



Vignettes 77

March 24th, 2021

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Club News

Hi everyone. Hope you are all well. I write this on the anniversary of lockdown so it was good to see everyone on Monday. Sorry about the late change in the programme on Monday and I do hope we got the message out to everyone, particularly those who weren't going to attend the Permajet presentation. Just when you thought you were going to have a night off.....!

As the email from Louise at Permajet said:

Good Morning Martyn,

I do hope you are keeping well and safe during these unprecedented times that we are all experiencing at the moment. Regretfully, I am writing to you as we have a slight problem with Colins presentation to you and your members this evening and we are going to have to postpone/move the evening to another date. Unfortunately, Colin damaged his knee about a month ago falling off a step ladder from his loft and it has been getting worse, but he has still been walking/hobbling on it. So, he had a MRI on Thursday last, and they discovered that he has shattered his bone in three places, so he is now on crutches and has to rest his leg for up to 4-6 weeks. He was still going to run the presentation from home for you with his leg up!!!, but he has just let me know that he now has a hospital appointment to see a knee specialist to see if he has to have an operation, so I am afraid we are going to have to postpone the evening for you. Sincere apologies that this situation has occurred as we never like to cancel any bookings but this is definitely a situation beyond our control. I would be grateful if you could confirm that you have received my email and once again please accept our sincere apologies.

Louise was good enough to email the cancellation to everyone in addition to Mike's round robin email in the midst of his child care duties! and with Jill on the case with the Website and WhatsApp Group, I think we got it covered. Ah, the wonders of social media. I noticed from Monday's night's talk that we had 26 club member attendees whereas the Permajet talk registered 20 of us so I guess we got through to everyone.

As you will recall, Permajet were offering us a discount code for purchase of their products on line which we would get on the night and would last a week. I'm aware that some of us were holding back to take advantage of this offer but of course that's now on hold. In view of this disappointment I'm proposing to ask Permajet if it could release the discount code now but before I do, could you let me know if you were going to take advantage of this offer so I can get a feeling for numbers before I go back to them. There's at least Mike, John S and I. If you can let us know before the end of the week, that would be great. That issue and the timing of the rescheduled talk has a bearing on whether we ask for a refund of the presentation fee which we've already paid.

In hunting round for a substitute speaker, I had seen the excellent Tom Way before and had him as a possible speaker for next season. Although his phone was busy, he was good enough to phone me straight back and it was really a stroke of luck that he was free. And what a great, professional, talk we had. It's always a bit humbling as a "hobbyist" to try and sum up a professional photographer's presentation, particularly one who is tuned in to trying merge what he likes in his photography with the need to put bread on the table. Although commercial in approach, I don't think he was going through the motions just to make living. He's clearly passionate about the images he's creating and it's a style the market likes. A perfect combination.

Tom was keen to stress that he is a wildlife photographer, not a digital artist. He takes it as he sees it, in part due to the restrictions in what is acceptable for wildlife competitions which form an important element of his work. I think his style and approach says everything about the components of a good image - his "three test" mantra being a) light, b) character and c) simplicity are ones we can all learn from. To me a combination of the use of monochrome (or desaturation) and a "tight in" approach definitely captures the character of an animal. As Tom said though, not all animals have a character which is easy to capture. The main bullet points I came away with (which may be obvious but are good reminders) are:

1. Shoot for yourself, not for a judge albeit that sometimes the objectives of both can become aligned.
2. Learn through trial & error.
3. Think on your feet.
4. Paint with light.
5. Capture the personality.
6. Less can be "more".
7. Attention to detail - read the essential elements which characterise an animal or situation.
8. Know your settings.
9. Know your camera.
10. Don't be afraid to experiment with low light.
11. Read the context - the relationship between your position (about to be trampled on by an elephant!) the subject and the background.
12. Don't be afraid to crank up the ISO if it's dark BUT shoot "to the right" - in post processing, in managing noise, it's better to darken a high ISO lighter image than lighten a darker one.
13. Shoot "tight" to immerse one in the subject's character and maintain simplicity.
14. Shoot "wide" when you are looking at balance and composition as the principal ingredients of an image.
15. Some "tight" images might not portray context (it could be anywhere) so think about whether context is an important element as a backdrop.
16. Think about whether colour vs.. B&W as the former can be more distracting.
17. Consider using desaturation as an alternative to B & W.
18. Shoot in RAW, crop to suit, use the contrast slider to highlight tones and don't over sharpen. Be careful with the clarity and texture sliders.
19. In terms of printing, don't use paper that's too light. 280-310 gsm is a good weight.

The final piece of advice is to not critique your images immediately, or if you have, let time allow the opportunity to look at the images again. Your appreciation and skill in processing may change over time for the better. Let the image “breathe” for a re-critique later.

Tom’s website is below. He’s just announced a new series of workshops and if you fancy a trip to Africa, he takes groups as well. A good night.

<https://www.tomway.co.uk/>



Descent

A few important dates coming up

1. The submission date for the club annuals is next Monday 29th March.
2. Next week's talk is by Bob Bewley. Although an experienced speaker on the subject of archaeology, this is a bespoke talk just for us so we are very grateful that he is stepping in as a replacement to one of our booked speakers who does not Zoom.
3. We have a battle coming up against Cheltenham and Stroud on Thursday 1st April. Stroud to host.
4. The Committee are Zoom meeting on 30th March at 7.00. Usual dial in details.
5. The RPS Distinction Group are Zoom meeting for an update on Wed 24th at 7.00. Usual dial in details. All welcome to attend.

External Competitions

The Cheltenham International Salon of Photography (CISP) submission closing date is soon to upon us - it's the 5th April. Submitting entries is via the web and is very straightforward. All the details of CISP can be found here:

[Cheltenham International Salon of Photography 2021 – Cheltenham Camera Club](#)

Internal Competitions

Vote for your favourite subjects for next year's competition season

As discussed at recent meetings, John and Jamie have created an online survey with a comprehensive list of potential subjects for next season's club competitions. Jamie has asked that members submit their results by the end of the month, using the following link. This will take around 5 minutes to complete:

<https://cirencestercameraclub.org/subject-poll/>

The annual club competition categories

The annual club competition entries are due on the 29th of March which is rapidly approaching. Get your thinking hats on or, failing that, better get the camera out! Jamie has confirmed that all the entries will be DPI again this year and we have enough new members for the Pitchers Cup - as long as they all enter! Just in case you have forgotten what the categories are, and for our new members, the details are shown in the table below, and this is the Dropbox link for submitting DPis:

<https://www.dropbox.com/request/zRwHLz7MfRGHIZyCHNsp>

**CIRENCESTER CAMERA CLUB
2021 ANNUAL COMPETITION CATEGORIES**

Final Submission date : 29 March 2021

Award	Subject	Format	Notes
Pitchers Trophy	'An Iconic Cotswold's Location'	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB	Topic chosen by our Club President.
Dennis Moss Trophy	Open	Print 1600 x 1200, sRGB	If CV19 restrictions still apply, this will be DPI.
Leonard Jones Cup	Open	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB	
Black & White	Open	Print 1600 x 1200, sRGB	If CV19 restrictions still apply, this will be DPI.
Miles Shield	Open (Club outing)	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB	
Gladiator Trophy	Aviation	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB	
Pitchers Cup (new members)	Open	Either Print or DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB	Open to new members only. If CV19 restrictions still apply, this will be DPI only

The 10th May is our Knockout Print night.

Summer Cup

Our President has come up with three challenges for the Summer Cup:

- 1) *Stress.*
- 2) *Relaxation.*
- 3) *Happiness.*

All I can say is, if you are not sure, get that English Oxford Dictionary out!

BBC Pictures

Another selection from the BBC's news website.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cumbria-56482574>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-56479185>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-shropshire-56455308>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-56442714>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-56405150>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-56443644>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-56443464>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-56252755>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-56406791>

Miscellaneous

Future possible Battles

I watched Cheltenham (Glos) battle against Cheltenham (Melbourne, Aus) last week which was absolutely fascinating. It started at 9.30 am UK time, 8.30 pm Australia time with Colin Harrison (who has talked to us) judging. The score at the end was really close at (approx) 707 (Aus) and 723 (UK) given that something like about 80 images were judged. It was a balmy 20C at 8.30 pm in Melbourne which made us envious and it was good to hear what's going on, on the other side of the world, all down to the new Zoom world.

Cirencester Camera Club Book Club

Yes, just when, at 76 vignettes "in", I thought we were running out of ideas, up came a new angle - what photographic books do you own or have read recently? Of course, at 76 vignettes "in" I might also have already raised this idea before in which case sorry in advance. However, I'm certainly not going to look back to check!!

Having just watched a gritty talk on northern urban dereliction, interspersed with images and quotes from some iconic photographers, I bought a couple of books I probably should have bought by now given their subject matter which I find myself drawn to. Typically for Amazon, they arrived the next day and what a joy they were to read. It immediately struck me that we've probably all got photographic books from our "heroes" dealing with a variety of subjects from technical guides to graphic imagery. Let us know what you are reading or recommend. Any book you want to recommend, right across the photographic spectrum and we'll put it in the next Vignettes to spread the word. Here's my list to get you motivated. It's a bit bigger than I thought!

1. Martin Parr - The last resort.
2. Don McCullin - In England.
3. Magnum Manifesto. A 70th anniversary celebration of the Photojournalist agency.
4. Concepts of Nature - Andy Rouse.
5. Little Owls - Andy Rouse.
6. Tigers, a Celebration of Life - Andy Rouse.
7. 2020 Vision - AA.
8. Growing in the wild - Sri Lanka Wildlife.
9. The Photographer's guide to Lightroom's Develop Module - Robin Whalley.
10. Various WPOTY Annuals (British & International)
11. Various editions of Scott Kelby guides on Lightroom and Photoshop.

You won't find many camera club competition winners in the first three books listed. They are all focussed on context, storytelling and imagery. Forget burnt out highlights, dodgy focus and irritating edge distractions. These all tell stories and remind us that there's a photographic life outside club competitions. That's not to say though that competitions don't help us to hone our photographic skills and guide the direction of our photographic interests.

The Photography Show - Catch Up

Although it's now passed, the talks and presentations from the Photography Show are available online if you missed it, most being available until 7th April. You just have to register. Here's the link:

https://futureplc.slgnt.eu/optiext/optiextension.dll?ID=JbaJgoy9T0pt%2BnmWCirG7KVUaatSGHycdZ6QV2nrJj_Uee6ZRx9Vv4_C0czEfdmcBU6YtvM69J75P8gFECpLY%2BoYXtHdZ

Quote of The Week

The best thing about a picture is that it never changes, even when the people in it do Andy Warhol

That's it for this week. Catch up next week.

Cheers and stay safe.

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Mike (mike.cheeseman1777@hotmail.com)