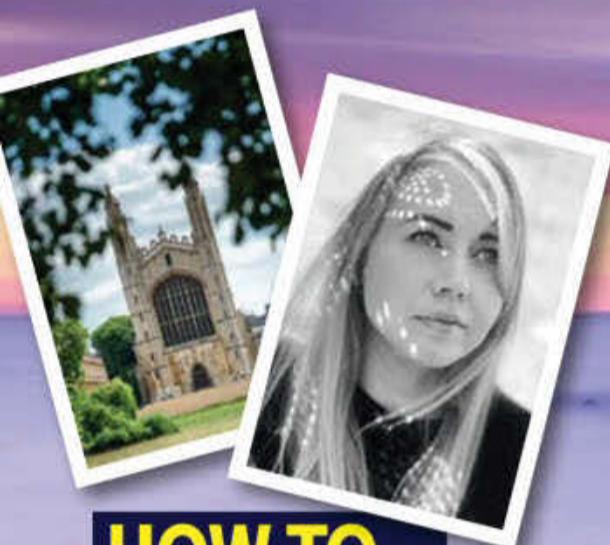


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Digital SLR Photography



HOW TO...

- FRAME A SCENE WITH FOLIAGE
- GET CREATIVE WITH GOBOS
- MASTER MULTIPLE EXPOSURES
- SHOOT MIDDAY WITH FILTERS

MASTER COLOUR

15 TOP TIPS FOR ADDING IMPACT
TO YOUR IMAGES USING COLOUR

Simple steps to PERFECT PICTURES

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INSPIRATION TO HELP YOU TAKE YOUR BEST-EVER SHOTS

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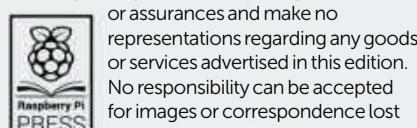
Digital SLR Photography is published by Raspberry Pi Press, Maurice Wilkes Building, St Johns Innovation Park, Cowley Road, Cambridge CB4 0DS.

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ISSN number: 1751-8989

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Welcome



WELCOME TO THE OCTOBER 2020 issue of *Digital SLR Photography*. It's been a long, hot summer and while the world is still under the cloud of Covid-19, we continue to gain a little more normality with every passing month. From a photographer's point of view, it means we're able to head out and indulge in our passion more than we have been able to for quite a while. And there's no

better time than now to do it – along with the sunshine and warmer temperatures there's plenty of colour to give images extra impact. Starting on page 60, pro photographer Ross Hoddinott shares his favourite 15 tips to help you make the most of colour over the coming weeks in *Photo Expert*. With the rules on social distancing relaxed, we're able to bring back a regular reader favourite

– *Photo Workshop*. Regular contributor and pro photographer James Abbott takes a reader to the Peak District and helps him overcome three different outdoor challenges. Our *Hot Shot* article takes to the skies this issue as pro landscape photographer Adam Burton reveals how becoming a qualified drone pilot has given him a totally new perspective for his landscape photography. Enjoy the latest issue and have a great month of photography. All the best!

Daniel Lezano Editor



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ON THIS MONTH'S COVER...

The easing of lockdown rules makes it possible to head outdoors to capture great images, such as this stunning coastal shot of Kimmeridge Bay in Dorset by Ross Hoddinott. Our *Photo Expert* guide to colour, starting on page 60, offers 15 top tips to filling your images with instant impact.



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OUR TEAM OF PHOTO EXPERTS



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With around 35 years' experience as a photographer and over 25 years on photo magazines, editor Lezano is passionate about photography, in particular portraits.



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One of the UK's leading landscape photographers and author of four books, Adam shoots throughout the UK and runs international workshops. adamburtonphotography.com



Brett Harkness PORTRAITS

You either want to be photographed by him or shoot like him. A master of portraits, fashion and weddings, Brett runs regular photo workshops. brettharknessphotography.com



Mark Bauer LANDSCAPES

One of the UK's leading landscape photographers and a celebrated author, Mark enjoys photographing the south west of England. markbauerphotography.com



Angela Nicholson TESTS

Angela is a well respected editor, writer and reviewer with close to 20 years' experience testing cameras, optics and accessories. She tests the Nikon D6 on page 98.



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Portfolio

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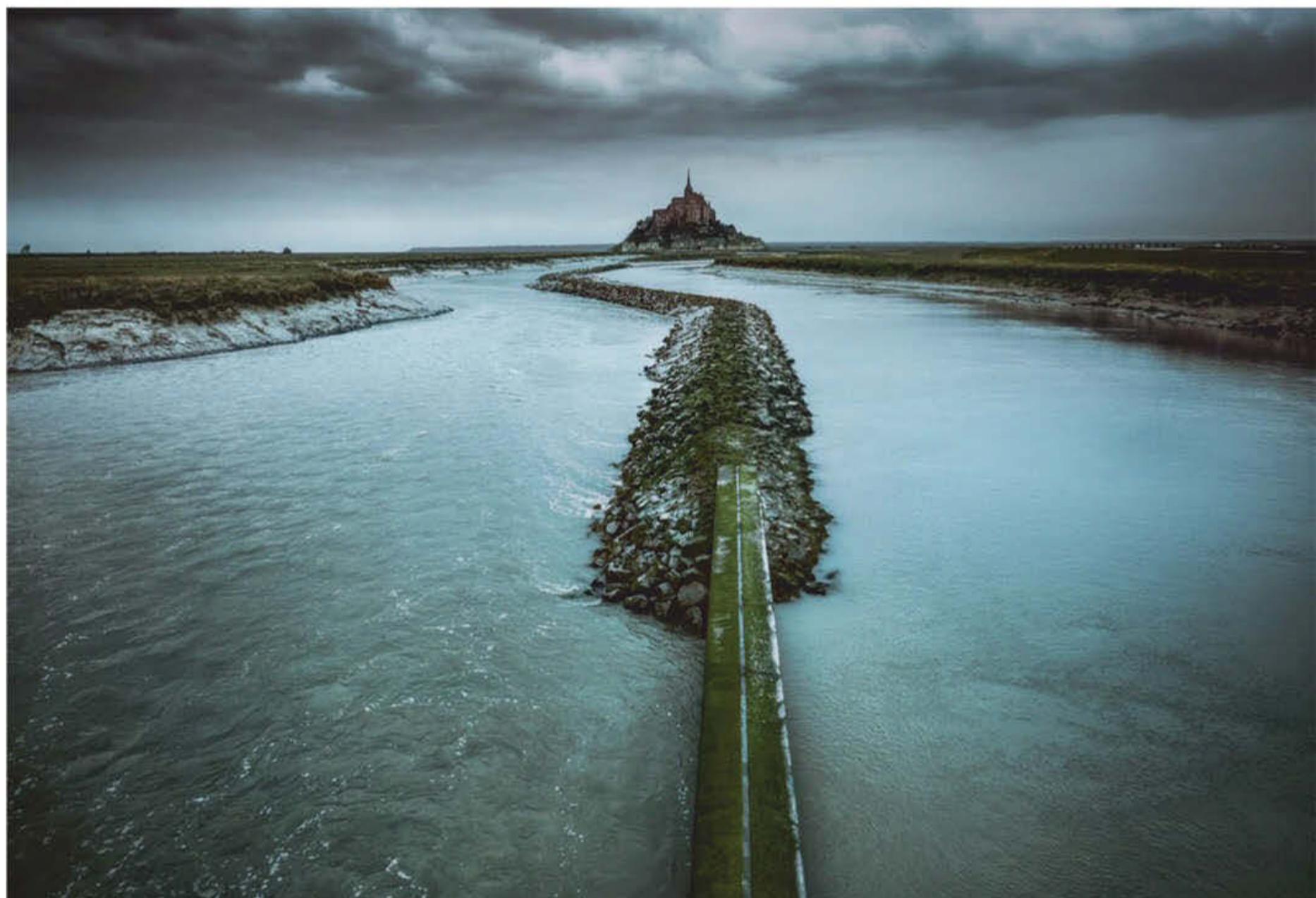
Tower Bridge by Hanaa Turkistani

500px.com/hanaatrkistani

"You cannot visit the City of London to enjoy its ancient buildings, heritage and culture without getting a photo of this iconic landmark on the River Thames. I used a Nikon D810 and a wide-angle lens at a low viewpoint with an ND8 filter to reduce the exposure by three stops to give smooth water."

Nikon D810 with 14-24mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: 13 seconds at f/20 (ISO 50).





Mont Saint-Michel by Hanaa Turkistani

500px.com/hanaaturkistani

(Above) "I always like to choose a unique angle to take my photos from and this spot is located on a platform just before you go on the Mont Saint Michel, in Normandy, France. The lead-in lines are in a great position to direct the eye towards the island and you can see the beautiful nature of this place on both sides."

Nikon D850 with 14-24mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: 1/125sec at f/3.5 (ISO 100).

DDP by Hanaa Turkistani

(Right) "One of the most amazing places that I visited in the Seoul Special City of South Korea is the Dongdaemun Design Plaza, designed by Zaha Hadid. I used lead-in lines as a way to guide the eye towards the building, which you cannot shoot without an ultra wide-angle lens due to its jaunty shape. I used a 16mm fish-eye lens and I'm happy with how the scene was captured."

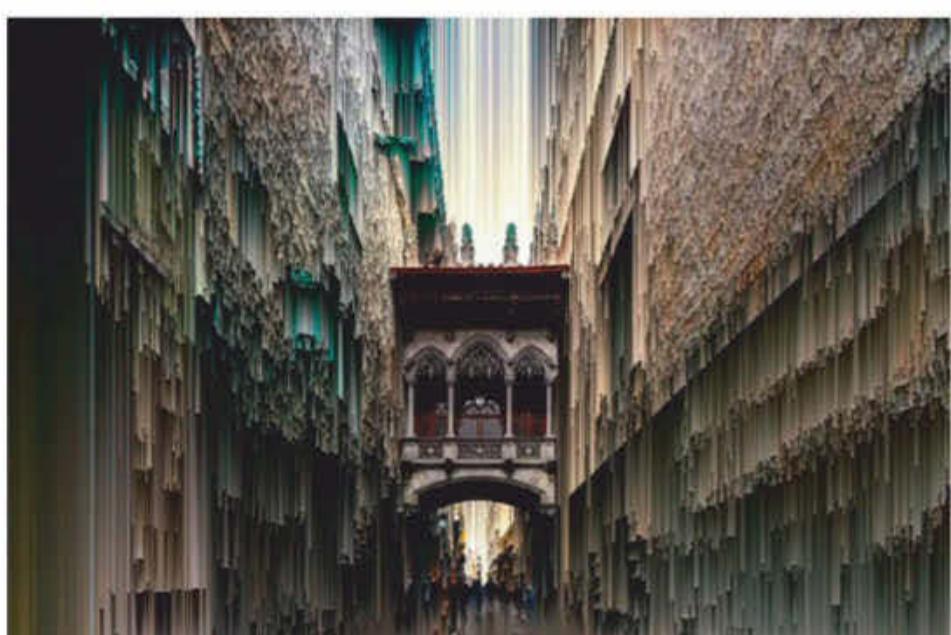
Nikon D810 with 16mm f/2.8D fish-eye lens. Exposure: 13 seconds at f/16 (ISO 64).



Melted by Hanaa Turkistani

(Below right) "The Gothic Bishop Bridge is one of the architectural secrets of Barcelona, Spain. The bridge, which dates back to the Middle Ages, crosses a narrow street and unite the buildings on both sides. Here I combined history and civilisation by melting the old walls using Adobe Photoshop."

Nikon D810 with 14-24mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: 1/100sec at f/3.5 (ISO 250).



Futuristic by Hanaa Turkistani

(Left) "Known as ITThra, the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture in Dhahran, Saudi Arabi, is epic and was listed in Time magazine as one of the top 100 places in the world. This image was taken vertically to encompass the scope of the building, which is designed to reflect the geological nature of the kingdom using different-sized 'rocks' symbolising diversity."

Nikon D850 with 24-70mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: Two seconds at f/11 (ISO 100).

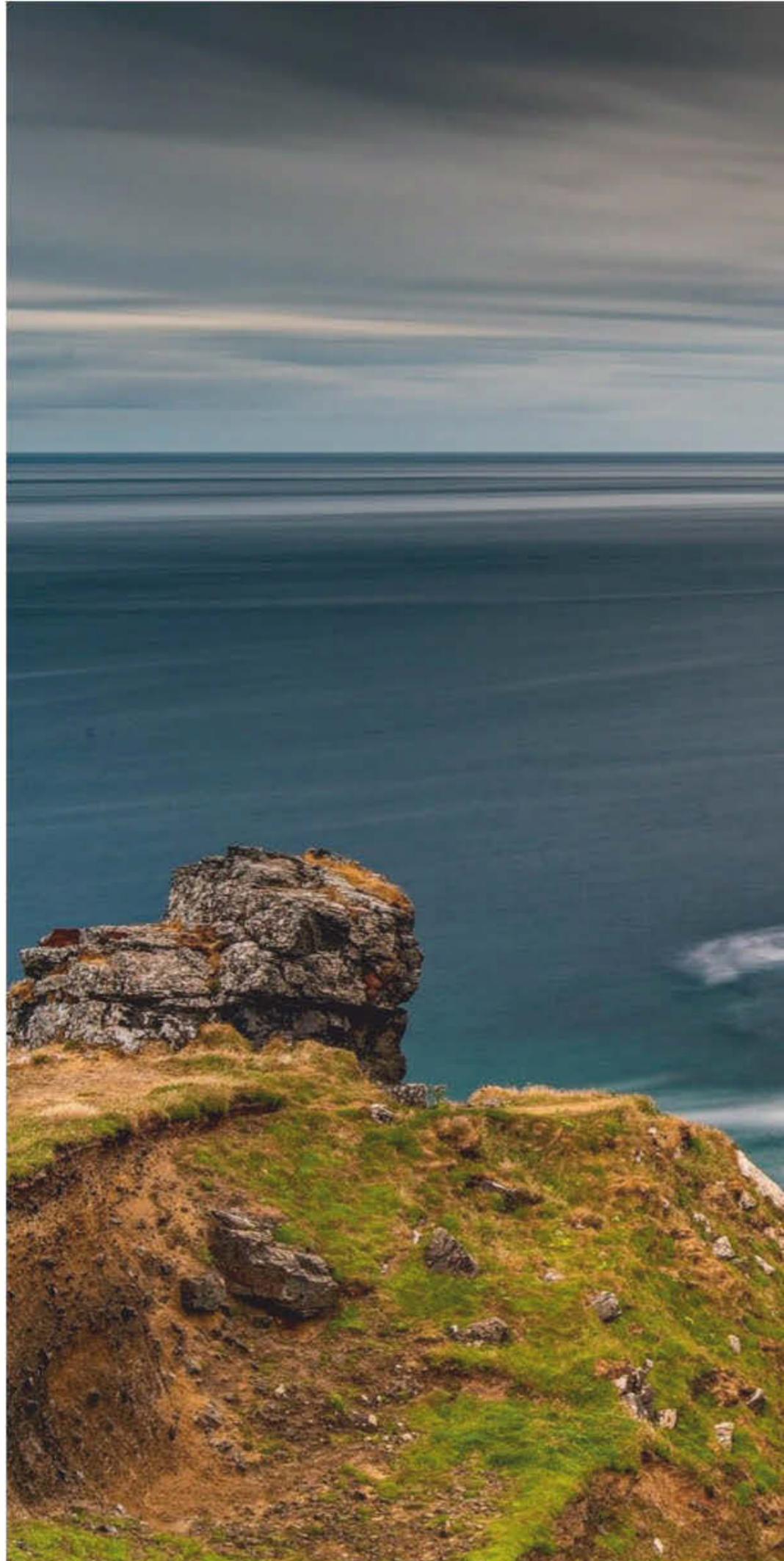
Portfolio

Bottalack by Jerome Colombo

www.jeromecolombo.com

(Right) "It's impossible not to go to Bottalack Mine when you are in Cornwall! The coast is sublime and the place is magical and especially pleasant during the summer. After many different tries, I got this four-minute long exposure using a ten-stop ND filter and polariser to enhance the stormy sky and drama of the scene."

Nikon D810 with Nikkor AF-S 16-35mm f/4 ED VR lens. Exposure: 240 seconds at f/11 (ISO 64).



Beuzec Cap-Sizun by Jerome Colombo

(Below left) "In the west of Brittany, France, in Beuzec Cap-Sizun is the Pointe de Trenaouret, which is simply a playground for photographers. One evening, once the sun had disappeared, the colours in the sky created this idyllic picture, which I caught using a three-stop ND grad."

Nikon Z7 with FTZ and Nikkor AF-S 16-35mm f/4 ED VR lens. Exposure: 30 seconds at f/8 (ISO 64).

Saint-Cado by Jerome Colombo

(Below right) "In Saint-Cado is the little Nichtarguer's house on the Etel River – it is a must-see! It's well positioned to be able to capture the sunset from the bridge that connects the island of Saint-Cado to the mainland. An ND grad was used so as not to underexpose the house."

Nikon Z7 with Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S lens. Exposure: 60 seconds at f/8 (ISO 64).

Primelin by Jerome Colombo

(Opposite below left) "Porstarz, in the far west of Brittany, is a shelter port and a former Audierne fishpond. The very jagged coast and the often rough sea make it a very interesting place to photograph at both sunrise and sunset. I used a four-stop ND grad and six-stop ND filter."

Nikon Z7 with Nikkor Z 14-30mm f/4 S lens. Exposure: 60 seconds at f/11 (ISO 64).

Pointe du Van by Jerome Colombo

(Opposite below right) "At the western end of Brittany, at the Pointe du Van, is a chapel that faces the ocean. One evening, in addition to the sky coloured by the sunset behind me, the clouds seemed to start from the chapel. I used an ND grad and ND filter for a 20-second exposure."

Nikon Z7 with FTZ and Nikkor AF-S 16-35mm f/4 ED VR lens. Exposure: 20 seconds at f/8 (ISO 64).

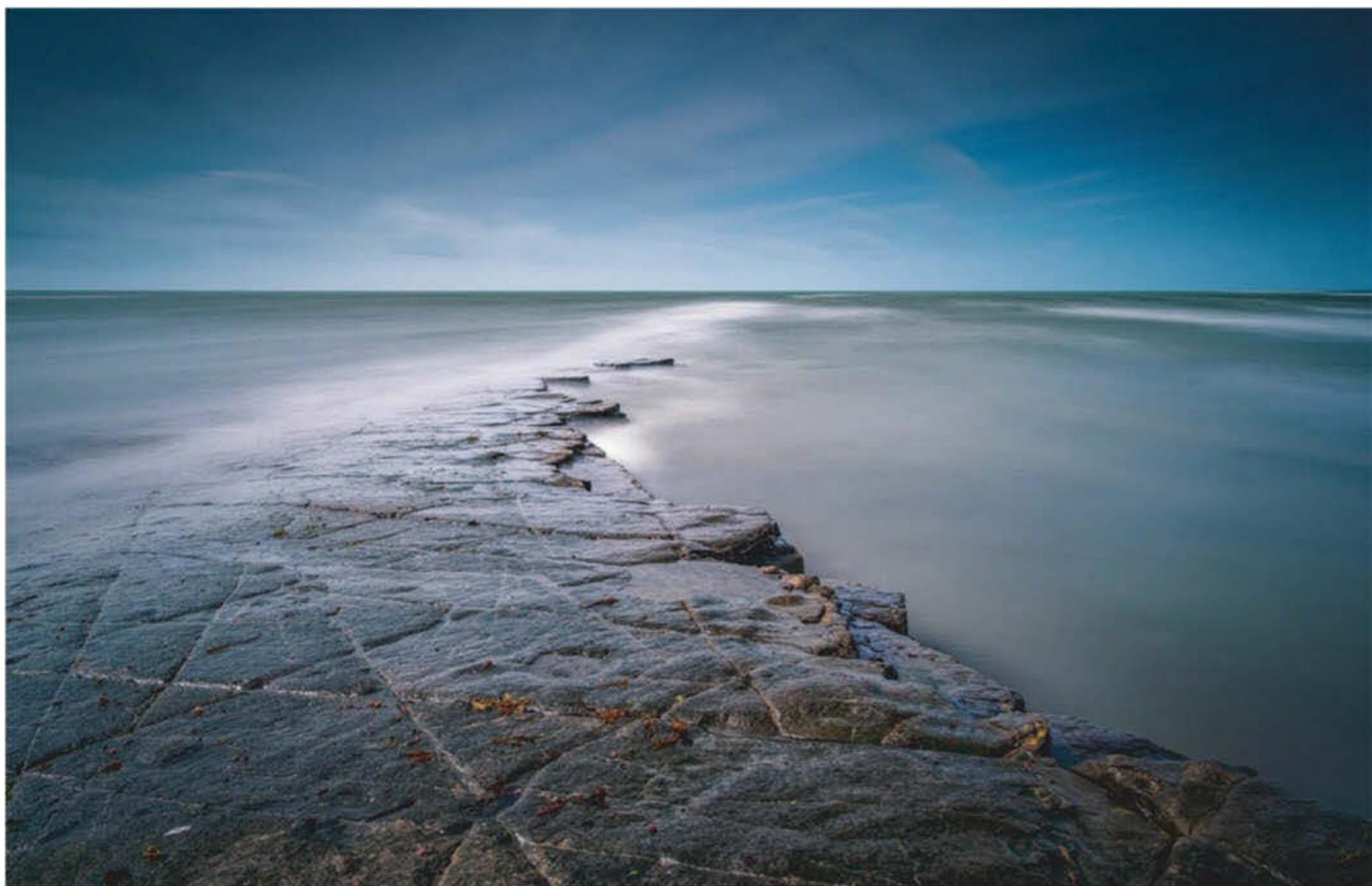
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Kimmeridge Bay by Jerome Colombo

www.jeromecolombo.com

(Above) "I had the chance to spend a day with the internationally acclaimed photographer Jeremy Walker in Dorset, during which we went to Kimmeridge Bay. Jeremy showed me the usefulness of a 15-stop ND filter when there is a lot of light to contend with. To get this image, we also used a three-stop ND graduated filter. It was an excellent memory!"

Nikon Z7 with Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S lens. Exposure: 120 seconds at f/11 (ISO 400).

Durdle Door by Jerome Colombo

(Right) "Durdle Door was a place I dreamt of visiting long before going there last year. It is absolutely beautiful and there were countless photographs to be taken. I waited for the sunset to give the sky some colour before taking this long exposure. Photographer Tom Mackie advised me to come back in December to have the sunrise in the ark! I'll be back for sure."

Nikon Z7 with Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S lens. Exposure: 20 seconds at f/8 (ISO 64).



Petit Minou Lighthouse by Jerome Colombo

(Below right) "Petit Minou Lighthouse in Plouzane is another classic photographic location in Brittany, France, but it can be difficult to get a colourful sky as the lighthouse faces south. It is therefore important to choose the right moment between the tides and sunset. Here, I used a four-stop ND grad filter and ND filter, in addition to a polarising filter."

Nikon Z7 with Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S lens. Exposure: 60 seconds at f/8 (ISO 64).



Corfe Castle by Jerome Colombo

(Opposite) "Photographing Corfe Castle in Dorset was also a long-time dream of mine. Very early that morning and again with Jeremy Walker, we captured an extraordinary sunrise. What a moment! For this image, I used a three-stop ND grad and my friend's precious advice. We just lacked a bit of mist around the castle for the perfect image."

Nikon Z7 with Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4 S lens. Exposure: 1/8sec at f/8 (ISO 64).

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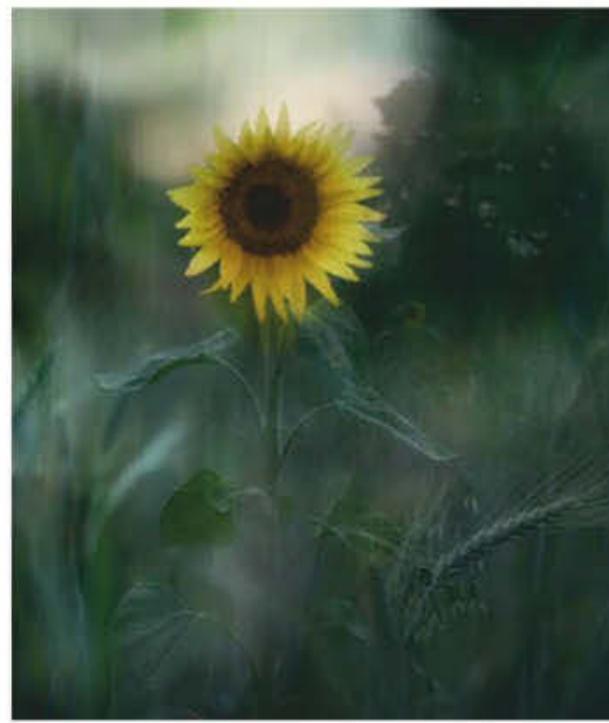
p16: LEARN HOW TO COPE WITH MIDDAY LIGHT



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PHOTO
SKILLS

BREAK THE RULES

ONLY MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN GO OUT IN THE MIDDAY SUN, BUT YOU CAN STILL SHOOT LANDSCAPES.
JAMES ABBOTT EXPLAINS HOW TO GET THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULTS FOR LANDSCAPES IN BRIGHT LIGHT

CAMERA: SONY ALPHA 7R IV / LENS: SONY FE 16-35MM F/2.8 GM



NEVER, EVER SHOOT landscapes in the midday sun, is a mantra you'll often hear and likely follow yourself already, and for good reason; in the middle of the day the light is harsh, shadows can be problematic and the weather conditions at any other times of day are generally much more conducive to achieving great results. You should always try to shoot landscapes around sunrise and sunset, but what can you do if you're on location in the middle of the day, such as en route to another location, and you're unlikely to return?

If there's little chance that you'll be returning anytime soon, it's better to take a

shot while you can so you have a frame or two, rather than passing it by – if you have time of course. In bright and sunny conditions, this is unlikely to produce an award-winning image worthy of inclusion in your portfolio, but you can still achieve reasonable results by using the right filters to make the best of the situation. And the most useful filter of all in this case is the polariser.

Polarising filters are the most versatile filter type available. They help to deepen blue skies, remove glare from water, reduce the appearance of harsh light on subjects, increase colour saturation and can be used as an ND filter as they can block up to two stops

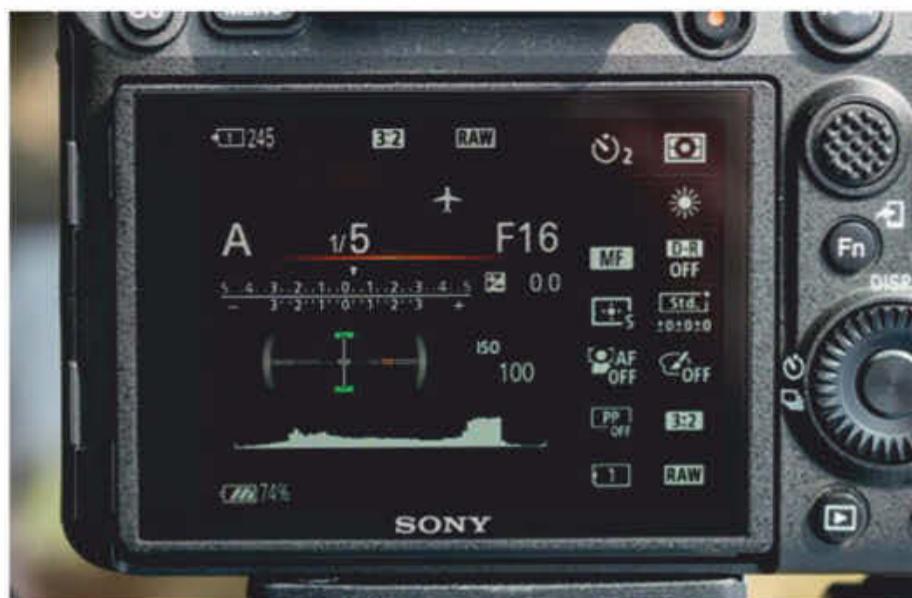
of light, depending on their rotation and angle to the sun. Circular polarisers are most effective when the sun is 90° to the camera, but other angles will work too. Rotate the filter in its thread to vary the degree of polarisation. If you only have one filter, make sure it's a polarising filter.

Other useful kit for shooting in bright sunlight include an ND graduated filter, to help accentuate sky detail, and a tripod for carefully framing the shot. Although, in bright conditions you can often shoot handheld so this is optional. In the final image here the shutter speed was too slow for handholding despite the bright sunlight. ►





1 COMPOSE AND FOCUS: Compose your shot, ideally on a tripod; if the shutter speed is fast enough to support handholding this is fine. Next, manually focus a third of the distance beyond the foreground you'd like to be in focus – here it was the heather in the bottom right of the frame. You'll see here that the camera settings are still set to the previous shoot, so these will be changed in the next step.



2 CAMERA SETTINGS: Set the camera to aperture-priority mode at f/16 if shooting full-frame or f/11 if shooting on an APS-C camera. Set ISO to 100 for noise-free images, making sure that the metering mode is set to multi-zone and that White Balance is set to Daylight to match the shooting conditions. At this stage, you can either set the self-timer to a two-second delay or attach a remote to release the shutter.



3 USE A POLARISING FILTER: Attach your polarising filter to the lens and rotate the front of the filter, while looking through the viewfinder so you can clearly see the effect. Rotate until the light in the scene looks softened and the blue of the sky is more pronounced. Take care with the sky because over-polarisation will ruin the shot – generally speaking, aim for midway between the weakest and strongest effect.



4 ADD AN ND GRAD: A polarising filter will do a great job of accentuating the blue sky, but if there's any cloud an ND grad filter will help to maintain detail. If you do use an ND grad, choose the relevant gradient type for the landscape being photographed – either hard, medium or soft. The horizon in this scene was straight so suited a hard grad and the filter was positioned while looking through the viewfinder.



5 ASSESS EXPOSURE: Use the live histogram in LiveView, or take a test shot and change the view mode to show the histogram, to assess exposure and make sure highlights aren't blown. The advantage of taking a test shot and reviewing the histogram is its four histograms – one for overall luminance as well as the red, green and blue channels – so you can ensure blue, for instance, isn't being clipped.

BUILDING THE SHOT

1 NO FILTERS: Without a filter being used, the image looks really washed out and there's virtually no sky detail visible. The light is most harsh in this situation.



2 POLARISING FILTER: Using a polarising filter has helped to reduce the harsh appearance of the light, and some of the blue of the sky has been pulled back.

3 POLARISER & ND GRAD: With a polariser and an ND grad, the exposure of the sky and foreground is most balanced, as well as there being more detail in the sky than the previous two shots.

SOFTENED LIGHT

The harshness of the scene has been successfully reduced using filters for a midday landscape image that works.

Exposure: 1/6sec at f/16 (ISO 100)





GRAB A GOBO TO GO

PLACING CERTAIN OBJECTS BETWEEN A LIGHT SOURCE AND YOUR SUBJECT CAN ADD UNUSUAL INTEREST TO PORTRAITS. CAROLINE SCHMIDT SHOWS YOU HOW

CAMERA: NIKON D750 / LENS: NIKON 50MM F/1.4G

WE ALL KNOW photography is the play between light and shadow so why not let gobos become your new favourite toy. Gobos, standing for 'go-between objects', are stencils that attach to lighting fixtures to project an image or a pattern on a subject or background. You mostly find them used with studioflash or theatre lighting but, for portraits, it's almost as easy to use natural light.

Adding a gobo to manipulate the shadows can result in some intriguing and creative portraits.

Window frames, venetian blinds or even patterns cut into black card work when placed between direct sunlight and a subject. Look around your house and you'll find plenty of opportunities for interesting patterns from cheese graters to lace, plate drying racks to straw summer hats, which look great for summery outdoor portraits – have a play and experiment. They're less versatile than when using flash as you're working with a light source you cannot control, but you can still get creative for worthwhile results. Here's how... ►



1 GATHER YOUR GOBOS: A quick hunt for potential gobos around the home results in a summer hat, colander, sieve, whisk and steamer. Whilst it's worth experimenting with different types, generally the bigger the gobo: the bolder and clearer the pattern when working with a big, distant light source like the sun. If you cannot hang the gobo in place or have an assistant hold it, a 50mm f/1.8 lens is ideal as you'll be able to hold the gobo at arm's length and compose your image. Be careful of using a wider lens as it can distort features at close range. Alternatively, use a tripod and fire the camera remotely.



2 LIGHTING: Whether you choose to photograph indoors or out, you need to place your gobo in the line of direct sunlight. The harder the sun, the stronger the shadows; diffused sunlight won't work so it's a perfect technique for clear skies and a high sun. If you want a dark background, you'll need to position your subject in the sun but backed by shade; for a bright background choose an area where the light falls evenly on the background too and use the gobo as shade for the subject. If your subject will most likely be side-lit keep in mind this isn't very flattering light as it will accentuate skin imperfections.



3 EXPOSURE: Set your camera to aperture-priority mode and dial in a wide enough aperture to cast all but the subject's eyes in focus to minimise background distractions: f/3.5 or wider is good from a metre away. Keep the ISO low for optimum quality and only increase if your shutter speed drops below what's safe to handhold. If you feel confident, try using manual mode for full control over the exposure. To focus, set single-point AF and ensure that the eye closest to the camera is sharp – you may need to drop down your aperture to get both eyes crisp depending on your proximity and shooting angle.



4 METERING AND DISTANCES: Your metering mode will have a big impact on your images. Multi-zone metering will average the exposure, making the image brighter than you may want depending on the background's luminance. Spot metering will expose for the areas you want to keep as a midtone, such as the skin, or the highlights to create deeper contrast. Spot metering with about 1/3-stop positive exposure compensation worked well; do not blow out the highlights. Another variable is the distance between the subject and gobo: the closer the gobo is to the subject; the smaller the pattern and harder the edge.

SAFETY FIRST

Please only try this technique, currently, with members of your household, bubble or if you can ensure social distancing of at least one metre can be adhered to.

HATS OFF TO GOBOS!

A black & white conversion works well with high-contrast portraits like this and a bit of skin retouching evens out the tone to hide blemishes exaggerated by the side light.

Exposure: 1/250sec at f/4 (ISO 100)



FRAMING THE WORLD

ADD INTEREST TO CITYSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE SUBJECTS BY USING ONE SIMPLE YET EFFECTIVE COMPOSITIONAL DEVICE: FRAMING. JAMES ABBOTT SHOWS YOU HOW TO GET THE BEST RESULTS WITH A TELEZOOM LENS

COMPOSITION, WHETHER BREAKING the rules or following them to the letter, is one of the best ways of adding visual balance to images of all kinds. The rule-of-thirds, lead-in lines and foreground interest will always be the most used compositional devices for cityscape and landscape photography, but there are several other options available, and one that draws full attention to the subject is framing.

Framing requires that you surround the focal point with another element within the scene, which could be an archway, window or even through people depending on the viewpoint of the camera in relation to the subject. But the problem with these is that

CAMERA: SONY ALPHA 7R III
LENS: SONY FE 70-200MM F/4

several variables need to be perfectly in balance for a framed shot to work.

With this in mind, it's much easier and equally effective to use the foliage of bushes or trees to create the framing. And the best thing about this is that foliage is much more common in rural and city locations and works well with both natural and man-made subjects. What helps to make a successful shot is the position of the camera, the lens used and the aperture setting. The latter can make a huge difference and the f/stop that

creates the most interesting results may not be the one you'd expect it to be.

When framing subjects, the technique is composition-based so you don't need any specialist kit. A tripod and filters are useful, as they are with any landscape or cityscape image, for balancing exposure and maintaining sky detail. Here, we used a 70-200mm f/4 lens wide open to defocus the framing element of the shot, but you could use a superzoom like an 18-300mm, a kit lens or even a wide-angle. Anything other than a longer zoom lens, and you'll need to find a framing element closer to the subject than the one we used; we were roughly 150m away. ►





1 COMPOSE THE SHOT: Attach your camera to a tripod and frame it using the Virtual Horizon to ensure everything is straight on the horizontal axis. The vertical axis doesn't matter if you can achieve the best result by tilting the camera forwards or backwards slightly – but nothing is worse than a wonky horizon. Despite fast shutter speeds, more than capable of supporting a long focal length, using a tripod makes it much easier to get the shot square and locks the camera in position.



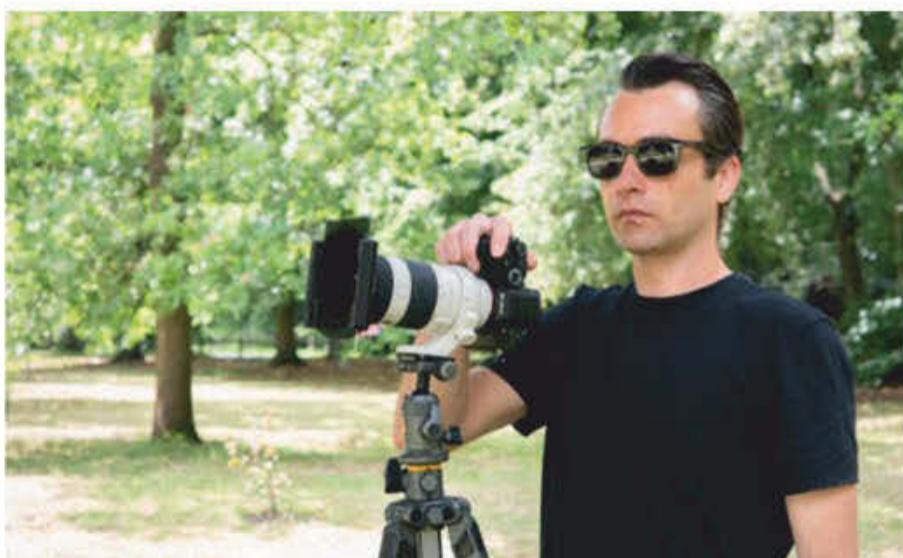
2 ATTACH FILTERS FOR DETAIL: The use of filters may not seem necessary when you're filling much of the sky with foliage, but a polariser and ND grad can be invaluable for maintaining sky detail. In this image, the polariser helped to maintain the blue in the bright sky and the two-stop medium grad held onto cloud detail. You can shoot without filters and still achieve good results, but filters will always help to take your images the extra mile when it comes to sky detail.



3 USE THE HISTOGRAM: Make sure the camera is set to aperture-priority mode with ISO set to 100 so that exposure compensation can be fine-tuned. If you have a live histogram in LiveView use this to assess exposure, but if not you'll need to take a test shot and then change the image view option by pressing the relevant button on the back of your camera. With the histogram, simply make sure the right side of the graph isn't touching the side, which means highlights have blown.



4 CAMERA SETTINGS: At this stage, you can set the aperture to the desired setting of f/4, f/2.8 or the widest aperture available on the lens you're using. Make sure that image stabilisation on the lens, or in-camera, is switched off and that the active AF point is sitting on the framed focal point in the scene so this is the point of focus. By autofocus further back, the foliage used to frame the subject will become a pleasing blur with circular highlights in brighter areas.



5 SHOOT AND RECOMPOSE: If shooting handheld, ensure the shutter speed set by the camera is not slower than the focal length of the lens. So, if you're shooting at 200mm, you want a shutter speed to be 1/200sec or faster. Now, all you need to do is shoot a couple of frames and keep trying new compositions, viewpoints with different trees and bushes to see which provides the best image. With the camera on the tripod, you can set up new shots surprisingly fast.

HOW TO GET THE BEST RESULTS

NO FRAMING: In this image, there's no framing and the result is an image that looks little more than a snapshot, despite using filters and being set up in the same way as the main image. The subject here looks awkward and boring – overall, it lacks the sense of depth that framing can give.

SHOT AT F/11: Shooting at an aperture around f/11 is common for cityscape and landscape photography and even though the point of focus was the chapel in the distance, the foliage has remained much sharper than in the main image. This simply doesn't look as good as shooting at f/4 or, even better, at f/2.8.



IN THE FRAME

Use selective focusing and a shoot-through technique to frame your focal point for an instant win.

Exposure: 1/200sec at f/4 (ISO100)





MESS AROUND WITH MULTIPLE EXPOSURES

MIX UP YOUR IMAGE MAKING THIS MONTH USING A MEDLEY OF CREATIVE TECHNIQUES
TO SEE IF YOU CAN DISCOVER A NEW SET OF RULES FOR YOUR ARTISTIC LICENCE

CAMERA: NIKON D750 / LENS: NIKON AF-S 70-200MM F/2.8G



WHilst photography is a craft we have to hone, it's also an art form that encourages you to break the rules you've already learnt. Out-of-focus images, intentional camera movement (ICM) and multiple exposures are all popular ways to add a dose of creativity to your pictures, but normally our tutorials show you how to use one at a time. I challenge you to be brave and pick two or even three new approaches to use in one shot. In previous months we've explained how to capture ICM and multiple

exposures, how to shoot wide open and through foreground subjects, though I'll recap them here too, but there's no reason for an image to be the product of only one of these techniques as they can look unusual and artistic when combined. As you'll be blending different exposures, it demands equal amounts of solid in-camera technique with post-processing (page 32) so it's best to begin with a vision for how you want the final processed picture to look once all your images are combined.

It's not the techniques but how you use them that make your images unique and creative, so these skills can be applied to any subject matter. Here, the focus was on creating an impression of the sunflower field so all the images are shot in the same location, but you might prefer to combine images from different scenes, textures and colours, or to make your shots more abstract. There are no rules for creative images, just skills that help you find your footing and techniques to aid experimentation. ▶



1 SET-UP: Any lens will work depending on your approach, but here I'm using a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens wide open for all the images. Using a long lens gives me the flexibility to shoot wide-angle views at 70mm by simply moving farther away as well as close-ups at 200mm for a mixture of images. It also gives me extra reach so I can shoot close to the edges of a field to limit the risk of trampling on wildlife and flowers. The dynamic range of the Nikon D750 is amazing so, for what I wanted, I didn't use filters, but an ND grad can be useful when shooting during the golden hours. Try challenging yourself by only using one lens, one aperture or just not your workhorse optic.

3 TAKE YOUR BASE IMAGE:

If you want a sharp focal point in your final image, you'll need to take a base exposure on which to blend your creative exposures with. Shoot your subject 'normally' leaving space around your focal point to use for blending later. You might also like to try expanding your canvas or out-of-focus areas by capturing a short panorama. To do this, lock focus on your subject (try back-button focusing) and, keeping the camera parallel to the subject, take shots around it while maintaining the same plane of focus and overlapping the frames slightly. You can blend these exposure together for softer depth-of-field.



2 CAMERA SETTINGS: To take full creative control of your images there's really only one mode for it – manual. It might take a while to get used to but the results will be worth it. Of course, if you're not quite there yet, aperture-priority mode with exposure compensation for some manual override can ease you in. Set your camera to your preferred mode, dial in your aperture and find a handholdable shutter speed by increasing your ISO. I prefer the depth of colour from slightly underexposing my images by about a half a stop and it means I can get a quick enough shutter speed to handhold in lowering light. I prefer the flexibility of handholding the camera whenever possible.

4 CAPTURE YOUR ICM:

Intentional camera movement comes in many forms to try. For straight and uniform, you have to use a tripod with a smooth panning motion. For uneven movements, do it handheld – you'll need to move the camera quickly within a fast shutter speed. Start with 1/30sec and lower your ISO, stop down your aperture or use ND filters to avoid overexposing the scene, although shooting Raw offers some flexibility. During the exposure, try dragging the camera down, across, spin it or zoom the lens for different effects. Areas of varied colour and tone will help give the movements more definition – take many!



BEAUTIFULLY BLENDED

By taking lots of creative exposures, you'll have more images to play with in Photoshop. Turn the page to find out how to blend them.

Exposure: Various at f/2.8 (Various ISOs)



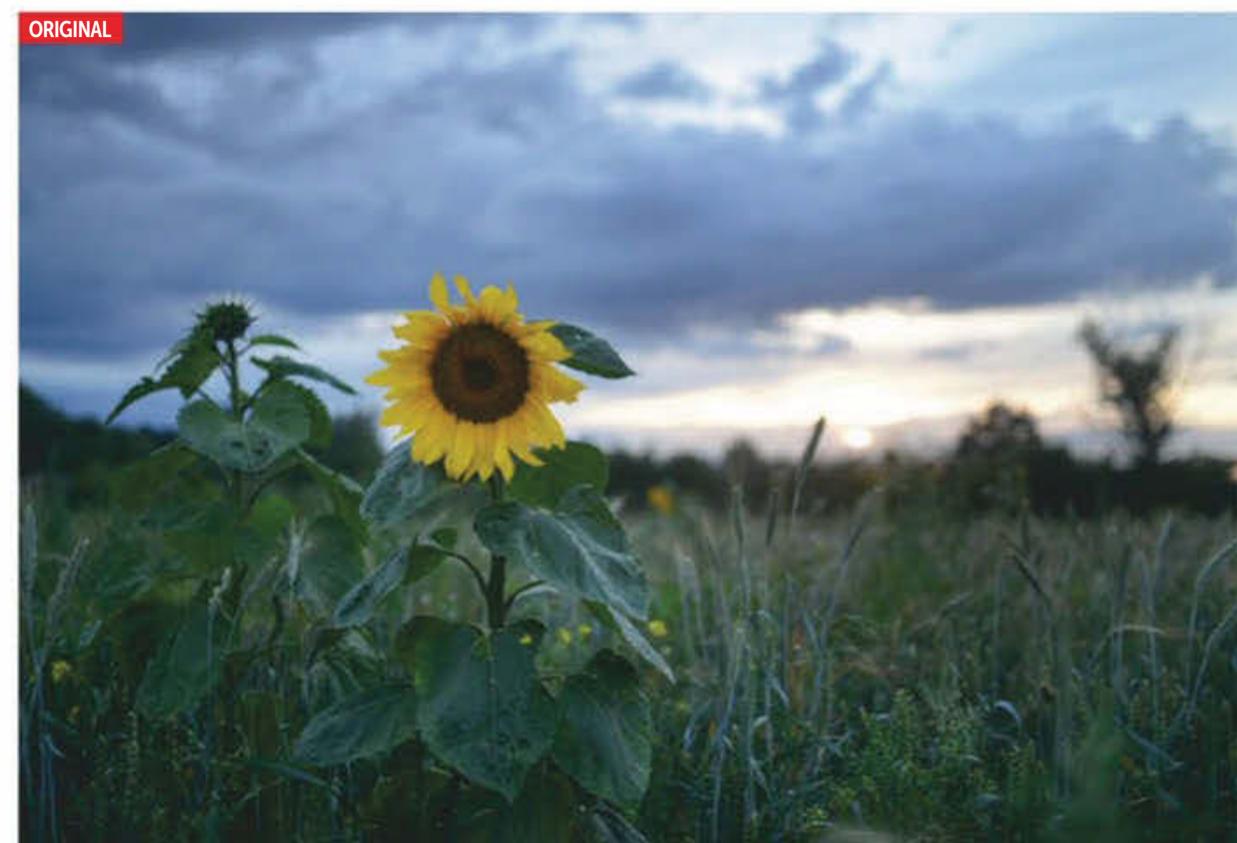
Master blending

LEARN HOW BY REPEATING A FEW SIMPLE PROCESSING STEPS, YOU CAN BLEND MULTIPLE IMAGES TO CREATE TEXTURE-RICH SHOTS

IN THE PREVIOUS tutorial, several ICM images were blended with a static portrait in the same way as you'll be shown here. The canvas has also been expanded for this image (as mentioned in step 3 on page 30) to allow room to add more exposures to increase the softness of the foreground.

To capture these extra frames, focus was locked on the sunflower and, keeping the camera parallel to the subject, three frames were captured to form a vertical panorama. By locking your arms into your side and adjusting your height you can do it accurately without a tripod. By crouching progressively lower than eye-level, frames included more of the soft-focus wheat in the foreground and by standing up, more of the sky without compromising on the size and perspective of the focal point. This is just one technique and you do not need to apply all these creative measures; pick and choose to create your own approach. You might want to use one focal length and the same aperture, to combine out-of-focus and sharp images in camera using your multiple exposure facility, or several frames using Photoshop – the results are unpredictable, artistic and full of character so find the right mix for you.

Shooting a bank of images to pull from can give you far more flexibility to experiment in Photoshop than blending images in-camera as you can realign frames and be selective over the areas that you blend, rather than leave it to the camera to decide.



CAROLINE SCHMIDT



1 VISUALISE THE END RESULT: Before you take any images, have an idea of what you're trying to create in your mind's eye. Here, the goal was for a subtle multiple exposure showing the main subject, but details of the wider sunflower field blended in with a dramatically out-of-focus foreground. Begin by shortlisting your chosen exposures and your base image you'll be applying them to. This image consists of four frames.

2 EXPAND THE CANVAS: To enlarge the canvas go to *Image>Canvas Size* and add a few centimetres to the *Height* – you can always crop it later to the right proportions. To control the direction of the expansion, adjust the arrows in the *Anchor* box; wherever the dot is placed the canvas will expand from – if it's left central, it will expand in all four directions depending on the measurements you've inputted. Click *OK* to commit.



3 ADD THE SKY: Click and drag the sky image (or go *Edit>Copy/ Edit>Paste*). Use the *Move Tool* to align it with your base layer – reducing the layer's opacity can help. Add a *Layer Mask* to the new sky layer and invert it from white to black (*cmd & I*). Use the *Brush Tool*, loaded with white paint, to reveal the new sky area and blend with the base layer. Add a Curves adjustment Layer (*Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Curves*).



4 SELECTIVE ADJUSTMENTS: If the exposure or ambient light shifted between frames, you may feel like you need to adjust the tonality or colour of your new images to match the base image. It's easy to do: click on the line between the new Curves layer and the sky layer whilst holding the *Alt* key to link them (a small arrow will appear to indicate this). You can do this with all Adjustment Layers like Hue/Saturation too.



5 ADD FOREGROUND INTEREST: To overlay the new foreground, repeat step 3. But this time, paint in the out-of-focus foreground to reduce the depth-of-field – it's a small step that makes a big difference. When using the *Brush Tool*, set *Hardness* to **0%** for the softest edge and consider setting a low *Opacity* and building up the effect. Switch from black to white colours, and vice versa, depending on if you want to hide or reveal detail.



LET YOUR CREATIVITY SHINE

There are parts of four different frames blended into this image and it took less than 15 minutes to do. Give it a go!



6 OVERLAY MORE IMAGES: Repeat step 3 with each of the images you want to blend with your base. Reduce the *Opacity* of the new layer to at least 50% and try changing its *Blend Mode* to *Soft Light*, *Screen* or *Multiply*. Unlike in-camera multiple exposures, you can reposition this new image using the *Move Tool*. Here, it's made so the horizons align and then a Layer Mask is used to remove unwanted areas. Repeat for each exposure.



7 ADD SOME FLARE: To add warmth and flare to a sunset, add a *Gradient Fill* adjustment layer and select the colour of the light in your base image. Set *Style* to *Radial*, adjust the *Angle* based on the direction of the existing light and *Scale* to control the spread. Before clicking OK, click and drag the flare spot into position on your image. You can reduce the Layer's opacity, or use its Layer Mask, to reduce its effect overall or selectively.



8 OVERALL ADJUSTMENTS: Once all images are blended, look at the image as a whole. Use the *Crop Tool* to refine your ratios and composition and add Adjustment Layers. Here, a Curves and then a Color Balance adjustment layer was used to tweak the Midtones towards Red and Yellow, increasing the image's warmth. If you edit all your images in Raw first before blending you can also adjust the light's temperature in ACR.

Dramatic drone images

HERE'S A QUICK AND EASY WAY TO IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF YOUR DRONE LANDSCAPES IN LIGHTROOM CC WITHOUT HAVING TO BUY PRESETS

WHAT'S NOT TO like about a drone image? Surprisingly, quite a lot. Even if your composition is on point, which is usually one of the trickiest aspects of drone photography, straight out of camera images are often left lacklustre. The location's beauty and the epic viewpoint can be overshadowed by flat contrast and muted colour, especially if shooting in JPEG. It's an easy fix using

Lightroom CC though and you don't need to pay for extra one-click presets as this takes mere minutes to do. Begin by making sure you shoot in Raw – there's only so much colour correction you can do with a JPEG – and do yourself a favour and follow the forecast. Dull light will make for dull images, unless you're a whizz at Photoshop, but then you wouldn't be reading this if you were.



1 ESSENTIALS FOR EVERY PHOTO: When you open your image in Lightroom, your first stop is the Develop module and then make a visit to *Lens Correction* panel to remove any distortions and to apply a lens profile, if there is one present for your drone. Next, under *Transform*, click *Auto* or *Level* to ensure your horizon or your image isn't jaunty. You may want to use the Crop Tool afterwards.



2 ADJUST THE CONTRAST: Often the quickest and simplest way to make a drone shot 'pop' is by adjusting the contrast and its tonal range. Under *Tone Curve*, you'll see here that there's no detail in the extreme shadows or highlights, so by dragging the Curve's line to where the histogram begins and ends you'll see an instant improvement. To do this, click an anchor point on either end and drag.



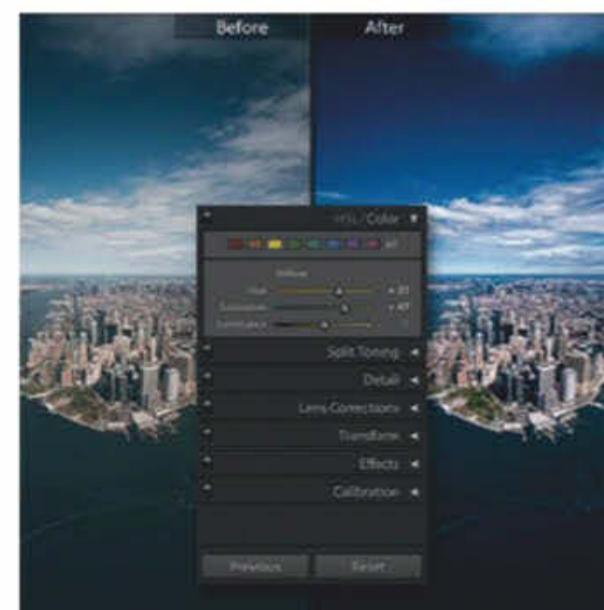
3 TARGET THE COLOUR: The dominant colours in this image are blue (sky) and green (water), which are easy to tackle in *Tone Curve* by changing the targeted channel to Blue or Green or by using *HSL/Color*. Here you can pick the colour to tweak by clicking on its swatch and simply move the *Hue* to change the shade, *Luminance* to tweak the brightness and *Saturation* to adjust the intensity.



4 BACK TO BASIC: Now it's time to address the *Basics* tab where you'll find sliders for exposure and contrast. It's important that you don't have over and underexposed areas in your image, which commonly occur when averaging the exposure for sky and land, so begin by reducing the *Highlights* and *Blacks* sliders and increasing the *Clarity* slider slightly, as this will boost sharpness and edge contrast.



5 SELECTIVE EDITING: Although global adjustments under the *Basics* tab may be enough, if you've stubborn areas that need lifting or bright areas that need darkening turn to the *Adjustment Brushes* for targeted tweaks. Select *New* for each of your selective adjustments or image areas you address to make it easier to locate and re-edit sections of your image if you find they need refining.



6 DON'T IGNORE THE DETAILS: Once you've handled the big areas, look out for the small details. For instance, there are trees in this shot that won't have been affected by earlier colour adjustments as they're primarily yellow, but by boosting the *Saturation* in the *HSL/Color* tab it adds an extra dimension to an area that otherwise gets lost. Finish with some light sharpening and you're done.



A FEW TWEAKS FOR A TOP SHOT

Drones have come a long way in recent years but images need help if you're to get the best from them.

Understanding Liquify

MANIPULATE PIXELS EASIER AND MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN PERHAPS EVER BEFORE USING AFFINITY PHOTO. CAROLINE SCHMIDT GETS YOU ORIENTATED

AFFINITY PHOTO HAS a whole persona dedicated to Liquify, a feature that's hidden away in the filter menu of Photoshop but given pride of place in Affinity Photo for its excellent warping and distortion abilities. It sits in-between the Photo and Develop Personas where you do the bulk of your editing and is accompanied by the Tone Mapping and Export Personas in the top left of the interface. Within the Liquify Persona are many tools to help you manipulate the shapes in images and, in my opinion, is much cleaner to use than Photoshop CC – although this too has come a long way in terms of preserving image quality as you work.

Typically, Liquify is used to warp elements in a photograph and is most commonly applied to portraits. Making smiles bigger, features more appealing, slimming figures or bulking out muscles – if you want to shave a few pounds off a waistline or give your subject a face-lift, this is where you go. You can push, pull, rotate, reflect, pucker and bloat pixels in any area of your image for subtle or dramatic changes, making it extremely powerful for retouching. Here, however, I'll show you the key features and a more comical use for Liquify. Caricatures work with any portrait but you'll reduce your editing if you use a shallow depth-of-field against a plain background.



1 SELECT THE HEAD: Use a selection tool to isolate the head – here the Freehand Selection Tool with a small Feather is used to lasso around the head as close to the outline as possible. This is where having a plain background will help as it makes blending easier in step 2. Click **cmd & C** (mac) / **ctrl & C** (PC) to copy the selection, then **cmd & V** (mac) / **ctrl & V** (PC) to paste it automatically onto a new Pixel Layer.



2 ENLARGE THE HEAD: Select the **Move Tool**, and with the **ctrl** key depressed, pull out an anchor point on your selection to enlarge the head proportionally and then reposition it over the neck. When happy, go to **Select > Deselect**. Add a Mask Layer (from the bottom of Layers) and using the **Brush Tool** carefully remove excess background to blend. If you've used shallow depth-of-field, opt for a soft-edged brush around the face's outline.



CAROLINE SCHMIDT



3 ACCESS LIQUIFY: To open the Liquify Persona you need to have a pixel layer active, in this case the head. Now click on the **Liquify Persona** in the top-left of the screen. Your image is now visible under a distortion mesh and there's various tools to choose from. The **Liquify Push Forward Tool** is selected as default and lets you push pixels in any direction. Adjust your **Brush** size and increase the **Speed** and **Opacity** to make edits quicker.



4 CONTROLLING THE TOOLS: Use the **History** panel to step back or the **Reconstruct Tool** to brush over any errors to revert them to their original state. If you find by making edits you're adjusting areas you don't want to, use the **Freeze Tool** to mask them in red then perform your edits. Once you're finished, use the **Thaw Tool** to remove the masking. It's useful if you want to adjust the jawline but not the smile, or tweak cheeks but not the eyes.



5 EXAGGERATE THE FEATURES: For a caricature, exaggerate their most prominent features. To make the eyes bigger, use the **Bloat Tool** – the longer you click and hold, the bigger those eyes become. Try the tool on the cheeks too, but you may want to 'freeze' the smile and nose before you do. As this subject has a prominent chin, I used the Push Forward Tool to drag the chin down and pinch the jawline. I did the same with the edges of the smile too.



6 OTHER USEFUL TOOLS: The results here aren't supposed to be subtle or realistic but if there comes a time when you need a more refined approach, the **Navigator** tab next to Brush allows you to zoom into your image. You can change the direction of tools, like the Twirl Tool, by holding down the **Option** key and remember that all adjustments are nondestructive if you're working on a duplicate pixel layer and until you click **Apply**.



HOW DO I LOOK?

Most photographers use Liquify to 'improve' their subjects but where's the fun in that!



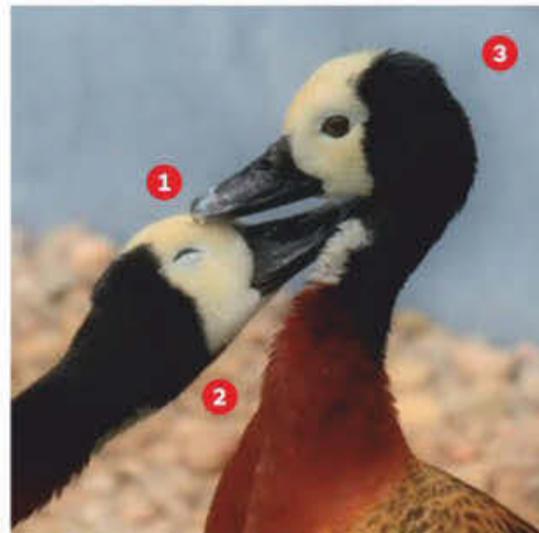
↗ BLINK AND YOU'LL MISS IT

by James Boston

Canon EOS 5DS and Canon EF 24-105mm f/4L lens.
Exposure: 1/400sec at f/6.3 (ISO 100).

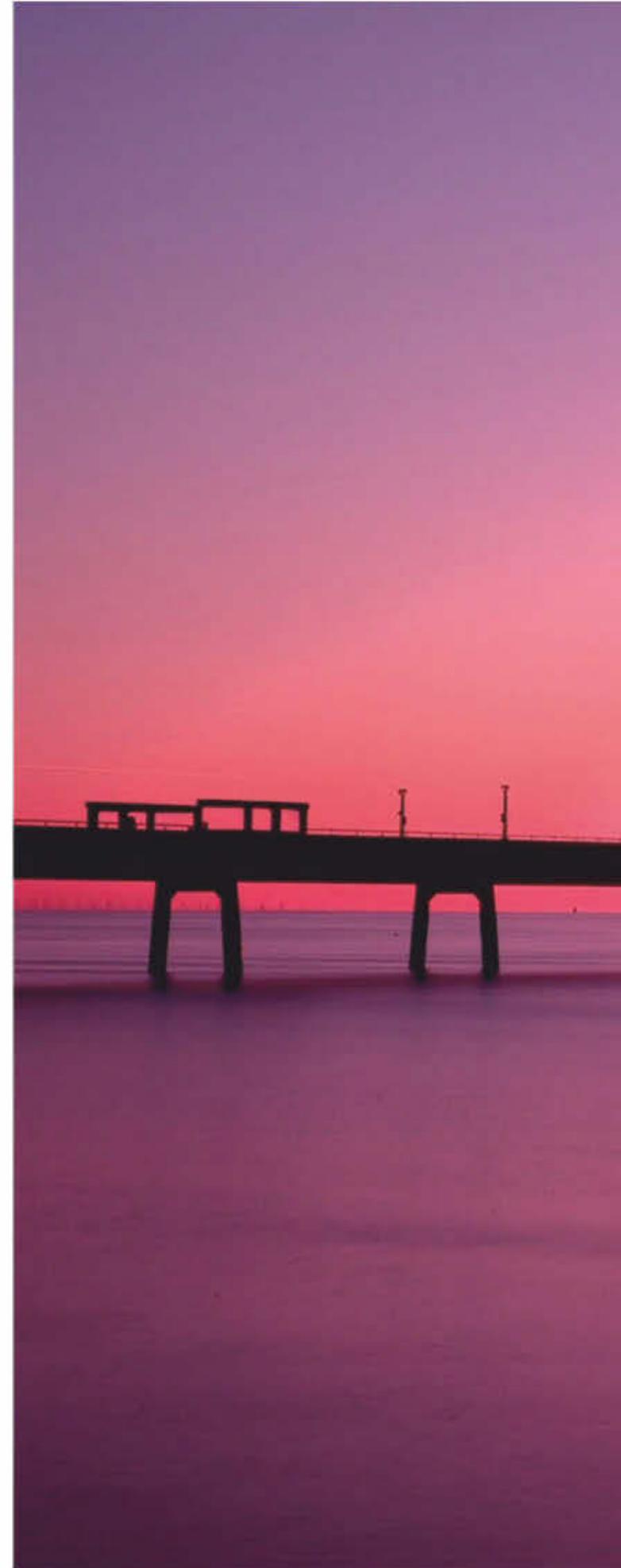
What we think: For wildlife photography, the best images often capture natural animal behaviour and James's shot of these two ducks does exactly that. As an added bonus, the duck that's nuzzling up to the other appears to have smiling eyes, which is likely due to James taking the shot while it was blinking, but it gives it an almost human feel. James's cropped version of the image is much better than the full image as it draws attention to this apparently special moment. On a technical level, exposure is spot-on and focus is on the birds, so all in all a well captured local wildlife shot.

ORIGINAL IMAGE



Why it works

- 1) Captures natural behaviour
- 2) Exposure is spot-on
- 3) The crop makes a stronger image



↗ SUNRISE IN DEAL

by Marie Brook-Smith

Fujifilm X-A20 with 18-45mm lens and variable ND filter.
Exposure: 36 seconds at f/20 (ISO 100).

What we think: In terms of colour, this shot is awash with golden-hour light despite the lack of clouds in the sky. The pier is nicely silhouetted, but looking at the histogram in Photoshop and tweaking brightness, it looks like Marie could have underexposed the shot by half a stop to darken the brighter parts of the frame slightly. Also, composing with the sea occupying just the bottom third of the frame would have created a more balanced image, but Marie has won half the battle simply by being there and getting the shot, and the reflected light works well as a lead-in.

Quick critique

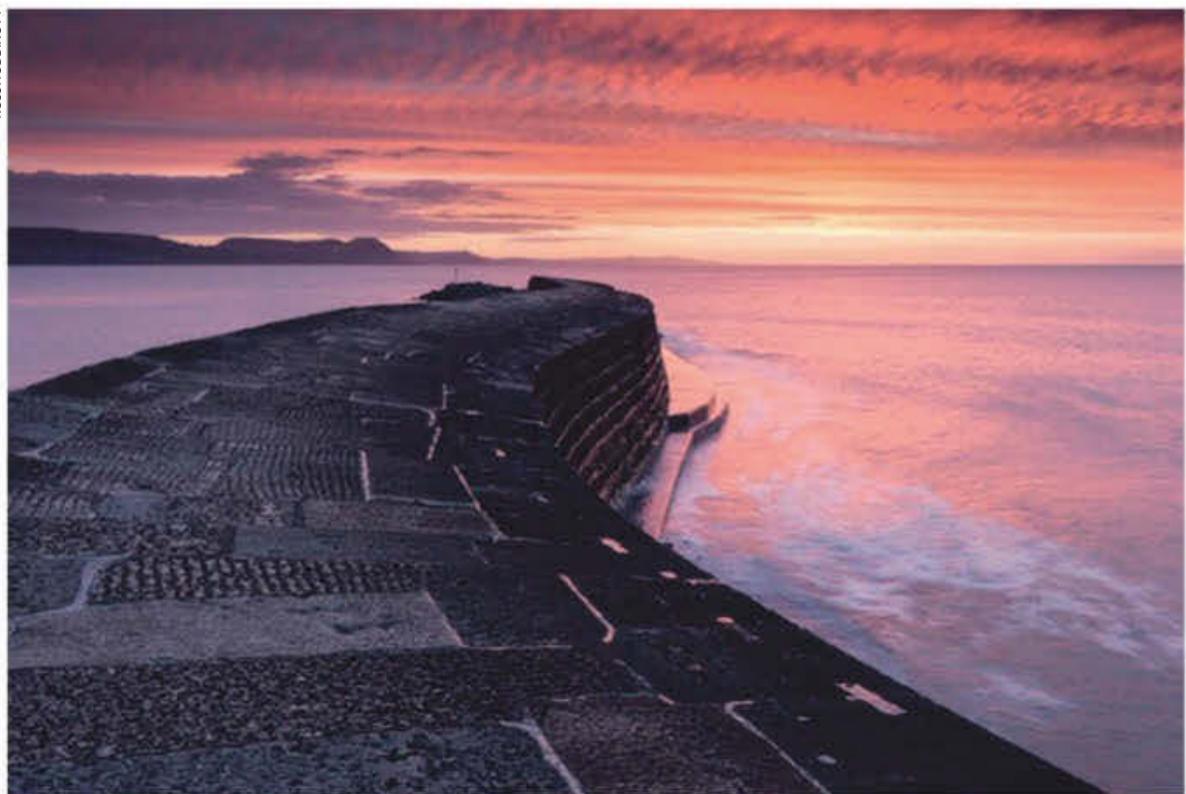
- ✓ Fantastic colour
- ✓ Pleasantly silhouetted pier
- ✓ Well placed reflected light

Expert Critique

WANT YOUR SHOTS CRITIQUED BY THE
DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERTS?
TURN TO PAGE 43 TO FIND OUT
HOW TO SUBMIT IMAGES



ROSS HODDINOTT



LANDSCAPE EXPERT Ross Hoddinott



"I love a good sunrise. It's the best part of the day, particularly when nature delivers a great sky. Well done Marie for getting up early and making the effort. This is a lovely result – I love the graphic nature of silhouetted subjects and Marie has positioned herself thoughtfully in order to capture the sun and its reflection on the water bursting through the pier. Shooting towards the sun can cause exposure issues, but Marie has done well to avoid losing key highlight detail. For me, the colour cast is a little too vivid and the strong magenta cast doesn't look natural. This might be a White Balance issue or created by the variable ND, as some versions are not colour neutral. I'd be tempted to have another play with the image's colour temperature to create a slightly more natural-looking hue. Given the lack of cloud and interest in the sky, a more letterbox aspect ratio might be worth trying in this instance. Currently, I feel there is too much emphasis on a fairly empty sky. This is definitely a viewpoint worth returning to on a day when the sky delivers a little more drama. Good luck!"



CATHEDRAL OF ST MARY

by Nicole Hernandez

Fujifilm GFX50s and Fujifilm GF23mm f/4 lens.
Exposure: 1/170sec at f/11 (ISO 200).

What we think: Judging by the architecture combined with the Union Jack flag hanging from the bunting on the left, this shot looks like it must have been taken in the British colony of Gibraltar – a place that's well-known for its narrow streets. This has forced Nicole into a tight shot of the cathedral, but rather than simply grabbing a snapshot, she's clearly thought about the composition and successfully used the palm fronds as a framing device for the eye-catching building behind. The light here looks tricky too, with half the shot in bright sunlight and the other in shadow, but Nicole has handled it perfectly.

Quick critique

- ✓ Great framing with the trees
- ✓ Well-exposed despite tricky lighting
- ✓ Perfect depth-of-field

OUTDOOR EXPERT James Abbott

EDITED



"Shooting in bright daylight conditions isn't always easy and it's especially tricky when you're in locations where a large proportion of the shot is in direct sunlight and the rest in shadow, which is the case here. Despite this challenge, Nicole's exposure has skilfully captured detail throughout the scene. The dynamic of the camera and metering system will, of course, play a part in these situations, but even with the best camera in the world, the slightest misjudgment of exposure compensation can lose detail in the shadows or highlights. My favourite aspect of the shot is that despite shooting quite close to the cathedral, Nicole has managed to capture the building without introducing too much perspective distortion. And the use of the trees to frame the cathedral was a stroke of genius, although I would clone out the cut of leaves in the top left of the shot. Overall, a well taken image in a tricky situation."





DRAGON

by Kay Wilson

Canon EOS-1DX with Canon EF24-105mm f/4L IS USM lens.
Exposure: One second at f/11 (ISO 100).

What we think: Smoke trails from incense sticks are a classic still-life subject, and Kay's image is both well-executed and creative. Just like laying back in the park and trying to see what familiar shapes you can see in the clouds, everyone will probably see something different in this shot; for Kay it was a dragon, for us, it's the T800 played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the *Terminator* movies, although Kay's smoke trails are far less scary. Kay's use of symmetry during editing has worked well, and the colour gradient brings the smoke trails to life.

Why it works

- 1) Highly creative
- 2) Technically well executed
- 3) Great post-processing

PHILIPS

Monitors

Brilliant interactive display with Smooth Touch

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B line touch monitor



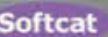
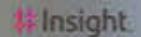
Water and Dust
Resistant



SmartContrast



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IF YOU WOULD LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE YOUR IMAGES IN *DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY*, OR TAKE PART IN ONE OF OUR READER ARTICLES, THEN NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO GET INVOLVED!



HOW TO GET YOUR IMAGES TO US...

EMAIL: If you want to email submissions, send them to: submissions@dslrphotomag.co.uk. Please only email images at a maximum of 1,000 pixels along the longest edge (note: your email will be rejected if the total size of attachments exceeds 8MB). Tell us which article(s) you're submitting to in the subject line and include your name, address and daytime number.

POST: Burn your high-res images as JPEGs onto a CD/DVD, including a 'mugshot', and produce a contact sheet with location and technical details. Put it all in an envelope with a covering letter, including the submission form below and post to: *Digital SLR Photography, Raspberry Pi Press, Maurice Wilkes Building, St Johns Innovation Park, Cowley Road, Cambridge CB4 0DS*. Enclose an SAE if you'd like them returned.

FACEBOOK: Join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/digitalslrphoto. Become a part of the community and **post** your best shots to our wall. We regularly monitor the page and will be in touch if your work catches our eye!



Digital SLR Photography contact form

Tick the relevant boxes and add your details if you would like to submit images or take part in our Photo Workshop



Workshop



Portfolio



Expert Critique



General

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Phone:

Email:

Checklist

- ✓ If submitting images by post, remember to include your 'mugshot' and contact details (name, address, email and daytime number).
- ✓ Please don't send us high-res images by email: resize your shots to 1,000 pixels along the longest edge and if we see something we like, we'll request the high-res file from you!
- ✓ Emails exceeding 8MB total size might not arrive, so split your submission down into two or more emails to ensure they get through.
- ✓ Please don't send us your entire portfolio – as you may appreciate we receive a lot of submissions and aren't able to look through hundreds of images – narrow the selection down and pick your best shots only.

For a full set of picture guidelines, or to ask any questions, please email enquiries@dslrphotomag.co.uk





2015
APPLE DESIGN
AWARD WINNERS

Editors' Choice



worldwide customer rating

Bloodsport by Timothy Poulton - Shoot The Frame Affinity Photo Contest Winning Entry



AFFINITY PHOTO

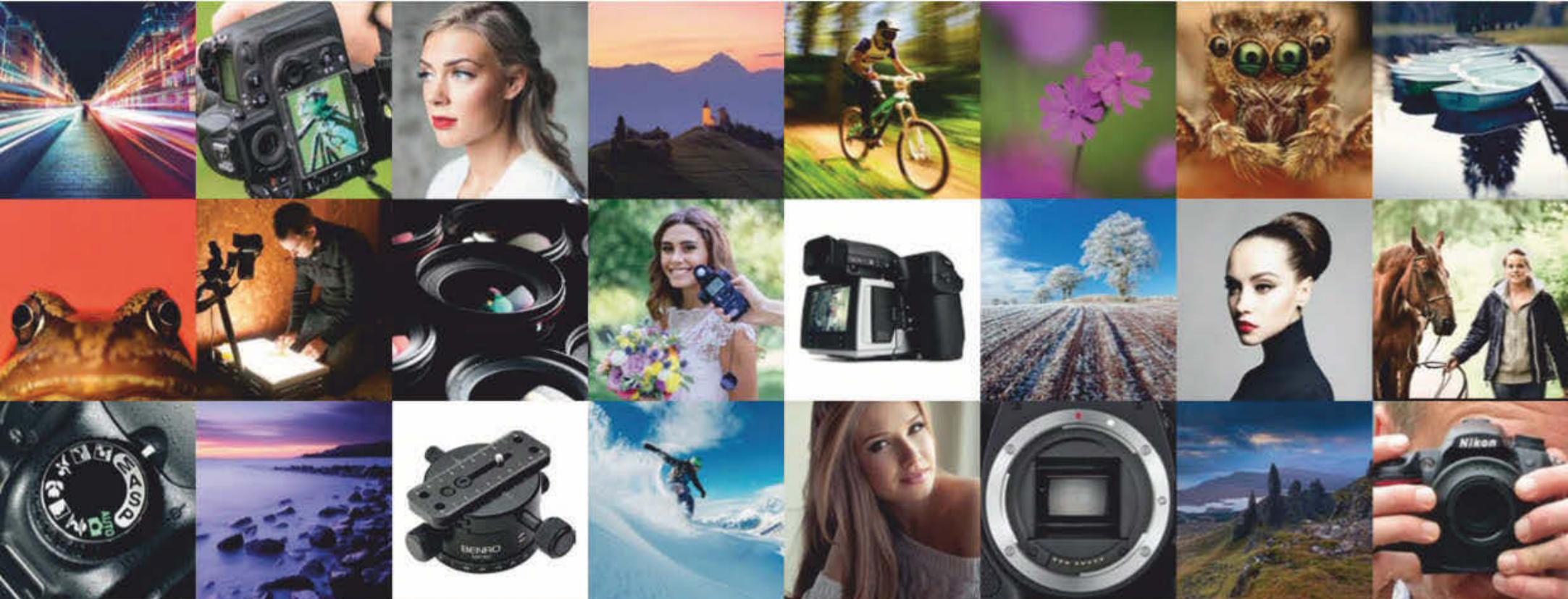
The fastest, smoothest, most powerful professional photo editor for macOS, Windows and iPad

Affinity Photo redefines the boundaries for professional photo editing software. With a meticulous focus on workflow it offers sophisticated tools for enhancing, editing and retouching your images in an incredibly intuitive interface with all the power and performance you need.



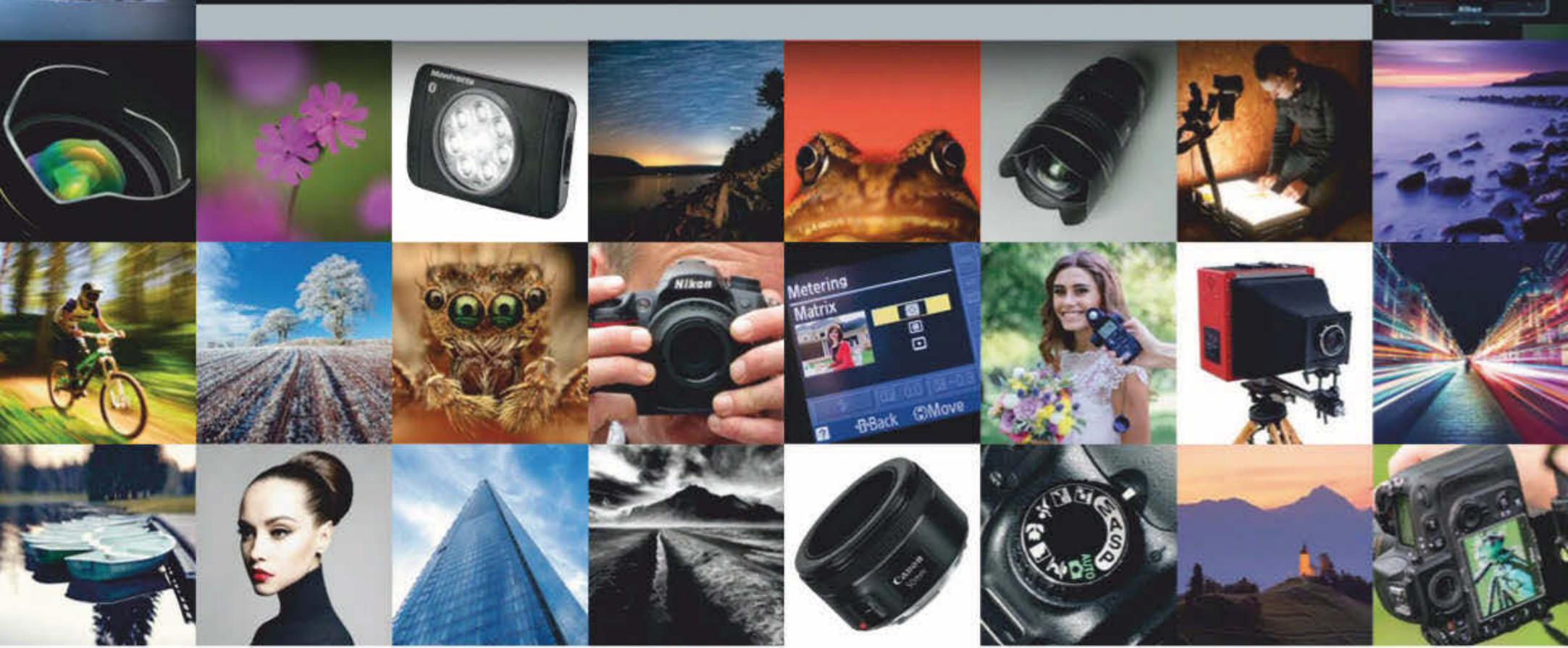
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A TO Z OF PHOTOGRAPHY

EVER GET MIXED UP ON THE MEANING OF LOW-PASS FILTERS AND LEAD-IN LINES, OR UNSURE WHAT TERMS LIKE NOISE AND MASKING RELATE TO? THE WORLD OF PHOTOGRAPHY IS RIFE WITH ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND TECHNICALITIES THAT CAN MAKE UNDERSTANDING ALL ITS TERMS DIFFICULT AT BEST. OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, IN OUR NEW SERIES, WE'LL BE BUSTING THE JARGON FOR ALL THE MOST COMMON TERMS IN OUR PHOTOGRAPHY DICTIONARY. THIS MONTH WE COVER L-N ►



L is for...



LARGE-FORMAT: When it comes to sensor sizes there's Micro-Four Thirds, APS-C, full-frame, 35mm, medium-format and large-format – or, in other words, any imaging format of 4x5in or larger. Large-format is bigger than medium-format with its 6x6cm or 6x9cm Hasselblad and Phase One cameras and much larger than a 35mm film (24x36mm) or full-frame sensor. In 2018, the world's first 8x10in large-format digital camera was created, the LargeSense LS911 (pictured above), and was selling for a measly \$106,000. The quality of a large-format camera is unrivalled (film and digital) with depth-of-field that melts away.

LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED):

The popularity of LED lights as a continuous light source for video and stills photography is steadily rising, because they're efficient, portable and being continuous can be used for longer exposures. They come in a wide range of sizes for studio portraits to still-lifes.



LOSSY & LOSSLESS: Lossless compression is when a file size is made smaller without diminishing the image quality; lossy compression permanently deletes data to make the file size smaller. Lossy compression is used when creating JPEGs in-camera or converting a Raw file – the process is irreversible and the more you compress the JPEG, the more the image quality gets degraded. The main advantage is a smaller file size than a lossless compression can offer, which means more images can be stored on your memory card.



ROSS HODDINOTT



ADAM BURTON

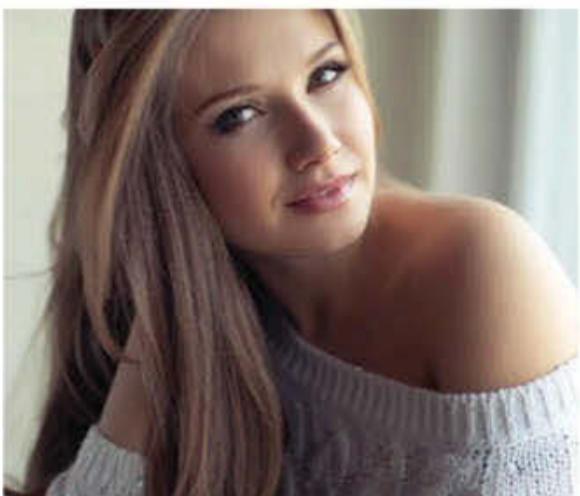


MICHAEL NOSER/SHUTTERSTOCK

LENSES: Perhaps even more important than the camera itself is your choice of optics, as they have a huge impact on your photography. From focal lengths and maximum apertures to primes and zooms, wide-angles and telephotos, the breadth of choice is remarkable and there's a lens to suit every budget, shooting style and subject. 'Fast' lenses with wide maximum apertures are great for portraits, dedicated macro lenses give you the magnification you need for close-ups and wide-angle lenses (any lens 35mm or shorter) are ideal for landscapes and wider scenes. Each type affects perspective, field-of-view and depth-of-field differently, too. Within all these options you've got to consider key factors that affect lens performance, such as its construction (elements), sharpness and minimisation of flaws such as chromatic aberrations and flare. The quality of the glass and materials of the lens, as well as coatings, are extremely important. For instance, telephoto lenses are renowned for chromatic aberration and loss in sharpness, but can be reduced with the use of an extra-low dispersion lens (ED lens).

Zooms tend to be more complex in their construction due to their focal length range, so high-quality zooms and telephotos boasting wide apertures, such as f/2.8, often come with a hefty price tag compared to shorter, fast fixed focal lengths like a 50mm. When you buy an entry-level camera, it often comes with a standard 'kit' zoom like an 18-55mm that initially seems great value as it covers a wide range of focal lengths. However, the optical quality can be low, the aperture slow and the build quality poor. We suggest upgrading your glass as soon as possible. As well as your marque brands, there are also great options from the likes of Tamron, Sigma and Samyang that prove you don't need to compromise on quality if you're on a budget.

NINA BUDAY/SHUTTERSTOCK



LIGHTING RATIO: When you're working with multiple light sources, lighting ratios will help you to express the relationship between the lights and their impact on the image. The more uneven the ratio, the higher the lighting contrast will be, for instance if your key light and fill light are 1:1 then they're evenly illuminating the subject. If you increase this ratio to 4:1 or just 2:1 then you'll be working with deeper shadows as the key light will likely be several stops brighter. By knowing your lighting ratio, you'll find it easier to expose your image correctly and be able to replicate results.

LOW-PASS FILTER: Known as an anti-aliasing filter, an optical low-pass filter is used to eliminate rainbow moire patterns from repetitive details like lines and dots, but in the process can soften detail. Cameras without OLPF can suffer moire but also record sharper images, which is a benefit for particular specialisms like landscapes and nature photography as you rarely see moire anyway. Nikon even introduced two versions of their cameras, with and without an OLPF, the D800 and D800E respectively, to suit different photographers' needs.

LAG TIME: That frustrating wait for your camera to trigger the shutter as you see the moment pass you by is called the shutter lag. It usually happens with fast-moving subjects, ironically when you need a quick response the most. The lag is caused by the camera processing all the factors it needs to take a photograph like exposure and focusing. Generally the higher the spec of camera, the shorter the lag time.

L is for...

SHARAF MAKSUMOV/SHUTTERSTOCK



LIGHT METER: All digital cameras have a built-in exposure meter with various metering patterns that help gather light information from a scene to calculate the correct exposure. There are, however, handheld light meters, too, that read ambient light or the light from a source like flash, which help to find the right shutter speed and aperture combination for an accurate exposure. Unless you're working in a studio, scouting a location to decide on the best lighting gear or trying to balance flash with ambient light, your camera's built-in light meter does a more than ample job.

LOW-KEY: The opposite of a bright high-key image, low-key is a lighting technique that favours shadows and only uses highlights to add shape and form. It predominantly consists of midtones and shadows.

LUSTRE: Somewhere between matte and glossy is lustre and it's one of the most popular print finishes for professional photographers. A lustre photo tends to be rich in colour saturation with a satin-like finish and not as prone to fingerprints as matte.

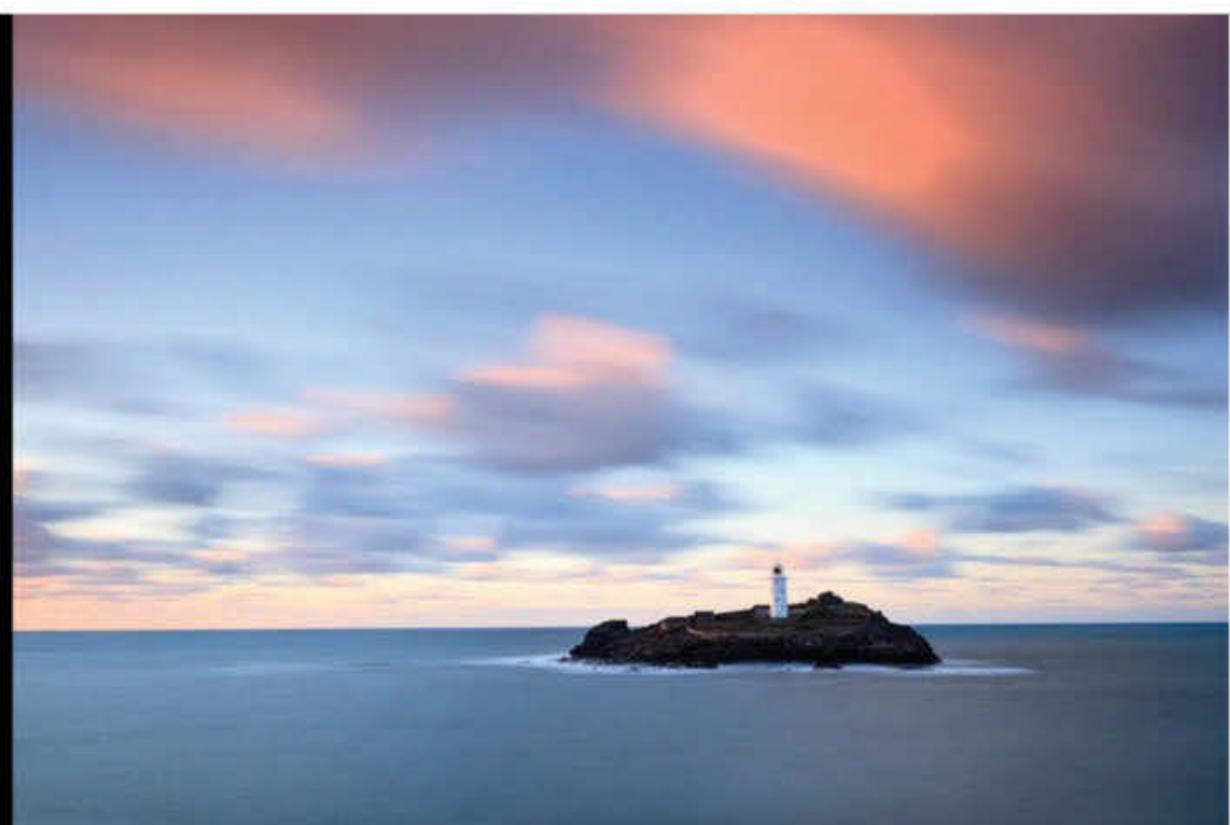
LONG EXPOSURE: There's no specific speed when an exposure becomes a long exposure but it's an incredible technique that lets you capture time passing in a single shot. Whether that's stars trailing as the Earth spins, clouds passing overhead, a tide receding or the effects of a light painting at night, long exposure photography is an art form. If you've a fast-moving subject, you may find half a second is long enough to capture movement but most 'long exposures' fall in the region of ten to 30-second long, while others can last several minutes, such as with some types of astrophotography. Most landscape photographers use filters of varying densities to extend their shutter speeds to capture motion in seascapes, with extreme ND filters offering up to 15 stops or more of extra exposure that's capable of transforming night to day.

ADAM BURTON



LEAD-IN LINES: A compositional tool that's incredibly powerful as it controls the viewer's gaze into and through an image. Lead-in lines tend to converge towards a focal point or work to contain the viewer's interest within the composition, as opposed to taking it out of frame. Popular lead-in lines include railway tracks, crop lines, bridges, jetties, roads, piers, lines in a building, long shadows and staircases. Avenues of trees, rocky outcrops and even the lines left from a receding tide work well, too.

MARK BAUER



Low light

As available light diminishes, the ambience becomes known as low light. With low light levels come the need for higher ISO sensitivities and potentially longer exposures.

Types of low light include candlelight, sunset, moonlight and twilight.



MARK BAUER

LAB COLOR: You may have heard of CMYK and sRGB, well Lab Color is another colour space that works on a three-axis system: a-axis (green to red), b-axis (blue to yellow) and Lightness axis. It's easier to achieve the same colour across different devices but is mostly used in manufacturing industries, although some photographers do use its wide gamut.



LCD: Short for Liquid Crystal Display, an LCD monitor is what's on the back of your digital SLR and is used for LiveView, to review images and display menu options. An LCD screen, unlike an optical viewfinder, displays the entire image area that the sensor captures whereas most viewfinders only show around 95% of the image frame.



LIGHTBOX: In the days of film, a lightbox was used to preview film negatives and slides. The latest generation of LED lightboxes are used mostly as a photographic backlight that allows you to compose overhead close-ups and abstracts. The term lightbox is also often used interchangeably with a light tent, which is used for product photography – an open cube that allows lighting from all sides for a soft, evenly-lit shot.

L is for...

Greats of photography

Dorothea Lange (1895 – 1965)

Dorothea Lange was an American documentary photographer and photojournalist, best known for her Depression-era work for the Farm Security Administration. Lange's photographs influenced the development of documentary photography and humanised the consequences of the Great Depression.

Annie Leibovitz (1949 – present)

One of America's most famous living portrait photographers, Annie Leibovitz is best known for her portraits of celebrities – most notably the last portrait of John Lennon and Yoko Ono before his death – and projects like Disney's Dream Portraits. She began her career as a commercial photographer for *Rolling Stone* magazine and was the first woman to be named chief photographer. Later she worked for *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*.

LUMINANCE: Simply put, luminance is the photometric measurement of a light's intensity – it's the scientific measurement behind our subjective view of brightness.

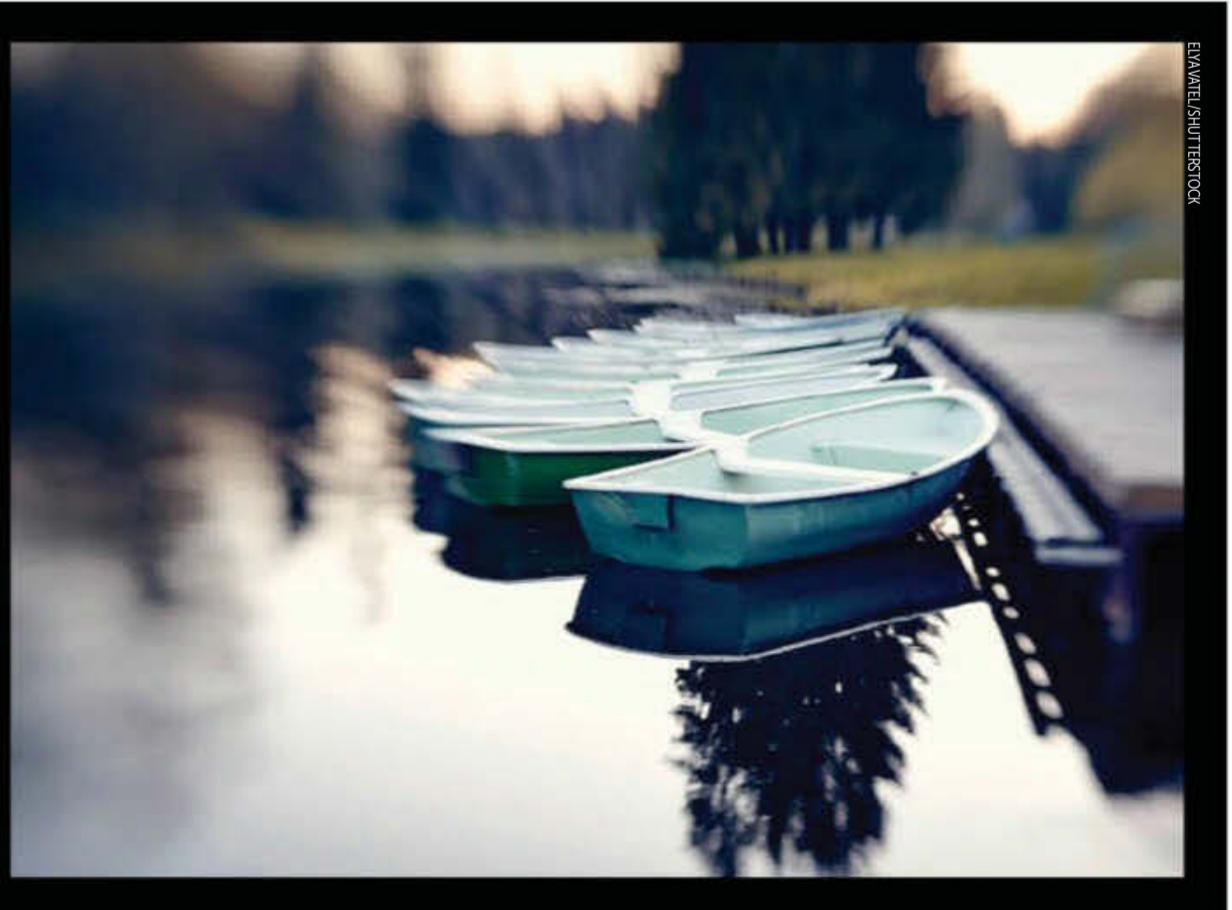
LITHIUM-ION: Also known as a Li-ion battery, this is a popular and reliable type of rechargeable battery seen in most digital cameras due to its small size but high-energy density.



LENSBABY: A line of special-effect lenses that work on a ball and socket or bellow mechanism to manually focus. These unusual selective-focusing optics have a small 'sweet spot' of sharpness that falls dramatically away to blur more akin to motion or radial blur than typical bokeh. You use its pivoting mid-section to manoeuvre the 'sweet spot' and focus around the frame without moving your camera. The plane of focus is extremely thin so it's not an easy type of lens to use but produces very creative results.

Light trails

When you use slow shutter speeds to shoot a moving subject you'll end up with motion trails through the frame. When that moving subject has lights, like cars or stars, you end up recording light trails. These light sources are continually recorded as they move during the exposure as the shutter speed is too slow to freeze them. Traffic trails, star trails and light painting are all types of light trails.





L is for Lens...

LENS HOOD: Nearly all lenses come with a lens hood or shade to help eliminate flare from a light source that's just out of frame. The hood attaches to the front of your lens and is designed to block the sun or other light sources entering the lens. They're also useful for protecting lenses from scratches without having to put the lens cap on. Most hoods are petal shaped to accommodate a wide-angle lens's wide field-of-view and rectangular sensor shape.

LENS CALIBRATION: Ideally, lenses should be calibrated to the camera to give consistently sharp results and accurate focusing. This is especially true if you've bought a third-party lens and have a high megapixel camera as it can amplify focusing problems. It's not as much of a problem for landscape photographers as they use small apertures, but with wide apertures there's a lack of depth-of-field to mask focusing errors. Look within your camera's menu system for AF Fine Tune or AF Microadjustments to create a lens profile, and invest in a calibration device or software such as LensAlign or SpyderLENS.

LENS COATING: A thin coating applied to the front element of a lens is designed to reduce light reflections, increase light entering the lens and control colour rendition. Most modern lenses have multi-coatings to increase performance, minimise glare and boost image clarity. Uncoated lenses tend to reflect a lot of light from the lens surface and within the lens itself causing flare and ghosts.

LENS MOUNT: The mechanical and electrical interface between a camera body and lens is called the lens mount and, when connected, enables the devices to communicate functions like AF and exposure. Most DSLRs feature bayonet mounts, which comprise tabs around the base of the lens that sit within the camera's mounting plate. They are secured in place using a spring-loaded pin once you attach the lens. Mounts are generally brand-specific, so you can't interchange lenses from different brands, although there are adaptors that allow cross-use of brands, albeit with limited functionality.



LIVEVIEW: As well as a viewfinder, most DSLRs (and all mirrorless models) have LCD monitors featuring LiveView as an alternative means to preview scenes. It's popular due to the bigger screen, the ability to see real-time changes such as exposure and being able to refine focus, especially for macro subjects, more precisely. LiveView is also beneficial for landscapes when a camera is tripod-mounted or if shooting at awkward angles with a vari-angle screen. LiveView is the primary viewing method when shooting video on a DSLR, too, as it requires the mirror to be lifted in order to record.

M is for...



METERING PATTERNS: Metering modes, or patterns, determine how the light in a scene is read based on the luminance value of the areas metered. The system will try to average the exposure of these areas to 18% grey, which is why you can run into trouble when photographing an overly bright scene like snow, or a dark scene, as it can be under or overexposed, respectively. There are various patterns to suit different scenes: multi-zone metering takes readings from the entire image area; centre-weighted metering considers only what's at the centre of the frame; and spot metering measures the light based on where your focus point is.

MICRO FOUR-THIRDS: This is a system based on the original Four-Thirds system launched by Olympus and Panasonic and designed for DSLRs. While the size of the Four-Thirds sensor remained unchanged, the Micro Four-Thirds system, released in 2008, allowed for a new range of mirrorless cameras to be introduced.

MOIRÉ: When a camera confuses a pattern in a picture with the pattern of pixels on the sensor it creates a type of aliasing, called moiré. It tends to be less common with high-res cameras.



MONOBLOCK: Otherwise known as monolights, monoblocks are single flash units that plug into a mains power outlet and are form the basic kit within a studioflash set-up. A studio starter pack tends to come with two monoblocks, lighting stands and light modifiers like softboxes and umbrellas.



Monochrome

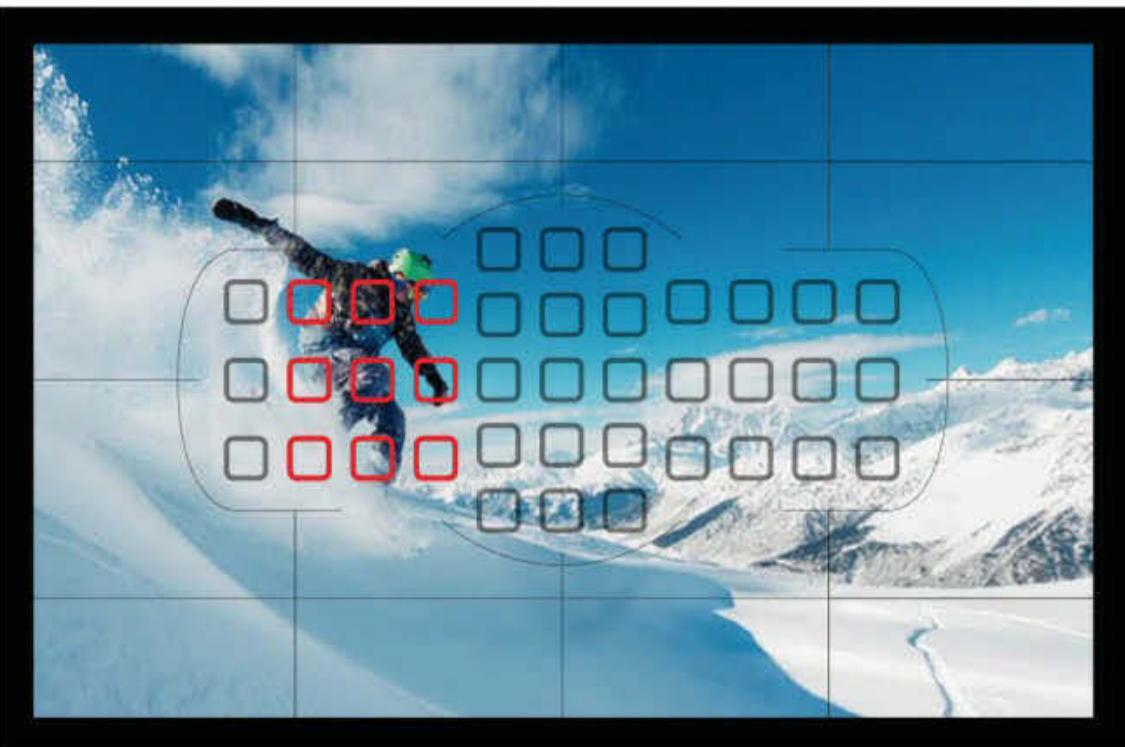
Monochrome is another way of describing a black & white image. It is often confused with the phrase monotone, which refers to any image containing shades of the same colour.



MULTI-POINT FOCUS: DSLRs have multiple AF points spread across the image area to make it faster and easier to focus on off-centre subjects. Leave all active to let the camera decide where to focus, or should you find it struggles to focus where you want, switch to single-point AF and choose an individual point to ensure focus is where you want it to be.



MACRO: Whilst the terms close-up and macro photography are often interchanged, macro is actually an extreme version of close-up photography that magnifies subjects to record them life-size. Whilst you could use any lens for close-ups, you need a specialist macro lens or optical attachment (like extension tubes or close-up filters) to reduce your focusing distance and magnify your subjects for a 1:1 minimum reproduction ratio. True macro lenses allow you to reproduce subjects on the sensor the same size as they are in real life or larger. They come in a range of focal lengths from 60mm to 150mm, with the longer lengths preferable due to their greater working distance when photographing flighty subjects such as insects. As well as marque brands, Tamron, Sigma and Tokina all offer superb options for macro optics.



MULTI-ZONE FOCUSING: When using multi-zone focus you choose a size of group (eg 3, 5 or 9 AF points) and an area/ zone of focus and the camera automatically focuses on the subject within that zone. Many action photographers use this with Dynamic/ servo-AF mode to ensure accurate tracking of a subject as it moves across the frame.

MTF GRAPH: A Modulation Transfer Function (MTF) is how the optical performance of a lens is measured and will give you an understanding of how different lenses compare. They plot the contrast, perceived sharpness and resolution of a lens from its centre to its edges against the 'perfect' lens that transmits 100% light.

MEMORY: Most cameras use flash memory to save images taken on the camera as it's such a reliable and robust format. Flash memory, or memory cards as photographers like to call them, are removable and come in various sizes and types, such as CompactFlash, SD (SDHC/SHXC) and CFExpress. Another type of flash memory is a USB flash drive, which replaced optical discs as a way to store data once downloaded. Some cameras have built-in memory to hold a few images but capacity is limited.

M is for...



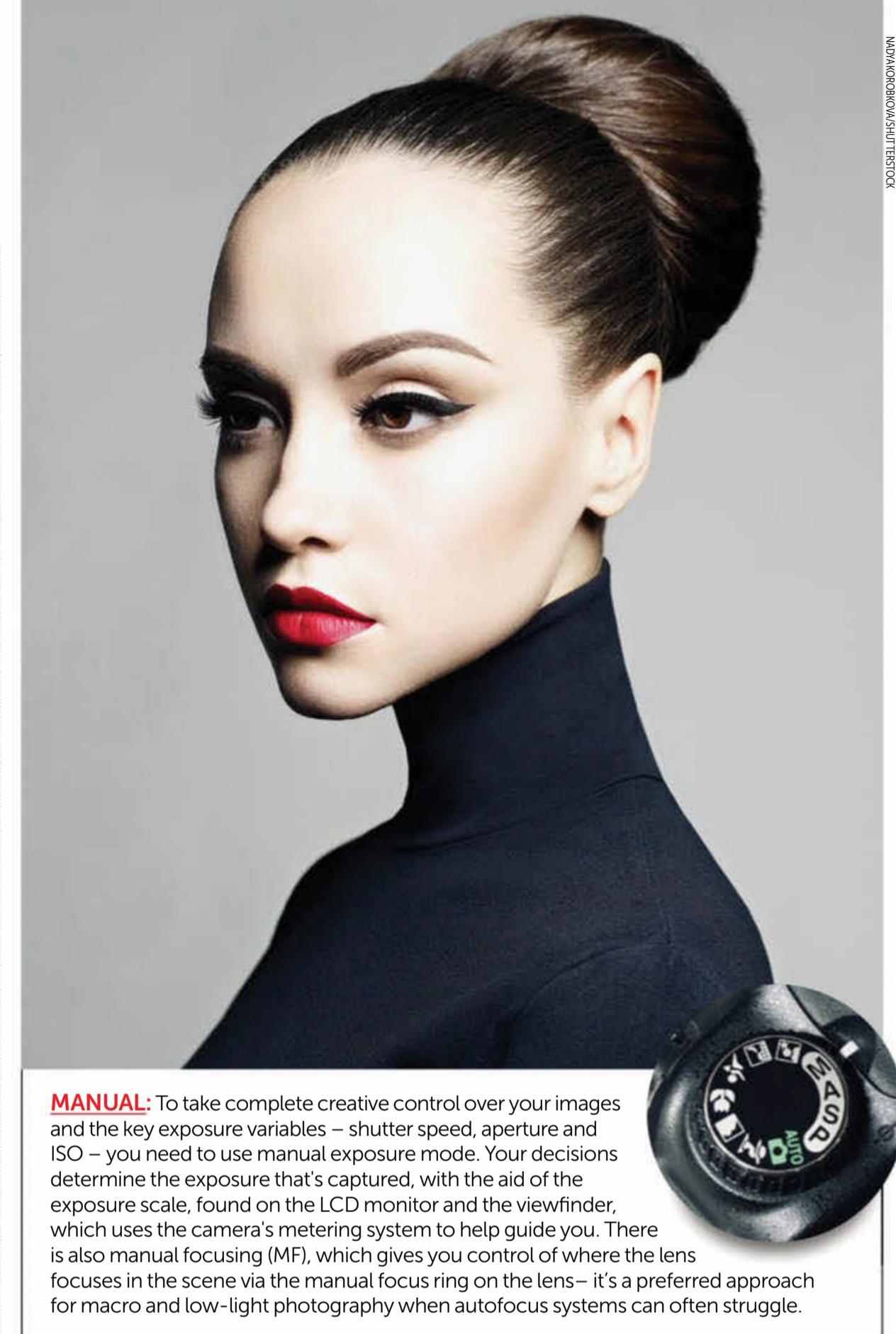
MEDIUM-FORMAT: Any camera that records an image larger than full-frame sensors, but smaller than the large-format 4x5in, is known as medium-format. It's a premium camera with a premium price tag. The likes of Hasselblad, Leica, Phase One and Fujifilm provide the best digital medium-format cameras on the market in two sensor sizes. Phase One and Hasselblad's H-Series holds true to traditional film by using a full-frame medium-format sensor to replicate the old 645 film format. Whereas Fujifilm, Leica and Pentax use a smaller sensor size that's bigger than 35mm.

MOVIE MODE: Most recent DSLRs feature a Movie mode that allows them to switch between capturing stills and video. When in Movie mode, the camera record sound and video clips.

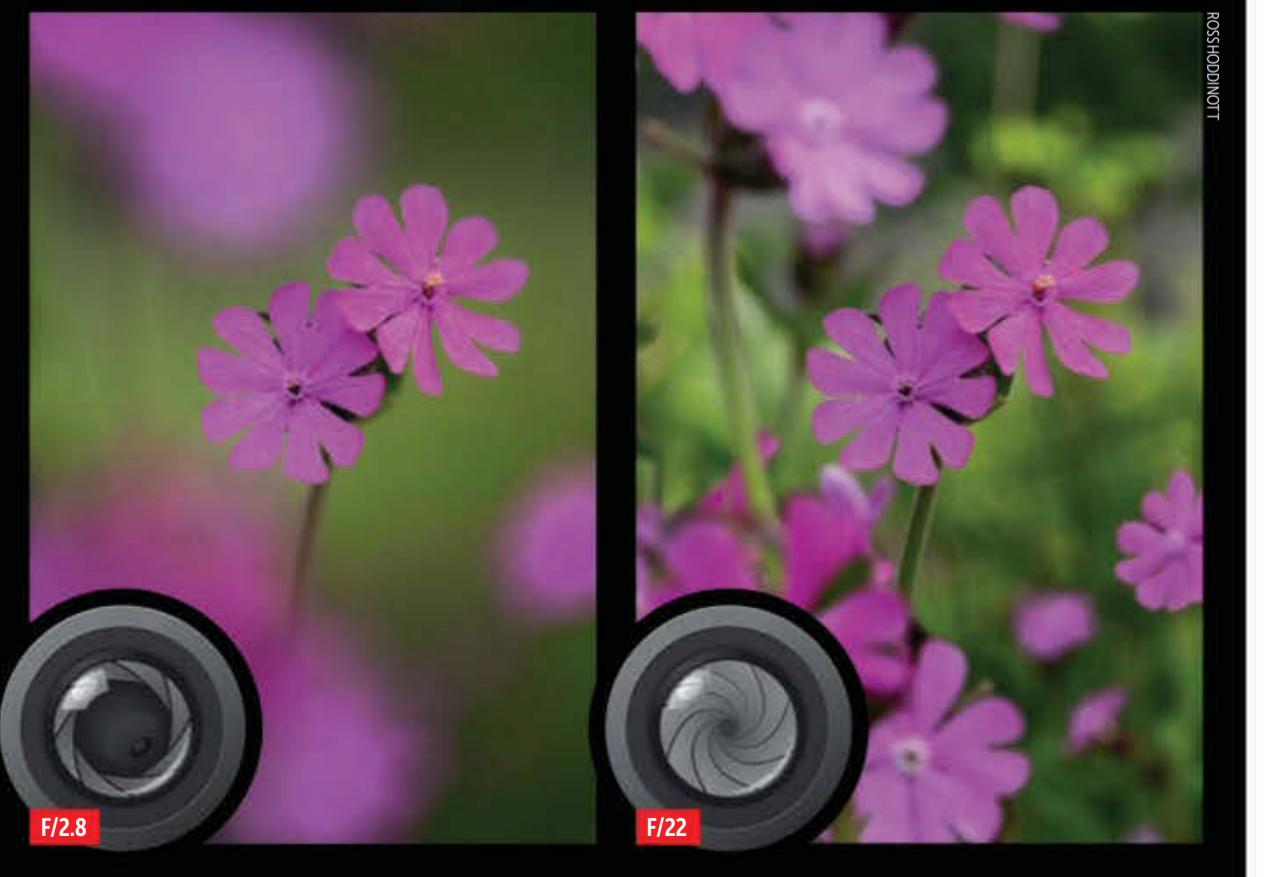
MODELLING LIGHT: Inside a studioflash is a continuous tungsten light that remains on when the flash is in standby mode, allowing you to attain focus prior to the flash firing.

MAXIMUM & MINIMUM APERTURES:

The centre of confusion for beginners learning about apertures are the conflicting terms used to describe the characteristics of an aperture. The size of a lens's iris and the depth-of-field is controlled by the aperture setting, also known as the f/stop. The larger the aperture, the smaller your f/number eg f/2.8 and shallower the depth-of-field; the narrower your aperture, the larger your f/number eg f/22 and the greater your depth-of-field. When you're asked to use your lens's maximum aperture, it's asking you to open the lens iris to its widest f/stop, which could be f/1.4, f/1.8, f/2.8 or f/3.5 depending on the lens. 'Fast' lenses have large maximum apertures that allow a lot of light to reach the sensor as well as boasting shallow depth-of-field. Conversely, your minimum aperture would be your lens's smallest aperture setting but largest f/number, which is usually between eg f/22 and f/32.



MANUAL: To take complete creative control over your images and the key exposure variables – shutter speed, aperture and ISO – you need to use manual exposure mode. Your decisions determine the exposure that's captured, with the aid of the exposure scale, found on the LCD monitor and the viewfinder, which uses the camera's metering system to help guide you. There is also manual focusing (MF), which gives you control of where the lens focuses in the scene via the manual focus ring on the lens – it's a preferred approach for macro and low-light photography when autofocus systems can often struggle.



Motion blur

With longer exposures, a moving subject creates motion blur that appear as streaks of colour moving away from the subject. The level of blur depends on the speed of the subject and length of your shutter speed. Motion blur is different from the image blur caused by camera shake.

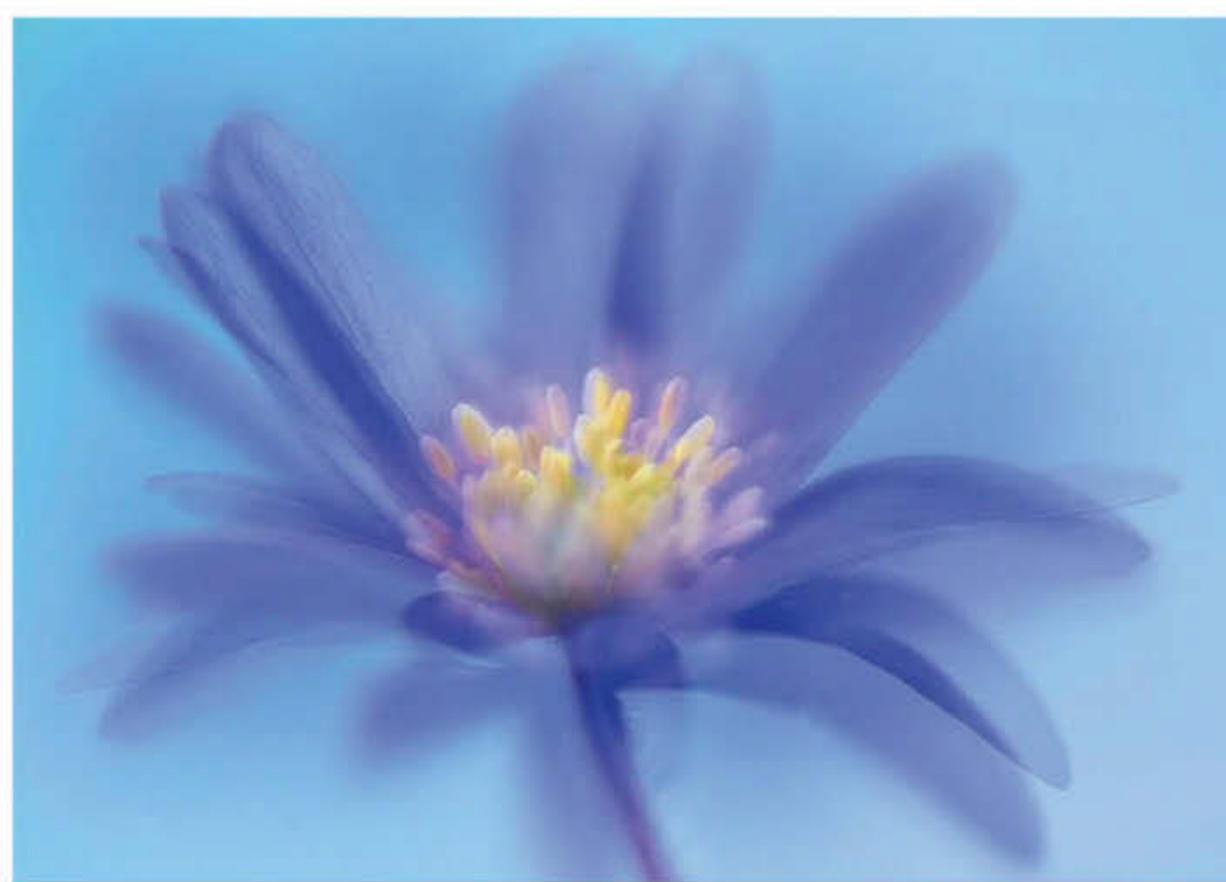


MAXIM PETRICHUK/SHUTTERSTOCK

MIDTONE: Simply put, a midtone is has a medium luminance value – not bright enough to be a highlight or dark enough to be a shadow. These colours are in the middle of the tonal spectrum. Our cameras, generally, try to expose for a midtone of 18% grey to keep the extremes of highlights and shadows within its dynamic range.

METADATA: Otherwise known as EXIF, metadata holds all the essential information about your image and is automatically embedded into every shot you take. Resolution, camera settings, lens type, copyright, geotags and dimensions are usually included, and if they're not you can add them in during post-production.

MATTE: A popular print finish that lacks the vibrancy of gloss paper but produces high-quality images. It's resistant to glare, making it preferable for displaying in areas with overhead lighting and smudging from fingerprints after handling.



HELEN DIXON

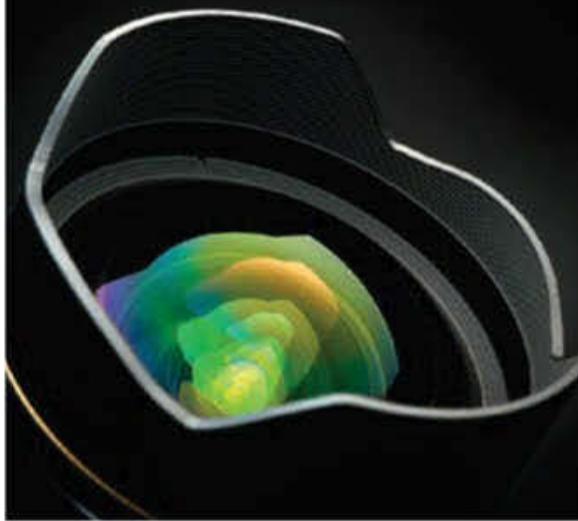
MULTIPLE EXPOSURES: When you expose the same frame more than once you're creating a multiple exposure; a double exposure is a form of multiple exposure that only includes two frames. Photographers use the technique for practical and creative reasons, such as expanding an image's dynamic range. It can sometimes be created in-camera using a multiple exposure facility or by bracketing the exposures in-camera and compositing them in post-production. Some photographers like to composite multiple frames from a sporting sequence into a single image or superimpose images over others.

M is for...

AALTAR SHUTTERSTOCK

Multi-coated optics

All lenses and filters have multiple coatings, commonly called a multi-coating or a nano-coating. They're special chemical compounds that are applied to the surface of the glass and elements to change their optical properties such as to reduce flare, reflections or scratches.



MEGAPIXEL: One-million pixels is one megapixel, so an 18-megapixel DSLR shoots 18-million pixel images.

MAH: Standing for Milliamp-hours, it's commonly used to measure the energy capacity of a battery. In general, the more mAh the longer the battery life: every 1,000 mAh equals approximately one-hour of power so a 9000mAh rechargeable Lithium-ion battery should last up to nine hours.



MONOPOD: A monopod is an extendable metal support for your camera using a single leg. It's designed to help you stay steady when shooting for long periods of time or when using a long heavy lens, such as shooting sporting events or wildlife. You can fit a head to it as you can a tripod. Manfrotto, Gitzo, Benro and Vanguard are all brands worth exploring.



MIRROR: A digital SLR's mirror sits at an angle in front of the shutter and sensor. Its placement allows it to reflect light from the lens into the viewfinder pentaprism so you to see what you're shooting. When you take a photograph, the mirror swings out of the way to allow light to hit the imaging sensor. In LiveView mode, the mirror is permanently lifted.



MACRO RAIL: A mechanical system that allows you to move your camera on axis for very precise movements, which is beneficial given macro's challenging depth-of-field. The system of gears allows for precise and consistent control, which can prove useful when shooting a focus stack.

MINIMUM FOCUSING DISTANCE:

The shortest distance between a sensor and the subject whereby a camera can accurately focus is known as your minimum focusing distance. The distance is usually noted on the barrel of the lens or in the specification, with true macro lenses having the shortest focusing distance.

Greats of photography

Robert Mapplethorpe (1946 – 1989)

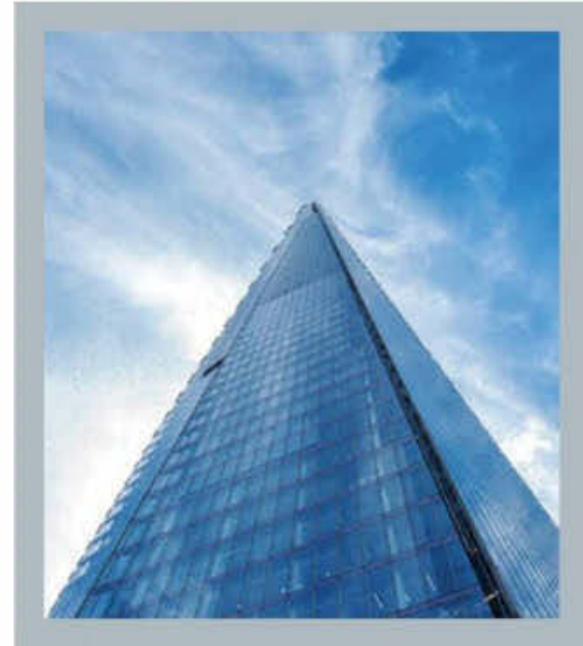
An American photographer best known for his black & white photographs of a range of subjects, including nudes, celebrity portraits and still-life images of flowers, particular orchids and calla lilies. His work is represented by galleries across America and Europe and his legacy includes the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, which promotes photography and funds medical research for the fight against AIDS.

Don McCullin (1935 – present)

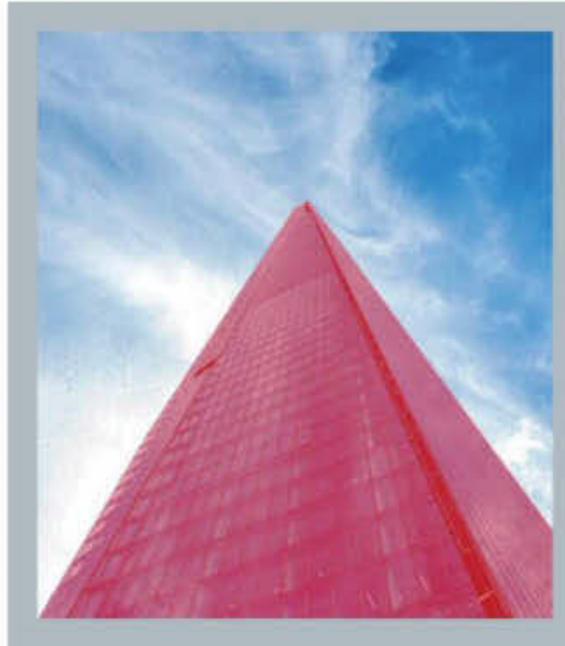
This British living-legend is a photojournalist who is best known for his frontline recording of catastrophes and wars, including Biafra, Vietnam and the Northern Ireland conflict. He won the British Press Award for his essay about the construction of the Berlin Wall and in 1993 was the first photojournalist to be awarded a CBE.

Steve McCurry (1950 – present)

An American photojournalist, best known for his portrait 'Afghan Girl' that has graced the cover of *National Geographic* many times. His work spans conflicts, vanishing cultures and ancient traditions and has earned him some of the most prestigious awards, including four first prize placements in the World Press Photo contest and is present in the International Photography Hall of Fame.



MARCHING ANTS: Not in any way related to insect photography, marching ants refer to the animation that shows up when you've used a selection tool during post-processing – it looks like a dashed or dotted border that appears to be slowly moving.



MASKING: A core editing technique that allows you to isolate your target area from the rest of your image, masking protects the other areas from whatever edits you apply. The most common method is by 'painting' a Hide All/Reveal All Layer Mask.



GOODFREEPHOTOS/UNSPLASH



Mirror lock-up

When the mirror momentarily moves to allow light to reach the sensor it can cause a little camera shake, which isn't usually a problem unless you're shooting with long exposures. The Mirror lock-Up function keeps the mirror out of the way when the shutter opens so as to avoid any movement.

N is for...



NOISE: There are two types of digital electronic noise: Luminance and Chroma. Luminance shows up as fine monochrome grain and Chroma noise as flecks of colour, but both are caused by long exposures and high ISOs. These days most DSLRs can handle very high ISO ratings before noise impacts on image quality. But, if you do need to eliminate or reduce noise levels there are a number of ways to do so. Most cameras feature an in-camera Noise Reduction facility that automatically take an extra exposure to merge with the original image to mask out noise, which if you're working with long exposures isn't an efficient method. Alternatively, shoot in Raw and use software such as Photoshop, Lightroom or DxO's dedicated noise reduction functions to tackle Luminance and Chroma separately. There are also dedicated plug-ins available such as Topaz Denoise AI, Skylum Luminar or Nik Collection 3.

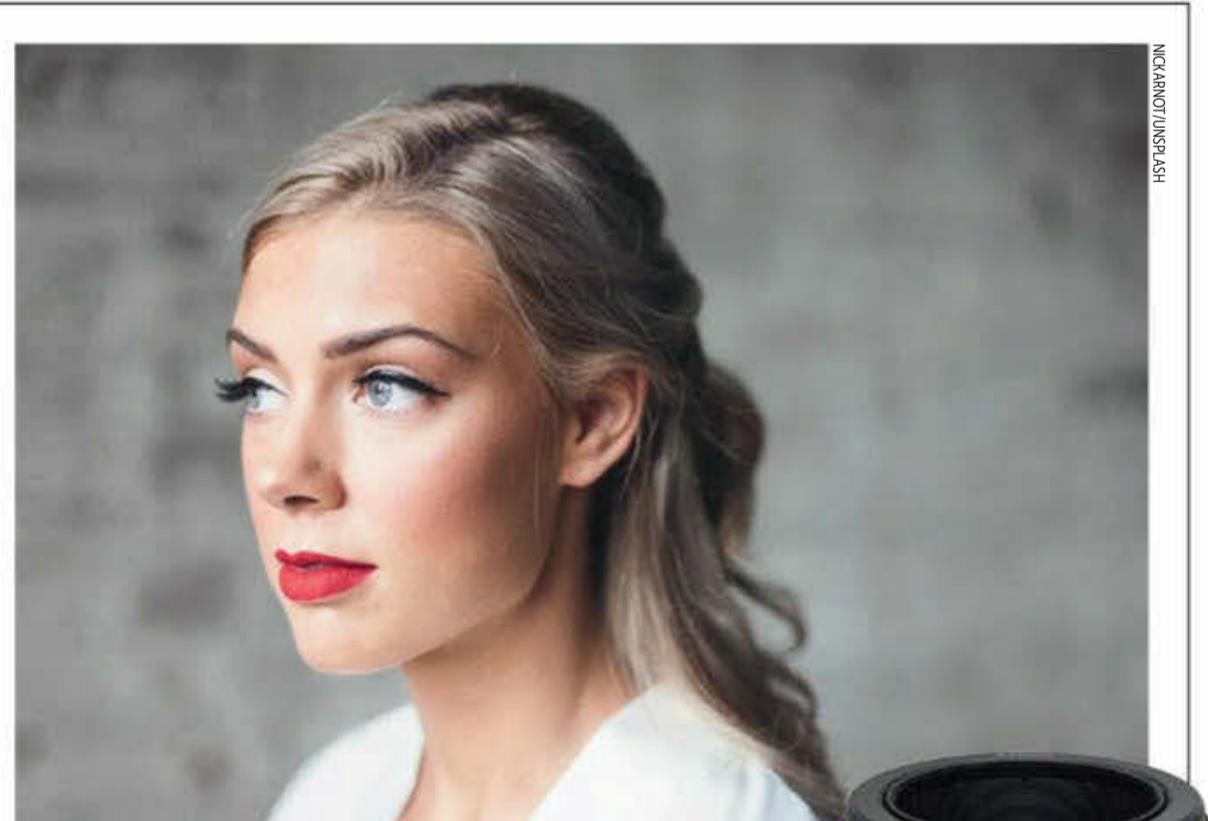
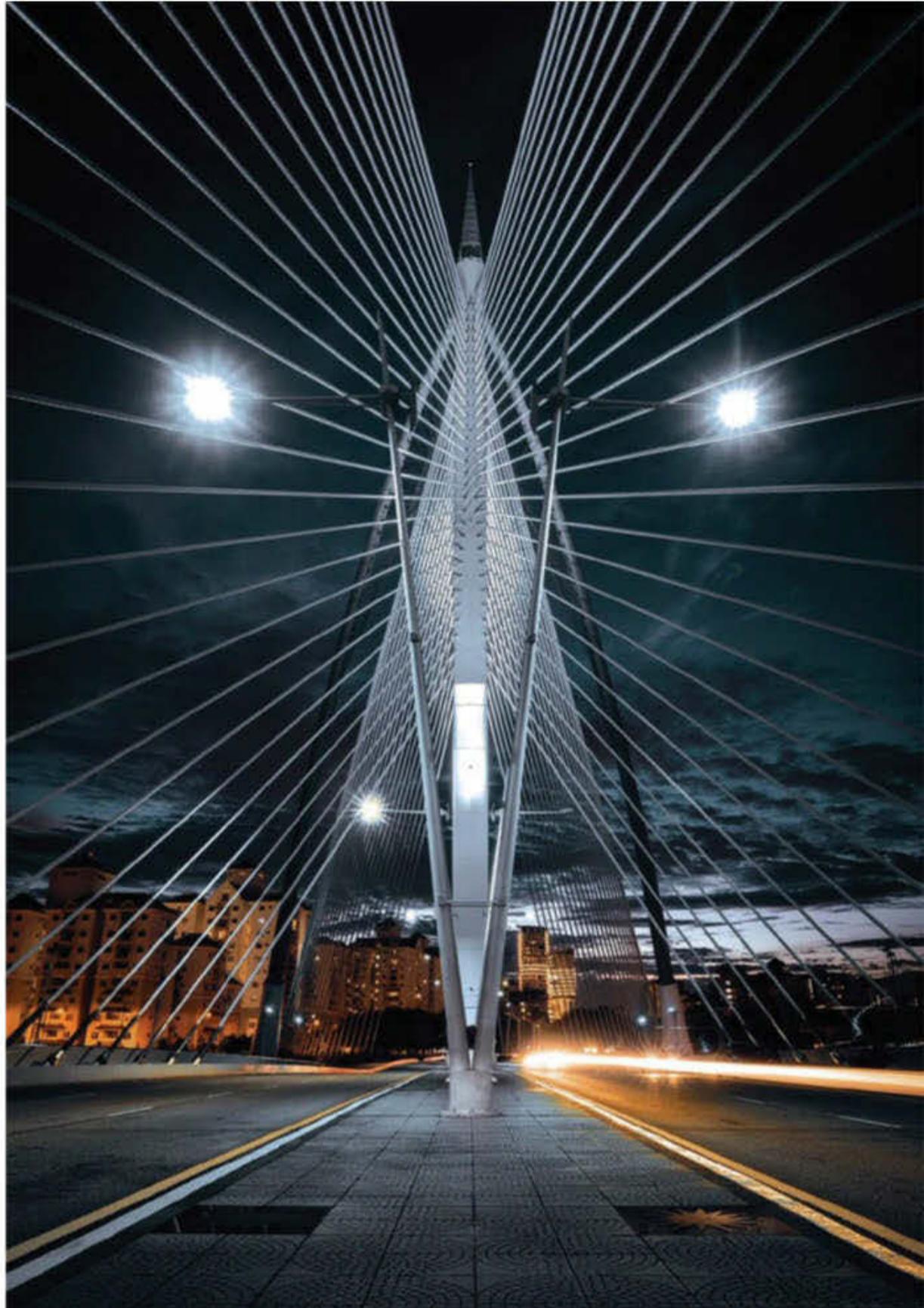
NATURAL LIGHT: The sun, moon and stars are natural sources of ambient light and therefore deemed as 'natural light'. Different times of day and weather conditions affect the quality of this light, its colour and luminance, such as sunrise, sunset, twilight, overcast and high noon. You can use aids like filters and reflectors to modify these light sources.

NARROW LIGHTING: Also known as broad or short lighting, this lighting technique is primarily used for portraits to control how wide a subject's face looks. The goal is to use the main light to illuminate the side of the face that is turned away from the camera, making their face seem narrower.

Greats of photography

Helmut Newton (1920 – 2004)

A German-Australian high-fashion photographer whose provocative black & white portraits frequently appeared in the likes of *Queen*, *french* and *british Vogue* and *french Elle*. He's still considered to be one of the world's leading portrait photographers and his style is widely imitated.



NIFTY FIFTY: The term 'nifty fifty' refers to a 50mm prime lens with a maximum aperture of f/1.8 or faster. These lenses are fast, lightweight, versatile and extremely good value for money at often under £100. A 50mm lens is deemed a 'normal' or standard lens as it replicates the same perspective as our eyes. If there was one lens every photographer should own, it's this one.

Neutral Density

Solid and graduated Neutral Density (or ND for short) filters limit the light that reaches your camera's sensor across part or the whole image area, respectively. These resin or glass filters are designed to be a neutral colour and come in varying densities to reduce the amount of light reaching the sensor. Solid NDs are often used to extend shutter speeds so as to capture motion blur in water or to give wide apertures in bright conditions for portraits. NDs are available in densities from one stop to 15 or more.

ND Grads balance the exposure difference between sky and land at up to three stops.

IMAGE: ROSS HODDINOTT



**PHOTO
EXPERT**

Colour

COLOUR IS EVERYWHERE, BUT DON'T TAKE IT FOR GRANTED. IT PLAYS AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN PHOTOGRAPHY, PROVIDING IMPACT, CONTRAST AND STRUCTURE TO OUR SHOTS. WHATEVER THE SUBJECT MATTER, COLOUR – MUTED, VIVID, SUBTLE OR BOLD – HAS THE ABILITY TO ENHANCE YOUR IMAGES. ITS VISUAL INFLUENCE IS FAR-REACHING – COLOUR CAN BE USED TO EVOKE ALL KINDS OF DIFFERENT EMOTIONAL RESPONSES. ROSS HODDINOTT PROVIDES YOU WITH A HANDFUL OF TIPS, TRICKS AND IDEAS FOR CAPTURING IMAGES WITH COLOUR IMPACT

Words & images: ROSS HODDINOTT

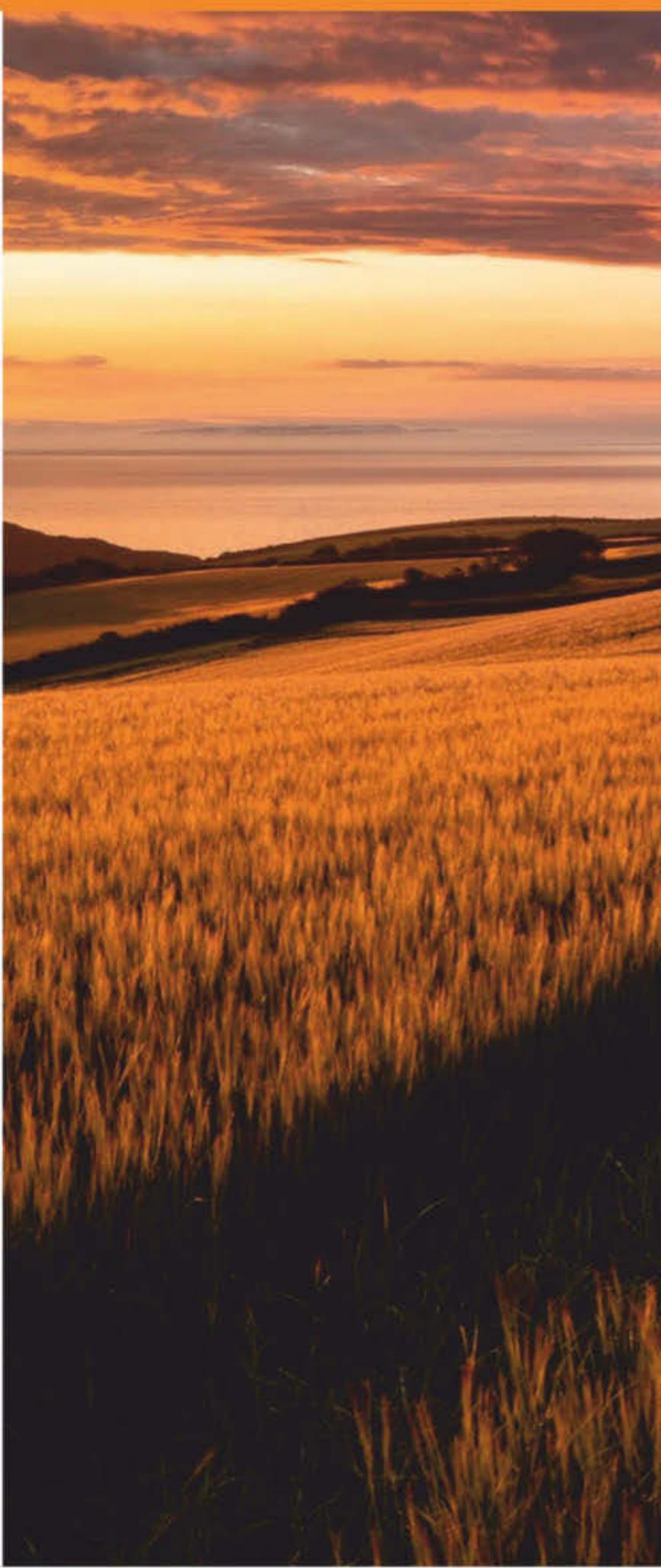
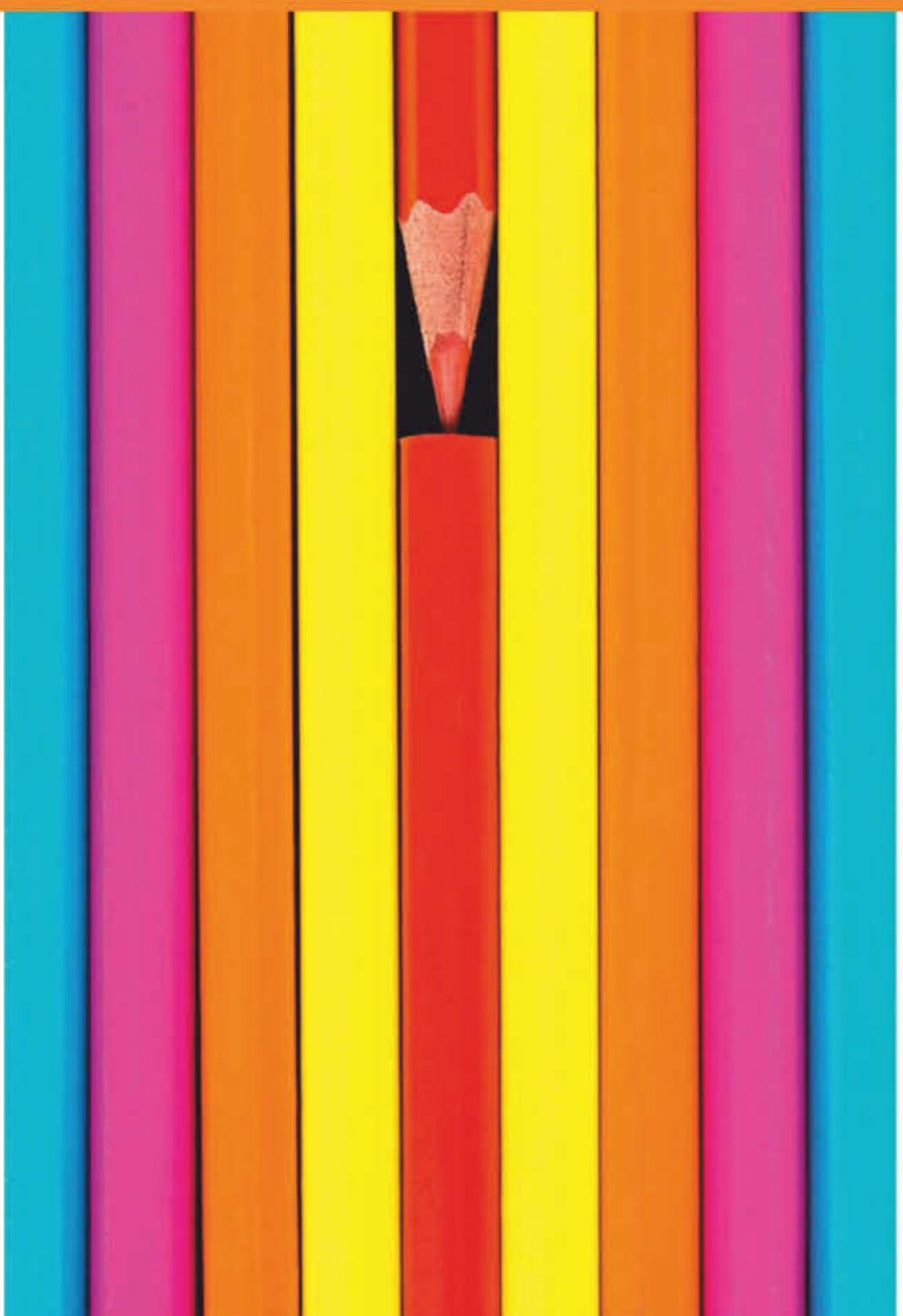


OUR EXPERT

Ross Hoddinott

Ross is one of the UK's leading outdoor photographers. Based in the picturesque south west of England, it's no surprise he is passionate about coastal and landscape photography. Ross is a multi-award winning professional photographer and author – his books include *The Landscape Photography Workshop* and *The Art of Landscape Photography*. His next book, *52 Assignments: Nature* is out now. Ross is also an ambassador for Nikon UK and Manfrotto. For more on Ross Hoddinott and the workshops he leads, visit www.rosshoddinott.co.uk and www.dawn2duskphotography.co.uk





1

Be bold: Along with shape, form, texture, contrast and light, colour is one of a photograph's building blocks. Deep, saturated colours create impact, but too many different or competing hues can undermine the shot. Keep it simple with a few bold hits of colour within a composition. Look for strong colours that contrast or complement each other. How exactly you should or shouldn't combine colours is tricky to answer as so much depends on the effect you want to achieve. While there are no hard and fast rules, a little forethought about colour harmony helps. Some colours, particularly red and yellow, appear to 'advance' towards you and demand attention. Study a colour wheel as this will reveal the relationship between primary, secondary and tertiary colours.



3

Cool things down: We all subconsciously react to different colours. Therefore, a simple shift in colour temperature can have a very real influence on a shot's mood. A cool blue hue tends to evoke feelings of calmness, tranquillity, loneliness and enhance an overall feeling of coldness. By using your camera's White Balance setting creatively – and deliberately selecting a technically incorrect colour temperature that doesn't match the prevailing lighting conditions – you can project a very different mood. It is easy to add a cool blue cast to your shots – simply select your camera's Tungsten or Fluorescent preset or dial-in a White Balance setting below 4500K. Doing so will immediately add a cool, blue hue to your shots – try it for yourself. A blue tint can enhance all types of subjects, but particularly the mood of wintry images, waterfalls and long exposure seascapes. In order to see what cast works best, play with your White Balance settings – much will depend on personal taste.

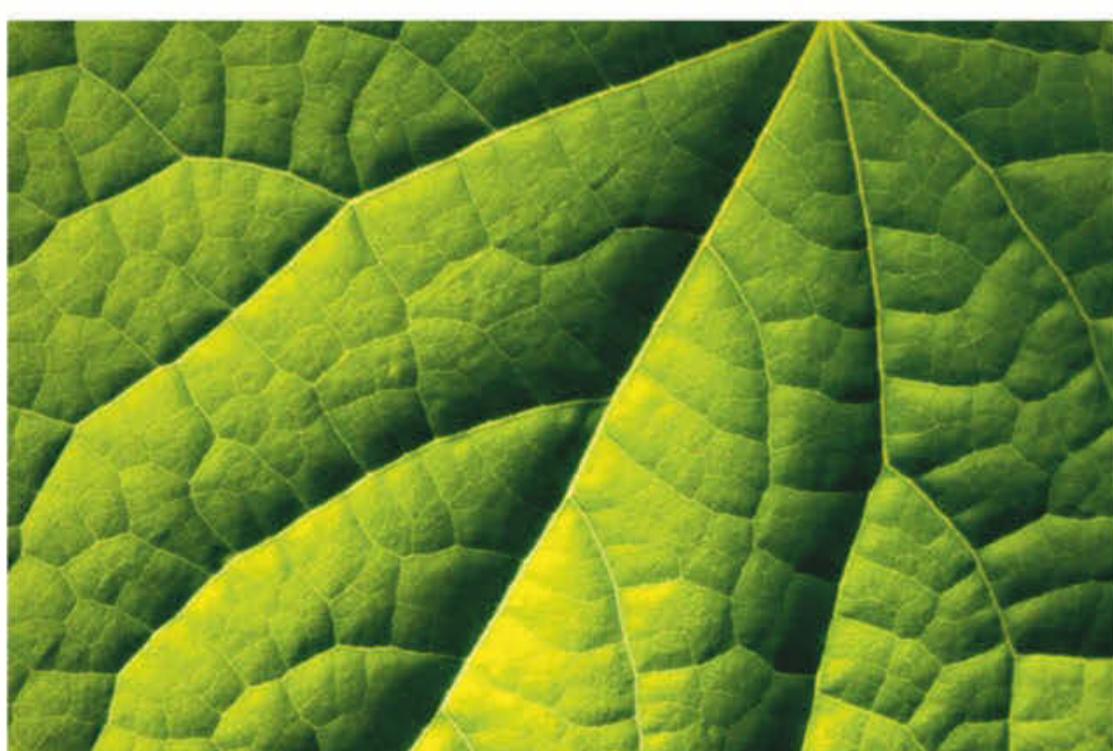


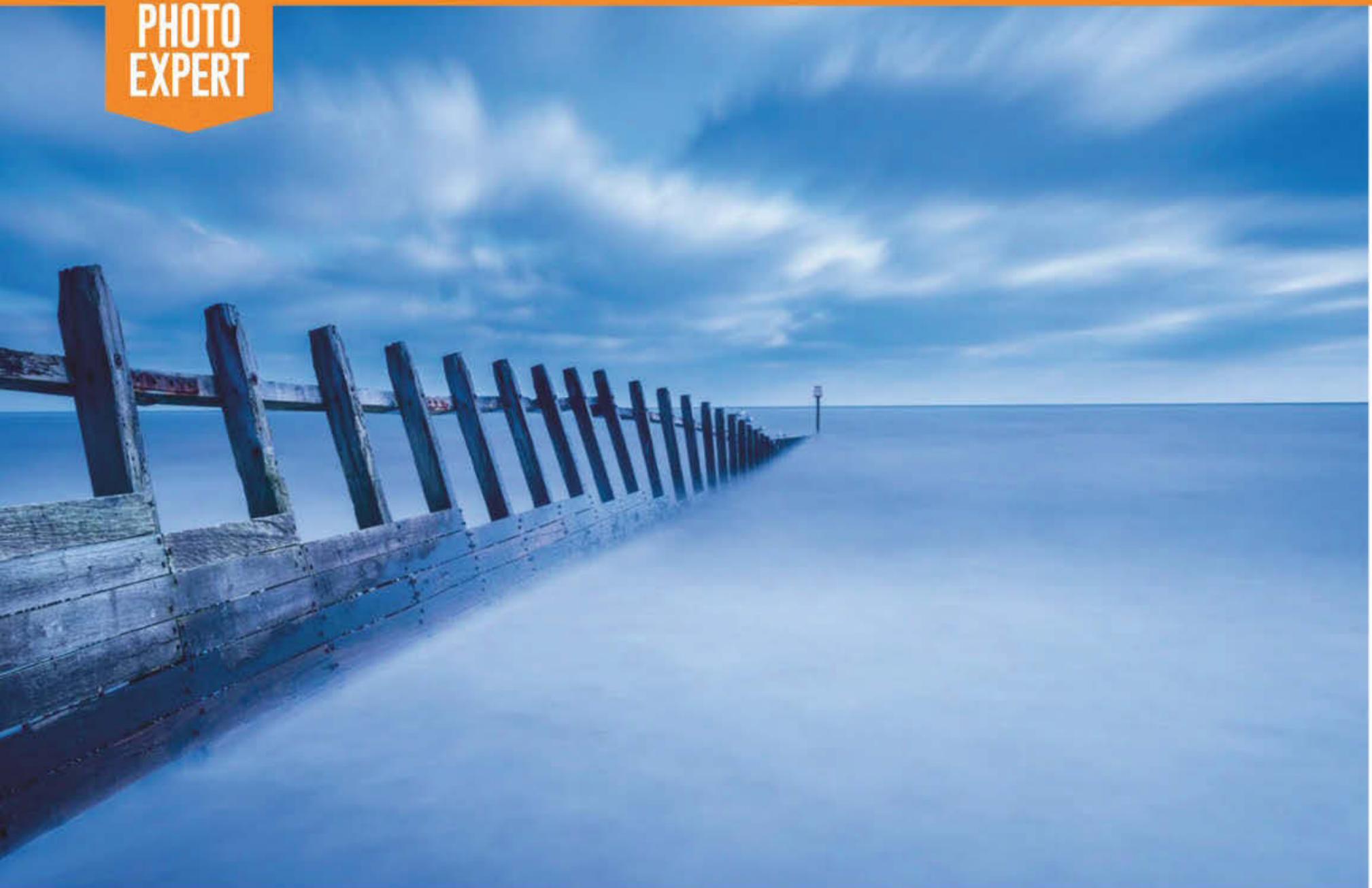
2

Add some warmth: Although your camera's White Balance is designed to correct colour casts from light with varying colour temperatures, this function can also be employed creatively. Think of your White Balance setting as a form of in-camera filtration – by deliberately mismatching the White Balance you can add a strong, intentional colour cast to your images. By selecting your camera's Cloudy or Shade preset, or manually dialling in a WB setting upward of 6500K, you will add a distinct warm, orange cast – similar to that of a warm-up filter, which film photographers once used. Warm tones are considered uplifting and enticing. A warm hue can be flattering for skin tones, be used to enhance golden-hour sunlight and add punch to autumnal colour. Play with White Balance until you find the look you want, but keep your shots believable. I favour getting things right in-camera, but Raw shooters can quickly adjust and enhance a photo's colour temperature at the editing stage.

4

Nature's vibrance: Green is a positive and endearing colour to use in photographs. Leaves and foliage, being so vibrant and shapely, make obvious and appealing subjects too. Leaves often boast strong outlines, while their veins create intricate and interesting patterns. To reveal and highlight their colour and intricate designs, try backlitting leaves either by shooting against the sun, photographing them arranged on a lightbox or taped to the inside of a window. Now, using a macro lens or standard lens with close-up attachment, crop in tightly to fill the viewfinder with colour and exquisite detail. Opt for a mid-range aperture, like f/11, to generate a usable depth-of-field. Try to place your camera parallel with the leaf to position as much of it as possible within the plane of focus. Bracken, ferns and reeds can also produce bold, vibrant green images with eye-catching repetition and texture. In autumn, when leaves turn red, orange or gold, you can highlight seasonal colour instead.





5

Let a colour dominate: It can be tempting to fill the image space with lots of vibrant, clashing or competing colours, but sometimes it is best to stick to a single dominant hue. In its simplest form, focus on one block of colour, like a wall or painted door, but look for blistered paint, a keyhole or some point of interest to create an anchor for your composition. Another idea is to create your own single-colour still-life by placing objects of similar shades together – bottles, flowers, fruit, stationary, plastic cutlery and toys, for instance. You might also want to look for a scene where shades of the same colour dominate. Although this is harder to find in an urban environment, it is prevalent in nature where the colour palette is subtle and limited. For example, in spring, lime green will dominate photographs of woodland interiors; in autumn, shades of gold and brown. Low-light seascapes captured in overcast conditions often appear blue and it is sometimes possible to enhance the overall hue by adjusting White Balance. You can create very striking results by removing colour contrast and allowing one shade to dominate.

6

Get close: One way to emphasise and isolate colour is to get up close. Use a macro lens or close-up attachment to reveal colourful detail, texture and repetition. You could photograph brightly-coloured man-made objects, like stationary, paper, straws or sweets, arranging items to create the most colourful and interesting compositions. Alternatively, focus on colour and detail provided by nature, like feathers, lichen, geology and even fruit and vegetables. Try filling the frame to create more abstract looking results and to maximise the impact of the colour. Play with how your subject is lit. With small objects, it is easy to adjust the light's quality, angle and its overall effect by using a combination of a small reflector, diffuser and/or LED device.

7

Colour popping: It's a creative and fun post-processing technique where you pick a single colour from an image and make it the focal point. You do this by removing colour from the rest of the image, which immediately directs the viewer's eye to the coloured object and gives the subject more prominence and impact. It is best to select an image with one strong, dominant colour. One simple method to create selective colour images is to open your image in Photoshop and then, using the selection tool of your choice (Lasso Tool, Quick Selection Tool, Pen Tool, etc) draw a selection outline around the area you wish to retain colour. Invert your selection by clicking Select>Inverse. Create a New Adjustment Layer and then choose Black and White from the list of adjustment layers in order to desaturate your background. Ta-da! You have created your selectively coloured photo.







8

Colourful skies: A crimson sky adds mood and drama to your landscape images. Nature can provide incredible colour but big colourful skies don't occur often – you need just the right combination of cloud, low humidity, air quality and light. High to mid-level clouds often produce the best canvas, reflecting the colours of the setting sun – thicker, lower cloud are too dense for the sun's rays to pass through them. The best skies often occur at sunrise prior to a storm, or at sunset after bad weather – hence the old saying 'red sky at night, shepherd's delight; red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning'. A weather app will help you make good decisions as to when to head out with your camera, or when to stay home. Use an app that provides a detailed, hourly forecast for cloud cover, visibility, humidity and wind speed. Cloud cover between 30-60% is often desirable at sunrise or sunset. Apps like Skyfire and SkyCandy are designed to do all the hard work for you and predict the likelihood of colourful skies based on the conditions. Reach your location at least 45 minutes prior to sunrise or sunset. Some of the best colour and glow can occur up to 30 minutes before sunrise or long after the sun has dropped below the horizon.



9

Polarise: Give your shots a little extra punch with a polariser. These circular, screw-in type filters are a must-have photo accessory. By rotating them, photographers can regulate the amount of polarised light entering the camera. They are best-known for their ability to saturate clear, blue skies, but they will also reduce or eliminate glare from reflective, non-metallic surfaces, like glass, water and shiny leaves. They are easy to use: simply rotate the filter and watch reflections and colour saturation strengthen or fade. Try to keep the image looking natural, watching for uneven or over-polarisation. A polariser will really give your shots some kick and can be particularly effective when you are shooting from a low, worm's eye viewpoint whilst contrasting a building, person, tree or flowers against a rich, saturated blue sky. To achieve the optimum effect, shoot at a 90° to the sun. Polarisers absorb up to two stops of light, so increase ISO to compensate if your shutter speed gets too slow.

10

Colourful decay: Dereliction, graffiti and urban decay can produce some incredible texture and colour to photograph. Blistering paint work, rusty machinery and neglect can look eye-catching and abstract in frame-filling close-up. To capture successful shots, you need a good eye for detail. Study decay closely and carefully and use a close-focusing lens – a macro is a great choice – to isolate areas of colour, texture and interest. Peeling paint, weathered beach huts, abandoned farm buildings and the boughs of old boats can provide some very abstract and colourful results. Bright but overcast light will produce the most punchy colours – in bright, high-contrast conditions, consider using a diffuser.



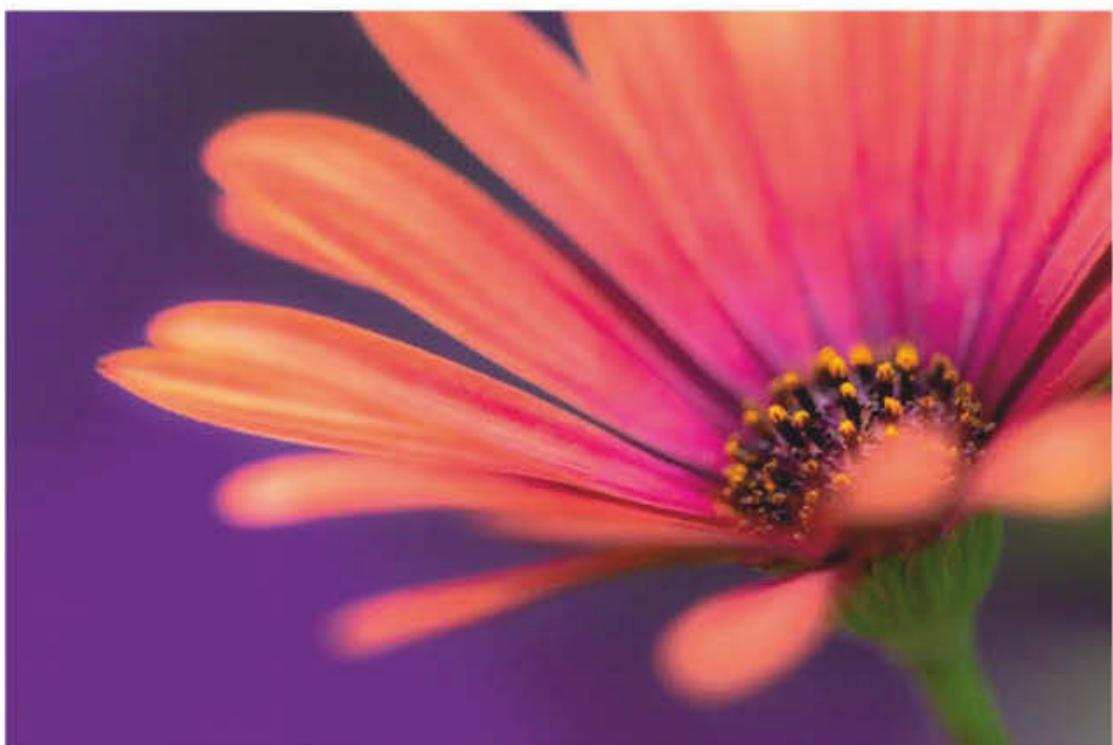


11

Go mute: Despite the temptation to get carried away with the saturation slider and produce photos with bold, vibrant colours and instant impact, a subtler approach can often prove classier and more effective. Subdued colours stir the imagination and encourage our eyes to explore the substance of the composition, rather than get stuck on the most colourful subject within the image area. Generally speaking, if you want to be subtle it is best to keep strong, advancing colours, like reds and yellows, out of the frame. While clear skies and intense light will typically intensify colour, diffused light will help soften the palette, reduce contrast and help photographers capture colour naturally. Colour tends to appear more muted and adopt a deeper tone when the light or exposure is reduced. Fading light or inclement weather, like fog, mist, drizzle and haze, will do a particularly good job of muting colour and enhancing the sense of mood or romance. Therefore, consider the forecast and use 'bad' weather conditions to create images with soft, muted and attractive hues.

**12**

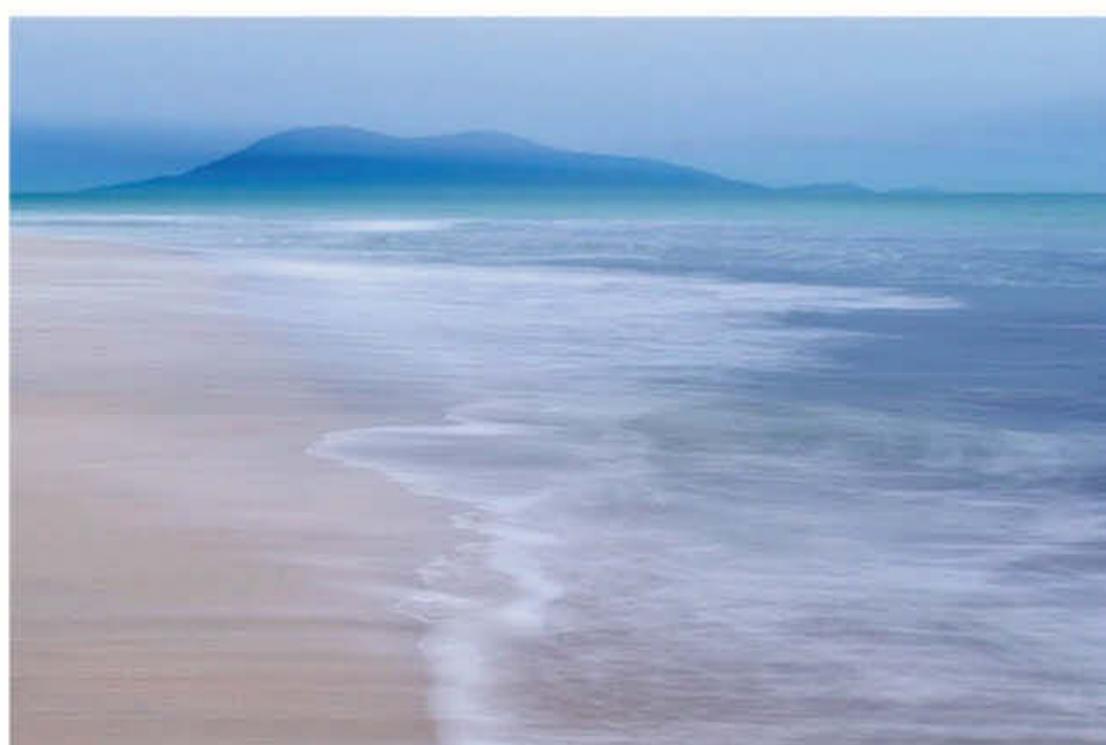
Cross-polarisation: If you want to capture vibrant, psychedelic colours, try cross-polarisation. This is a fun technique to play with where you sandwich a clear, backlit plastic object between two polarising materials. Unless you own more than one polariser (or happen to have a sheet of polarising material that you can place on a lightbox) use a computer monitor or tablet as a background. Screens tend to be polarised, so set the screen to white and stand your clear plastic object in front of the screen – or on top if using a tablet. Attach a circular polarising filter to your lens to sandwich your subject between the polarising materials. Rotate the polariser on your lens and the fun begins. The cross-polarised light highlights stress in the clear plastic as multi-coloured patterns. This psychedelic effect is the result of the diffraction of white light into the colours of the spectrum, with the most dramatic and intense colours occurring at the points of greatest stress. The best results are often achieved with cheaply made objects that easily shatter, like throwaway cutlery or plastic stationary. You will want a close-focusing lens too.

**13**

Background colour: Colour impact doesn't always have to be generated by your subject – background colour can be just as effective. All sorts of things can be used to create a colourful, contrasting and impactful background. For example, buildings, a polarised sky, or out-of-focus foliage, water or blossom. If you are shooting in a studio you can employ an artificial backdrop, or when photographing smaller objects, placing a sheet of coloured card behind your subject should suffice. Background choice can make a shot, adding a splash or colour and helping your subject 'pop' from its surroundings. To render backgrounds completely out of focus, use a large aperture – in the region of f/4 – and try to place distance between your subject and its background.

14

Flower power: Few subjects offer a more varied choice of colour or design than flowers. If you want to produce images with colour impact, look no further than a local garden, stately home or your own back garden. Spring until early autumn is normally the best time for blooms, but at other times of the year when they are not flowering in gardens, visit a local florist for a handful of photogenic stems to shoot in the comfort of home, using diffused windowlight. Sunflowers, gerberas, dahlias, tulips and cosmos are all photogenic. If you are taking photos outdoors, opt for a still day – it is tricky to frame and focus when a subject is wind-blown. Pristine blooms will look best under the scrutiny of a close-focusing lens. Avoid harsh, direct sunlight – diffused light will help your camera record colour and fine detail accurately. Consider spraying your subject – tiny water droplets will add interest, scale and sparkle to flower close-ups. You could also try to capture the refracted image of a flower in a water droplet.



15

ICM: Try abstracting reality by moving the camera during an exposure to blur your subject and create an impressionistic wash of colour. While this is a very subjective technique – you either love or hate the results – intentional camera motion (ICM) can produce unique and painterly results. When selecting subjects, colour and contrast should play a big role. Look for subjects that have a strong, recognisable outline and boast strong colour. Trees, buildings, people and animals all tend to work well. To create intentional motion blur, select an exposure in the region of one second – if necessary, use ND filters and a low ISO to generate a slow shutter. You can shoot ICM handheld or using a tripod. Move your camera smoothly while the shutter is open to create the best results. Experiment with different shutter speeds and types of movements for different effects. Typically, a vertical or horizontal panning action works best, but sometimes a circular or irregular motion is effective. Trial and error are key.

LANDSCAPE ESSENTIALS

THE BASICS OF LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY ARE EASY TO GRASP BUT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO EXECUTE WITH FINESSE. OUR PRO JAMES ABBOTT TOOK READER CHRIS LEIGH TO SEVERAL ICONIC LOCATIONS IN THE PEAK DISTRICT TO GIVE HIM A CRASH COURSE IN EXPOSURE, FOCUSING AND COMPOSITION TO DRAMATICALLY IMPROVE HIS LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

OUR EXPERT: *James Abbott*



James is a professional landscape and portrait photographer based in Cambridge. With a love of travel and the outdoors, he frequently visits locations around the UK to expand his portfolio and create photographic tutorials for beginners and advanced photographers.

James's kit: Sony A7R III, Sony FE 16-35mm f/2.8 GM, Sony FE 70-200mm f/4 G, NiSi filters system, Vanguard Alta Pro 2 263CB tripod and Mindshift Backlight 26 backpack.

OUR READER: *Chris Leigh*



Chris currently works as a consultant in the drone industry and has travelled extensively for both work and pleasure. He shoots landscapes and images of his children horse riding and would like to focus on improving his landscape photography.

Chris's kit: Fuji X-T3, 10-24mm f/4, 50mm f/2, Canon EOS RP, Canon EF-EOS R Mount Adapter, Canon 24-105mm f/4, Peak Design bags, Manfrotto BeFree tripod and a Gobe Filter Pack.

SHOOTING ANY PHOTOGRAPHIC subject can be easy when you know how and have years of experience under your belt. But when you're just getting started with a subject like landscapes, what at first appears to be relatively simple reveals itself to be a subject requiring many layers of knowledge and experience; composition, exposure, focusing, depth-of-field, and the use of filters are all factors of landscape photography that need to work in harmony to create images that work on each of these layers – little is left to chance.

Teaching someone with little knowledge of these principles can take time, but with just a day to work with, our expert James Abbott took reader Chris Leigh to the Peak District to give him a crash course in the

fundamentals of improving his landscape photography. Like a sponge, Chris was a fast learner and absorbed all the information to quickly grow in confidence and experience throughout the day.

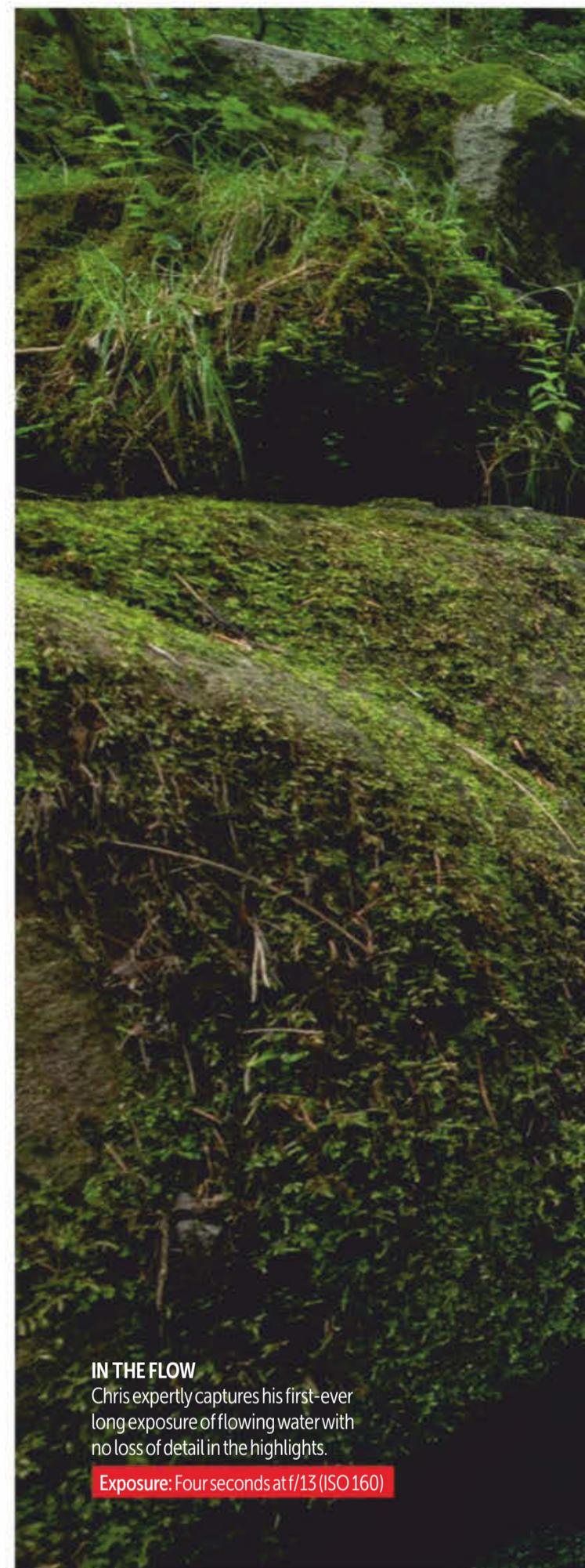
Each location was carefully selected to ensure that Chris would have the opportunity to explore the most important principles of landscape photography. So, after driving to the Peak District separately, James and Chris met at Wyming Brook just outside of Sheffield where Chris would learn the basics of exposure and focusing, as well as how to use filters effectively.

The Great Ridge, the second location, was the perfect place to learn the basics of composition such as the rule-of-thirds, foreground interest and lead-in lines, as well

as how to combine these compositional devices for more dynamic results. This can be a tricky location because the weather conditions can be challenging to say the least, but luck was on the pair's side and the greatest challenge was waiting for the vast numbers of walkers to walk out of shot.

The final location was Baslow Edge – a tricky location to shoot at any time because the cluttered nature of the landscape means that you have to find calm in the chaos by working hard with composition to make shots work. Composition was, of course important, but the aim here was to use creative depth-of-field to achieve interesting and indeed cleanly composed shots. It was a long day, but an enjoyable one, so let's see how Chris got on... ►





CHALLENGE 1: EXPOSURE & FOCUS

After arriving to the Peak District separately, so to maintain social distancing, Chris and I met in the car park at Wyming Brook. After a quick introductory chat, we made the muddy walk down to an area of streams that offers some of the best shooting opportunities in the vicinity. The location was much muddier than usual, which was probably due to increased visitor traffic from lockdown in nearby Sheffield.

When Chris and I arrived at my preferred section of Wyming Brook, Chris didn't waste any time; he had his Fujifilm X-T3 and 10-24mm f/4 lens attached to his tripod and his new set of GOBE filters at the ready within minutes of arriving. Chris's collection of GOBE screw-in filters was very comprehensive, including several NDs, coloured filters, ND grads and a polarising filter – everything he needed for the day. He'd purchased them in the 72mm thread size to fit his 10-24mm lens.

I directed Chris to use aperture-priority mode and dial in f/13 to help lengthen the exposure time; stopping down to f/16 could introduce diffraction so f/13 was the smallest advisable f/stop. The shutter speed was coming in at around one second, which isn't quite long enough, so I suggested Chris attach his polarising filter as it would not only reduce glare on the water's surface but the exposure by up to two stops.

Attaching the filter, with ISO at its lowest setting of 160, increased the shutter speed to 2.5 seconds, which was perfect. Since this



was a beginner's reader workshop, the focus was going to be on basic skills rather than slightly more complex techniques, such as extreme long exposures. At 2.5 seconds I expected we'd get a pleasing and sufficient amount of surface blur on the water while maintaining a degree of texture.

Chris framed his first shot and I gave a few pointers to help tighten the composition and improve visual balance. Once we were both happy, we tackled focusing. I explained how he needed to take control over his autofocus system using single-point AF or manual focusing to roughly focus a third of the way into the scene as this will help achieve sufficient depth-of-field. The first shot looked fantastic and Chris had taken on board everything I'd told him so

IN THE FLOW

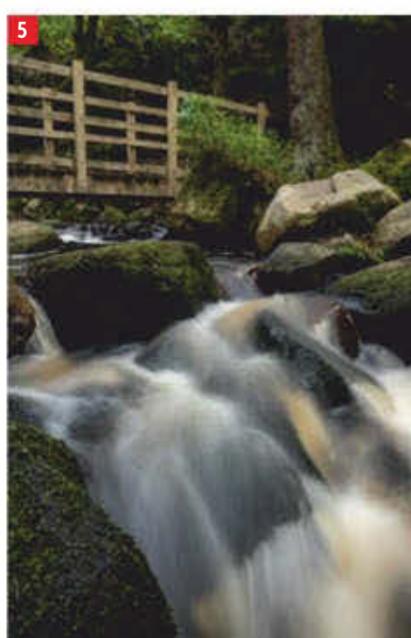
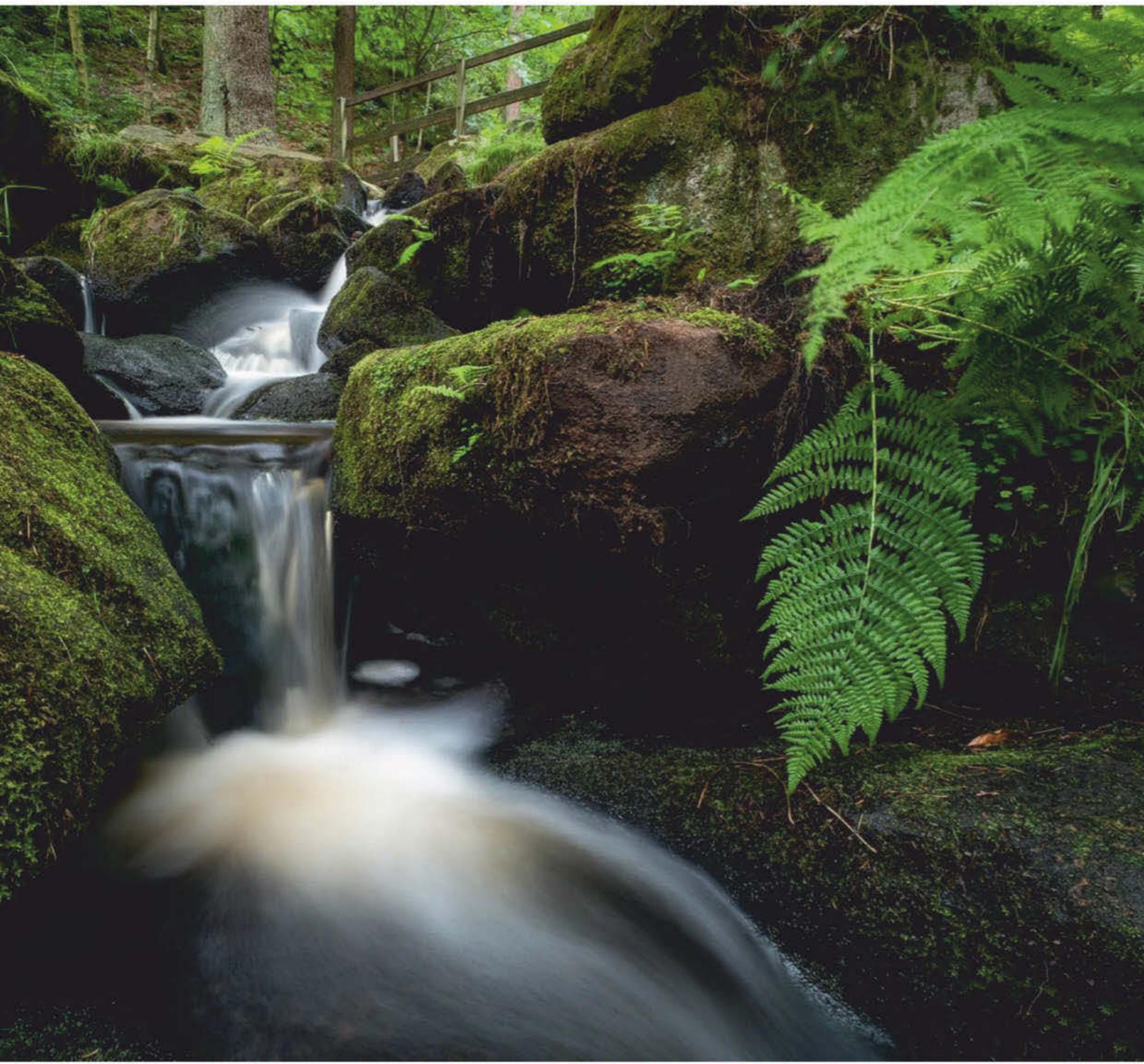
Chris expertly captures his first-ever long exposure of flowing water with no loss of detail in the highlights.

Exposure: Four seconds at f/13 (ISO 160)

1) Chris composes his shot on his X-T3. 2) A switch to the Canon RP after the Fuji's battery ran out. 3) Dialling in settings to lengthen exposure time. 4) The best shots require standing in water – wellies were essential. 5) Exploring the location.

I left him to grab a few more shots before moving onto a different area of the location.

After the first set of waterfalls, Chris's X-T3 battery ran out of power and he'd accidentally left his spare on the charger at home. Luckily, though, he'd also brought his Canon EOS RP with the EF-EOS R Mount Adapter and 24-105mm f/4 lens so he could keep shooting. The downside was that the filter thread of this lens is 77mm, so we'd have to continue shooting without the use of any filters – a challenge if the conditions became brighter, but not a problem if the sky remained cloudy as it was at the time.



CHALLENGE 1 Pro verdict

"Wyming Brook is always a great location to shoot long exposures, with or without filters, because of the deep gorge and tree cover that keeps light levels low. This allowed Chris to achieve reasonably long exposures with nothing more than a polarising filter. Chris's results were fantastic, and he was extremely happy with what he'd achieved; a great start to the day. He'd also taken everything I'd taught him on board and was able to apply the knowledge he'd only just learned, so despite being a complete beginner, he was quickly shooting reasonably independently – well done!"



CHALLENGE 2: COMPOSITION

After such a successful start to the day at Wyming Brook, we needed a bucketful of luck for challenge two to follow suit, but with outdoor photography you never know which way things will go. Chris and I remained optimistic as we jumped into our cars and made the short drive into Hope Valley and the parking place for Mam Tor so we could walk along The Great Ridge.

On arrival, when Chris pulled on his jacket as the temperature had dropped since we were hunkered down in Wyming Brook out of the wind, I'd realised that I'd made the schoolboy error of leaving mine at home! It was a little chilly to say the least; I hoped it would stay dry and the brisk walk to Mam Tor would keep me warm.

The plan was to walk partway along the ridge to the famous but unnamed gate – it provides a focal point in an otherwise vast and tricky location to compose. The gate would act as both foreground interest and could be positioned according to the rule-of-thirds, so it was a great place to introduce Chris to the fundamentals of composition.

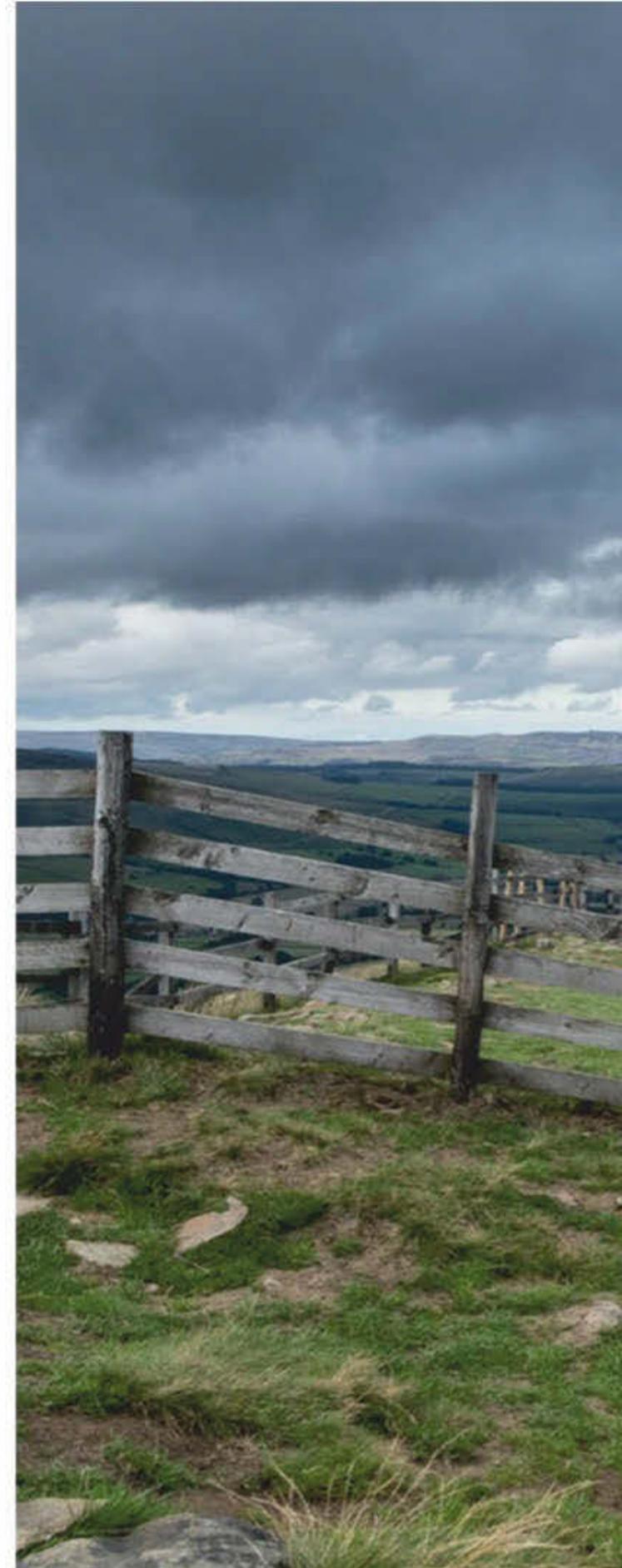
The sky had clouded over with clearly defined grey clouds, and looking at the LiveView image on the Canon EOS RP's LCD screen, the histogram showed us that Chris could shoot without any filters and not lose any detail in the shadows or the highlights, which was a big relief. We'd already discussed the use of the histogram to evaluate exposure in the first challenge, but the emphasis there was on maintaining highlights, whereas here we were aiming to maintain detail at both ends of the spectrum. Chris understood the concept and was able to apply exposure compensation as and when necessary.

When explaining the rule-of-thirds to Chris, we discussed the four power points and how it's usually best to place the horizon along the top or bottom imaginary third line, depending on the desired emphasis on the sky or foreground. Occasionally, breaking the rules and splitting the scene with the horizon across



the centre of the frame can work. So with this in mind, I asked Chris to shoot three images: one with the gate placed on a left power point; one with the gate centrally composed; and one with it positioned over a right power point. It was the first shot that looked the best in my opinion because it showed more of the valley and the cement factory in the background. Most importantly, though, Chris was quickly able to understand how to make shots balance compositionally and how even small movements of the camera can make a huge difference to the composition.

The final compositional device I introduced Chris to was lead-in lines. Chris began by attempting to use a track leading towards the gate, but it unfortunately didn't work. Instead I suggested that we stop at Mam Tor on the way back to the cars and shoot Edale Road and its perfect 'S' bend as it's an incredible lead-in line. We arrived at the shooting spot and Chris wasn't keen on standing on the edge of the hill to get the shot, so he laid down on the ground and was able to take a great image of the road that led the eye through the scene perfectly. ►



1) Testing a gully as a lead-in line to the gate. 2) Composing with the gate on the left power point. 3) Composing with the gate on the right power point. 4) A lead-in line experiment that didn't work. 5) Edale Road taken from too far back. 6) A clean composition of Edale Road and the perfect lead-in line.



BREAKING THE RULES

Sometimes, composing with the focal point centrally of the frame provides the most engaging photographs.

Exposure: 1/20sec at f/16 (ISO 100)

**CHALLENGE 2 Pro verdict**

"This challenge was another great success. Chris is a quick-study – it didn't take him long to understand how to apply compositional devices to certain scenes. We were very lucky with the overcast conditions, too, there was great tonality in the sky and we didn't need to worry about our lack of filtration. I think Chris's most interesting image is the one of the Edale Road that relies on a lead-in line as the main compositional device, but still loosely conforms to the rule-of-thirds. Overall, Chris did a fantastic job."



1

CHALLENGE 3: CALMING CHAOS

With the wind on The Great Ridge still ringing in our ears, we made our way to the final location of the day. We met up in a parking spot along the road that separates Curbar and Baslow Edges. After the steep walk up Mam Tor and a long walk along The Great Ridge, Chris was jokingly unimpressed with the walk up our next hill and wondered why I hadn't parked at the car park at the top; I assured him that despite seeming like an illogical choice, it was actually the most convenient and we walked along looking for potential compositions.

Out of the two edges, Curbar Edge is the easier of the two to photograph because it's less cluttered, the edge features lead-in lines, as well as there being several millstones dotted around to use as excellent foreground interest. This would have been the easy option, but having only just worked with composition I wanted to help Chris learn how to calm chaotic scenes using his viewpoint, compositional devices and in some cases depth-of-field.

To get started I asked Chris to frame up a shot he thought would work using the skills he'd learned so far. From a technical point of view, the image he took was spot-on. The problem was it was an extremely messy



CHALLENGE 3 Pro verdict

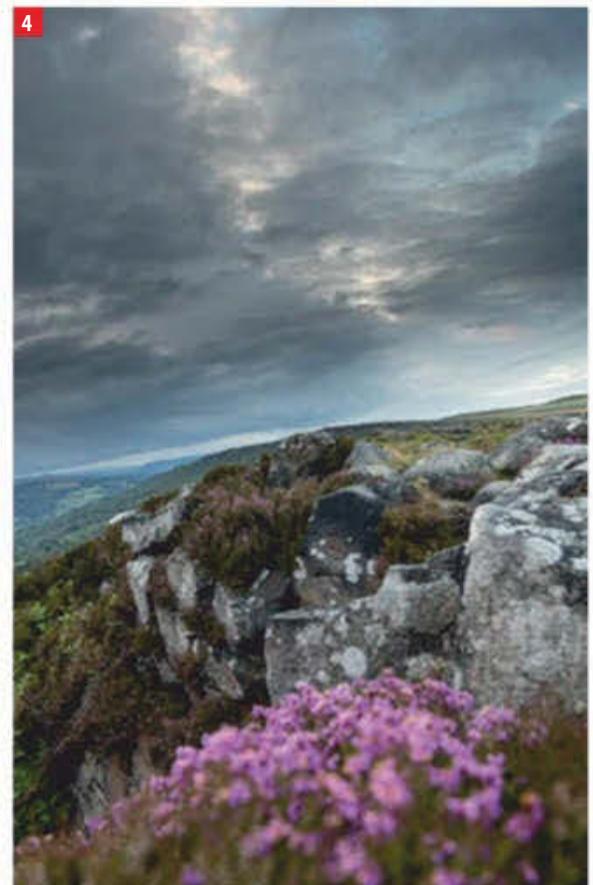
"This was an extremely tough challenge for a landscape beginner, but it provided an important lesson and experience for dealing with chaotic scenes. We were extremely lucky to find a small bunch of heather in flower because this provided a much-needed burst of colour in a scene that was otherwise almost monotone. Chris already had an understanding of depth-of-field, so when I suggested using differential focus to let the background fall off he was familiar with what I was asking. His best shot here is the one where the heather is sharp and the background falls out of focus."



LESS IS MORE

A shallow depth-of-field has effectively calmed the chaotic scene to accentuate the bright colour of the heather.

Exposure: 1/50sec at f/4 (ISO 100)



composition purely because of the clutter in the scene. As we were shooting in early July, the heather season was a long way off being at its best but I had spotted a small cluster of flowering heather on the edge so I suggested that Chris should use it as foreground interest and shoot an upright image with Curbar Edge meandering away into the distance.

Chris took his first shot using the skills he'd learned earlier; he was shooting in aperture-priority at f/13 with ISO 100, and used the histogram to assess exposure and dialled in exposure compensation when he felt it needed it. To ensure a large depth-of-field, he focused a third of the distance into the scene like before and beyond the heather to ensure that this was acceptably sharp. The resulting image looked good, but I suggested that he take a couple more shots at f/4 – one focused on the heather and one focused on the background.

The idea here was that Chris would

1) Chris carefully frames his shallow depth-of-field shot of the flowering heather. 2) Chris takes his first shot but struggles for composition in the chaotic location. 3) Sacrificing shadows to maintain the highlights. 4) Focusing on the background at f/4. 5) Large depth-of-field for sharpness throughout.

shoot two very different images using the same composition: one would have sharp heather and a blurred background, while the other would have blurred heather and a sharp middle-ground and background. The technique worked well, and it was the shot of the sharp heather and blurred background that worked the best. Since the sunset didn't yield much, if any, colour, the shots saved our bacon at a tricky location in less than ideal lighting conditions.

It was now 9.30pm and time to part company again for the drive home. At this stage, neither of us were sure if these last images had worked because of the dull light and blue hour beginning to set in, but Chris's images certainly did the final challenge justice – great work. ●

4

5

WORKSHOP SUMMARY: *Chris Leigh*



"We started off at some wonderful waterfalls, which allowed James to illustrate something sadly lacking in my skill set – the use of filters. I had bought some the day before based on James' recommendation and I was immediately glad I had. We were then off for a shoot at the top of a ridge to look at the rule-of-thirds and the correct way to frame a landscape. After a fantastic walk up the hill, we were greeted by superb views down into a couple of valleys. Finally, we headed to another fantastic peak for sunset, this time looking into the sun and a fantastic ridge line. James talked me through what was needed to find calm in chaos, and depth-of-field was the key. In short, a fantastic day; I loved not only the area but also the brilliant skills that James passed on."



HotShot / Adam Burton

“My first plane journey captivated me, especially soon after take-off when I peered down onto the beautiful English countryside for the very first time”

ADAM BURTON IS ONE OF THE UK'S BEST LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHERS AND OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS HAS BEEN EXPLORING THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE FROM A FRESH PERSPECTIVE: THE AIR! HE REVEALS TO DANIEL LEZANO WHAT INSPIRED HIM TO TAKE UP DRONE PHOTOGRAPHY, THE CHALLENGES HE FACED AND THE TECHNIQUES HE USES TO CAPTURE STUNNING AERIAL IMAGES ►



“ HAVE ALWAYS BEEN fascinated with aerial views. On summer holidays as a child, I would imagine what the landscape looked like as a bird peering down on the sea, lakes and rivers and how they might look like pools and streams. Years later I was further captivated by my first plane journey when I realised just how vast and beautiful the English countryside was just after take-off.

“As a landscape photographer, I have always adored these expansive, elevated countryside views but, when restricted to shooting from a hill or mountain top, options are somewhat limited. When the first drones appeared on the market they were almost irresistible, but I held off for a number of reasons. Back then drones were bulky things with poor battery life, dodgy cameras and a worrying reputation for going AWOL when in the sky. Furthermore, as they grew in popularity they increasingly seemed to be treated with suspicion and negativity by the public. I got as far as putting a drone in my online shopping basket on several occasions, before deciding against it.

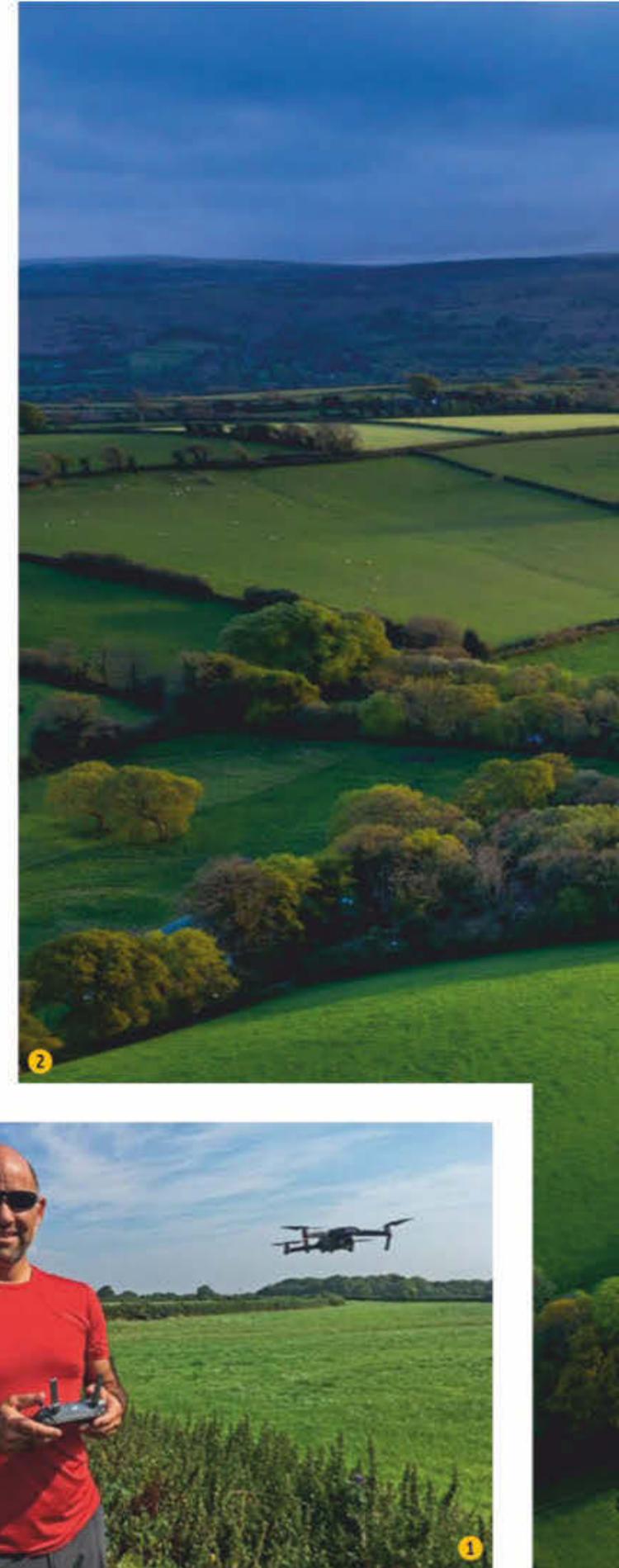
“It wasn’t until 2019 that I succumbed. I was running a photography workshop on the North Devon coast and one of the participants had brought along his drone. I had encountered drones many times by this point but never up close, so was intrigued to see how it worked. The drone had barely taken off before I (and every other participant on the course) decided to purchase one. The next day four DJI Mavic 2 Pro quadcopters were being despatched!

THE PHOTOGRAPHER...



Adam is one of the UK’s leading landscape photographers. A professional photographer, teacher and author with over 15 years experience working within the landscape photography industry, Adam has photographed many of the world’s beautiful natural areas and specialises in UK landscapes, particularly southwest England. Adam is a qualified and fully-insured drone pilot, holding a PfCO issued by the UK CAA. With an expanding portfolio of aerial images, Adam’s drone photography is now a growing part of his business. Adam now offers one-to-one tuition days on drone photography. www.adamburtonphotography.com

“The DJI Mavic 2 Pro is a fabulous device, in every way the perfect drone for a landscape photographer. As with the entire Mavic series of drones it’s incredibly compact, with folding arms and props, so you can fit it inside your regular camera backpack. This was a key consideration for me; I didn’t want to have to choose between taking either the drone or DSLR out with me, so the portability of the Mavic was essential. Within the Mavic range, the 2 Pro is the largest, but at just over 900g is only as burdensome as carrying an extra 24–70mm f/2.8 lens in



“The DJI Mavic 2 Pro is a fabulous device, in every way the perfect drone for a landscape photographer”



your kit bag. What really sets the Mavic 2 Pro apart from the competition is its 1in 20-megapixel sensor, made by Hasselblad. It’s not quite up to the standard of my Nikon D850, but the DSLR doesn’t have the same head for heights!

“Despite its huge potential for photographs, a drone shouldn’t be purchased without due consideration. They may be small but they’re still aircraft and, as such, are subject to the same air laws as an aeroplane or helicopter. As a remote pilot, you need to understand your aircraft, where you can fly and that you have the skills to fly responsibly at all times. With this being said, despite qualifications not being a requirement at the time, I decided to sign up for the Permission for Commercial Operations (PfCO) course run by Icarus training (now known as UAVHub). The online course, taught by an ex-RAF pilot instructor, gives you a sound understanding of everything to do with flying a drone: guiding you through modules on the principles of flight, air safety, meteorology and air law. At the end of the course, in order to achieve my PfCO, I had to pass a theory



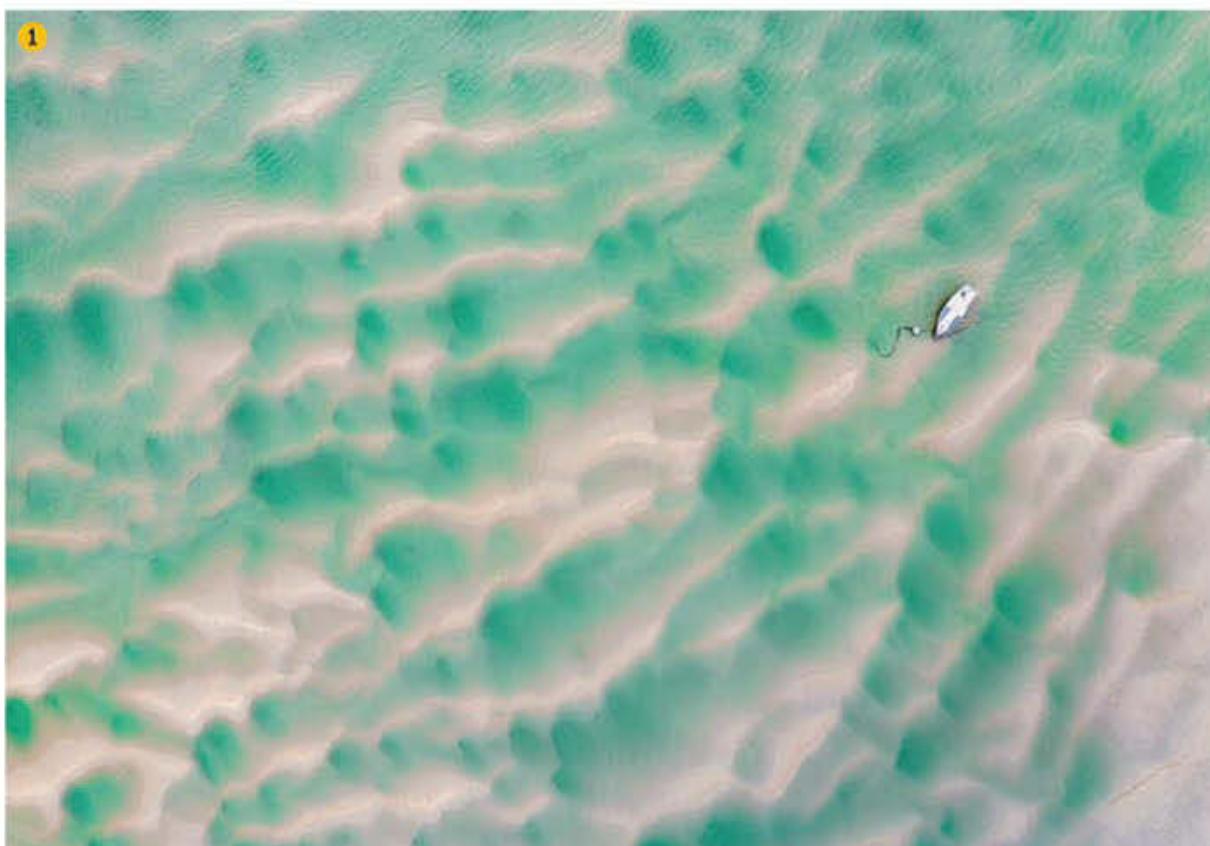
Opening image) Early morning sunlight, Start Point in South Devon. 1) Adam with his DJI Mavic 2 Pro. 2) Beautiful evening light over farmland in Devon. 3) Dawn mist on a summer morning. 4) Carreg Cennen Castle in Carmarthenshire, Wales.

test, a practical flight test and write a comprehensive 50-page operations manual.

"By the time I passed my course, the PfCO had become a requirement for anybody wishing to make money using their drone. However, by the end of 2020, the UK will adopt the new EASA drone rules, which effectively means any remote pilot can make money from their drone, providing that they are following the regulations. All drones flown in the UK will need to be registered and the pilot is required to pass an online test, showing that they understand and can comply with the Drone Code."

"Once I passed my test, I could finally begin to get to grips with the photographic side of things. Thankfully, flying the drone is a relatively simple affair; unless you give it a command to move the drone will simply hover in position allowing you time to set up your shot. Although the same compositional rules apply in the air as they do on the





“As with all landscape photography, in order to capture the best photographs, planning and prior knowledge is essential”

ground, setting up shots can be bewildering at first. Where before you would move your tripod a little to the left, or a little backwards, now you can potentially cover 500m in any direction within a matter of seconds. Where you could previously decide to raise your tripod a few cms, now you can go up by 120m! As a result, compositional opportunities present themselves everywhere, and with a limited battery life of 20–30 minutes you need to be very decisive.

“As with all landscape photography, in order to capture the best photographs planning and prior knowledge is essential. However, where you may typically research the weather and sunrise/sunset time before venturing outside, with a drone there is a whole lot more planning required. First and foremost, can you fly at your desired location? Is there an airfield nearby? Are there any bylaws preventing you from flying there? Have you checked for any nearby NOTAM’s (Notice to Airman) to see if there is a temporary reason why flying could be dangerous? It is essential that you check all these things to ensure that your flight will be safe. At the same time, you need to understand and mitigate for any risks present

in the area. Pylons, telegraph wires, busy roads, wildlife etc. The list is long. Finally, and this is every bit as important; will your drone potentially be causing a nuisance to any people, houses or livestock nearby?

“Although the prospect of such in-depth planning does take away some of the enjoyment, it is vital that all of these factors are taken into consideration to ensure you are flying safely and responsibly. Although my drone needs to be at least 50m away from any rural house or person, I always thoroughly research my locations and only fly if I am much farther away than this to ensure that, to the best of my knowledge, I am not causing any disturbance to anybody. Flying early morning or late in the evening can help with avoiding people, while giving you the best chances to capture atmospheric images.

“At these times dynamic range is always a problem and although you can purchase graduated filters, they aren’t really practical. Fortunately, the DJI software allows you to bracket up to five Raw images, which you can later blend together using software such as Lightroom to extend dynamic range.

“As I got to grips with flying the drone, I needed an area to practise. I’ve always been



- 1) Low tide on the Camel Estuary near Rock, Cornwall.
2) Top down vista of the rugged north Cornwall coastline.
3) Tree pattern in the Camel Estuary salt marshes, Cornwall.
4) Early mist shrouds Restormel Castle on an autumn morning. 5) Topdown view of a tree in a rapeseed field, Devon.

a fan of wide rolling countryside vistas, and as I live in an area surrounded by farmland, staying close to home seemed ideal for building my confidence. From those first few flights I soon learned that the landscape really needs some light to bring pictures to life, even more so than ground-level photography. Now I always aim to head out on sunny days, ideally with low or no wind. Although the Mavic 2 Pro is remarkably stable, winds over 20mph are not recommended and you really don't want to be taking chances with such an expensive piece of equipment.

"The Mavic 2 Pro has an aperture range of f/2.8 to f/11. Although f/11 sounds very tempting, the camera suffers badly from diffraction and so apertures smaller than f/5.6 are not recommended. When you are high up, however, there is never any issue

with depth-of-field anyhow. I always shoot at f/4 in aperture-priority mode, letting the camera determine the shutter speed required. Shutter speeds as slow as half a second are usually fine, but any lower and the image tends to suffer from motion blur.

"As my experience and skills developed, I began to plan for locations further afield that I knew would be particularly suited to aerial vistas. I paid particular attention to landmarks, especially those that are difficult to capture from the ground, or that could be showcased in a new light from above.

"Castles, churches and towers all look fabulous when photographed from the sky. You should never fly above these structures, but when photographed from a far distance as part of a wider landscape they can make compelling photographs. It has taken a whole year for me to feel confident enough to fly the drone over the sea and, although my heart is still in my mouth at times, the resulting images can be fabulous.

"Some of the most striking drone images can be achieved from angling the lens

parallel to the ground. What you can capture with a bird's eye view can be striking and incredibly appealing. Beaches, cliffs, trees and hedgerows always look good from directly above, but if flying over buildings your drone should never be used to invade another's privacy, and stay aware of the Drone Code's 50m distance rule (150m in congested areas). Also, don't feel that you have to zoom the drone up to 120m for every shot; sometimes you need just enough elevation to see above a hedge or tree to achieve a composition that you otherwise could not. As with regular landscape photography, your choice of composition is completely dependent on the subject matter and how best to showcase that subject.

"For me, the drone is now as essential to my photography as my DSLR, and accompanies me on most trips. After many years working as a professional landscape photographer, the drone has given me huge enthusiasm and new opportunities for my photography. In some ways I feel like that little boy on a beach again." ☺

PENWITH PENINSULA

With Ross Hoddinott

IN THE FAR WEST OF THE DUCHY, YOU WILL DISCOVER THE PENWITH PENINSULA – HOME TO SOME OF CORNWALL'S MOST SPECTACULAR AND PHOTOGNIC SCENERY. FLANKED ON THREE SIDES BY THE POUNDING ATLANTIC OCEAN, THIS REGION IS CHARACTERISED BY ITS DRAMATIC GRANITE SEA CLIFFS, GOLDEN SANDS, HISTORIC MINING SETTLEMENTS AND SMUGGLERS' COVES. QUITE SIMPLY, THIS IS A LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHER'S HAVEN. LOCAL LANDSCAPE PRO ROSS HODDINOTT GIVES US AN EXPERT GUIDED TOUR OF THE REGION'S MUST-VISIT VIEWPOINTS

WEST CORNWALL
ENGLAND





Gwithian to St Just

From the A30 westbound – or the B3301 coastal road from Portreath – head toward Gwithian. From Gwithian Towans beach, there are good, distant views of one of the region's most photogenic landmarks – Godrevy lighthouse, which stands proudly on a small island in St Ives Bay. From the car park, either go directly to the beach and shoot across the golden sand or explore the clifftops and dunes. From here, you can use swaying marram grass as foreground – there is also a couple of giant sea stacks that make imposing foreground subjects, particularly combined with a high tide and choppy water motion. For closer views of the lighthouse, drive to the National Trust car park at Godrevy – there is plenty of parking here and a nice café too. At high tide, shoot from the safety of the clifftops, which are topped with sea pinks during May. But on a lowering tide, head down to the rocky beach below where you can find some fantastic viewpoints. Try using solid ND filters and longer exposures to generate interesting water movement, as waves drag back over the rocks, but be mindful of big waves and sea spray. Evening light can produce drama and colour. There is a large colony of grey seals at Godrevy, and you'll often see them bobbing in the water close by.

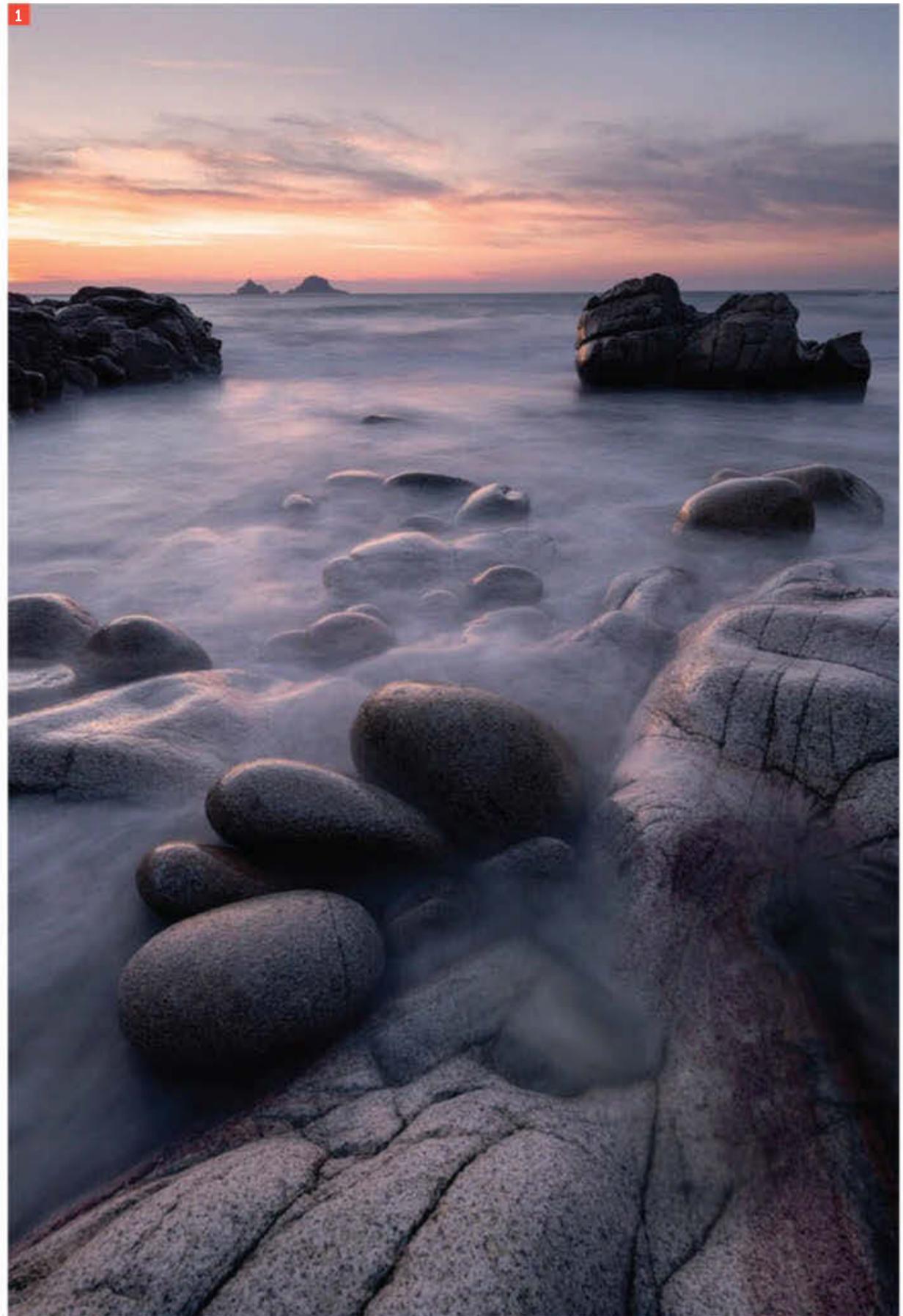
Travelling along the B3301 in a southerly direction, through the town of Hayle – but stopping at Philps for a warm pasty – follow signs for St Ives. This hugely popular seaside resort is renowned for its wonderful, clear light and for centuries has been a hotbed for artists. There is plenty for photographers to enjoy too. There are four beaches at St Ives – Portmeor, Porthgidden, Harbour beach and Porthminster. I'd advise you to shoot early or late in the day when sand will remain virgin, and the light should also be at its best. There are a handful of good, elevated viewpoints overlooking the harbour and town, which work particularly well at twilight when cool natural light is mixed with the warm, twinkling street and house lights illuminating the town. However, St Ives is a busy, bustling town throughout the seasons

1) Porth Nanven is a truly unique little cove. 2) Godrevy is a great spot to shoot in dramatic light or during a storm.

BIOGRAPHY



Ross Hoddinott first discovered photography aged ten and he hasn't been far from a camera since. Now in his early 40s, Ross has been working professionally for 25 years and taken photos for a wide variety of prestigious clients, including BOSE, Kew Gardens, Petronas and the National Trust. He is the author of several photography books, including the best-selling *Landscape Photography Workshop*. He is a multi-award winner, an Ambassador for Manfrotto and a LEE Filters Master. Ross lives in north Cornwall with his wife Felicity and three children. www.rosshoddinott.co.uk



– call me antisocial, but I prefer quieter locations where I can shoot undisturbed.

Follow the B3306 toward the village of St Just. Enjoy the scenes along this very scenic route, with wonderful views of both Penwith's coast and also its rugged moorland, which in summer is ablaze with flowering heather. Stop at Zennor and explore its beautiful church and old stone buildings. If you explore inland, you will discover a number of prehistoric sites, including Chysauster Ancient Village and Men-an-Tol. Photographically, Lanyon Quoit is the most appealing. This Neolithic burial chamber is located on the Madron to Morvah road. The large granite slabs are best shot when bathed in warm, low sunlight – or at night with a backdrop of star trails or the Milky Way – use the Photo Pills app to help plan the timing of your night shoot.

Continue along the B3306 until you reach Pendeen – approx. three miles north-

northeast of St Just. This coastline is strewn with mining remnants of ruined engine houses that add focal points and context to the coastal scenery. Geevor is worth exploring, but Levant Engine House is probably more photogenic. There is a National Trust car park close by, so you don't have to walk far to achieve good views of Levant, set against its stunning coastal backdrop. You can also include Pendeen lighthouse as a point of interest in the distant view. Late evening light suits this location well and in late spring the clifftops are ablaze with wild flowers.

Just a short distance further south is the hamlet of Botallack. Follow a rough track to a large National Trust car park adjacent the Old Count House, which is now a visitor centre and café. You will see engine houses and chimneys stretching along the coast in both directions. Join the coastal path and explore. Evening light typically works best

DID YOU KNOW?

The little hamlet of Porthcurno was once the communications centre of the world, being the terminal for the 19th Century submarine telegraph cables connecting Britain to her empire. Huge cables were landed on the beach from as far away as India. Find out more by visiting the Telegraph Museum.





here. If you are a fan of BBC's *Poldark*, you will recognise Botallack – it features heavily in the series. This is home to The Crowns Engine Houses, which are dramatically perched at the foot of the cliffs, just above the churning sea below. It's one of Cornwall's most recognisable and most photographed locations and therefore it can be tricky to capture an original composition. However, visit here at a high tide, in great light, or when the conditions are stormy, and you will return with wonderful images. If your mobility allows, clamber down the slope opposite the mines to achieve a flattering, parallel viewpoint. A short telephoto in the region of 50–70mm often works well, but take the time to try different focal lengths. If there are big, crashing waves, set a fast shutter to capture the drama but if there are frothy water trails on the water surface, consider using a long exposure instead. Ideally, carry a range of ND filters including three-, six- and ten-stop versions.

Continue to the village of St Just, which provides access to two superb locations – Cape Cornwall and Porth Nanven. The headland of Cape Cornwall is clearly signed

and there is good parking above the beach. Walk down to Priest's Cove, where you will find boats hauled up on the cobbled slipway. This is a great spot for shooting intimate landscape – close-ups of detail, colour and geology. At low tide, the rocky beach can feel a bit overwhelming – it is easier to find compositions once it is partly submerged and using the water's motion dragging over rocks to create depth and interest. There is a sea pool here too, which can work well in wider views. However, if you have limited time in the area, nearby Porth Nanven is a stronger location. To get there, drive back into St Just and then follow signs for the Cot Valley. The lane down to the beach is narrow and winding and there is only room for a handful of cars to park at the end of the road. This is rarely a busy place, though, yet it is one of the peninsula's photogenic highlights. The beach is covered with large oval boulders that locals refer to as dinosaur eggs. They create amazing foreground interest, particularly when captured using a low and wide perspective. At low tide, a small area of sand is often revealed and out to sea are a couple of small islands called

DID YOU KNOW?

West Cornwall is home to the World-famous Minack Theatre, a stunning open-air amphitheatre, carved into the granite cliffs overlooking Porthcurno Bay. An extraordinary place, well worth exploring and photographing.



- 1) The lighthouse at Godrevy makes an ideal focal point.
- 2) The Crowns engine houses at Botallack is an iconic view.
- 3) Levant is less photographed, but well worth the visit.

The Brisons, which create a handy focal point. A tide height in the region of two to three metres is often desirable and, yet again, this is a location best shot in evening light or with a setting sun. The rocks here are so shapely and textural that it is worth considering shooting them in close-up or in black & white to place emphasis on their shape and form. The boulders are not the easiest to walk over, though, so don't attempt to get to the shoreline unless you feel safe and confident clambering over them. And never walk over rocky, potentially slippery rocks with your camera around your neck – always keep it safely protected in your backpack until you are ready to begin taking photos. ►



WEST CORNWALL'S BEST SUNSET LOCATIONS



PORTH NANVEN: This hidden gem of a beach is tucked away and easy to miss, but there is parking for several cars close by. The large, oval rocks that smother the beach are photogenic, but not easy to walk over so take time and care getting to your viewpoint. A lowish tide reveals fantastic foreground opportunities and at sunset, skies can be large, colourful and impressive.



LAND'S END: Don't be put off by the shops and commercialism when you arrive at Land's End. Leave the complex behind and follow the coast path south towards Poldennack Point. The clifftops boast far-reaching views of this rugged, dramatic coastline and are a great spot to photograph the sun setting over Enys Dodman rock arch, the Armed Knight and Longships lighthouse.



GODREVY: Godrevy is home to an interesting rocky beach, big crashing waves and a lighthouse perched on an island out to sea – what more could you want for a Cornish sunset? This is a great spot for an evening shoot and, throughout the year, the sun sets in a position that will either provide great golden light, colour or – if you are lucky – opportunities to capture both.



Sennen to Marazion

Next stop is Sennen Cove, home to a large sandy beach and photogenic harbour wall. The breakwater is a great long exposure subject at high tide and Sennen is well known for attracting some of the biggest waves during storms that can crash high up on the cliffs – there are certainly worse places to visit during a storm. Sennen doesn't really benefit from the best morning or evening light, though, and more dramatic shots can be had by driving a few more miles and stopping at Land's End.

Although you have to pay to park at Land's End, a few quid is a small price to pay to enjoy some of best coastline you will ever see. Leave the complexes and commercialism behind and follow the coastal path south. After a 20-minute walk, you will reach the iconic Land's End view of Longships lighthouse, The Armed Knight and Enys Dodnan rock arch. Yes, it's been shot many times before, but this is an irresistible viewpoint, especially when the cliffs are bathed in warm, golden light and huge waves crash far below you. So many photographers stop here and don't explore any further, but continue walking another few minutes and you will be greeted with stunning views looking in a south-easterly direction from Poldennack Point. You should definitely take a look while you are here.

Just a short drive from Land's End, following the B3315 toward Penzance, you will see signs to Porthgwarra. The road to this cove is narrow and winding, but the little beach is picturesque and the surrounding coastline is well worth exploring. Slightly



1) Poldennack Point is a wonderful stretch of coastline. 2) Visit Porthcurno and capture waves dragging over the sand. 3) Land's End is a great spot to shoot an incoming storm. 4) At certain times, you'll see the sun setting through the rock arch.

further on is Porthcurno. With its white sand and turquoise waters, this is an unbelievably beautiful beach and cut out of the cliffs above is the renowned Minack Theatre. This beach can work well as a sunrise location, but there are not many foreground options here, so it can be worth wearing wellies and using the backwash of the sea to create depth and interest. Push the feet of your tripod firmly into the sand for good stability.

A few minutes drive away is the hamlet of Treen. There is a pay and display car park at the end of the road. Park here and then follow signs to the campsite and coast path. From the clifftops, you achieve unrivalled views of Pedn Vounder beach, with its stunning tidal sands and shallow lagoons, and also Logan's Rock. Although you can scramble down to the beach itself, arguably it is best shot from an elevated cliff-top viewpoint. Again, this can be a good viewpoint for a dawn shoot, as you look directly toward sunrise for much of the year



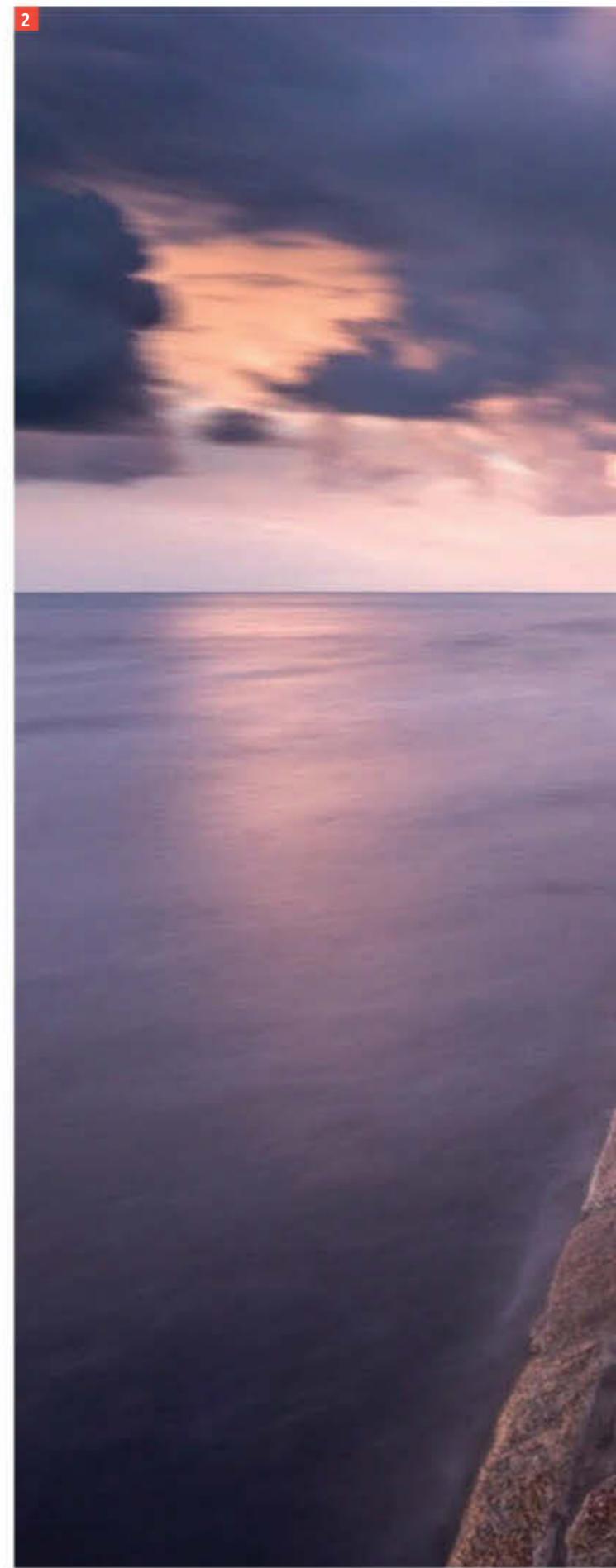
ROSS'S WORKSHOPS

Few photographers know Cornwall better than Ross, so why not book a day of one-to-one tuition/guidance. Ross is an experienced and popular tutor, and one-to-one days allow you to tap into Ross's knowledge of the area and photographic expertise. For more information, visit his website: www.rosshoddinott.co.uk/photography-workshops. Ross also co-owns Dawn 2 Dusk Photography, which specialise in running landscape photography workshops in the UK. North Cornwall is among the locations they visit. For more information, visit: www.dawn2duskphotography.co.uk

– to balance the light in this type of high-contrast scene, either attach a graduated ND filter, or be prepared to blend exposures. You will want a headtorch to help you safely negotiate the coast path and reach your viewpoint in semi-darkness.

Re-join the B3315 toward Penzance. You will pass signs to Penberth Cove, Lamorna and other inlets and bays. If you are staying in the area and have time, do explore these ➤





hidden gems – there is plenty of picture potential. But if time is limited, prioritise a visit to Mousehole (pronounced ‘Mowzle’), as this is one of Cornwall’s most photogenic fishing villages. Just a short drive from Newlyn, close to Penzance, Mousehole is full of character and charm. It is probably best shot at high tide, when you can capture the colourful fishing boats bobbing about in the harbour and reflected in the water. During December, the harbour is decorated with Christmas lights and these festive illuminations are well worth photographing on a crisp winter’s evening.

Penzance itself – Penwith’s largest town – is home to distant views of St Michael’s Mount and the photogenic Jubilee Pool – an art deco sea water lido. The town is the perfect place to base yourself during your visit to the Penwith Peninsula and is home to no shortage of good guesthouses and hotels. Penzance has a train station and the is just a short drive from Marazion, home to one of Cornwall’s most photogenic landmarks – St Michael’s Mount.

Our final location on our tour of Penwith is also arguably its most photogenic. Mounts

Bay is one of West Cornwall’s crown jewels, boasting mile upon mile of golden sands and magnificent views toward the Lizard. The bay is dominated by St Michael’s Mount – a tidal island, linked to the mainland at low tide by an old cobbled causeway. The island is well worth exploring and is home to a handful of shops, a harbour, beautiful gardens and a majestic castle. But it is best photographed from Marazion beach, where photographers can use include the causeway, the rocky foreshore and tidal pools in wide-angle compositions. A low tide of two to three metres is often best, but whatever the tide height, you will find shots. For example, at high water, try using the concrete slipway as a lead-in line. Potentially, St Michael’s Mount can photograph well at any time of the day – in the morning, the sun rises to the left of you (if looking toward the island from the beach) bathing the mount in early morning light, while in the evening, compositions can benefit from sunset colour. Personally, I favour the morning, as the beach is quieter and there are less footprints to avoid. The tide rises quickly, so wear wellies to keep

1) Pedn Vounder offers stunning views. 2) The cobbled causeway leading to St Michael’s Mount makes a perfect lead-in line. 3) St Michael’s Mount, bathed in golden sunlight.

your feet dry while shooting the causeway – the colourful cobbles can look beautiful when partly submerged by rising water. Marazion marshes, on the Penzance side of the village, is a large reed bed that is great for birdlife and visiting wildlife photographers. Nearby Perranuthnoe beach is also worth visiting with your camera.

And so we come to the end of our tour of the stunning Penwith Peninsula. This is an area you will want to return to again and again – each visit will yield more great photo opportunities. And once you are ready for a new photo adventure, the nearby Lizard Peninsula is another stunning area of Cornwall to explore with your camera. ●

**DID YOU KNOW?**

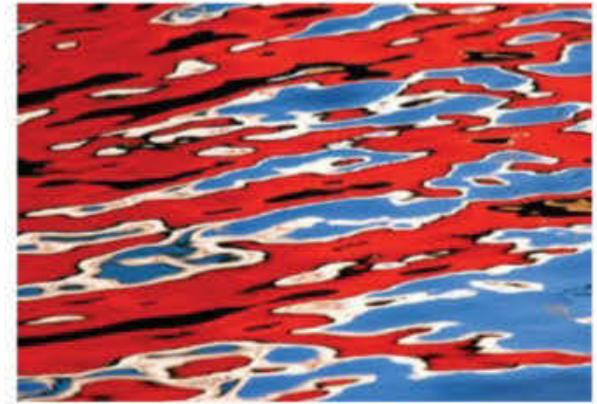
St Ives is renowned for its unique, clear light, which has attracted artists for centuries. It is home to a disproportionately large number of art galleries, including Tate St Ives and the Barbara Hepworth Museum.

INTIMATE LANDSCAPES

SAND PATTERNS: There is more to west Cornwall than simply its magnificent coastal views. Use a telezoom or macro lens to isolate interesting detail, like intricate sand patterns. Look for interesting shapes and detail and capture a range of abstract-looking results.



ABSTRACT ROCKS: At both Cape Cornwall and the Cot Valley, you will find beautiful geology. The large oval boulders not only look great in wider views but in close-up, you can produce very striking, abstract-looking shots highlighting shape, form and repetition.



HARBOUR DETAILS: Fishing villages and harbours, like St Ives, Sennen and Mousehole, are colourful and interesting places. Look to photograph striking reflections, peeling paint on the boughs of old boats and patterns created by fishing rope and lobster pots.

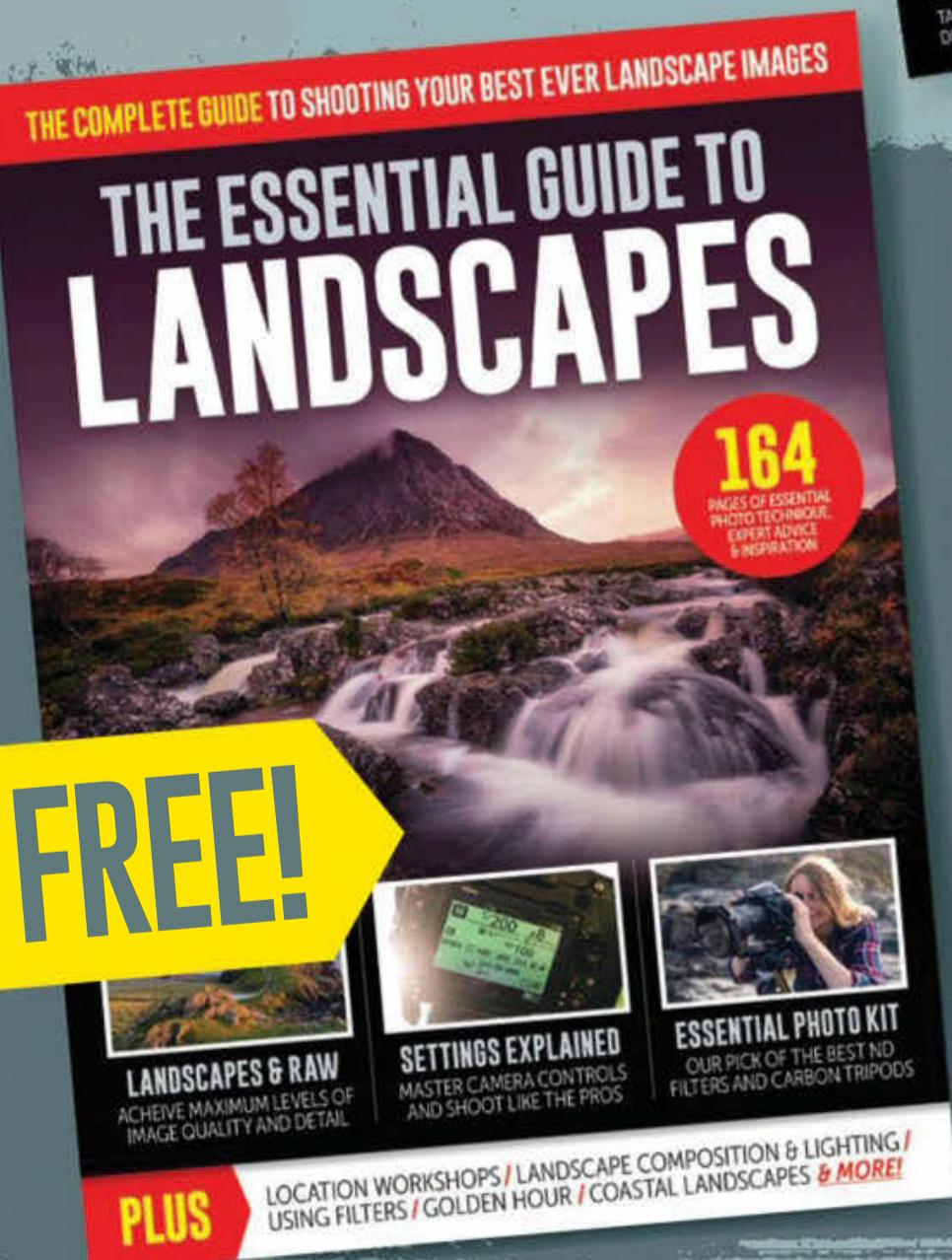
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Gear

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NIKON D6

NIKON'S LATEST FLAGSHIP DIGITAL SLR IS AIMED AT PROFESSIONAL SPORTS AND PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS. WE FIND OUT IF IT HAS ENOUGH TO COMPETE IN SUCH A FIERCE SECTOR



Plus

SOFTWARE TEST: We take a look around Skylum's Luminar 4 editing package *Page 102*

MINI TESTS: The Manfrotto MII tripod and Lastolite's Skylite Rapid *Page 105*

NIKON D6

It's Nikon's most advanced flagship DSLR to date but is it what professional photographers want in 2020? Angela Nicholson puts it through its paces

Test: ANGELA NICHOLSON

SPECIFICATIONS

Price:	£6,299 (body only)
Image sensor:	Full-frame CMOS (35.9x23.7mm)
Lens mount:	Nikon F-mount
Resolution:	20.8-megapixels
Maximum image resolution:	5568x3712 pixels
AF system:	Viewfinder: 105-point (all cross-type) phase detection, LiveView: contrast-detection at all points in frame with face detection and subject-tracking
Metering:	Viewfinder: TTL using RGB sensor with 180,000 pixels; LiveView: TTL via image sensor. Matrix, centre-weighted, spot and Highlight-weighted metering with type G, E, and D lenses
ISO range:	Auto + ISO 100-102400 expandable to ISO 50-3280000
Shutter speeds:	30-1/8000sec, Bulb
Continuous frame rate:	Up to 14 frames-per-second (fps)
LCD:	3.2-inch 2,358,000-dot touch screen
Finder:	Pentaprism type optical with 100% view
Storage:	Dual CFexpress (Type B) / XQD cards
Size:	160x163x92mm
Weight:	1,450g (inc battery and two CFexpress cards)
Website:	www.nikon.co.uk

NEW FLAGSHIP DSLRS tend to come around roughly every four years, just in time for the summer Olympic Games. The Covid-19 pandemic may have messed with the timings a bit but the D6 is now here to replace the D5 as Nikon's top-flight digital SLR.

As you'd expect the D6 has the same-bulletproof build as the D5. It's a big, heavy weather-sealed camera with a dual-grip arrangement to make shooting portrait format images as comfortable as landscape format. There's also a new Kensington lock connection to help keep it safe.

Nikon has stuck with the same control arrangement on the D6 as the D5, which means that anyone upgrading or planning to use the two cameras alongside each other will get along just fine. Also like the D5, the D6 has a 3.2in 2,359,000-dot touchscreen, which provides an excellent view of your images, the details seem to leap out so you feel you don't need to zoom in to check the focus. However, as it's a fixed screen, it's not very helpful when you're shooting in LiveView or recording video from above or below head-height. The optical viewfinder is also excellent, being large and bright to give a great view of the scene.

An effective pixel count of 20-million is widely regarded as ideal for professional news and sports photographers, so Nikon has stuck with the same 20.8-megapixel full-frame sensor as is in the D5. However,



Above & below: The new flagship Nikon D6 has the same robust build and control arrangement as the D5 but with several new performance-enhancing features.

instead of the D5's Expeed 5 processing engine, the D6 has the new Expeed 6 processor and this is responsible for some of the performance enhancements of the new camera. Most significantly, the D6 can shoot at up to 14fps with continuous autofocus (AF) and metering, the D5 can only match that figure when the mirror is locked up and the exposure is set at the start of the shooting sequence. If you want to use continuous AF with the D5 you have to drop down to 12fps. That might not sound much but when you're shooting split-second moments in sport, the extra 2fps can be significant. However, it's worth pointing out at this stage that the Canon EOS-1D X Mark III can shoot at up to 16fps with continuous AF when the viewfinder is in use or 20fps in LiveView.

If you're shooting NEF (Raw) Uncompressed 14-bit files with the D6, you can expect to get 105 images in one blast, switch to shooting NEF (Raw) Lossless compressed 12-bit files and the burst depth rises to 184 images. However, if you don't need Raw files you can get 200 Fine quality JPEGs in a 14fps sequence. At 14fps it takes just 7.5 seconds to shoot 105 images while it takes just over 13 seconds to shoot 184 images, which is more than enough to capture the Olympic 100m final.

Nikon has paired these fast shooting rates with its most advanced (viewfinder-based) autofocus system to date. However, it may come as a surprise to learn that with 105 AF



points, the D6 has 48 fewer points than the D5. But the D6 has the advantage of letting you select any of those 105 points for use, the D5 only has 55 user-selectable points. That makes the D6 better able to target and track your subject. It's also extremely capable. For example, in a heavily-shaded woodland I got a high hit rate photographing my dog with the AF system set to single-point, nine-point or 25-point dynamic area AF. And in an open field where his brown coat contrasted nicely with the grass, the 3D-tracking got him sharp and kept him in focus as he raced for a ball.

Alike the D5, the D6 pushes the boundaries for low-light shooting and it has a phenomenal native sensitivity range of ISO 100-102400 with expansion settings pushing the range from ISO 50 to 3280000. If you're concerned with image quality then I'd recommend keeping to ISO 6400 or lower, but if the aim is to capture news

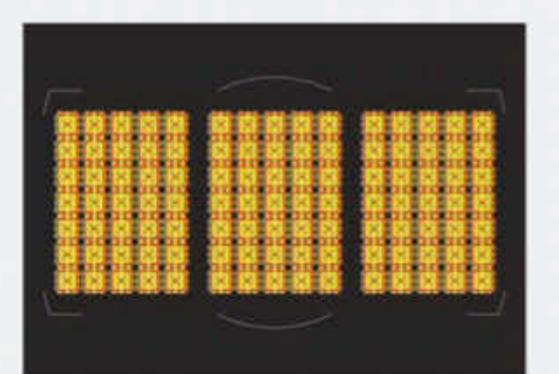
Exposure: 1/1600sec at f/2.8 (ISO 2500)



images, I'd happily use the full native sensitivity range and possibly the first one or two expansion settings. Give the top setting of ISO 3280000 a wide berth though as the level of noise can sometimes make it hard to even recognise the subject.

In most situations the Matrix metering system delivers good exposures, but it can be advantageous to reduce the exposure by 1/3EV to boost the colour saturation. On the subject of colour, the results from the D6 can be great, but it's worth experimenting with the various Auto White Balance settings and either using a preset value or setting a custom value if you need to nail the colours in-camera. In bright sunshine, for example, the results produced by the Auto and Natural Auto settings can look a bit cool.

Although the D6 is capable of producing high-quality, detail-rich 4K (3840x2160) video at 30/25/24p with excellent colour and exposure, it's not the natural choice of camera for it. For a start, the contrast detection AF in LiveView and video mode is unreliable. In addition, the fixed screen isn't helpful when you're shooting with the camera at anything other than eye-level. Of course you can connect an external monitor, but that makes a big, heavy camera even bigger and heavier. You can also focus manually, but it's out of step with the AF advances that we've seen over the last couple of years. If you're looking for a professional grade DSLR for stills but you also want to shoot a fair bit of video, the Canon EOS-1D X Mark III is a better choice.



AUTOFOCUS SYSTEM

The D6 has a new Multi-CAM 37K autofocus module with 105 user-selectable, all cross-type AF points. Each of these points has three vertical and three horizontal sensors (the D5 has a dual sensor array), increasing the density of the AF area by 1.6x and boosting subject acquisition performance. Additionally, the centre point can operate as low as -4.5EV. It's also possible to set the starting point in Auto-Area AF mode to speed subject acquisition and, in a first for optical viewfinder shooting, the D6 can prioritise the subject's eyes for focusing.

CLOSEST RIVALS

- **CANON EOS-1DX MARK III:** This 20.1-megapixel DSLR is the most natural competition for the D6. At £6,499 it only costs a little more but it feels a bit more forward-looking with a better LiveView and video specification.
- **SONY A9 MARK II:** Sony's top-of-the-range mirrorless camera has an AF system that keeps sports pros more than happy, a maximum shooting rate of 20fps and 4K shooting at up to 120fps. It retails for £4,699.
- **CANON EOS 5D MARK IV:** At £2,789, the 30-megapixel EOS 5D Mark IV is a more affordable alternative with a very capable 61-point AF system and excellent video credentials.

VERDICT

The Nikon D6 is an excellent DSLR for shooting stills and it's a solid, reliable camera that professional news and sports photographers can rely on, even in tough conditions. Its handling is also very similar to the D5, making the upgrade-path easy. However, it doesn't make any major steps forward and it lacks the versatility that the Nikon D780 offers as a result of incorporating some of Nikon's mirrorless technology.



Handling	18/20
Ease of use	18/20
Features	18/20
Performance	18/20
Value	17/20
Overall	89/100



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– John Krish, Writer & Director





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SKYLUM LUMINAR 4.3

With a newly-designed interface and the introduction of impressive AI editing, Luminar 4.3 is as powerful as it is enticing

Test: JAMES ABBOTT

SPECIFICATION

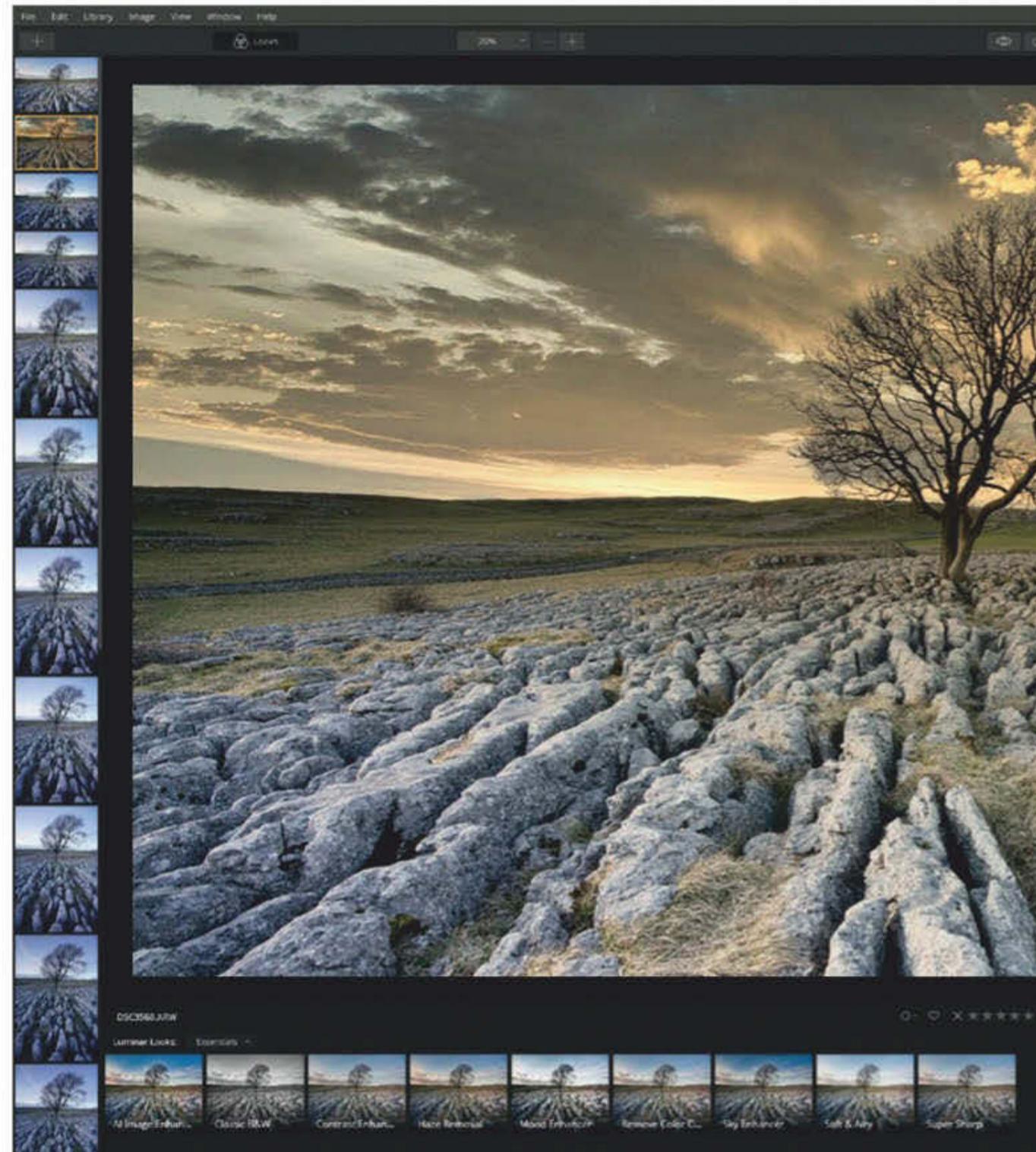
Price: £54

Mac: Mac model: Early 2010 or newer. macOS: 10.12 or higher. RAM: 8GB or more
Disk space: 10GB free space
Windows: Graphics: Open GL 3.3 or later compatible. Processor: Intel Core i5 or better. OS: Windows 7 or higher (64-bit only). RAM: 8GB or more.
Disk space: 10GB free space

THE PHOTOGRAPHY EDITING software market has been electrified with many new releases this year, and Skylum Luminar 4 is yet another impressive option to be released. As a year, 2020 may have been a write-off for several industries, but for photographic software developers the task of eroding Adobe's dominance with powerful alternatives doesn't seem to have paused.

Luminar 4, as the name suggests, is the software's fourth iteration and comes with a host of new features and improvements aimed at bettering the user experience and speeding up workflow. If you're unfamiliar with the software, Luminar 4 provides the processing tools for editing Raw and other image file types nondestructively. In many ways it offers much more functionality than Lightroom or Capture One, but it's certainly not a replacement for editing software such as Affinity Photo and Adobe Photoshop.

The software works both standalone and as a plug-in for Lightroom Classic, Photoshop, Elements and macOS Photos.



With the introduction of an image library, the software is now a much more functional option for image cataloguing and editing because you can quickly and easily review, rate and select images to be processed in a way that's not too dissimilar from how Adobe Lightroom works. But rather than using the classic thumbnail display in rows and columns, the Luminar's Library successfully uses a modern masonry layout when viewing thumbnails.

Above: Luminar's AI Sky Replacement feature is the most effective automated sky replacement available in any software today. It doesn't work perfectly all the time but more often than not, it does prove to do a fantastic job.

● **A NEW LOOK AND MORE:** Luminar 4 differs significantly from previous versions in several ways, which will inevitably please some but frustrate others. The interface has been given a drastic makeover, so where controls were previously tab-based on the right-hand side of the interface, this has now been replaced with icons for Layers, Canvas (tools), Essentials (basic adjustments), Creative (creative adjustments), Portrait (portrait-specific manipulation) and Pro (localised and colour adjustments) with control tabs within.

The interface is quintessentially modern and looks fantastic, but for Luminar users upgrading to this latest version, there will be a learning curve to discover where familiar and indeed new features can be found. And unlike previous versions, not all tabs can be expanded at once so you can quickly move from one to the next; now, as one control tab is clicked this opens and the previous closes. It keeps the interface looking clean and tidy, but some photographers prefer to have everything open so they can quickly scroll through settings to apply them. However, the interface is well laid out and easy to use so no complaints here.

As soon as you begin editing in Luminar 4, you can see that there's a strong lean



VERDICT

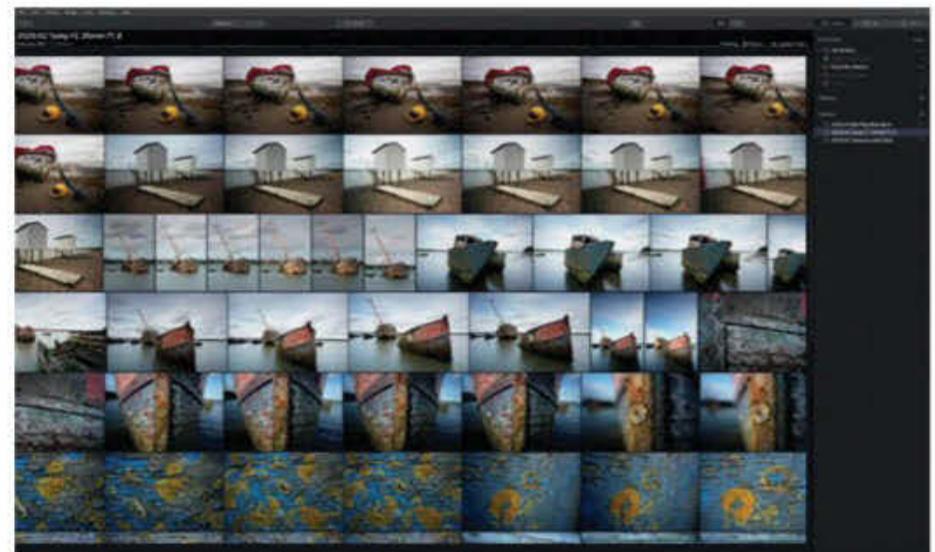


Luminar 4 is incredibly powerful, indeed clever software for processing Raw files and other file types, and at just £54 for a perpetual licence, it's an absolute bargain too. The overhaul of the interface has resulted in modern-looking software that's easy to use and provides everything you need and more to almost effortlessly make your images look great.

Existing Luminar users may not be impressed by the changes to the interface, but it doesn't take long to get used to and new users will arguably find the interface less intimidating than previous versions. The ability to export directly to 500px has also been added alongside export to SmugMug, Email and Image, but export to SmugMug and 500px are only useful if you use these services. That said, it's always better to have such features than not.

The highlights of Luminar 4 are undoubtedly the AI-powered adjustments that, in many cases, work visual miracles before your very eyes. They won't be to everyone's taste, but there's no doubt that they're some of the most effective AI image editing tools available right now. So, with a seven-day free trial of the software available, not to mention the excellent price, there's no reason not to see what the software is capable of for yourself.

Ease of use	
Features	
Performance	
Value for money	
Overall	



towards landscape and portrait photography with the inclusion of powerful controls aimed at these two subjects. The software is, of course, capable of processing any type of image, but it's these two popular subjects that are strongly catered for.

Artificial intelligence is the catalyst for several powerful features, which for landscapes includes AI Sky Enhancer, AI Sky Replacement to replace skies and AI Augmented Sky for adding realistic objects to the sky. AI Augmented Sky works well in some instances and not so well in others, but the AI Sky Replacement is incredible – the most effective feature of this type available in editing software. It's not perfect every time, but it does a great job more often than not.

AI Sky Replacement takes the hard work out of replacing skies and can even place them behind complex objects such as trees. Additional objects and skies can be bought from the marketplace on Skylum's website but there are already many options that come with the software. Other landscape features include the ability to add sun rays to scenes and a Landscape Enhancer that's used to apply Dehaze, enhance golden-hour colours and foliage colour. These can be applied manually using other settings, but this tab simply speeds up editing.

For portrait photography, the Portrait section includes an AI Skin Enhancer to soften skin, remove blemishes and to remove shine. Then there's AI Portrait

enhancer that provides the ability to manipulate and enhance facial features using sliders, and the results of both tools are excellent. Curiously, the Orton Effect has been added to the Portrait section of the interface despite being more commonly used for landscape photography.

Performance and stability improvements are also headline features of version 4.3, but image rendering is a little slow despite using a computer with a powerful i7 processor and 32GB RAM. It's not debilitatingly slow, but images can take around five seconds to become sharp in the image window and editable. It's certainly not the end of the world but can be frustrating when you're trying to work quickly.

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MANFROTTO ELEMENT MII

Basic but sturdy aluminium travel tripod with ball head for hobbyists

Test: DANIEL LEZANO

SPECIFICATION

Price: £115

Leg sections: Four

Leg construction: Aluminium

Centre-column: Detachable ballast hook

Max. height: 132cm (160cm with raised column)

Min. height: 43cm

Closed length: 42.5cm

Maximum load: 8kg

Weight: 1.55kg

Supplied accessories: Carry case, allen key

Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

ITALIAN BRAND MANFROTTO has led the way in terms of camera supports for decades, thanks to an extensive range of high-quality tripods and monopods covering most price ranges and levels of photographer from novice to professional.

The Elements MII is aimed at hobbyists using a DSLR or mirrorless outfit, although as our review will show, its performance may well interest enthusiasts looking for a decent budget travel tripod. It's the second generation of Elements tripod, replacing the original Elements Big, and sports some attractive decals on two of the three legs (the other sports a rubberised grip).

As with most travel tripods, the MII is stored with the legs splayed over the head to minimise its size to only 42.5cm. Pull down the four-section legs to use it from heights ranging from 43cm up to 132cm (or up to 160cm by also extending the centre-column). The twist-locks are wide with a grooved rubberised finish that is easy to grip, making them quick and easy to use.

Changing leg angles is a fast and simple process too, using your thumb you can quickly move the selector levers (located at the top of each leg) and independently lock legs at 25° and 35°.

The aluminium spider and decent thickness of the upper sections of the legs ensures excellent stability and even with the thinner lower leg sections extended, the tripod can be relied upon to help deliver shake-free images, although in windy conditions I'd avoid full extension unless absolutely necessary.

The aluminium ball head that is supplied in the outfit is excellent considering the budget price of the kit and has a payload of up to 8kg. The large primary knob is used to



Above & inset: The Elements MII is a trendy little travel tripod that offers excellent versatility, stability and value for money.

control the ball's movement, while the smaller secondary knob allows for a 360° pan with a very smooth motion. A large knob at the top is used to release and fix the quick-release plate (with Arca-Swiss and Manfrotto RC2 compatibility), with a bubble spirit level well positioned to make it easy to check for straight horizons.

As you'd expect of a tripod at this price point, the centre-column cannot be positioned horizontally, but a hook accessory is included that screws on the bottom of the column when you require some extra ballast.

The wider diameters of the legs compared to rivals means at 1.55kg, the Elements MII isn't the lightest travel tripod on the market, but it is one of the most stable. It's also one of the quickest and

"THE ELEMENTS MII ISN'T THE LIGHTEST TRAVEL TRIPOD ON THE MARKET, BUT IT IS ONE OF THE MOST STABLE"

easiest to set up and possibly most importantly, one of the most affordable. This, along with its great head, makes this Manfrotto one of the best value travel tripods on the market, especially as – commendably for the price – a neat storage case included in the bundle.

VERDICT

The Elements MII is one of the very best budget tripods available. Its compact size, neat design and excellent stability makes it great value. The removable ball head that it comes supplied with proves to be a capable performer too.

OVERALL





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LASTOLITE SKYLITE RAPID STANDARD (MEDIUM) KIT

Framed reflector and diffuser kit / Fast and easy to set up / 1.1x2m

Test: DANIEL LEZANO

SPECIFICATION

Price: £285

Kit contents: Frame, silver/white reflector, diffuser (1.25 stops), carry case

Dimensions: 1.1x2m

Frame construction: Rust-resistant aluminium

Cover fasteners: Plastic clips

Weight (approx): 3.6kg

Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk/lastolite

ASTOLITE HAS BEEN the number one choice for lighting aids for decades and is still one of the most popular brands with amateur and professional photographers alike. Perhaps best known for their collapsible reflectors and diffusers, Lastolite also offers a wide choice of framed lighting aids to provide a much wider working area and extra versatility.

The Skylite series has been around for many years but the current Skylite Rapid range, while using a similar elastic-corded aluminium frame, boasts clip-on rather than Velcro fasteners for attaching the panel to the frame. The range offers five sizes of frame: Small (1.1x1.1m), Medium (1.1x2m), Midi (1.5x1.5m), Large (2x2m) and Extra Large (3x3m), along with a number of reflector and diffuser fabrics, plus accessories such as a crossbar handle and griphead to fix the frame to a lighting stand.

The Medium kit consists of a carry case containing the frame, a 1.25-stop diffuser and a silver/white reflector. The frame is supplied in six sections, each interconnected with a thick elastic cord to prevent accidental loss of a section. Assembling the frame is an easy and quick



“IT'S EASY TO TRANSPORT, FAST TO SET UP AND PUT AWAY, PROVIDES GREAT LIGHTING CONTROL AND FURTHER FABRICS AND ACCESSORIES CAN BE ADDED TOO IN THE FUTURE”



procedure that takes no more than a handful of minutes to do (disassembling is even quicker!). The diffuser and reflector fabrics have plastic clips along the edges that lock securely over the frame to give a tight and flat surface. The whole process takes less than five minutes, so the 'Rapid' tag in the name is totally valid.

The 1.1x2m kit is a good size for shooting portraits of a single person or a couple. It's light enough to be handheld, while the optional (£50) crossbar that fixes across the frame helps further. Should you be working solo, you can use a griphead to fix it to a lighting stand. Whichever method you use, take care when using it outdoors as the

Above and below left: The 1.1x2m panel is big enough for shooting couples and everything packs up neatly into a carry case. Inset: An elasticated cord keeps sections together.

surface area acts like a sail in the wind. Both the diffuser and reflector panels are made from very good quality fabric so should last for years, and if you want other reflector colours, there are options that you can add separately to maximise the frame's use. Spending £300 on the kit is a big decision but if you regularly shoot portraits and require lighting aids – in particular a diffuser – then you'll find this kit to be excellent value, especially as you can add to it in the future. It's easy to transport, fast to set up and put away, provides great lighting control and further fabrics and accessories can be added too in the future.

VERDICT

The Skylite Rapid is a great option when a large reflector or diffuser is required on location. Quick and easy to set up, with a rust-resist aluminium frame, quality fabrics and decent accessories, you'll soon find it more than pays back the initial outlay.

OVERALL





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Ospreys Workshop in Rutland - Morning and Evening Sessions Combined

£299

May 21 PM combined with May 22 AM, July 16 PM combined with July 17 AM; AM and PM sessions in specialist Osprey hide a few miles from Rutland Water's resident Ospreys. Provides the best opportunity in the whole of England to photograph Ospreys catching live trout. 10,000 trout in one pond 100 feet by by 50 feet. Exclusive use of 6 person hide. Tips and tuition from experienced photographer to assist you throughout both sessions plus classroom reviews after second session to show you how to work your photos to their best advantage. Breakfast included. See website for examples of photos from 2019.



Small Mammals, Insects & Reptiles in Northumberland

£199

June 4th; Indoor studio set-ups ensuring professional quality photos of stunning subjects. Studio lighting set up for you. No flashguns required. Cameras and lenses can be loaned without charge. Innovative set-ups to maximise your opportunities. Max 3 persons. Harvest Mice, Red Eyed Tree Frogs, Praying Mantis, Locust, Beardeed Dragon, Scorpion, Tarantula, Snakes, Lizards, Crested Gecko etc.



Golden Eagle Experience in Leicestershire

£89

May 3rd, August 3rd; Golden Eagle will fly, and perch in carefully chosen natural settings. Jresses hidden for static shots. Controlled flying. Also selection from; Owls, Buzzard, Hawks, Goshawk Max. 8 photographers.



Cheetahs, Lions, Foxes, Birds of Prey, Camb's.

£129

May 2nd, Aug 1st; Privileged access to Cheetahs, Malayan Tigers, White Tiger & Corsac Foxes. The Cheetah & Tiger enclosures are not mowed for enhanced photographic opportunities. Private Displays by various Birds of Prey, both static & flying. Jresses hidden for static shots. Barn Owl, Eagle Owl and Red-Tailed Hawk etc.



Amazing Bat Photos & Learn Fill-in Flash Techniques

£139

April 14th, 28th; Oxfordshire. Take amazing bat photos, plus learn how to use balanced fill-in flash on wildlife subjects in different lighting conditions. Max 4 persons. Free loan of Canon digital camera and flash if req'd.



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Foxes, Otters, Wildcats, Badgers & more, Surrey.

£163

July 6, 7th; Inside enclosures 'til sunset. Also Owls, Snakes, Badgers, Polecats, Weasels, Stoats, Hedgehog, Harvest Mice & various Deer. 2 sessions with the foxes, sometimes only inches away from you. inside encloses with Foxes, Otters, Scottish Wildcats. Badgers GUARANTEED. No fences or wires to shoot through.



Small Cats Workshop, Welwyn, Herts.

£119

April 12th, May 10th; Privileged access to Snow Leopards, Amur Leopards, Pumas, Caracal, Leopard Cat, Lynx, Servals, Golden Cat, Jaguarundi, Cheetahs, Asian Wildcat. As featured on Animal Planet. Small groups.



Bass Rock Gannets

£199

June 7th, 12th, 21st; Private boat. Exclusive use of island for just 9 photographers. 50,000 pairs of nesting gannets and 55,000 non-breeders on one small island. 4.5 hours photography. Amazing close-ups & fantastic flight shots. An amazing sight that you will never forget. David Attenborough's 7th wonder of the world.



Gannets diving off Bass Rock

£99

June 8th, 22nd; Fantastic workshop . We sail round Bass Rock without landing on the island. A whole hour of throwing fish into the sea for the Gannets to catch. Amazing diving shots. 1,000 + dives. Tuition.



Farne Islands Puffins (Over 4 hrs photography)

£85

June 6th, 13th, 17th, 20th; 20 species of birds. 50,000 puffins. Guillemots, Razorbills, Shag, Arctic Tern colony etc. You will get unbelievably close to some of the species. Get that much sought after shot of Puffins with their beaks crammed full of sand eels. Tips and Tuition. Approximately 4 hours photography.



Pro Birds of Prey Shoot (2) with Short Eared Owl, Northumberland.

£139

June 11th, 19th; Amazing day's photography of adult and baby owls. Probably the best Birds of Prey shoot in UK. Short Eared Owl and Snowy Owl. We will take two of the birds down to beautiful, little known waterfall. This will provide a unique backdrop for your subjects. Fantastic natural woodland surroundings.



We will photograph up to 10 different species of birds, mainly British. Maximum 8 photographers.

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Digital cameras: Our favourite models under £1,500

Looking to buy your first camera or an upgraded model? Here's nine of our most highly-rated DSLRs and mirrorless models

DIGITAL SLR

NIKON D3400

Guide price: £499 with AF-P18-55mm VR

Image sensor: APS-C / 24.2-megapixels

Website: www.nikon.co.uk

One of the best value entry-level DSLRs on the scene – keep an eye out for the standard kit on offer at main photo retailers for under £420! It features 11-point AF and a 24.2-megapixel APS-C sensor that delivers excellent results. It's small and light and has a neat Guide Mode for beginners.



TESTED: APRIL 2019 RATING 86/100

DIGITAL SLR

CANON EOS 250D

Guide price: £559 with 18-55mm IS STM

Image sensor: APS-C / 24.1-megapixels

Website: www.canon.co.uk

Canon has a long history of producing excellent entry-level DSLRs and this one continues the trend, although a drop in price would be welcomed. The nine-point AF system is basic but the excellent 24.1-megapixel APS-C sensor and 4K video capability makes it a good starter model.



TESTED: OCTOBER 2019 RATING 84/100

DIGITAL SLR

NIKON D5600

Guide price: £579 with AF-P18-55mm VR

Image sensor: APS-C / 24.2-megapixels

Website: www.nikon.co.uk

This is one of the best upper entry-level models currently available. It's lightweight at only 465 grams but is nicely put together. It has an excellent specification but is also easy to use, making it a good choice of camera for beginners looking for a model they can advance their skills with.



TESTED: AUGUST 2017 RATING 88/100

DIGITAL SLR

CANON EOS 77D

Guide price: £699 with EF-S18-55mm STM

Image sensor: APS-C / 24.2-megapixels

Website: www.canon.co.uk

This is an excellent upper entry-level model that will suit beginners and enthusiasts alike. Build quality is excellent, with Canon's familiar control layout making it easy to operate, even for novices. The sensor delivers high-quality stills and Full HD video and boasts responsive Dual Pixel AF.



TESTED: JULY 2017 RATING 89/100

MIRRORLESS

FUJIFILM X-T200

Guide price: £749 with AF15-45mm

Image sensor: APS-C / 24.2-megapixels

Website: www.fujifilm.co.uk

This recent update of the X-T100 proves to be one of the best entry-level models available. As well as being a fine stills camera, it's also a solid choice for video shooting, in particular for vloggers. Only downsides are a few handling niggles and noise levels at higher ISO ratings.



TESTED: AUGUST 2020 RATING 89/100

MIRRORLESS

FUJIFILM X-T30

Guide price: £899 with XC18-55mm

Image sensor: APS-C / 26.1-megapixels

Website: www.fujifilm.co.uk

This mid-range mirrorless model is one of our favourite cameras under £1,000. Beneath the stunning retro design you'll discover a camera packed with features including a brilliant APS-C sensor and X-Processor Pro 4 imaging engine that delivers stunning images and 4K video.



TESTED: MAY 2019 RATING 92/100

DIGITAL SLR

NIKON D7500

Guide price: £899 (body only)

Image sensor: APS-C / 20.9-megapixels

Website: www.nikon.co.uk

If you're in the market for an advanced DSLR and aren't bothered by full-frame, then the D7500 should be on your shortlist. It's smaller, lighter and more affordable than the popular D500, but delivers similar high image quality thanks to using the same sensor. A great all-round camera.



TESTED: SEPTEMBER 2017 RATING 91/100

MIRRORLESS

PANASONIC LUMIX G9

Guide price: £899 (body only)

Sensor: Micro Four-Thirds / 20.3-megapixels

Website: www.panasonic.co.uk

Based on the excellent LUMIX GH5 but with more emphasis on stills photography than video, a major price drop makes it great value. Speed is at the heart of the G9, with a 20 frames-per-second shooting mode and fast and responsive AF. A great choice if you regularly shoot wildlife or action.



TESTED: MARCH 2018 RATING 93/100

MIRRORLESS

FUJIFILM X-T4

Guide price: £1,549 (body only)

Image sensor: APS-C / 26.1-megapixels

Website: www.fujifilm.co.uk

It may sport the same APS-C sensor as its predecessor, but this updated flagship model boasts a wealth of improvements – in particular to its AF system, as well as the addition of body-integral image stabilisation – that helps make it one of the best cameras on the market.



TESTED: SEPTEMBER 2020 RATING 93/100

If you're looking to buy a camera, check out the offers from the UK's best photo dealers in this issue for the very best prices

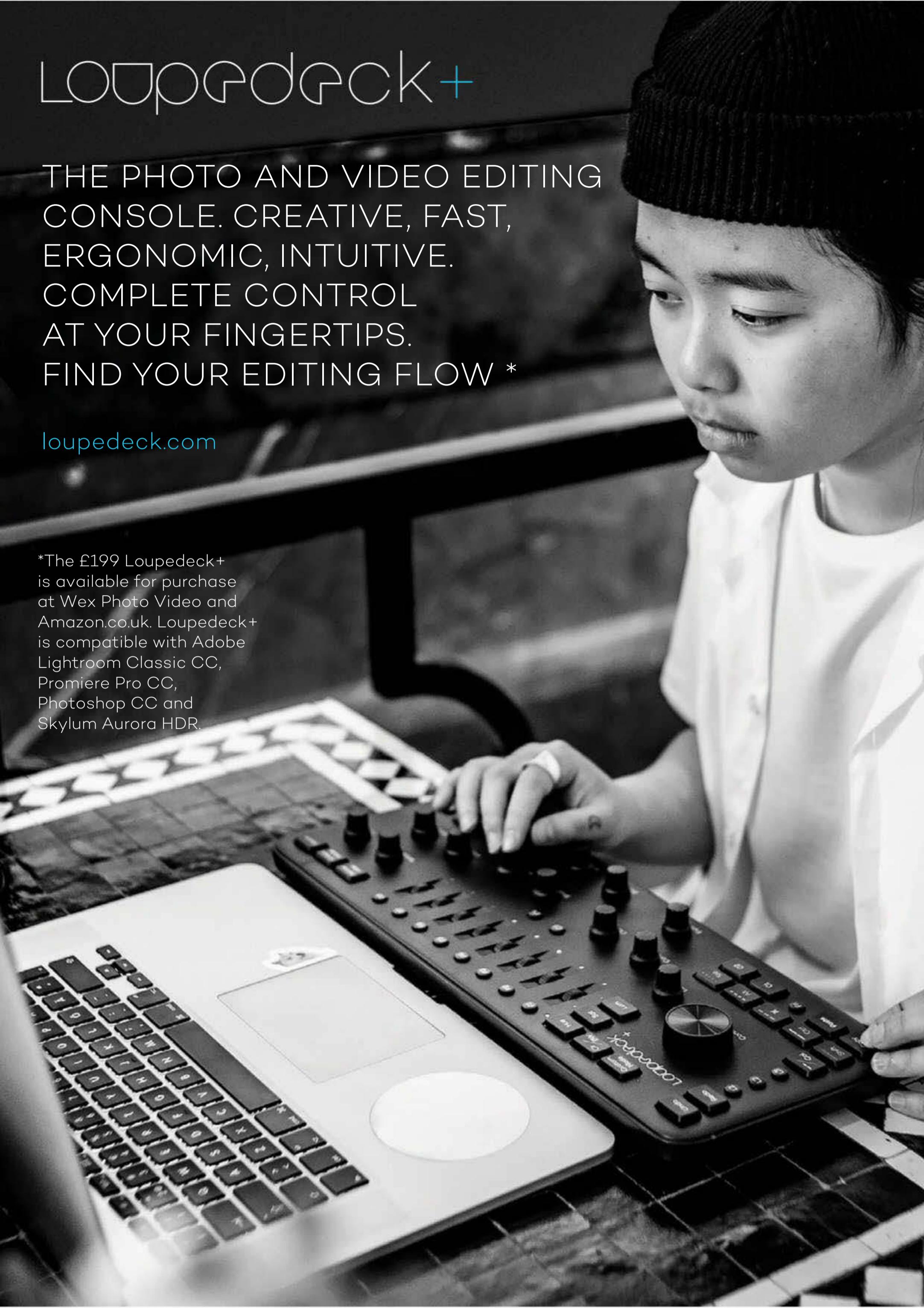


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Essential photo accessories: Tripods

Every photographer should own a lightweight and sturdy tripod. We highlight our favourite models

MANFROTTO ELEMENTS MII

Guide price: £115

Leg sections: Four Weight: 1.55kg
Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

This aluminium tripod is one of the best budget models available. Small enough to be used as a travel tripod, it comes supplied with a good quality ball head with a payload up to 8kg. It's a sturdy model that uses twist-locks for fast and easy set-up and has a maximum height of 160cm.



TESTED: OCTOBER 2020 RATING ★★★★★

BENRO SLIM TALL TSL08CLN00 KIT

Guide price: £140

Leg sections: Four Weight: 1.09kg
Website: www.benroeu.com

The limited-edition version of the TSL08CN00 offering an additional 18cm of height, making it more suitable for tall users. It's light weight and relatively compact size makes it a good choice for travel as well as standard use. It has a stored length of 55.1cm and maximum height of 135cm.



TESTED: MARCH 2020 RATING ★★★★★

BENRO GOPLUS CLASSIC TGP17C

Guide price: £170

Leg sections: Three Weight: 1.38kg
Website: www.benroeu.com

An older model but still available in limited quantity at far less than its original price (£309). Boasts really useful and well implemented features to go with a high overall performance and modest weight, including an articulating centre-column and monopod facility.



TESTED: NOVEMBER 2017 RATING ★★★★★

BENRO TRAVEL ANGEL FTA18CV0

Guide price: £269

Leg sections: Four Weight: 1.5kg (inc head)
Website: www.benroeu.com

This is a compact and lightweight travel tripod (with monopod option), offering good support and just enough height (121cm, extendable to 145cm) for most. It closes down to 44cm for easy storage. The supplied V0E ball head is no more than average, which is a little disappointing.



TESTED: JULY 2016 RATING ★★★★★

MANFROTTO MT055 CXPRO4

Guide price: £299

Leg sections: Four Weight: 2.1kg
Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

Manfrotto's renowned 055-series has changed a lot over the years but has always delivered high performance. This version adds welcome new features, including a tilting centre-column and heavy duty Quick Power Locks. Excellent stability, even at its maximum height of 140cm.



TESTED: NOVEMBER 2017 RATING ★★★★★

MANFROTTO GT BEFREE XPRO CARBON

Guide price: £299

Leg sections: Four Weight: 1.74kg (inc head)
Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

Travel tripods are one of the most popular types of camera support and this model is one of the best. Aimed at enthusiasts and professionals, it sports a solid build and an excellent range of features, including a neat centre-column mechanism. The supplied 496 ball head is excellent too.



TESTED: JANUARY 2020 RATING ★★★★★

GITZO GT2545T WITH 1382QD HEAD

Guide price: £619

Leg sections: Four Weight: 1.48kg
Website: www.gitzo.co.uk

The price is high but this exceptional travel tripod from Gitzo could possibly be the one and only tripod you'll ever need. Construction is sublime, as is handling, while the 1382QD ball head is first rate too. Stored it measures 44cm, increasing to 129cm (153cm with column raised).



TESTED: JULY 2016 RATING ★★★★★

MANFROTTO MT057C4-G

Guide price: £649

Leg sections: Four Weight: 3.75kg
Website: www.manfrotto.co.uk

A top of the range tripod with stability at its core, at the expense of additional weight. It is very well engineered, with great strength and a maximum height of 182cm that can be raised to 206cm via the geared column. Ideal for the studio or outdoors, if you're happy to lug it about.



TESTED: NOVEMBER 2016 RATING ★★★★★

GITZO SYSTEMATIC 5543XLS SERIES 5 XL

Guide price: £999

Leg sections: Four Weight: 3.1kg
Website: www.gitzo.co.uk

Professionals requiring an extremely rigid yet lightweight support consider this model to be one of the best. The G-Lock twist-action locks are fast and easy to use, while the chunky legs extend from a min. height of 10cm to a maximum of 198cm. The ultimate in stability, at a price.



TESTED: FEBRUARY 2019 RATING ★★★★★

If you're looking to buy a tripod, check out the offers from the UK's best photo dealers in this issue for the very best prices





LIMITED EDITION Slim Tall Tripod Kits



Ideal for photographers using mirrorless and compact DSLR cameras, the limited edition Slim Tall tripods feature a streamlined design and a maximum working height of 164cm.

Aluminium and carbon fibre versions are available, both supplied with a removable ball head complete with an Arca-style quick release plate and tripod carry case.

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CF 1.10kg
AL 1.23kg

MAX HEIGHT
164cm

MAX LOAD
4kg

FOLDED LENGTH
55cm

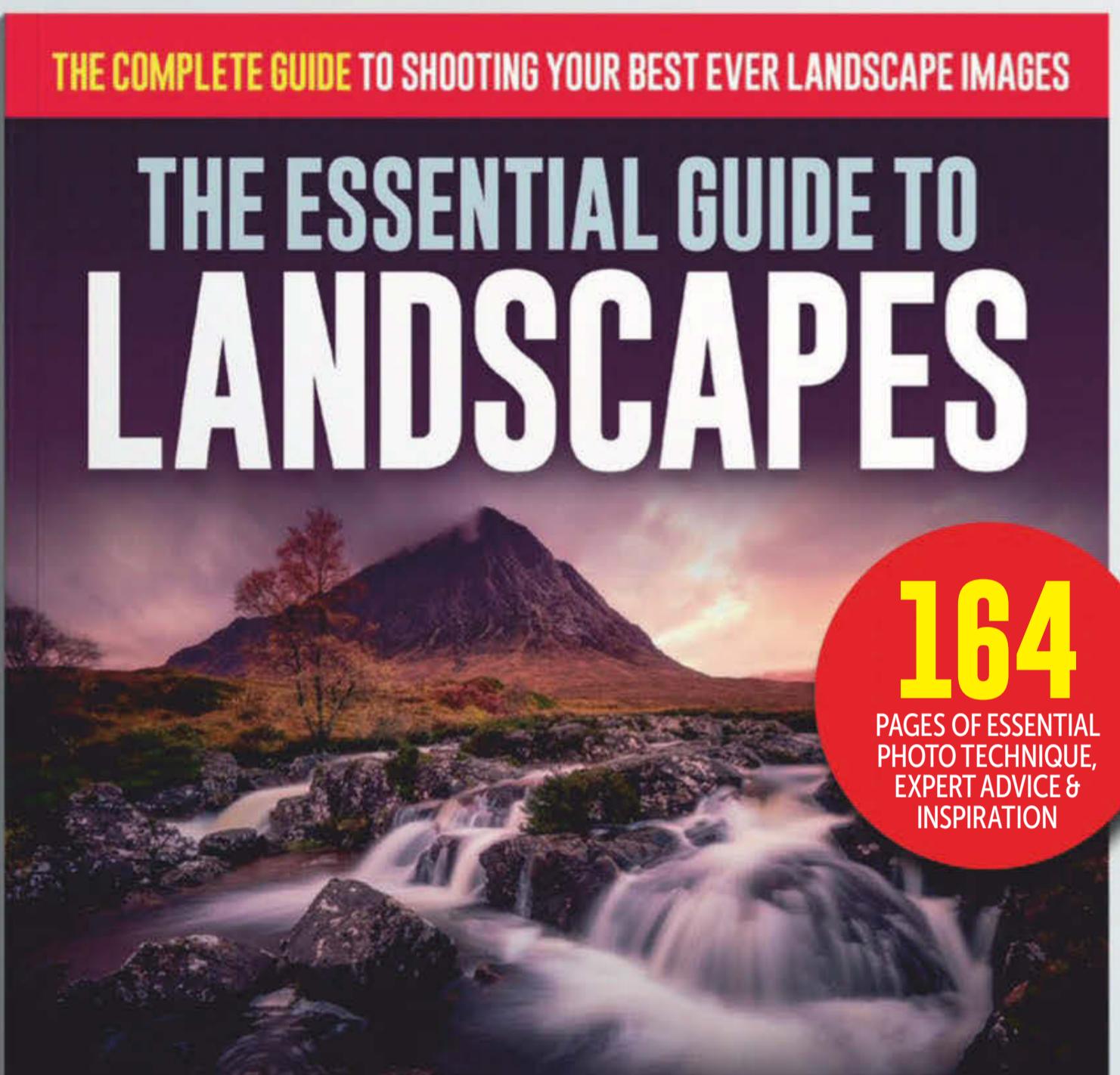
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PHOTO A-Z

Test your photo knowledge and learn new terminology as we continue our glossary of photo terms from O to S

CANON EOS R6

Canon's latest mirrorless model has an extensive specification, but is its 20.1-megapixel sensor high enough resolution?

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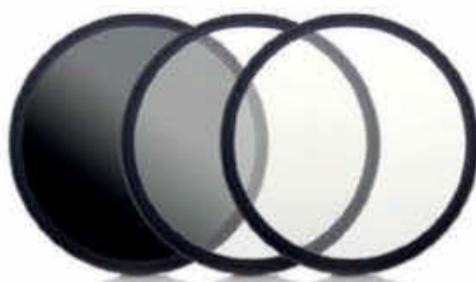
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