



Vignettes 244

November 8th, 2024

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Club News | 2 |
| Dave’s Programme Review | 2 |
| Tools of the trade..... | 3 |
| Battle Secretary’s Update | 4 |
| Cirencester History Festival | 5 |
| Photography Challenge..... | 6 |
| Christmas Quiz | 6 |
| External Exhibitions and Competitions | 6 |
| BBC pictures..... | 7 |
| 2024-25 Competitions and information | 8 |
| Quote of the week | 9 |
| Cirencester Camera Club – Members Challenge | 10 |

Club News

Hi everyone. I hope you are all well. A good turnout on Monday this week to hear Mike wax lyrical about Still Life Photography. And what a terrific talk it was. It was very clear that he put a lot of time and effort into preparing a really informative PowerPoint presentation all delivered with humour and a light touch. Here's Dave Cahill with his weekly roundup and thoughts and what we are up to next week.

Dave's Programme Review

Hi everyone. This week we had the first of our two evenings on Still Life/Tabletop Photography. Very many thanks to Mike for an excellent and informative presentation on the history and theory side. As Martyn mentioned above, I can see that Mike has put a lot of effort into the presentation. I found it very educational, inspiring and thought-provoking.

Mike covered a huge amount of ground, including the history of still life art with its various (pre-photography) sub genres, then moving on to the development of still life photography, drawing on artwork and images from a range of well-respected and creative exponents in their fields. The pros and cons of still life photography were well explained and introduced a lively debate – the notion that in most photography we find a readymade scene and tend to be looking for things to leave out, whereas in still life we are creatively adding things to a blank canvas, struck home with me. Also, that while we often find a 'decisive moment' to deal with in other photographic genres, in still life we control the whole creative process. As Mike explained, this can be a never-ending process and all down to your creativity.

There were also lots of practical suggestions to inspire our creativity, for example the use of opposites, the use of cropping, using a narrative, and types of lighting including the merits of reflectors, diffusers and light painting tools to enhance the image. The options are endless.

Next week we move on to the practical side. The plan is to set up a number of workstations. We hope to have a number of backgrounds and lighting arrangements, and advice will be on hand regarding how to set up and light the scene to get the best results. There will also be help with processing and focus stacking for those that are interested. Make sure you bring your cameras and tripods, and your creative imaginations. If you have any items/props that you think would look good bring them along too. Don't forget that 'Still Life' is the Competition D set subject, submission due in January 2025. The definition, for the purpose of the competition, is given below in the competitions section. It's worth emphasising here I think that it's all about inanimate objects, typically arranged by the photographer to create a visually compelling composition. Mike also made a good point that because the still life image is created by the photographer the judge may be less forgiving about small 'faults' in the image, on the basis that you should have had time to 'get it right'!

Our usual 7:30pm start and should be a fun evening.

Cheers
Dave Cahill

To pick up on Mike's talk and in advance of next week, I produced a list of stuff which might help you create your Still Life image. This is what I said in V224:

Tools of the trade

I gave a talk last year on Focus Bracketing (or Focus Stacking) and for the photos used in my talk, I made a mini still life studio and bought some backdrop stuff on the internet to help. When I was putting together my Panel, it struck me that you might find it helpful to know where you can get creative photo stuff so here's a few links:

1. *Mirror finished stainless steel (better than a glass mirror as you don't get the double reflection from both the glass and mirror surface) - <http://www.metaloffcuts.co.uk/>*
2. *Perspex sheet - I use cast acrylic sheet - <http://wholesalepos.com>*
3. *Correction and creative gel filters for led light panels - Decareta Store on Amazon.*
4. *Vinyl backdrops for placing still life on. Numerous options - <https://clubbackdrops.com/>*
5. *Mini lightbox studios. I made my own fold away MDF open sided version so I could add side lighting but there's loads on Amazon. The only disadvantage with many 'ready to go' mini studios is that they are enclosed, some with built in lighting which reduces scope to do you own lighting effects.*
6. *Mini T-shaped backdrop holding stand - Selens's Store on Amazon. Use with a fold away picnic table as the base as an alternative to a home-made mini lightbox.*
7. *Led light panel (rechargeable, dimmable, variable Kelvin) - see VILTROX store on Amazon.*
8. *Light stands - Amazon Basics Aluminium 2.04 m Light Stand with Case, Black. Sold in pairs.*
9. *Mini ball head for light panel - the Neewer store on Amazon but see https://www.amazon.co.uk/Removable-Detachable-Installation-Compatible-SmallRig/dp/BOBFWSZCX3?ref=ast_sto_dp&th=1&pvc=1*

As always have a look on Amazon - there's tons of stuff out there. Finally, if you check out the club's website, you should find talks by Stephen Chapman and myself (Martyn) on our approach to Focus Stacking. Finally, if you recall Mike's array of light 'wands', here's an amazing article about a light sabre wielding photographer:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cyv7prndj0qo>

Hot on the heels of Paul Norris's Battle selection night info

He's back with more info about the Battle Selection Night and info on the Gloucestershire Camera Clubs Photography Exhibition early next year in Glos Cathedral. Here's Paul:

Battle Secretary's Update

Gloucester Cathedral Photography Exhibition

Hello everyone. We have an exciting opportunity to be part of a local photography exhibition that is scheduled to take place in Feb 2025. The theme is 'Images that depict our local area'. A number of camera clubs across the Cotswolds, including Cirencester Camera Club are being invited to contribute to the exhibition and our local area can be defined as Cirencester and surrounding countryside. I am keen that we, as a club, are part of this exhibition as it will be a great opportunity to showcase some of our work. So, I have agreed to be the conduit in organising our submission, but I need your help.

Technical Stuff - *We have been allocated two panels measuring 160cm x 160cm, which is a good size. At this stage, I am keen to look at a range of images and would request that as part of the Camera Club evening on the selection committee activities later this month, it would be good to look at some suitable images for discussion and selection. Just from chatting at the club this week, we are keen that there are perhaps some photos of well-known Cirencester landmarks or scenes, but equally some of the surrounding areas would also be good to include. I think we can be quite creative in including images from the Cirencester Mop Fair, maybe the recent local History Festival and perhaps local pursuits (John Polo?) along with more traditional shots of Cirencester and the wider area.*

Images do not necessarily have to previously been entered for a competition and there is not a restriction on age, but I would like to have all our images of a similar format (if not image size) when we present them, but this layout issue is detail for the future.

Each picture will need a short bio by it to help visitors understand more about the image which I think is a good thing given that I think we should be creative.

At this stage I am not worried about size of the image but if you have something that you would like to be considered please can you let me know and we can agree how we bring these together for the evening. I think it should be fun. Given that we have been allocated two panels, there might be an opportunity after the exhibition to display them locally in the Bingham Gallery or a local community facility which would help advertise the Club.

Please can you let me know on my email - apnorris100@hotmail.com if you are interested in supporting this event or catch me in the next couple of weeks at camera club.

Many thanks
Paul

Cirencester History Festival

[A note from our Chair - on The Cirencester History Festival.](#)

Further to my brief comments on Monday night, as you know, I volunteered the club to take pictures at the Cirencester History Festival following a request we received from the Festival Organisers, The History Society. I was delighted that seven Club members took up the challenge - Mike, Gary, Paul, Finn, John Crew, Jane and me. We spent a great week listening to some fantastic talks - all front row seats and free of charge courtesy of the HS, not to mention some hospitality at the end of the festival. Oh, and we took some pictures as well which seems to have gone well as the History Society appears to be pleased with the images.

I hope I have whetted your appetite as this is likely to be an annual event, so watch out as I'll be looking for volunteers for next year. I understand that the images we took may be in the Standard with good reference to the club. I think we can definitely use one or two in Paul's Gloucestershire Photography Exhibition referred to above.

<https://www.wiltsglosstandard.co.uk/news/24707190.25-photos-incredible-festival-set-return-cirencester/>

Many thanks again to all the volunteers.
Cheers
David



Gruesome Gargoyles
(John Crew)



Medieval Mystical Women
(David Wallis)



Octavia's Bookshop
(Findlay Simpson)



Stalin, Putin & the West
(Paul Jones)



Iron Age
(Jean Thirkettle)



Rabbit Hole Detectives
(Gary Gleghorn)



Historical Cookery
(Mike Cheeseman)

.....and whilst I'm on

Photography Challenge

Don't forget about 'My Photography Challenge' next stage.

By now you should be familiar with your camera controls and understand any limitations of your lenses. It is now time to put this into practice.

The third stage of my challenge is "Seeing in the Dark". Taking your camera out at night opens a whole new realm of photographic possibilities. The darkness transforms familiar landscapes and views, offering unique opportunities to capture the world in a different light.

Details of the November challenge are attached at the end of Vignettes.

Christmas Quiz

Christmas Quiz 16th Dec - The Siddington Pub - and now there are three!

Here's the latest fantastic (!) club member attendance update and link to the pub menu. By the way I'll be drawing names out of a hat for the all-important quiz teams near the time.

<https://www.thegreyhound-inn.co.uk/menu>

1. Martyn S - Henry Burger
2. David Wallis (Quizmaster) – Beef & Ale Pie
3. Colin Hoskins - Beef & Ale pie
4. ?

Could you email me (Martyn (thehoneys@btinternet.com)) that you are coming and if and what you are eating.

External Exhibitions and Competitions

Weather Photographer of the Year competition 2024

Here's a new comp I haven't seen before. The UK's Royal Meteorological Society has revealed the winners of this year's Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year competition. The total number of submissions received this year was above 4,500 from 84 countries. This was whittled down to a shortlist of 25 images, from which the winners were chosen by an international panel of experts from the fields of meteorology, photography and journalism, including members of the ITV Weather team. The public also voted for their favourite from this shortlist.

The Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2024 Title Prize Winner goes to Wang Xin of Shanghai, China, with the photo 'Sprites Dancing in the Dark Night'. Check out the winners here:

<https://www.rmets.org/weather-photographer-of-the-year/gallery/standard-chartered-weather-photographer-year-2024-winners>

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) 2024 Photography Competition

A shot that captures a rare bee has been crowned the winner of a wildlife photography contest. The extreme close-up of an armed nomad bee won first prize in the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) 2024 Photography Competition. It was taken by Luke Chambers at BBOWT's Dry Sandford Pit reserve near Abingdon, Oxfordshire. Mr Chambers said he had taken about 10 frames to achieve the desired detail. Check out the winners here:

<https://www.bbowt.org.uk/2024-photography-competition-winners>

BBC pictures

As usual some great images from across the globe from the BBC's website:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cpvzk3y19j4o>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c624z4egxpvo>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0qdw124zvwo>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdrdyvkd1nno>

2024-25 Competitions and information

| Cirencester Camera Club General Competition Schedule 2024/2025 | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| | Competition | Submission date | Judging night |
| A | Journey + Open | 30/09/24 | 28/10/24 |
| B | UK Flora, Fauna, Fungi + Open | 28/10/24 | 02/12/24 |
| C | Golden/Blue Hour + Open | 02/12/24 | 13/01/25 |
| D | Still Life + Open | 13/01/25 | 17/02/25 |
| E | Closed + Open | 17/02/25 | 24/03/25 |
| Annual | 2024-25 Annual competitions | 24/03/25 | 14/04/25 and 28/04/25 |

Definitions of Set Subjects

JOURNEY: A journey photograph is an image captured during the course of a journey or expedition, typically depicting scenes, landscapes, people, or moments encountered along the way. These photographs often aim to convey the essence of the journey, capturing the spirit of exploration, discovery, and adventure.

UK Flora, Fauna, Fungi: A flora, fauna, fungi photograph is an image that showcases plant life (flora), animal life (fauna), or fungi found in a particular ecosystem or habitat. These photographs aim to highlight the diversity, beauty, and intricacies of the natural world. They can range from close-up shots of individual species to wide-angle landscapes that capture entire ecosystems.

Golden/Blue Hour: During the golden hour, the sun is low in the sky, casting long shadows and creating a warm, diffused light that can enhance the colours and textures in a scene, often producing a soft, flattering glow. In contrast, the blue hour occurs just before sunrise or after sunset when the sky takes on a deep blue hue, creating a serene and tranquil atmosphere.

Still Life: A still life photograph is an image that portrays inanimate objects, typically arranged by the photographer to create a visually compelling composition. It can range from simple, minimalist compositions to more elaborate and stylized scenes, depending on the creative vision of the photographer.

Closed: A photograph with the title "closed" could depict a variety of subjects or scenes, but the title suggests a theme of closure, restriction, or inaccessibility.

Summer Cup (judged by members)

This is an informal competition which takes place during the 'off season' between June and September. Members can submit an image on one or all of the following subjects, which must be taken between May 20th 2024 and Sept 2nd 2024. These will then be judged by the other members at the start of the season. Images must be sent via the Club Dropbox before Monday 02 September 2024.

1. Small
2. Medium
3. Large

Ted Parrott Memorial Trophy (judged by members)

This Trophy is in memory of a long standing and valued member of the Club, Ted Parrott who passed away in 2019. Images must be of 'Sporting Action', and be submitted by Monday 02 September 2024. This image must have been taken between September 04th 2023 and September 2nd 2024.

For all Competitions, please upload images via Pixoroo link below: -

pixoroo.com/public/account/login

Quote of the week

If I could tell the story in words, I wouldn't need to lug around a camera - Lewis Hine

That's it for this week.

Cheers

Martyn (thehoneys@btinternet.com)

David (david.wallis@btinternet.com)

Dave (dave.cahill975@btinternet.com)

Cirencester Camera Club – Members Challenge

NOVEMBER TOPIC

Seeing In the Dark.



Taking your camera out at night opens a whole new realm of photographic possibilities. The darkness transforms familiar landscapes and views, offering unique opportunities to capture the world in a different light. Here are some tips and techniques to help you explore and capture the beauty of the night:

1. **Use a Tripod:** Night photography often requires long exposures to capture enough light. A tripod is essential to keep your camera steady and prevent blur caused by camera shake.
2. **Long Exposures:** Experiment with long exposure times. This allows your camera to capture more light and can create beautiful effects like light trails from cars, smooth water surfaces, and star trails in the night sky.
3. **Adjust ISO Sensitivity:** Increasing the ISO sensitivity can help you capture more light in low-light conditions. However, be cautious, as higher ISO settings can introduce noise. Modern cameras often handle higher ISOs better, but finding the right balance is key.
4. **Wide Aperture:** Use a wide aperture (low f-stop number) to let in as much light as possible. This also creates a shallow depth of field, which can produce stunning bokeh effects with lights in the background.
5. **Manual Focus:** Autofocus can struggle in low light, so switch to manual focus. Use live view and zoom in on your subject to ensure it's sharp.
6. **Explore Different Light Sources:** Nighttime offers various light sources, from street lights to neon signs. These can add interesting colours and contrasts to

your photos. Play with different angles and compositions to make the most of these lights.

7. **Experiment with Light Painting:** Use a flashlight or other light source to "paint" light into your scene during a long exposure. This technique can create interesting and artistic effects, adding an element of creativity to your night shots.
8. **Capture the Night Sky:** If you're away from city lights, night photography is perfect for capturing the stars. Use a wide-angle lens, set a long exposure (around 20-30 seconds), and a high ISO to capture the beauty of the Milky Way or star trails.
9. **Utilize Reflections:** Look for reflections in water, windows, or other surfaces. Reflections can add depth and symmetry to your night photos, creating more visually appealing compositions.
10. **Experiment with Black and White:** Night scenes often have strong contrasts, which can look striking in black and white. Converting your night photos to black and white can emphasize shapes, shadows, and textures.
11. **Embrace the Mystery:** The darkness can add a sense of mystery and drama to your photos. Embrace the shadows and play with the lack of light to create moody and atmospheric images.
12. **Post-Processing:** Don't be afraid to enhance your night photos in post-processing. Adjusting the exposure, contrast, and colour balance can bring out details and make your night shots even more captivating.

By venturing out into the night with your camera, you'll discover a new perspective on the world around you. The darkness unveils scenes and details that are often hidden during the day, allowing you to capture unique and mesmerising images.

Keep Safe!