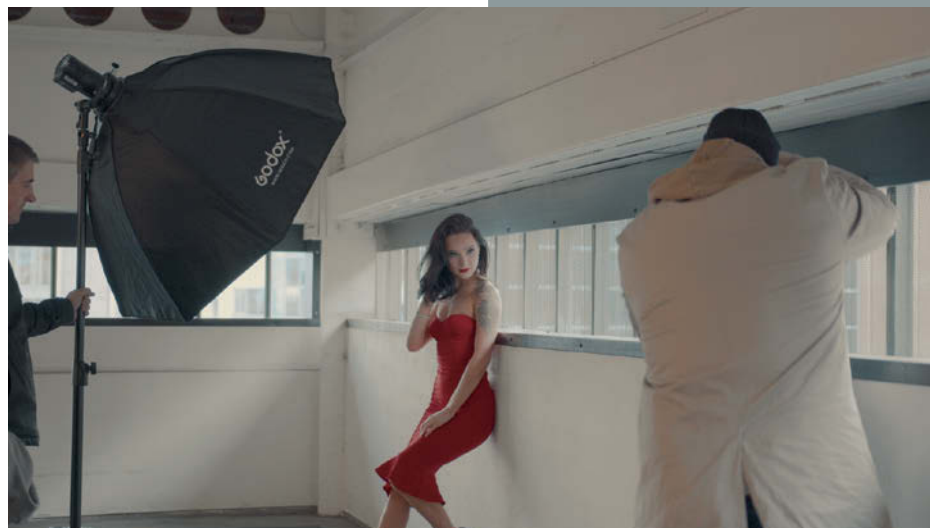
■ [chrisordtraining.co.uk](http://chrisordtraining.co.uk)

### NEXT MONTH:

In my next column I’ll be exploring how to balance your flash and ambient light in both daylight and night conditions, utilising all of the variables available to us with our camera and strobe combinations.

## VIDEO

In the film below Chris goes into more detail about how this sequence of portraits was lit.



## SET-UP FOUR:

THE FINAL SET-UP was where I really aimed to change the entire look and feel of the shoot, but remember our camera settings and light power remained exactly the same.

For this sequence I changed my position so







### SET-UP THREE:

THE NEXT STEP WAS fairly simple, and involved a move away from the wall to allow for a slightly different composition. As long as the distance between Kayleigh and our light stayed the same, there was no need to change any of the camera settings, meaning that I could keep my conversation going, and didn't need to be constantly checking my settings. As a result,

the flow of the shoot was much quicker and smoother, which was better for both sides. As you can see in the BTS shot above, our light position was maintained above and angled toward Kayleigh to allow for the shadows to form.

The full length shot (Pic 7) offers a broad light, where the light is hitting the side of the face we see the most of, due to Kayleigh turning her



8

glance away from the camera. Meanwhile the close-up (Pic 8) reverts back to a Rembrandt effect, with the soft ambient light providing an adequate fill to allow a decent level of detail to be revealed in the shadows.



9

that the model was now between myself and the strobe, and I opted for 'narrow light' to illuminate the side of the face we see the least. This type of effect is one of my favourites, and I knew it would work really well since Kayleigh has such a strong profile. Because the vast majority of our light is on the opposite side to the camera it gives the



illusion that there is less light, and it allows us to shape and sculpt Kayleigh into the frame. The ambient light is still present and offers some fill to allow for details in the shadow, rather than everything going into total darkness.

My final shot (image 10) was essentially based around exactly the same technique, albeit from a different angle. We illuminated the narrow side of Kayleigh's face but this time shot into the ambient light to lift the whole exposure and, while the effect of the light in Kayleigh's face doesn't change, we see just a little more of it due to the amount of skin that it's hitting, giving the impression there is more light, or more power.





# Using Thrive to Survive!

Lisa's first Thrive Conference since the pandemic has just taken place to rave reviews and she's convinced of the need for such get-togethers and keen to encourage women attendees.

I'M JUST RETURNING from Thrive, my annual conference that I produce through Photography Farm and which takes place separately in my home town of Brighton but also Glasgow. When I say 'annual' I mean in normal times. This one was postponed and postponed due to, well you know what. It was originally planned for March 2020 and, one week before it was due to happen, I took the difficult decision to not go ahead with it.

It's all too easy now to forget how crazy those first few weeks of the pandemic were. I had been in Warsaw the month before to speak at another photography conference. We had no idea at that time that just a few weeks later the situation in the news was going to escalate to such a degree. However, once the Photography Show announced that it wasn't going ahead, all other events seemed to topple like dominos.

The stress of planning this one was actually too much for me. I hated the additional postponements. I hated the few weeks leading up to it and I swore that this was the last time. I told my husband to restrain me if I started talking about doing it again. I'm a photographer, not an event manager. I don't get my kicks from spending time with spreadsheets, battling with audio-visual equipment and catering to 100 individuals' food requirements.

It's a lot to take on. So why have I locked in dates for 2023, and why have I already opened up the ticket sales? Because I believe that we need photography conferences – maybe even more so in a post-pandemic world full of online interaction. We need to come together in real life to connect with our peers, form new industry friendships,



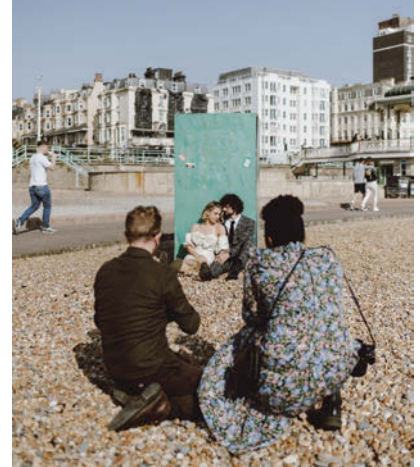
Images on this page © Jessica Bevan

**“By the end of the first day at this year’s conference, I started to get messages like this – ‘I arrived feeling lost, tired, very lonely, and questioning if this was going to be the job for me. I left Thrive so happy, so refreshed, revived, and excited again.’”**

shoot, learn, grow, get drunk and fall into a karaoke bar at midnight.

Every year, I design my conference being mindful that, often, female photographers will be attending on their own. It's intimidating to walk

Thrive's Brighton event was held close to the sea front, ensuring some classic shooting locations on the doorstep.



into a room full of people that you might only know on social media. Are you good enough, is your kit up to scratch, will you say the wrong thing, will you fit in? The thing to realise is that chances are high that most other people in the room,





including the speakers and myself as well, are feeling the same high levels of anxiety.

It's challenging to present a talk about your business and it's equally stressful to shoot in front of other photographers, no matter what level you are at. By the end of the first day at this year's conference, I started to get messages like this – 'I arrived feeling lost, tired, very lonely, and questioning if this was going to be the job for me. I left Thrive so happy, so refreshed, revived, and excited again.'

There is a magic that happens at our conference that can't be replicated in a digital space: it can only happen in a room. Once people realise that they do fit in, that everyone is scared, they let down their guard and participate. They take what they need and that's different for everyone. The conference is like a transmission, but it's up to the individual what they choose to receive.

So, that's why I've already opened up ticket sales for 2023. At this stage, I haven't announced any speakers, venues or topics but another magical thing is happening, and that's the fact that people are buying in. I woke up this morning to a lovely little flurry of ticket sales from photographers that attended



this year, along with some that didn't. It's extraordinary. It's made me understand that it's not the line-up that people buy into, it's the shared experience.

By the end of the first day of this year's event many people had already made new friendships. They had group chats on the go and were arranging to meet up. These bonds will go far beyond the two days they

spent together at the conference and, when times get tough like we all know they can, these will be the people that support each other.

I'm already getting messages and Instagram stories from photographers out at weddings shooting with their newfound skills. It's the shot of inspiration we all need as we go into another uncertain season. It's so heart-warming to see and I need to refer back to these at times when the planning gets tough. Which I know it will, and I also know of other conferences that haven't survived.

I'm not surprised. It was extremely challenging to deliver this one. But as I open up the spreadsheets again, I'm thinking that we need conferences planned by women. My plane from Glasgow is about to land and my family will be waiting for me at the airport. I'm really looking forward to seeing them but I'm also wondering – how am I going to break the news that, yes, I'm going to be doing it all over again?

PP

#### More information about Lisa:

■ [photographyfarm.co.uk](http://photographyfarm.co.uk)

■ [@devlinphotos](https://www.instagram.com/devlinphotos)

■ [@photographyfarm](https://www.instagram.com/photographyfarm)

# Go Wild in the Country

You don't need to travel to the ends of the earth to find brilliant wildlife subjects. If you're patient there are wild creatures to focus on that can be close by, or even in your own garden.



## ASSIGNMENT ELEVEN:

# LOCAL WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

**W**ILDLIFE IS ONE OF the most popular subjects of them all, and the real thrill of it is that, even in the very heart of a city, it can be all around us, and so you're never likely to be far from some potentially fruitful subject matter.

Just because the creatures you're focusing on might be considered everyday – think birds, squirrels or maybe the odd urban fox – it doesn't mean they can't be incredibly photogenic. And if you're prepared to venture to a quieter spot away from the crowds, with patience and the necessary stalking techniques the potential will open up to photograph an even greater variety of wildlife.

Take a look at the striking work produced by this month's Nikon expert Frederikke Jensen, and you'll get the idea. Many of her subjects were found







in the back garden of her father and stepmother's house and, despite the familiarity of the location, she's pieced together a strong portfolio of wildlife work and has recently been accorded the honour of being named a Z Creator.

If you're inspired to do the same take a look around you and you'll doubtless find a whole stack of subjects close by, and then your challenge will be to persevere and teach yourself the techniques you need to shoot great and natural-looking photographs. Even if you aspire to heading up to bigger and more exotic subjects, learning the basics close to home will still stand you in good stead.

If you've been following this series, you'll know the ground rules by now. We're running Pro Academy in tandem with the excellent Nikon School and there are twelve challenges in total, so you still

have one more chance after this one to earn one of those coveted certificates! As always, you're cordially invited to enter just one challenge or to go for them all.

We're inviting you to send across your best single shot from the assignment to our expert team at Professional Photo and, if you've met the required standard, we'll send you back an e-certificate to prove the fact. Let us know that you've successfully completed the first six assignments and you'll receive a further e-certificate to confirm you really are an excellent all-round operator, and there's now the prospect of receiving an extra one if you're one of the heroes managing all twelve! It's not a competition, there are no prizes to be won but you'll have the satisfaction of knowing your skills have been recognised and it's a chance to dip into some fresh genres.

## How to Take Part

You don't need to be a professional photographer or a Nikon user to take part in Pro Academy, and don't be shy about sending in your shot even if you feel it's perhaps not up to the high standards of the work from Frederikke that you can see here. It's also about learning and rest assured we make allowances for newbies!

Head to the Professional Photo website and upload your shot for Assignment Eleven – Local Wildlife, and make sure you fill in your email details. Our team of experts is eagerly awaiting your entry!

**ENTER YOUR IMAGE**

Tap to go directly to the Pro Academy page on the *Professional Photo* website.



## Challenge Eleven: Local Wildlife

STEP BACK FOR a moment and take a look at the wildlife that could be living in your locality. It might be so everyday that you almost don't notice it any more, but that squirrel that hops around your garden or the birds that visit your feeding table on a regular basis can make brilliant subjects. The challenge is to get serious about the way you photograph them and to set yourself the task of producing pictures that are up to a high professional standard, and the skills you learn in the process can stand you in good stead in your future wildlife photography career.

We're not asking for the pictures you submit to be shot in any particular style,



and the approach you decide to take is entirely up to you. You could even visit one of the excellent conservation centres, such as the British Wildlife Centre in Surrey – partnered with on a regular basis by the Nikon School – and here you'll be able to get up close and personal to subjects ranging from red squirrels through to foxes and badgers. It's a great way to build up your skill set and the experience ensures that, when the opportunity arises out in the wild, you'll be fully prepared to shot some awesome pictures!

## Technical Tips with Neil Freeman

TIPS  
FROM THE  
TOP

When you're shooting wildlife you'll need to work quickly if your subject is moving, and keeping everything in focus is key to success. Neil's recommendation is to work with back button focusing, which essentially separates focusing and shutter release to two separate buttons, preventing the camera's AF system from becoming continuously engaged when the shutter is fired.

"Usually, the shutter release will have two functions," explains Neil. "Slightly depressing it engages the AF and then fully depressing the button takes the picture. This is fine if you're taking a single image, but if you're shooting a sequence you will need to refocus each time, possibly resulting in lost shots. To get around this you'll need to use your AF-ON button, which takes the autofocus function away from the shutter release button and assigns it to another button on the back of the camera. This enables

you to work with your AE-L/AF-C button to ensure focus is maintained throughout an entire sequence, and it massively improves your hit rate.

"You also need to use a shutter speed that's going to be fast enough to avoid camera shake with long lenses, and this will change depending on the resolution of the sensor you're working with. Traditionally you would look to work with a shutter speed that's equal to, or greater than, the focal length of the lens you're working with, so 1/300sec if you're working with a 300mm.

"However, if you're working with a higher resolution sensor, so much detail is recorded that you need to up the shutter speed. If you're working with a 36MP sensor, such as that found in the Nikon D800, you should double the shutter speed – so up to 1/600sec – and this should be upped to 4x your focal length if you're working with a 45MP sensor."

## LEARN WITH THE NIKON SCHOOL

WITH MANY OF its courses now online, training via the Nikon School really is open to everyone, with a wide range of well-priced learning available to photographers at all levels and using any brand of equipment – although Nikon users will get particular value from the content. Head to the Nikon School website to take a look at what's on offer and to see what you could sign up for, with everything from lighting technique through to running a digital darkroom, mastering a particular piece of Nikon gear, filmmaking and even one-to-one tuition all available, along with location courses and experience days in the UK and overseas.

[nikonschool.co.uk](http://nikonschool.co.uk)



### WILDLIFE WORKSHOPS ►

Tap here to check out specific Nikon School workshops on wildlife that are coming up.



### ON CAMERA FLASH ►

Tap here for hints and tips on better wildlife photography from Nikon professional Richard Peters.



## Meet The Pro Team

### PROFESSIONAL PHOTO: Terry Hope

Terry is our editor and is inevitably to be found with a camera in hand, heading off on another assignment. He'll be the one looking through all of the submissions and making the call regarding who will have earned that cherished e-certificate!

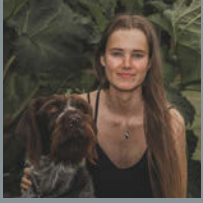


### NIKON SCHOOL: Training Manager Neil Freeman

Neil is one of the most highly respected trainers around, and each month he'll be handing out sound technical advice regarding how you might meet the particular challenge that's been set.







## Frederikke Jensen Wildlife Specialist

Each month, we're featuring a top professional from the genre we're covering who will share some top tips and tell us what they find so compelling about their chosen speciality.

TIPS  
FROM THE  
TOP

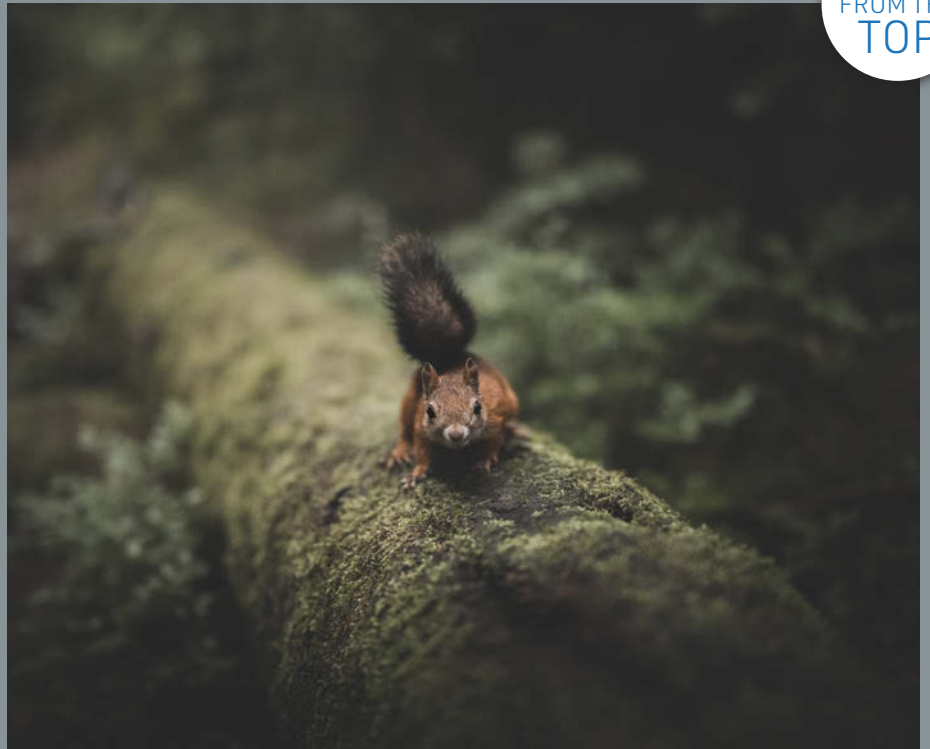
**GROWING UP IN A** small village in Denmark, 21-year-old Frederikke Jensen always had an appreciation for the nature and wildlife that was all around her, but it was only when she first picked up a camera in earnest four years ago that she really began to look more seriously at what was on her doorstep.

"My grandparents lived right beside a forest," she recalls, "and lots of different wildlife would visit their garden. I've always been fascinated by animals and, considering the relatively 'easy' access I had to the wildlife at this particular location, they seemed like natural subjects to focus on when I first started to become interested in photography. That's really how it all began for me and things have grown from there.

"My father and step mother now live there and, during spring and summer, I get daily messages from my dad with really zoomed in and pixelated photos of the wildlife he's seeing. It's really sweet of him, but it's also a massive help too because, when I come to visit, I know where to look. In my experience wildlife tends to stick around the same spots.

"Finding wildlife to photograph outside of my dad's garden depends a lot on the species I'm looking for. If I want to photograph foxes, badgers or raccoon dogs, for example, I'll usually look for semi-large holes in the ground where they have their dens. The easiest way to determine whether anything lives in there is to look for tracks or droppings. Setting up a trail cam near the den is also a great way to not only see if it's inhabited, but also to check on what time they usually come out. Once I know that, I set up my tripod and camera nearby.

"My approach to photographing wildlife is very dependent upon where I'm working. If I'm in an urban area, they're usually not too shy, as they're used to seeing humans. If that's the case I'll usually hang around the area for an hour or two until they eventually get curious enough to come close. Getting them to trust me makes the job of



photographing them so much easier, and the pictures look more natural.

"If I'm photographing rural wildlife my approach is a bit different, because the animals in these areas tend to be incredibly shy and I need to stay hidden in order to get close to them. I'll wear a camouflage jacket and have a camouflage net covering my tripod and camera as well. But I've also been known to just hide behind random

bushes and trees from time to time when I didn't have my camouflage gear with me. It's simple, yet can be really effective."

### Camera Gear

Recently invited to become part of Nikon's prestigious Z Creator programme, Frederikke has had the opportunity to shoot with the Z 9 flagship, and it's a camera that's left her mightily impressed.

"I've only used it for a couple of weeks," she says, "but I'm already blown away. It's so fast and the AF, and especially the eye-tracking, is amazing. Besides wildlife I also shoot professional football and it's almost faster than the players. The battery life is just unbelievable as well. The first couple of days I took more than 6000 photos and still had nearly half the battery life left."

Also working with the Nikon Z 5, Frederikke's regular lenses are a Z 50mm f/1.2 S, Z 70–200mm f/2.8 VR S and 105mm f/1.4E ED. "I'm impatiently waiting for the new Z 400mm f/2.8 TC VR S to arrive," she says, "and I can't wait to try it out."

■ [frederikkejensen.com](http://frederikkejensen.com)



# Time is Money

It might be a cliché, but when you're self-employed you need to put a value on your time and cost out every job you're taking on. Only by understanding your value can you properly set your prices. **WORDS** LUCY NEWSON

**T**IME IS A CURRENCY, and many would argue that, from the point of view of having a well-balanced lifestyle, it can be more valuable than the actual income your business is generating. It's why, if you want to have a successful career as a self-employed photographer, while also having a good work/life balance, it's so important to have a grasp of how much your time is actually worth in hard currency. This won't necessarily be straightforward since there is so much that goes into running a business that you might not immediately take into account.

You need to be looking at the overall picture and not be just working out what your rates per hour should be, based on

the actual time you spend shooting. As we all know, the logistics behind taking photographs, and the subsequent post-production that's required, can take an age, let alone the admin and the efforts required to book the work in the first place. You need to continually check in with yourself and to understand exactly how everything fits together.

A good question to ask yourself when deciding on pricing your services, and therefore quantifying your time's monetary worth, is this; if I were to take on a job and consequently miss an important family occasion, how much would I want to be paid to feel happy accepting the job? Clearly this amount will be different for everybody, and might

even change for the individual over time.

With this number in mind, you can then follow a systematic approach to crunch the numbers. You might calculate an hourly rate that you would like to charge your clients ensuring, as we've mentioned, that you've factored in the necessary extras, such as admin, post-production, time spent generating work etc, that are not necessarily the visible parts of your service. Alternatively, you could simply calculate how much profit you wish to earn per job, and work this way. Another method, and personally my favourite, is to start at the profit you wish to earn in one year and then effectively work backwards from this.

Whatever you go for is a personal



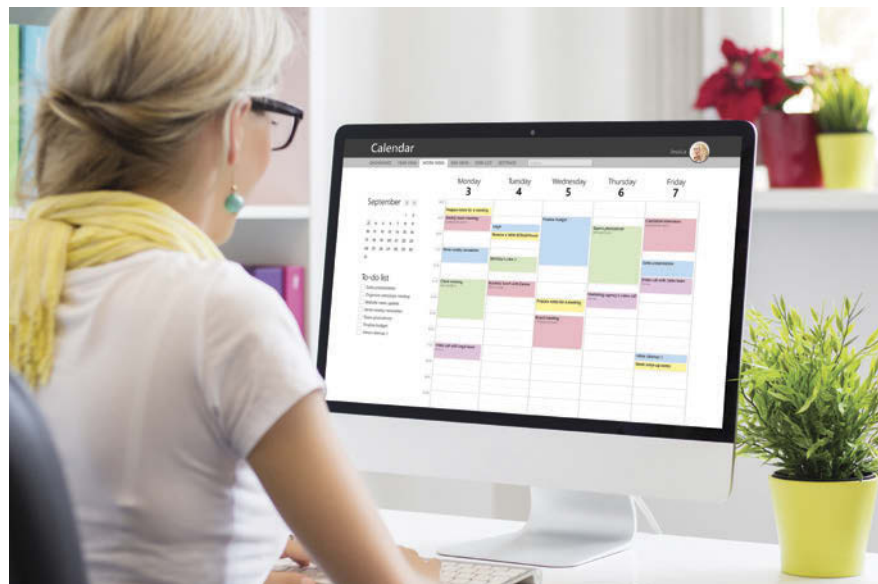
choice, and the more specific you are, the easier you'll be able to see where your business might be falling behind. For example, if you're charging too little for your services, you might be having to take on more photo shoots to counterbalance the fact, the result being less of your valuable family time. Make sure you don't dive in too deep and become totally engrossed in numbers, however, since they will be changing regularly. Keep your check-ins regular and brief.

## Potential Exceptions

Not every job you consider is making the best use of your time has to generate the same amount of income. Although it's important that you're making enough money to live on, there may be some jobs presented to you that will not tick your hourly rate box but nonetheless will be good for your soul or future career development. For example, you might relish the opportunity to work with a charity, or alongside an influencer, such as a celebrity, and it's then perfectly fine to go ahead, so long as your costings adjust to take account of the time you'll be spending on these assignments.

The key is to arrive at a balance between monetary and other benefits. To do this, when considering accepting a new job, ask yourself if it would fulfill at least one of the following criteria;

- Is it a job that you would love to take on because it's going to be an enjoyable or heart-warming experience?
- Could the job advance your portfolio or result in career improvement?
- Is it a job that carries a significant



## TOP TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

- Rank the items on your To Do List in a priority order rather than just working your way through, starting with the ones that should be the highest priority. This will prevent you from distracting multitasking and instead focus you in on the things that have to be looked at first.
- One big timesaver that is more of a fundamental look at your shooting technique is to ensure that you get your results as close to where you want them

to be in-camera as possible. Having to edit out distractions that could easily have been avoided in the first place, or needing to correct colour casts etc in post, is a huge time eater.

- Could you create email answer templates for your FAQs? Do this and the next time someone emails you over a question you receive regularly you can copy and paste your template in, rather than having to type the same thing over and over again.



monetary benefit, that will make it worth your time even if you're simply looking at it from the perspective of a commercial assignment?

If you can tick one or more of the above, then it's clear that this job will make sense for you to take on. If not, then be confident to say no. Of course, it can be hard to turn down something when you're self-employed. The idea that you have to accept all the jobs you're offered

to be successful is believed by many, but remember that, when you're saying 'yes' to one thing, then you could be saying 'no' to something else that you might have enjoyed a lot more, since you simply don't have time to do it all. Always prioritise the things that mean the most to you.

## Time Management

The best way to value your time is to manage it efficiently. To start with, take a look at the workflow of your business: what are you spending your time on? Consider how you can streamline these tasks. Do you need to check your emails on a regular basis, for example, or would just once or twice a day be sufficient?

Set time boundaries by allocating yourself work hours. It's very easy, especially when you're self-employed and working from home, to jump on the laptop at 10pm and then to complete a little bit of editing before you go to bed. But is this the most efficient use of your time? Would it be better to take a break and refresh, ready for tomorrow?

You must allow time for rest, whether this is holidays and family time, or just a bit of time for yourself. Our businesses rely on us and, to perform at our best, we must make sure to consider our mental

health alongside our bottom line.

Time management systems, such as Pomodoro, which encourages people to work with the time they have rather than against it, can be useful to check out. This is used alongside a timer to give you structure, and you can tie it in to apps such as Pomofocus to get the full benefit. Consider how long you're able to work before losing focus: many find somewhere between 25–55 minutes is their comfortable limit. Then set this on the timer and get to work.

After the timer runs out, allow yourself a 5–10-minute break, and decide what you'll spend the next focused work time on. By restricting the time you're able to work on something specific it effectively prevents you from becoming distracted or starting another task, which are both things that can slow you down.

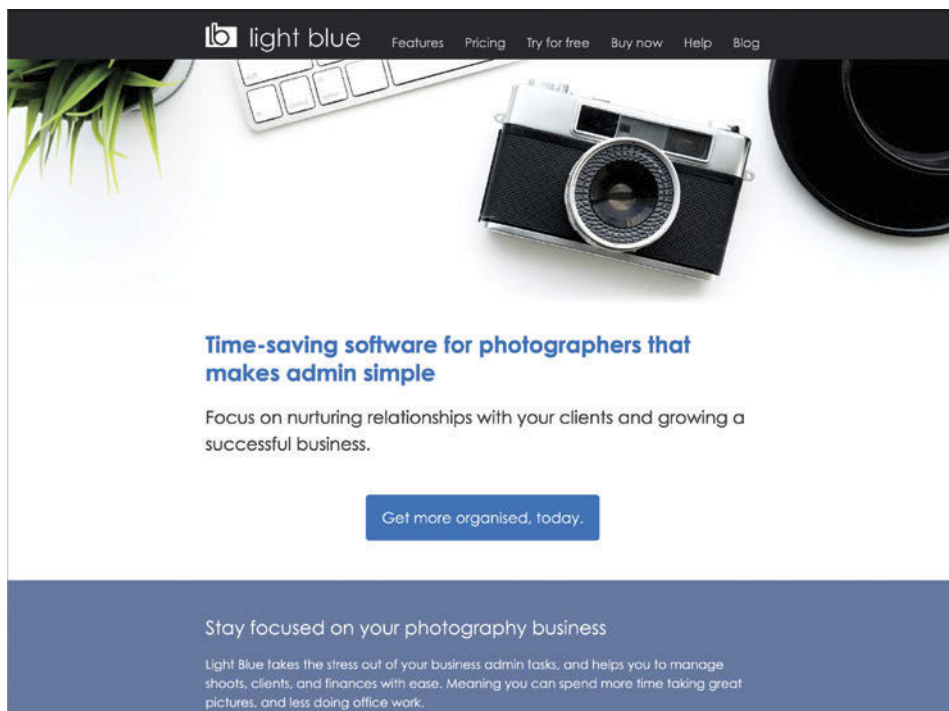
When the phone is ringing or your in box is full and you've got a few jobs waiting to be edited, it's very tempting to multi task, especially when so many things will be just a few taps away on your smartphone. However, many studies have highlighted how this can serve to make you less efficient, and it usually makes sense to complete one task before jumping on to another. A study has found that it can actually take over 23 minutes to regain complete focus on a task you were working on after being distracted.

## Productivity

So, you've streamlined your workflow and have set working hours, and you know exactly what you wish to achieve in a certain time period. But how do you get it all completed in the time you have?

Your productivity levels are key. When freelancing or managing your own business, it's vital to look into, and to invest, in ways to increase productivity within your business. The more productive you are, the more you can achieve within a shorter time period.

Delegation can be a great tool for increasing productivity. Are you completing daily tasks that someone else could undertake to the same standard? For example, are you writing multiple newsletters a month, or spending an hour after a shoot reorganising your studio? By delegating these tasks to an assistant, the time you would usually be using up could be redirected to something that will push your business forward, perhaps a meeting with a potential client or some extra



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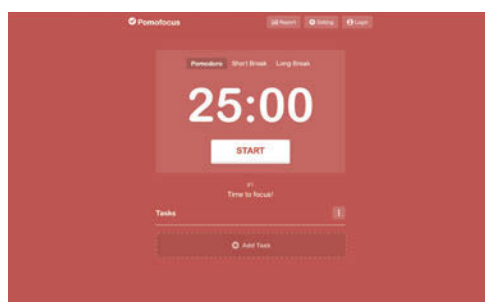
**Time-saving software for photographers that makes admin simple**

Focus on nurturing relationships with your clients and growing a successful business.

Get more organised, today.

Stay focused on your photography business

Light Blue takes the stress out of your business admin tasks, and helps you to manage shoots, clients, and finances with ease. Meaning you can spend more time taking great pictures, and less doing office work.



**TOP:** Light Blue CRM software is a brilliant tool for helping you organise your office workflow.  
**ABOVE:** The Pomofocus method involves working out your optimum working time before losing focus.

marketing. You must decide if the cost of paying someone else to undertake the mundane tasks can be cost effective, and often you'll find that it will be.

Using CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software, such as Light Blue, is also a huge time saver. The possibilities presented by a program of this type can be virtually unlimited, and can help you to manage everything from model releases through to appointments, emails, invoices and so on. Keeping everything organised, automatic and streamlined is a guaranteed time saver.

Other software, such as social media schedulers, can also be invaluable, since batch creating your content can save hours per month. Even simple methods, such as learning computer shortcuts or understanding your kit inside out, can save you precious minutes in the long run.

It's important to note that productivity can always be improved. It's not

something you tick off a list, but instead it's continuous. Take a few minutes at least once a week to analyse how productive you've been and where you can improve – it's always time well spent.

Remember that you're not superhuman. Everyone has good and bad days, and your productivity levels will inevitably fluctuate from time to time. The goal is to have processes in place so that, no matter how your day might happen to be going, everything can continue in a consistent fashion.

Most importantly of all, be sure to give yourself sufficient time to rest, and enjoy the benefits and freedom that come from being self-employed.

PP

■ [lightbluesoftware.com](http://lightbluesoftware.com)  
 ■ [pomofocus.io](http://pomofocus.io)

## Lucy Newson

Lucy Newson LBIPP is an award-winning rural lifestyle photographer based in Essex, with private commissions across the UK. Capturing the everyday magic for those living in the countryside, she creates treasured 'family heirlooms in-waiting' for her clients through albums and artwork for their walls.

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the  
bigger  
picture.

# TIME TO TRADE UP!

Top-of-the-range flagship cameras are the ones so many aspire to, but can cost a fortune. Invest in a slightly older model, however, and you could be looking at a serious bargain.

**T**HE CHALLENGE EVERY photographer and filmmaker faces these days is to remain competitive while still keeping a wary eye on the cashflow and ensuring that they're not spending money they don't have on new gear. Equally you don't want to be sitting on piles of redundant kit that, while still perfectly serviceable, is gathering dust in a cupboard somewhere in your studio, not earning its keep and dropping in value all the time.

Welcome then to the world of trading up, where you continually evaluate what you need to be running your business successfully, invest in areas where you can see a definite business opportunity or a need to keep pace and regularly move on the kit you're no longer using to fund at least some of your purchases.

With the whole business of buying

and selling having been revolutionised by the likes of second-hand specialists such as MPB, our partners in this series, it's dead easy and safe as houses these days to buy and sell used equipment online, and you'll achieve a fair price for the things you have to move on without any of the hassle of dealing face-to-face with potential purchasers. You'll also find there are major savings to be had when looking to buy second hand kit, and it's all backed up by a guarantee that ensures there's no risk, and you can be sure you're buying something that's up to the job.

Top-of-the-range flagship cameras such as the Canon EOS-1D X can become affordable when you buy them second hand.



## MPB Top-of-the-Range Camera Prices

- Canon EOS-1D X Mark II, Excellent, £2449
- Canon EOS-1D X Mark III, Well Used, £3359
- Nikon D5 Dual XQD slots, Excellent, £3089
- Nikon D5 Dual CF Slots, Well Used, £2029
- Nikon D6, Well Used, £3359
- Olympus OM-DE-MIX, Like New, £1109
- Panasonic Lumix DC-S1R, Like New, £1579

## THIS MONTH'S TRADE UP:

### Moving Up to the Top-of-the-Range Flagship

SO MANY PHOTOGRAPHERS when they're starting out will only have the budget to go for a relatively entry-level model, and they'll make do with this until business picks up and it becomes feasible to invest in something that comes with a little more in the way of bells and whistles. It's the sensible way to do things and you learn to cope with some of the shortcomings that come with the territory and you'll soon find out through experience what the features are that you really need to be working with.

So, why would you necessarily want to own a camera that's at the top of the tree? Well, for a start they will be designed from the ground up for professional use, will be built like a tank and packed with features that will cover every eventuality. You'll have the reassurance of knowing that you're working with a model fellow top professionals are also working with, and you can be sure that every measure that can be taken by the manufacturer to ensure total reliability will have been taken.

What kinds of cameras are we talking





Tap here to read an MPB hands-on review of the Canon EOS-1D Mark III from a Getty photographer.



IN ASSOCIATION WITH MPB | GEAR

about here? Well, think about dream machines such as the Canon 1DX or the Nikon D5, for example, and you have the level. They're not for everyone since they most certainly won't be lightweight options and their prime purpose is to shoot stills not to serve as a hybrid, but for those in the fields of sport, wildlife and documentary photography in particular they are exceptional products that can do a spectacular job.

If you're looking to buy new then prices, not surprisingly, are off the scale but, then again, we're talking here about a tool that can essentially help you to earn a living. A brand new Canon EOS-1D X Mark III, for example, will set you back around £7000, body only, while a Nikon D6 isn't too far behind at £6799. It's a

huge outlay for any pro, but things change dramatically if you're willing to look at a slightly older version of these cameras.

Obviously, the previous model in the series will have slightly more dated technology under the bonnet, but then again they're still no slouches. Autofocus and shooting speeds won't be as fast, more modern features such as deep learning won't be present, the image processor will be older and not quite as powerful and ISO speeds potentially won't reach as far, but you're still talking about immensely capable products that have a huge amount to offer.

So, what about prices? At MPB it's possible to pick up a Canon EOS-1D X Mark II which, outwardly, looks identical to the Mark III version, from £1174, while a Nikon D5 with Dual XQD card slots will set you back from £2169. You'll find that cameras



at these prices will be well used of course, a sign that they have been companions to working pros in the past, but they will still have been checked out and will carry a six-month warranty and so you can be sure

they will turn up in good working order, albeit with a few bumps and scratches that you'll have been told about.

## What are Top-of-the-Range Cameras Perfect For?

- They are built solely for professional use, and so are made of premium grade materials and are totally weatherproofed.
- Manufacturers will have excellent contacts with the pro community and so these cameras have been produced with ease-of-use in mind.
- Cameras at the top of the DSLR tree will regularly be used by photojournalists and sports photographers, who still see them as superior to mirrorless models.
- These cameras should go on for years and will hold their value over time.

## Disadvantages of Top-of-the-Range Cameras

- By design these cameras are big and heavy and slightly cumbersome to use.
- They're primarily designed for top level stills photography and so, if you're planning to shoot video as well, they won't be ideal.
- These are models designed for experienced professional photographers and could be hard to get to grips with if you're just starting out.

### "Why I love top end cameras..."

"The D6 is the ultimate camera for sports photographers. Following the launch of the Z9 it might not be Nikon's flagship camera any more, but the files it takes are still the industry standard, especially at high ISO."

**Andy Hooper, Chief Sports Photographer, The Daily Mail**  
■ andyhooper.co.uk



## TRADING UP

WHILE THOSE WHO love photography will doubtless aspire somewhere deep inside to own one of these mighty flagships, it's important that you've done your research and that you know for sure that this is the type of camera that will be useful to you in your particular genre of photography. While they're brilliant in all kinds of weather conditions thanks to their impeccable weather proofing, making them perfect for sports events, photojournalism and wildlife, where you could potentially have the camera sitting on a tripod, they wouldn't work so well in situations, such as weddings, where you need to be nimbler.

The fact is however that the used camera route offers an excellent opportunity for the professional to acquire a camera that they might only have been able to dream about when they were first starting out and they do very much live up to their reputation, and are wonderful to use and exquisitely put together. If you genuinely have the need for a camera of this type then you'll enjoy just having it around and you'll appreciate what a finely tuned tool it is when you're working with it.

### Potential Trade-Ins:

(All excellent condition)

■ Fujifilm X-T3	£490
■ Canon EOS R	£850
■ Nikon Z 6	£680
■ Nikon D850	£1280
■ Pentax K-1	£710
■ Olympus OM-DE-M5 Mark III	£450

**TOTAL: £4460**

The MPB website is fully geared up to offering trade ins, so the ability to swap in unwanted gear can very much be part of the transaction and you'll see as you go along what you're realising in terms of cash and how much you might need to add. You'll receive an honest quotation and could even end up with a surplus paid direct into your bank account.

■ [mpb.com](https://www.mpb.com)

The update to the spectacularly successful Lumix GH5 comes with a raft of cutting-edge filmmaking facilities and takes the MFT format on to a whole new level of excellence.

WORDS AND PICTURES ADAM DUCKWORTH



TESTED

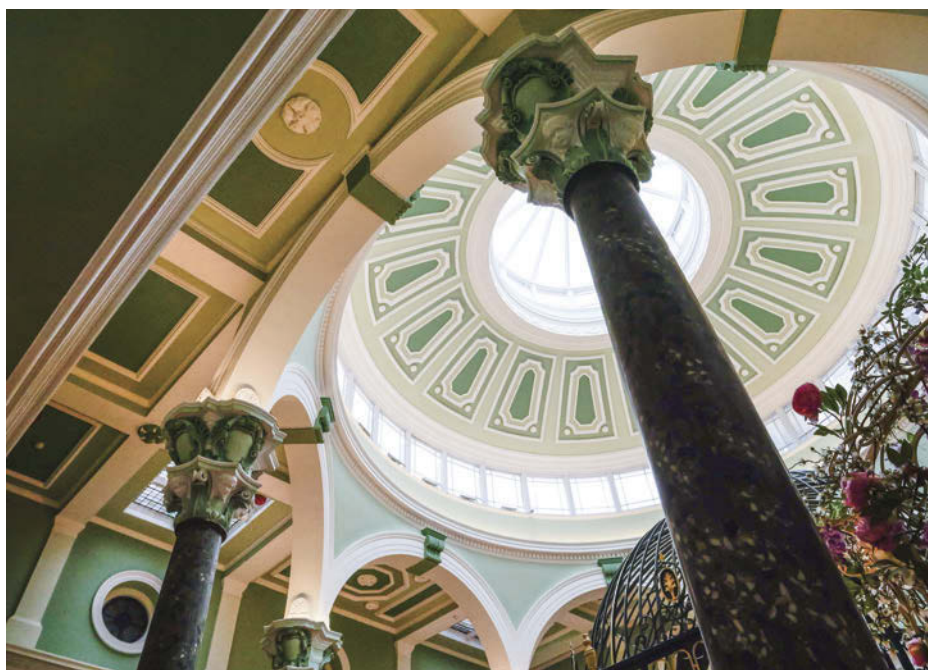
# Panasonic Lumix GH6

**P**ANASONIC'S LONG-AWAITED Lumix GH6 is the best Micro Four Thirds mirrorless camera you can buy if your plan is to produce video. Nothing comes close, so we can pause the review here: if you're an MFT user on the hunt for flagship filmmaking performance for not a huge amount of money, then order one right now. It really is that good.

However, if you're a hybrid shooter who wants to use the camera for both photography and video applications then things are not quite so cut and dried. Of course, the GH6 can take great stills, but the spec pales into insignificance compared to what it can do on the video front. So, let's take a look at that side of things first, and prepare to be astounded at the features and spec that this £2000 camera has on board.

For a start it features a brand new 25.21MP sensor – which happens to be the highest resolution of any MFT camera. And it also has dual gain output for improved performance when the ISO creeps up. The codec options are stunning, with lots of 4:2:2 10-bit options as well as industry-standard Apple ProRes 422 and 422HQ recorded to the camera's CFexpress card.

The GH6 comes with a built-in fan,



which enables you to record 5.7K video in ProRes without any overheating issues. Plug in a USB-C powerbank and you can keep going for as long as your memory cards can hold out. The camera is capable of a more useful C4K at 60p in full 4:2:0 10-bit All-Intra and the more compressed

LongGOP options, and can be used to C4K in 120fps for super slow-motion, although then the codec drops to 4:2:0 10-bit.

The highest resolution is actually 5.8K, in which you can shoot full-sensor open gate in anamorphic at up to 30p, and there are lots of anamorphic desqueeze options on





board. Or you can go to Full HD and shoot at 300fps for incredible 10-bit slow-motion. There's no audio or autofocus at speeds this high, of course, but there is at 240fps or below. No other cameras offer this, and it's amazing for speed-ramping in post.

Panasonic has also revealed a roadmap of future upgrades that will add recording to an external drive via USB-C, more options for Apple ProRes, 4K/120p RAW output via HDMI and more. So yes, this is a very video-centric camera – right down to the tools it has to help filming, such as waveform and vectorscope monitoring, a full-size HDMI port and a second card slot to take an SD card.

## Dynamic Range

To maximise dynamic range in video, the camera's 10-bit codecs combine with V-Log and the new Dynamic Range Boost function. When Boost is activated, the data from the sensor is simultaneously recorded in two ways: one at a higher ISO setting and one at a lower one, which is then combined in-camera. This gives up to around

The feature-packed new GH6 offers impressive specs for its £2000 price tag, but those who are into filmmaking will get the most benefit.



11.5-stops of usable dynamic range, which represents a boost of around 1.5 stops.

This setting only works at frame rates under 60fps and minimum ISO then leaps to 2000. When recording V-Log or HLG without Boost, the native ISO is 250. In standard modes such as Cinelike D2 and V2, the base ISO is 100 but Boost moves that up to 800. So this is a feature that's best saved for extreme high contrast situations rather

than being used all the time.

The Lumix GH6 has also improved on the class-leading in-body image stabilisation that's been offered by the GH5 series. Combine it with a compatible Panasonic Dual IS2 image-stabilised lens and it has the ability to deliver up to 7.5 stops of vibration reduction, a big bonus for both video and stills.

Another tick in the plus box sees the camera set a new high bar for audio, recording up to four channels at once. Two are from the standard 3.5mm input jack, with another two from the optional XLR audio input module. The body also comes with a new Audio Info button on the top plate to quickly access settings and levels.

There's a BNC socket onboard that allows a timecode controller to be plugged in for multi-camera edits, and there are also tally lights front and rear, so you can now upload .cube LUTs, which will mean a lot to the workflow of many moviemakers. So, with a fast, new processor inside which keeps rolling shutter issues to a minimum, a huge choice of codec options, internal



**ABOVE:** There's a full contingent of high-end filmmaking specs on board the GH6, which includes a range of recording options and internal ProRes recording.

ProRes and excellent tools for filmmaking, the GH6 is without a doubt the new king of MFT mirrorless for video.

That's true not just in terms of spec but also taking on board the quality of the video footage it can output. Despite the sensor being a quarter of the size of full frame there is no trace of the usual attendant noise issues that MFT cameras traditionally suffer at lower light levels. In fact, the Lumix is a fine performer up to around ISO 6400, after which some noise creeps in, but even this can be reduced with noise reduction in post. The 5.7K and 4K footage is highly detailed and the overall look and colour reproduction is very natural and pleasing. Skin tones have been improved, and the 4:2:2 10-bit files are packed with colour information to enable easy grading. Overall, it's a very, very impressive camera if you're looking to be shooting video.

## Auto Focus Issues

However, despite all these plus points it has to be noted that this camera is still not perfect. For example, although many filmmakers have traditionally used manual focus, there is a big swing these days towards using AF, now that clever on-sensor phase detection systems have come



While the GH6 is by no means a camera that's set up to capture action, it's nonetheless a very capable stills model.



The Lumix GH6 is first and foremost a video-orientated camera, well at home in the middle of a rig that would be light and easy to carry.

of age. And of course, stills photographers have long relied on speedy and accurate autofocus. Panasonic, however, remains the only major manufacturer to stick with its contrast-detection AF system.

It uses Panasonic's own 'Depth From Defocus' AF, and, to be fair, this is definitely getting better with every Lumix launch. In the GH6, it's actually pretty good and very usable for most subjects that don't move too fast or erratically. It's not, however, great for sports or wildlife.

The system has customisable settings, such as sensitivity plus face detection and tracking modes. These are all pretty good,

unless you're used to the incredible AF that's offered by many rival manufacturers. The face/eye detection works well enough, but even when locked on to a face can still hunt slightly with micro-jitters. That's not much of an issue for stills but can be obvious if you're shooting video.

The AF system uses AI subject recognition, with a choice of human torso/head/face/eye detection, human face/eye detection and Human/Animal, which includes cats and dogs. These options can be set separately for stills and video.

The DFD is better in stills, as lots of contrast measurements can be taken in-between shots. In video that's constantly running it's not so good, meaning that it's often best to use manual focusing, which is aided by focus peaking and the ability to adjust the response of the focus-by-wire Panasonic lenses. It's easy to see if your shot is in focus on the tilting, free-angle LCD screen. However, lack of modern PDAF is still the biggest issue for the GH6, especially for stills shooters.

When it comes to fast action stills, the GH6 definitely feels pedestrian, although there is a 75fps e-shutter mode where focus is locked off. Working with the mechanical shutter, you can shoot at 14fps if you use AF-S single shot focus. For continuous AF-C shooting, however, this drops to 8fps. If you compare that to



“ The GH6 sets new standards for video performance and its stills are as good, if not better, than the GH5 II. It’s stunningly capable, at a realistic price. ”

## SPECIFICATIONS

### Panasonic Lumix GH6

**PRICE:** £2000 body only

**SENSOR:** 25.2MP MFT dual output gain CMOS sensor

**PHOTO FORMAT:** J-PEG, RAW. 100MP pixel shift mode

**PHOTO FRAME RATES:** 14fps with AF-S, 8fps with AF-C. 75fps with e-shutter

**RECORDING FORMAT:** MOV: H.264/MPEG-4 AVC, H.265/HEVC, Apple ProRes. MP4: H.264/MPEG-4 AVC, H.265/HEVC

**FILE SIZES:** 5.8K 23.98/ 25/ 29.97p 200Mbps 4:2:0 10-bit LongGOP. 5.7K 23.98/ 25/ 29.97/ 47.95/ 50/ 59.94p 300Mbps 4:2:0 10-bit LongGOP. C4K/ 4K 23.98/ 29.97/ 47.95/ 50/ 59.94/ 100/ 119.88p up to 800Mbps 4:2:0 and 4:2:2 10-bit LongGOP and All-Intra. HD 23.98/ 29.97/ 47.95/ 50/ 59.94/ 100/ 119.88/ 239.76p up to 800Mbps 4:2:0 and 4:2:2 10-bit LongGOP and All-Intra.

**MAX VARIABLE VIDEO FRAME RATE:** 1080p 300fps

**DYNAMIC RANGE:** 13+ stops with Dynamic Range Boost

**AUDIO FORMAT:** 4ch, 48kHz/24-bit, 96kHz/24-bit

**RECORDING MEDIA:** 1xCfexpress type B, 1xSD slots

**CONNECTIONS:** USB-C, HDMI-A, headphone port, mic input jack, WiFi

**ISO:** 100-25,600, 50-25,600 extended

**IMAGE STABILISATION:** five-axis hybrid image stabiliser, 7.5 stops

**SCREEN:** 3in LCD fully articulating touch screen, 1.84M dots

**SHUTTER SPEED:** 60secs-1/32,000sec

**AUTOFOCUS:** Contrast AF

**PICTURE STYLE:** Cinelike D2, Cinelike V2, Like709, V-Log L, HLG and LUT picture display

**DIMENSIONS (WXHXD):** 138x100x100mm

**WEIGHT:** 831g



## VIDEO

The video above shows a selection of examples of the Panasonic GH6's stellar video performance.

stacked sensor cameras, they will typically be able to shoot at 20 or 30fps with full AF-C working, with the PDAF doing its best to ensure every shot is tack sharp.

To cram all the video spec in, some of the multi-shot stills modes like 6K/4K Photo and Focus Stacking have been dropped. But the camera does come with an eight-shot high resolution mode, which produces hi-res still images up to 100MP. Usefully this now has a hand-held mode, where the GH6 aligns and combines images even if there's some small movement taking place between them. So you can genuinely capture 100MP hand-held images, but it's probably not something many professional users would use frequently.

Of far more use is that, for stills photography, the GH6 automatically uses its dual output setting at any ISO settings

over 800, rather than the user needing to turn on the Dynamic Range Boost. Combined with Panasonic's new '2D Noise Reduction', this reduces colour noise at high ISO settings, which is a useful feature.

Overall, despite reservations, the stills performance of the camera is actually very good. The files are detailed if a little contrasty, but this is easily sorted. The colours are pleasing as well, although maybe a little over-saturated.

Skin tones are also good and high ISO performance, perhaps surprisingly, is decent as well. In short, the camera is a good stills performer, and one that's far more capable than just being used for shooting YouTube thumbnails. But the reality is that, if you're after stills performance first and foremost, then this probably isn't the camera for you. If you want stunning video alongside great stills, however, it very well might be.

PP

**More information:**

■ [panasonic.com](https://panasonic.com)

## VERDICT

WHEN WE TESTED the Panasonic Lumix GH5 II last year, we said that it was the best MFT camera on the market for photo and video use. Well, you can now scratch that. The GH6 sets new standards for video performance and its stills are as good, if not better, than the GH5 II. Not leaps and bounds better perhaps, but a definite improvement.

The Panasonic GH6 is a stunningly capable video camera that's available at a very realistic price. It might not have the live streaming of the GH5 II or 6K photo modes, but that's not what the

majority of buyers will be looking for in this camera, which is video quality.

The camera might come with no internal video RAW recording, but you can output RAW over HDMI to an Atomos recorder and save it as ProRes RAW. In any case, with the 4:2:2 10-bit ProRes files recorded internally providing edit-ready 5.7K ProRes files of stunning quality, you probably won't need to.

The GH6 takes a big step forward in terms of video performance thanks to its all-new sensor and processor, and it can serve as a great stills machine as well.

Pro photographers are spoilt for choice when it comes to big money sport and wildlife-focused speed machines, but can OM System's affordable new OM-1 steal their thunder?



TESTED

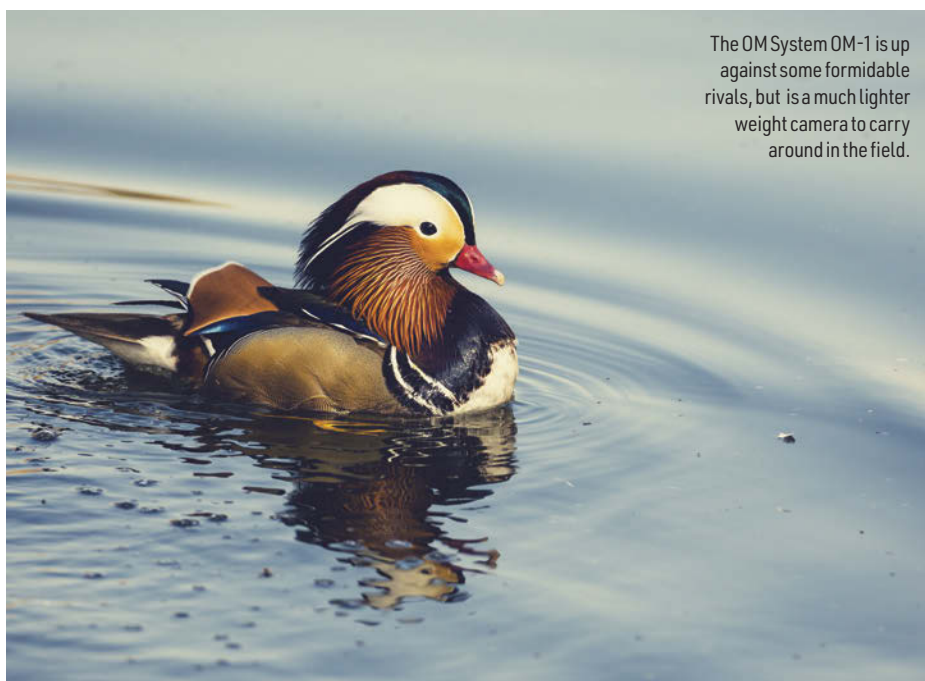
WORDS AND PICTURES MATTY GRAHAM

# The OM System OM-1

**A**FTER YEARS OF minimal activity, the photo industry has seen a flourish of big money, pro spec cameras hit the market over the last year or so. Sony started the ball rolling with the Alpha A1, before Nikon and Canon contributed the Z 9 and EOS R3 respectively. All great cameras of course, but in these times of high inflation and reduced budgets, their price tags can be off-putting. At the moment the A1 retails for £6,499, the Z 9 will set you back £5,299 while the Canon R3 costs £5,879. So, with all three of these costing over five grand, is there an alternative for the more cost-conscious professional?

Well maybe there now is, and it comes in the shape of the first camera from OM System, the new name that's evolved from the Olympus brand. Costing just a touch under £2000, less than half the price of the rivals we've just mentioned, the digital return of the legendary OM-1, the last model to be badged 'Olympus,' offers up some impressive specifications that are ideal for sports and wildlife photographers, but there's also plenty here too for portrait and landscape professionals. And, whisper it quietly, but videographers might want to test drive the OM-1 as well.

At the heart of the OM-1 is, of course, a MFT sensor that offers up 20MPs of resolution thanks to a Stacked BSI Live MOS Sensor, which is paired with a TruePic X image processor that's up to three times



The OM System OM-1 is up against some formidable rivals, but is a much lighter weight camera to carry around in the field.

faster than previous versions. While some pros could be wary of the lower megapixel count compared to rivals such as the 45-MP Nikon Z 9, it's worth remembering that the pixel count matches that of the full-frame Canon EOS R6 and, if more resolution is needed on occasions, there's a High-Resolution mode on board as well (see Box Out), that will merge multiple frames together to create files up to 80MP in size.

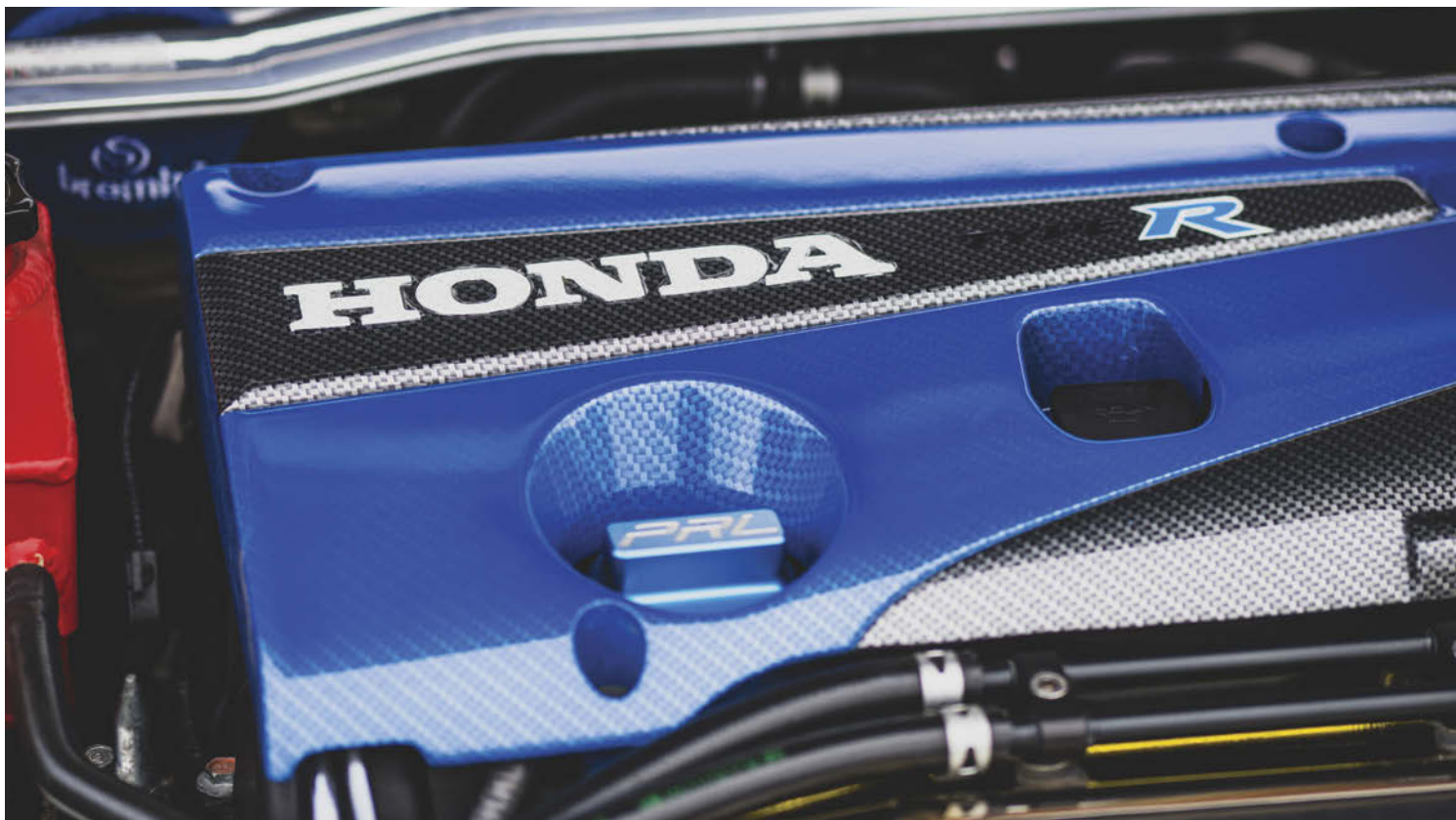
However, what pro photographers will really be interested in are the four pillars that have served Olympus so well

over the years, namely fast burst rates, ultra lightweight dimensions, insane IBIS performance and that 2x crop factor that gets professionals so much closer to their subjects – a massive advantage for those shooting sports and wildlife.

When it comes to speed, the OM-1 has really changed the game for MFT users, with a blisteringly fast max burst rate of 120fps – that's right, the OM-1 shoots stills faster than some cameras can shoot videos.

This is thanks to the electronic shutter mechanism, and it represents a whopping

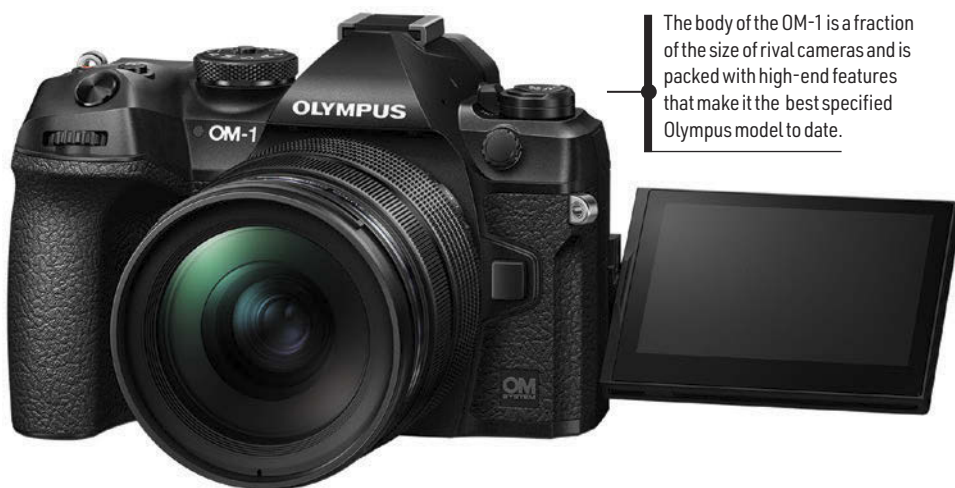




## VIDEO

The film above shows test video footage shot by Matty using the OM System OM-1 camera.

60fps increase over the E-M1 Mark III, which the OM-1 beats in pretty much every area. What's really important about this headline-grabbing feature is the fact that the shutter is completely silent – a must for wildlife photographers who don't want to spook their subjects. Professionals know speed is nothing without control, however, so it's really important that OM System has radically overhauled the focusing features, and the OM-1 offers up an incredible 1053 focus points – all of which are the more sensitive Cross Type points. Add into the mix the host of subject-specific focus tracking modes (birds, cars, planes, pets and even trains!), and the performance of the OM-1 is actually pretty amazing.



The body of the OM-1 is a fraction of the size of rival cameras and is packed with high-end features that make it the best specified Olympus model to date.

In the field the camera is a joy to use, particularly when you're working with longer optics. I tested the OM-1 with lenses including the 300mm f/4 PRO prime, which gives an effective focal length of 600mm, and the focusing performance of this lengthy telephoto can only be described as epic. Being able to work with a powerful lens like this in a package so ultra-compact and lightweight takes a while to get your head around, but brings so many benefits and makes photography an enjoyable and comfortable experience.

The OM-1 isn't over-cluttered with controls and the redesigned Menu system is straightforward to navigate around.

## Staying Steady

So, on to the next of those pillars, and those who have used Olympus cameras before will be well aware of the brand's impressive IS technology. OM System has continued down this road, and the OM-1 offers up to 8-stops of stabilisation. This is of course helped by the lightweight dimensions of the camera, which is often a prime reason for photographers to switch to the MFT system in the first place. To put this into perspective, the 24MP Canon EOS R3 is nearly twice the weight of the OM-1 (599g v 1015g) – for reference the even bulkier Canon 1DX Mark III tips the scales at 1440g.

Despite its lightweight footprint, the OM-1 is still exceptionally well built, offering IP53 weather sealing to protect against dust and moisture. The shutter is rated for at least 400,000 actuations



and the camera features a Supersonic Wave Filter that oscillates 30,000 times a second to shake dust and dirt off the sensor every time you turn the camera on. Stills and video can be recorded to one or both of the dual SD card slots and it's nice to see the OM-1 offering this option over more expensive alternative formats, such as CFexpress. In short, it's built for everyday professional use.

Those who shoot more video than stills may well be split between the OM-1 and the Panasonic GH6, which is also being reviewed in this issue. Read Adam Duckworth's review, however, and it soon becomes obvious that these are two very different machines. The Panasonic is the one to go for if you're looking primarily to produce video, while the OM-1 is a formidable stills camera that can also produce good quality video when required.

Topping out at C4K 60p 10-bit, videographers using the Olympus have the ability to use this 4K footage at half-speed for a slow-motion effect. For even slower footage, the OM-1 offers a 240p option at Full HD and, along with ports for mic/headphones, the camera also includes OM-Log to give more tolerance when editing footage. For those who like to pair cameras with an Atomos Ninja V, the OM-1 even allows for RAW 12BIT 4:4:4, but my feeling is that more videographers would be looking to benefit from the compact footprint of the OM-1 and would instead choose to use it without the Ninja V as an excellent 'run 'n gun' style B-camera.



This 100% enlargement of a section of an image shot using the hi-res mode shows the quality of the files that can be produced using this method.

## Shooting Stills

Image quality is impressive, and the OM-1 returns a maximum standard pixel count of 5760pixels wide, so professionals will be able to print up to A3 in size or larger if the High-Resolution mode has been employed. Colour rendition is decent and the RAW files enable a good level of tolerance to pull back Highlights or reveal Shadows.

In the field, the OM-1 is simple to use, and this is reflected by the numerous buttons and dials that have been squeezed onto the tiny body, but the camera also benefits from a redesigned Menu system, which is easy to navigate. The silent shutter can be a little disorientating because it's



## SPECIFICATIONS

### OM System OM-1

**SENSOR:** 20MP Stacked BSI LIVE MOS

**LENS MOUNT:** Micro Four Thirds

**FOCAL LENGTH MAGNIFICATION:** 2x

**STABILISATION:** IBIS, 5-axis sensor-shift, up to 8EV steps.

**SHUTTER SPEEDS (MECHANICAL):** 60-1/8000sec

**SHUTTER SPEEDS (ELECTRONIC):** 60-1/32000sec

**SENSITIVITY:** ISO 200-25,600, extendible to 80-102,400

**EXPOSURE COMPENSATION:** +/-5EV (0.3EV steps)

**METERING:** Multi-pattern, Centre-weighted average, Spot metering

**CONTINUOUS SHOOTING:** 120fps with fixed focus, 50/25fps with AF-C

**SCREEN:** 3in, 1.62m-dot full articulated touchscreen

**VIEWFINDER:** 5.76m-dots, 120fps refresh, 0.83x magnification

**AF POINTS:** 1053, all cross-type Quad Pixel AF

**VIDEO:** c/4K 60p, Full HD 240fps

**EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS:** Headphone, Mic, microHDMI, USB-C

**MEMORY:** Dual UHS-II SD

**POWER:** BLX-1 Li-ion rechargeable battery

**BATTERY LIFE:** 520 shots

**DIMENSIONS:** 134.8x91.6x72.7mm

**WEIGHT:** 599g with battery and memory card



Wildlife photographers will particularly appreciate the 2x magnification offered by the onboard 20MP MFT sensor.



■ Although I used the OM-1 to shoot a lot of wildlife imagery, this camera lends itself to be a total all-rounder so long as you have the right lenses for the job. ■

The MFT sensor might be smaller than full frame but the quality of files produced by the OM-1 is high, as this 100% enlargement shows.



so quiet that you might be concerned it hasn't fired, and those moving to the system from DSLRs could prefer the shutter effect that confirms the image has actually been taken. The EVF is very impressive with a high refresh rate and, of course, the combination of light body and light lenses makes this system a breeze to carry around.

Battery capacity for the OM-1 is decent, with the camera rated for 520 shots on a single charge but, in reality, I found the OM-1 was able to achieve well in excess of this figure. I used this camera a lot, carrying it around on pro shoots and days out in a wildlife hide, and the battery stood up well, only ever getting down to 25%. It should be noted that the OM-1 doesn't come with a charger, but USB

charging is included, so if you're going to be out for extended periods, take along a power bar and you can recharge on the go.

Although I used the OM-1 to shoot a lot of wildlife imagery, this camera lends itself to being a total all-rounder so long as you carry the right lenses. Sports photography is well catered for thanks to the AF and burst

rate, while for landscape and travel photographers there's the build quality and weather resistance.

Meanwhile portrait and wedding photographers will appreciate the ability to up the resolution, while macro specialists are covered thanks to the Focus Stacking mode. It's time professionals looked past the MFT sensor, as things really have moved on. Those that do will be rewarded with what must be one of the best value-for-money cameras currently on the market, and one that's equally at home delivering quality imagery – and video – over multiple fields. **PP**

**More information:**  
■ [olympus.co.uk](http://olympus.co.uk)



## VERDICT

GIVEN THE PRICE-TAG of the OM-1, it's actually quite difficult to pick too many faults with this camera. If I'm being particularly picky, I didn't like the material on the rear of the lovely touch-sensitive LCD, but it's a minor niggle and, overall, this is an outstanding package.

If you're a sport or wildlife photographer, there simply isn't a better

value option on the market than this one. The 2x crop factor works massively in your favour and we shouldn't forget that MFT lenses are often more affordable than their full-frame counterparts as well, so that's a further saving you need to consider.

The robust build quality of the camera, which really adds to its professional credentials, coupled with

video specifications that finally give an Olympus model some genuinely top-end filmmaking features, are also welcome.

Despite the smaller format, I found that quality of output was well up to pro standards and, if you love to travel light and have a regular need for bright, fast and affordable long lenses, then the returning OM-1 could be the perfect choice for you.

# Monitor Must-Knows!

If you're an imaging professional regularly working on post-production, you need a top-class monitor that's up to the job. So read our handy Q&A Guide to find out the basic requirements.



WORDS MIKE JENNINGS

**T**HERE ARE A bewildering number of monitors out there at a whole range of price points, and it can be a challenge at times trying to work out which one you should be considering for your needs. If you're regularly working on photography or film productions then you really do need to choose a product to work with that will tick all the boxes. So, to get you up to speed we got together with top manufacturer BenQ and our resident computer expert Mike Jennings to shed some light on some of the most regularly-asked monitor queries.

## Q Why invest in the BenQ SW321C or the SW271C, rather than a more entry-level product?

Because of one crucial factor: accuracy. If your screen can accurately produce any colour in any key gamut, then you can create with confidence. From photography and design through to video and graphics, accurate colours are critical, and entry-level displays just don't compete.

## Q Is there a particular size or aspect ratio you need?

A 16:9 aspect ratio is the most common, and if you buy a 27 or 32in screen then you'll have plenty of room to work.

## Q What are the key specs that a monitor designed for a creative professional should have?

Image quality should be your first port of call. Ensure that your display has a sub-2.0 Delta E and high gamut coverage levels, and validation from professional bodies like Calman and Pantone is a must: 10-bit colour technology or beyond means more nuance and make sure the screen is physically large enough to prove

comfortable. The BenQ SW321C and SW271C also come with a Hotkey Puck G2, a clever device that allows access to colour modes and features via preset shortcuts.

## Q What's the benefit of a monitor hood?

A monitor hood comes with many BenQ displays, and it's an important accessory – it can reduce glare and distractions from ambient lighting in your home or office environment, which will lead to more exact colours, better concentration levels and higher-quality images. Both the BenQ SW321C and SW271C come with an easily attachable hood as part of the overall package, making it straightforward to cut out glare on your screen if required.

## Q Is it also important to have features such as a matte screen?

If you're serious about image editing or video work, you should use a screen with a matte coating. This kind of display coating can block irritating reflections from bright lights in your immediate environment, meaning fewer distractions.



## Q Why is screen resolution so important?

A higher resolution means more pixels – and more pixels enable you to see more detail in your photos and videos. That in turn means more precise editing and better results. A higher resolution also means more on-screen space, so you can easily arrange multiple apps for better navigation.



## Q Can you explain more about colour space and what should you be looking for?

A colour space is the name given to a range of colours that a monitor can display. It's important to define your colour space because that means you can work with consistent colours, and so your work is accurately represented on other displays and in other mediums, from the camera to the canvas. You should make sure your monitor can render several key colour spaces; sRGB is the basic one, Adobe RGB is the standard for Adobe Creative Suite, and DCI-P3 handles HDR content.

## Q What about accuracy of colour, and why is something like BenQ's





Tap here to watch  
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Masterclass with  
Joanna Kustra.



Tap here to find  
out more about  
BenQ's AQCOLOR  
Technology.



If you're going to be spending hours on post-production tasks then it's crucial to invest in a monitor that's suitable.

### AQCOLOR technology so important? How does this relate to Delta E?

Delta E is an internationally-recognised colour accuracy measurement. It represents the difference between the colour on your screen and the colour captured by your imaging device. If the Delta E number of a display is closer to zero, it means there's less variation between the original colour and the shade on your screen. And anything below 2.0 is suitable for professional imaging work. The inclusion of AQCOLOR is crucial, too: this is a proprietary technology developed by BenQ to deliver accurate colours from a professional monitor to respective users. The four pillars of AQCOLOR are the meeting of Industry Standards, the Display of Details, including the uniformity of the monitor's entire viewing area, an Out-of-the-Box Guarantee, including a Factory Calibration Report, and 3rd Party Qualification from the likes of Pantone and Calman. Scan the QR Code above for more details.

### Q How important is it to regularly calibrate your monitor?

Calibrating your monitor regularly is the only way to ensure consistent accuracy and uniformity. Professional displays from BenQ have factory calibration, but you should also calibrate at home. If you have a hardware calibratable monitor like the SW321C or SW271C you can adjust the image processing chip in the monitor without changing the graphics card output data, avoiding any adverse effect on the colour depth. The hardware LUT then processes these values on the monitor, using a much bigger colour depth than the original signal, avoiding the risk of colour loss.

### Q Could you explain a little more about the function of LUTs?

A lookup table, or LUT, is a file that saves image settings, so you can quickly apply new attributes to pictures without having to load them individually. It's the professional version of applying a new Instagram filter to



BenQ's top monitors offer USB 3.2 Gen 1 ports and an SDXC card reader.

your photo and can save you loads of time when editing and processing.

### Q What about connections like USB-C ports and card readers?

Having extra connections on your monitor improves your workflow and makes life easier. If, like the BenQ monitors, you've got USB-C ports onboard, you can deliver data, images and audio from one cable – which makes your desk tidier. USB-C ports can also charge smartphones, and, if you've got a card reader, you can easily input image data from your camera to your PC.

### Q Can you use the same monitor for both stills and video editing?

Absolutely. Photography and video workloads both rely on many of the same attributes: you need accurate colours, plenty of pixels and high-end gamut ability. If you've got a screen that can render colours in several key gamuts, there's no reason why you can't use the same display for both.

PP

#### More information:

[benq.eu/en-uk/monitor/photographer.html](https://benq.eu/en-uk/monitor/photographer.html)



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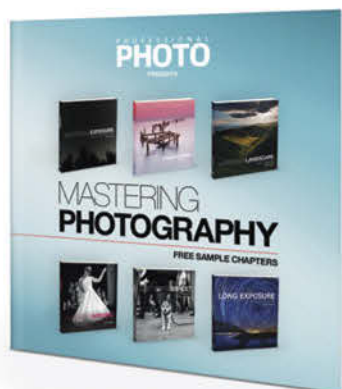
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# Safety First

Memory and back-up are two crucial areas that you need to get right, and we're looking at some of the latest launches in the pro arena and the trends that you need to be aware of.

**N**OTHING EVER STANDS STILL in the world of professional photography and, as the top-end professional cameras continue to become ever-more data hungry – thanks in no small measure to the increasing video capability that's being offered of course – so too memory has had to keep pace, and up its game. As a result, in recent years we've seen the speed of cards increasing, capacities going up and new technologies coming to the fore, and if you want to achieve the best performance from your camera it pays to stay abreast of what's going on and to make sure that you're always making the necessary investment to stay secure.

It's not just a case of ensuring you're working with the very best memory cards that are available, of course, but you also need to be embracing good practice by backing up your files in the field at every available opportunity, and this is where the latest generation of high-performance SSDs are coming into their own.

With the considerable advantage over the traditional mechanical hard disk of being flash based and therefore much faster and less likely to fail owing to having no moving parts, the hefty premium they once carried has now dissipated. It means that it's possible to acquire top-of-the-range devices from a selection of well-respected manufacturers at a highly

affordable cost, and the quality of the offering is going up all the time.

Starting with memory cards, it became clear a few years back that CF card technology needed to be refreshed to keep pace with the increasing demands being made by the latest generation of cameras. XQD cards were introduced by Sony ten years ago, with the promise of a 1Gbit/s read and write speed, and Nikon has been a big

If you're going to buy memory, then go for a product from a top brand, such as SanDisk's top-of-the-range Extreme Pro Line-Up.



supporter of the format since that time, adding XQD slots to signature cameras such as the D5 and D6, along with the Z 6 and Z 7 mirrorless trailblazers. However, CFexpress, which is physically identical to XQD, is fast becoming the new standard for top rated memory cards – the Z 9, for example, comes with dual CFexpress slots.

Because the cards are so similar in terms of size and shape it's been possible for manufacturers such as Panasonic and

Nikon to adapt models to accept CFexpress cards via a firmware update, which is good news for owners although it still means that they'll be bottlenecked to XQD speeds.

The reason that CFexpress cards are coming into the ascendency is because they have the capacity to offer incredible upload and download speeds, due to the fact that they're packed with the kind of technology that would previously have been found on computers and Solid-State Drives, ensuring that they can comfortably out-perform anything SD cards can offer. While the best of these will still have enough onboard for most still photography requirements, once you throw ultra-fast frame rates and 8K video into the mix you're clearly going to need something, such as CFexpress, that offers more under the bonnet, and which also has the capacity for yet more development into the future.

## New Launches

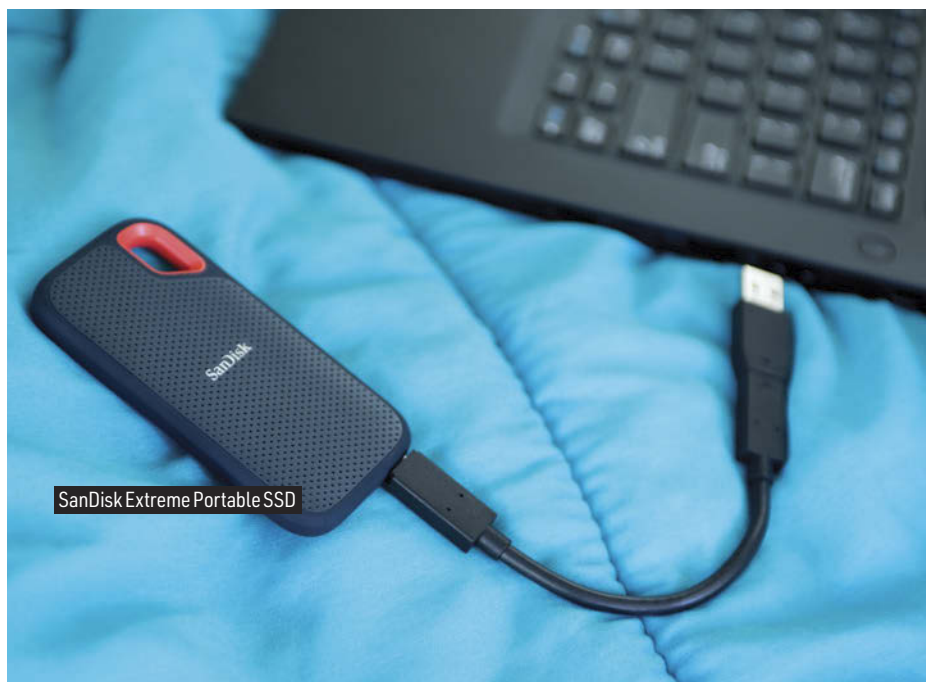
All of this is ensuring that the CFexpress format is growing rapidly, and there have been a number of recent launches that reflect the huge amount of research that's going into this vibrant sector right now. SanDisk, for example, has just launched the Extreme PRO CFexpress memory card, which offers read speeds up to 1700MB/s and write speeds up to 1400MB/s, along with low latency during high-speed recording and an enhanced workflow

efficiency that's far beyond anything existing SanDisk cards can deliver. The new cards are also said to enable smooth, RAW 4K video capture with sustainable performance, and they come with a RescuePRO Deluxe data recovery software offer, which is designed to make it easy to recover files accidentally deleted.

Lexar meanwhile has come to market with its Professional CFexpress Type B Silver Series cards, which offer read speeds of up to 1000MB/s and write speeds of up to 600MB/s to make the capture of high-resolution images and video a breeze. A limited 10-year warranty is also supplied for extra peace of mind and the cards are backwards compatible with XQD card slots providing that the camera used has had the necessary firmware update. Delkin, Angelbird and Sony also have CFexpress cards to offer, and to make the very most of the speed on board there are also dedicated CFexpress card readers available that are designed to accelerate the whole process. The Lexar Type B USB 3.2 Gen 2x2 reader, for example, delivers read speeds of up to 1700MB/s and comes with a 2-in-1 USB Type-C to USB Type-A cable for seamless port-to-port connection with a laptop or PC.

For those requiring the very highest performance from their memory this kind of technology is fantastic, but obviously it does come at a price, and CFexpress cards can carry a substantial premium over lower spec SD versions. A SanDisk 128GB CFexpress Extreme PRO card, for example, clocks in at £279, while a Lexar example with the same capacity is priced at £224 and a 1TB Angelbird card costs just a shade under £500. For the top-end professional these are prices that are worth paying for performance they couldn't achieve any other way, but for the majority of professionals the SD card in its many forms is still very much the tool of choice, and there is plenty going on in this area as well.

Lexar for example has just launched its latest entry into this market, the Professional 1800x SDXC UHS-II Gold Series Cards, which deliver read speeds up to 270 MB/s and write speeds up to 180MB/s. They also have UHS Speed Class 3 on board, which means that their use makes it possible to seamlessly capture extended lengths of Full-HD and 4K video, and the series comes in large capacity options up to 256GB. SanDisk too has a range of top-



SanDisk Extreme Portable SSD



Samsung caters for those using Micro SD cards with its PROEndurance range, supplied with an adaptor to ensure flexibility.

quality SD memory cards to offer in the form of its Extreme Pro SDHC/SDXC UHS-II cards, the highest capacity of which is 128GB.

The very highest spec SD cards such as these are actually similar in price to CFexpress cards, and so the cost argument is not so strong these days, but if you're not in need of a product that comes with quite such a blazingly fast performance then of course there are plenty of options around from all of the big players that will be way more affordable. It's up to the individual to make their own particular call, but the one big recommendation is that whatever

you go for it should be from a reputable manufacturer, since no professional wants to be in a position where a cheap brand of card lets them down on a major shoot.

Also on the memory card front, there are occasions where even a professional might find themselves with the need to work with a MicroSD card, perhaps if they're using an action camera, drone or a smartphone. Samsung's PROEndurance range is one of the better options in this department, with the cards offering a capacity up to 128GB, one of the largest available. The packet also contains an adaptor as part of the deal, and so it's possible to pop the micro card in and to use it in a full-size SD card slot.

One thing that the PROEndurance cards offer, and which many of the top-end suppliers also come with, is total durability, which is a huge tick in the box for any professional. It's definitely something



LaCie Rugged SSD Pro



LaCie Rugged SSD





Tap here to watch a film about the LaCie Portable SSD.



Tap here to watch a film about the latest SanDisk Extreme PRO CFexpress cards.



LaCie Portable SSD

you should be looking at whenever you're considering which memory card to go for, and the claims made by manufacturers are indeed impressive. The Samsung cards, for example, have an operating temperature range of between -25 and 53°C and are good for 43,800 hours of performance, while the SanDisk Extreme cards and the Lexar Professional range of 1066x SDXC UHS-1 Silver series of cards are marketed as shock, water, vibration and X-Ray proof, just the kind of reassurance you want.

## Backing up Files

Naturally you'll not be wanting to leave files sitting on memory cards for too long, and the latest generation of SSD back-up devices are small and lightweight, very stable and very well priced. Any professional would be unwise to go into battle without one of these tucked away, and if you get into the habit of backing up regularly as you're working then you'll cut the odds against you losing priceless files dramatically.

New to the market is the SanDisk Extreme Portable SSD V2, available in 500GB, 1TB, 2TB or 4TB capacities and priced from £89 upwards, the 4TB version coming in at £399.99. The product is positively tiny and offers 1050MB/s read and 1000MB/s write speeds and a rugged case that's designed to withstand inclement conditions in the field. It's compatible with both PC and Mac computers, and comes

**■ The latest generation of SSD back-up devices are small and lightweight, very stable and very well priced. Any professional would be unwise to go into battle without one of these tucked away. ■**

with USB Type C and Type-A connectors.

From Lexar is the SL200 Portable SSD, which again is super compact and capable of withstanding all kinds of mistreatment, being drop-, shock and vibration-resistant, while there's an advanced security solution on board with 256-bit AES encryption.

Capacities available are 512GB and 1TB and transfer speeds of

up to 550 MB/s and a write speed of up to 400 MB/s is possible. In terms of connectivity, you

can use the included USB

Type-C to USB Type-C or USB Type-C to Type-A cable.

Cost of the 1TB unit is £199.99.

Of course, you shouldn't be in a habit of mistreating your SSD back-up drive, but if you do then you would probably be happiest if you happen to be working with the LaCie Rugged SSD Pro. This is a tool that's very

much aimed at the top-end pro and the price reflects the fact – it's a cool £624 for the 2TB version – but then again you can pretty much do anything with it without fear it's going to let you down. It's IP67 water resistant, has a three-metre drop tolerance, two-ton car crush resistance and can also withstand the worst excesses of dust, so it could be worth the investment if you're heading somewhere where you could be encountering these conditions.

Meanwhile the slightly less bullet-proof LaCie Portable SSD USB-C should have enough about it to do the job for most professionals, and its USP is performance, with a read speed of up to 1050 MB/s and a write speed of up to 1000MB/s. Available in 500GB, 1TB and 2TB capacities, it can transfer an hour's worth of footage in less than a minute and it makes it possible to edit multiple streams of 4K video in next to no time. The price starts at £108 and rises to £336 for the 4K version.

As you can see, this is an area where there is a lot going on right now and clearly there is a huge amount of investment in r&d going on behind the scenes from every big player. Expect to see speeds going up and capacities continuing to rise in the future, as the memory market responds in positive style to the demands being made by camera manufacturers.

PP

## More information:

- lexar.com
- westerndigital.com
- samsung.com/uk/memory-storage
- lacie.com



Lexar SL200 Portable SSD

# Trust Your Memory

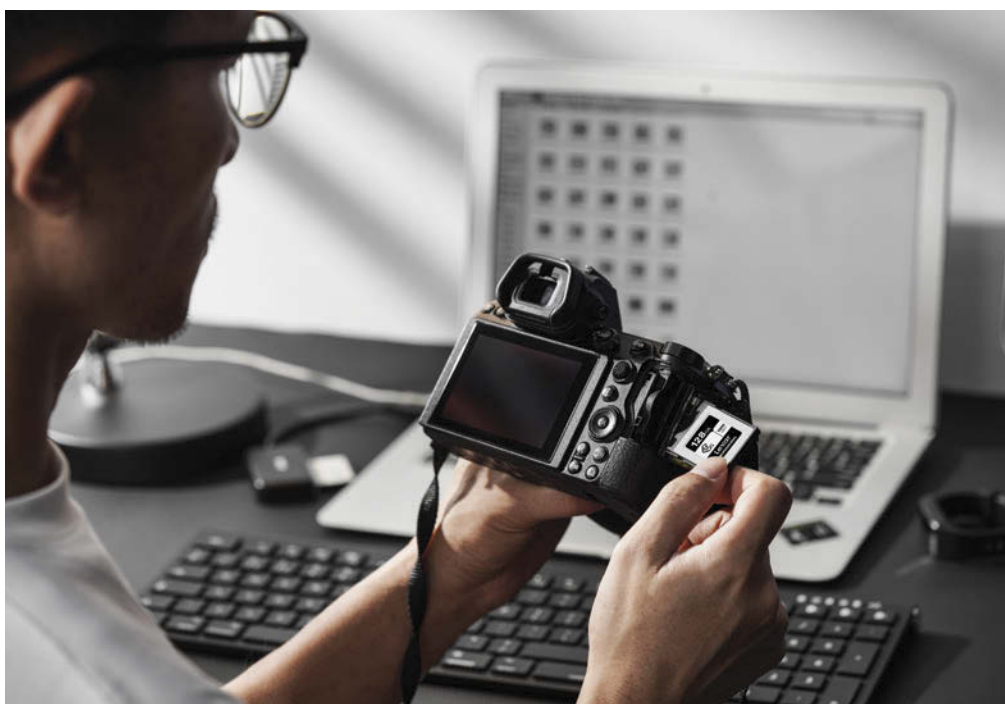
Memory is one area where no professional would want to cut corners and Lexar is a quality brand that can provide everything you need, from cards through to readers and storage.

**A** SA PROFESSIONAL photographer your reputation is one of the most important things you can possess, and so it makes sense to take every precaution you can to make sure that you never let your client down on a job. It's the reason why no self-respecting professional would ever dream of cutting corners by opting for a cheap memory brand. You might save a few pounds here and there but you're running the risk of failure down the line that could lead to you losing key files and ultimately messing up on an important commission.

Stick to memory from a reputable brand such as Lexar, which is trusted by professional photographers and filmmakers around the world, and you've immediately got the reassurance of a top-quality product behind you. Furthermore, thanks to ongoing investment in r&d, the company is also continually upgrading its product line-up, meaning that you'll have a wide choice of cutting-edge technology that's not only reliable and robust, but super-fast as well.

The icing on the cake is the fact that Lexar covers off the entire range of memory products that you're ever likely to need, everything from memory cards of all kinds through to stylish readers and memory storage devices. This enables you to download files in the field as you're working, creating back-ups as you go and cutting the odds still further against something happening that could disrupt your shoot.

Proof of the quality of the range was the accolade received from the prestigious and independent Red Dot Awards last summer. Lexar products ranging from the Professional Multi-Card 3-in-1 USB 3.1 reader through to the Professional CFexpress Card USB 3.1 reader, the Encrypted Portable Hard Drive and the SL210 Portable Solid-State Drive were deemed to have upheld the brand promise to provide customers with cutting-edge



design way over and above expectation, a rare and richly deserved honour.

Not only do they look good, but all Lexar product designs undergo extensive testing in the Lexar Quality Labs, facilities that house more than 1,100 digital devices.

## The Full Monty

Lexar memory cards have long been a by-word for quality while remaining highly affordable, and a full range is offered that caters for the requirements of professional photography and video creatives working at all levels. Reliability is a given, but the cards also tick all the boxes in terms of providing the features required to make life easier for those with a demanding job to do.

Emphasising the ongoing drive for more speed there has been news of a range of SD Express memory cards in development by Lexar that will leverage the PCI Express (PCIe) 4.0 specification, delivering a maximum data transfer rate of nearly four gigabytes per second. Able to transfer data up to three times faster than the fastest UHS-II SD card available today, SD Express will have a theoretical maximum read speed of up to 985MB/s, and the cards will also leverage the NVMe Express (NVMe) protocol and be backwards compatible.



## Meeting the Need for Speed

THE LATEST GENERATION of SDXC memory cards from Lexar boast the kind of lightning speed that the modern generation of hybrid photographer/videographers require to get the very most out of their high-performance DSLR and mirrorless cameras. The up-to-the-minute technology that's packed inside the new Lexar Professional 1800x SDXC UHS-II Gold Series Cards ensures that they can cope with even the most demanding of imaging requirements, leaving lesser cards standing.

The original UHS (Ultra High Speed)



cards were revolutionary, but UHS II has moved things on to a whole new level, enabling the new Lexar cards to deliver read speeds up to 270MB/s and write speeds up to 180MB/s, to handle photos in burst speeds with ease. And with V60 and

UHS Speed Class 3 on board it's also possible to seamlessly capture extended lengths of Full-HD and 4K video with these cards, with large capacity options up to 256GB.

With the ability to dramatically accelerate digital photography workflow for the professional user, the cards are also designed to be water-proof, temperature-proof, shockproof, vibration-proof and X-ray-proof. For added versatility, the cards are also backwards compatible with UHS-I devices, performing up to the maximum thresholds of UHS-I speed capabilities.

Cards such as this are being developed to meet the increasing demands of photographers and videographers for moving large amounts of data, including 8K video capture and playback, RAW continuous burst mode, 360-degree cameras and videos, and more data intense applications and workloads.

Companies such as Lexar have also invested extensively in the technology that's required to keep pace with camera development, and over the past few years the arrival of CFexpress cards in particular has made a massive difference to what's achievable. The latest generation of CompactFlash (CF) cards, these offer super high-speed performance that can keep pace with the demands of the latest cameras in terms of both high-resolution photos and video, particularly important now that 8K is becoming an option.

The most recent launch has seen the introduction of Professional CFexpress Type B Silver Series cards, which offer lightning fast write speeds of up to 600MB/s to make the capture of high-resolution images and video a breeze. A limited 10-year warranty is also supplied with the cards

The fastest transfer speeds will usually be achieved when a creative is working with a dedicated card reader. The Lexar



Type B USB 3.2 Gen 2x2 CFexpress reader enables read speeds of up to 1700MB/s plus there's a 2-in-1 USB Type-C to USB Type-A cable and USB Type-C to USB Type-C cable on board for seamless port-to-port connection with a laptop or PC.

Lexar also produces a Multi-



Card 2-in-1 USB 3.1 reader supporting transfers of up to 312 MB/s, while its Multi-Card 3-in-1 USB 3.1 Type-C reader is capable of accepting SDXC Micro SD, full size SD and CF cards.

In terms of storage, then devices such as the Lexar SL200 Portable SSD can do a fantastic job. Tiny and lightweight and with storage capacity up to a whopping 2TB, this is a product compact enough to tuck into a side pocket, and it provides security on the go, even when shooting the most data-hungry video footage.

Lexar's stylish SL200 Portable SSD comes with a huge capacity, yet is small enough to tuck away in the side pocket of a gadget bag.

**“ In terms of storage, products such as the Lexar SL200 Portable SSD can do a fantastic job. Tiny and lightweight and with storage capacity up to a whopping 2TB. ”**

**More information:**  
lexar.com

# MINI TESTS

GREAT NEW KIT HEADING YOUR WAY

## Nikon Z 40mm f/2

PRICE £259 | NIKON.CO.UK | WORDS DAVID NASH | THEELECTRICEYE.CO.UK

NEW TO THE CURRENT line-up of lenses for the Nikon Z series of full frame bodies is an interesting option. It's not a fancy zoom, rather it's a 40mm prime f/2 prime lens that's the perfect glass of choice for candid portraits, vlogs and interviews.

To many photographers perhaps this could appear like an unconventional focal length choice by Nikon, given that so many of us will undoubtedly already have a 50mm f/1.8 in our armoury, (the nifty fifty) and, quite possibly, the 35mm f/1.8 alongside as well, since these two lenses between them effectively cover off the natural perspective of the eye. However, I'm glad I had the chance to try out this new optic, since it turned out to be more useful than you might have originally envisaged.

The first thing to jump out at you when you look at this lens is its price. With an srp of just £259 this is a very affordable product, especially when you consider the £629 price tag of the Z 50mm and the £899 the Z 35mm will set you back. So, it's a great alternative for those on a budget.



Obviously, there are going to be differences in the build quality given this price point, and areas such as a plastic mount and no lens hood are the first things you'll notice. However, the lens, although light at 170g, doesn't feel cheap, and the multi-functional focusing ring – which can be set to control such things as aperture, exposure compensation, ISO and, obviously, manual focusing – is incredibly smooth and

responsive. In the field meanwhile I found the AF to be quiet and fast, and it locked in smoothly on target with no issues.

Impressively, the lens is also weather sealed, and it's constructed with 6 elements in 4 groups (including 2 aspherical elements) with an f/2 rounded 9-blade maximum aperture. In operation it produces pin sharp images and, fully open, you can achieve a nice shallow depth of field, though I tended to stop it down to f2.8/f3.5 to create a level of separation of the background from my subject.

There's no optical image stabilisation built into the lens, this obviously being taken care of by the IBIS within the majority of the higher end Nikon Z bodies the lens will be partnered with. This does however mean you won't have any image stabilisation in your corner should you happen to be working with non-stabilised models, such as the Z50 and Fc.

The lens sits nice and snug on the body, creating a very compact set-up similar in many ways to an older 35mm SLR with a prime 50mm. This makes it a perfect general walkabout lens for street photography and candid portraits, and it's also great for filming engaging first-person perspectives – think vlogs and interviews.

The more you start using this lens the more you see how it fits perfectly in-between the 35mm and 50mm: you get the ideal balance of a short wide angle without the distortion a 35mm might introduce, while you also get that valuable extra field of view over a standard 50mm, which can prove to be crucial on occasions.

PP



## VERDICT

CONSIDERING THE versatility this lens offers and the highly reasonable asking price this would certainly be a great addition to your kitbag whether you are into stills or video. It's definitely one that's already on my wish list.



## Kenro Smart Lites

**PRICE:** £49.99 AND £84.99 | **KENRO.CO.UK** | **WORDS** TERRY HOPE

THERE IS AN OBVIOUS need for small and versatile continuous lights for professional photographers, and a new arrival in this market is Kenro, with its fresh launch of branded products that are designed to fit both the gadget bag and the pocket.

The premise behind the Kenro Smart Lites is simple and effective: small, easy to operate and cost-effective-to-buy fixtures that are hugely versatile and the kind of thing that are brilliant to have tucked away ready for a multitude of uses.

There are two products plus accessories in the first wave of launches, with more following imminently. These are the entry-level Bi-Colour Compact LED Video Light, (£49.99) and its higher spec sibling the RGB Compact LED Video Light (£84.99), while there is also an aluminium mini ball head available at £14.99 and a smartphone adaptor for £5.99. The latter accessory gives a clue regarding the make-up of the audience that Kenro sees for these products, since they are ideal for vloggers and content creators who are looking for a simple and effective way to lift shadows if they're filming themselves on their smartphones. However, there is potentially a lot more to these new products than simply this, and the RGB version of the light in particular does have a set of features on board that the pro will find very useful.

To the specs of this higher end product first, and it usefully features an integrated 4040mAh battery and 10W output, charged via the included USB-C cable, and will deliver around 1.6 hours of light on a full charge, and obviously longer if used judiciously. It comes with a CRI (Ra) of 96+ and a CCT colour temperature range of 7500–3200K, and can produce 720 LM of

brightness. For a panel at this price point that's quite impressive, and furthermore it provides up to 1050 Lux of illumination (7500K at 0.5m) and even boasts nine built-in special lighting effects that could prove useful for filmmakers.

The key feature of this fixture, however, is its RGB capability, and it comes with a full 360-degree RGB colour spectrum, with 1–100% controls for both brightness and saturation, offering millions of colours to choose from. That's a fantastic capability, and put this product into the hands of a creative individual and you can imagine the uses they'll find, from a small studio still life through to atmospheric portrait lighting or part of a larger filming set-up.

For this money I have to say that I was expecting a product with something of a flimsy feel, but was pleasantly surprised to encounter a sturdy metal casing with a decent amount of weight to it. Controls were ultra-simple: an on/off switch and separate wheels on the side to control colour and intensity,

with a panel on the back to give you an easy-to-read visual check on the settings. There's also a tripod bush on board and an included ball head adaptor to enable the light to be attached to a camera's hot shoe. Furthermore, the light can be controlled by a smartphone app, so remote control for functions such as colour temperature, RGB colour, saturation, brightness and special effects is also possible.

The Bi-Colour Compact LED Video Light is similarly well put together, comes with the same battery and has a power output of 9W and can deliver 1.9 hours of output at full power. It's surprisingly bright and has a neat extra feature in that a standard USB port is provided so that you can charge your smartphone as well.

PP

## VERDICT

**FOR THE MONEY** these two new lighting fixtures are offering great value, and the RGB version in particular will hold huge appeal for those looking for a simple and affordable lighting scenario. In fact, we're giving one of these away in our competition on page 9 of this issue, so go try your luck and you could be testing out this product out for yourself!





# Tom Lee

Following a challenging start Tom Lee established himself as a top international professional, and his advice to his younger self would be to find a mentor and to specialise.

**W**HEN I LOOK back at the start of my career, it's difficult to imagine what I must have been thinking at the time. It's easy being a photographer, just press the button and go, right! I thought I was going to be the next David Bailey.

The truth is I was a good hobbyist photographer who had won a few national photo competitions, but also carried an abundance of inexperience. When I started, there was no-one to guide me through the vast gulf between the enthusiast and professional realms, and I knew nothing about business skills. My first wedding was almost a complete disaster, but somehow, I got through it by the skin of my teeth. The other mistake I made early on, was being a bit of a 'Heinz 57' guy. I tried my hand at everything and was OK, but never really managed to be great at anything. Income was irregular and there never seemed to be enough coming in to make a living.

Being in business for yourself is scary, especially if you can't afford staff, or even the occasional assistant. There are so many things you need to be in control of, such as finance, advertising, web design and social media, not to mention doing the actual job you're being paid for. Without proper advice your fledgeling business could quickly unravel.

I would advise that you find a good mentor from an established professional, or a trade association. There are many available, and the

camaraderie amongst others in the same position as yourself can gain you friends for life and give you the added confidence that comes from knowing that you're not alone. These organisations also offer a qualification structure, giving prospective clients security in the knowledge that you've

attained a professional standard.

I started professional photography back in 1985, but it wasn't until 1988 that I came across an organisation that fitted the bill, the newly founded SWPP that allowed part-time professionals to join, and I've been a member ever since. My career developed and grew,

due to the extensive support and training I received. When I began, the internet was in its infancy, digital cameras were a twinkle in some scientist's eye and you still had to wait a week to see if your pictures had turned out at the lab. Yes, I know I'm a dinosaur, but I'm not yet extinct!

I finally retired my business in 2018, but continue to support my organisation and other aspiring entrepreneurs, giving back to the community that supported me so well. This is the essence of my advice; you don't have to go it alone. Keep on learning and evolve your business alongside the current markets.

If you want to be a great wedding and portrait photographer then be the best you can be, and learn to specialise. A bride

isn't interested in how well you can photograph a plate of food, so don't show other stuff like this on your web pages if you want to target a specific clientele. Keep the quality of your images high and you'll find you attract better paying clients.

PP

■ [tomleephoto.com](http://tomleephoto.com)



## Tom Lee

Over a 40-year career span, Tom has been a UK-based international portrait and fine art photographer recognised for his expertise in digital image capture, and he's accumulated multiple international awards throughout that time. With a global reputation as an author, he's also written several books and collaborated with other renowned writers.



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