

# STREET SMARTS

Sean Tucker and Joshua K Jackson share their secrets

# Amateur Photographer

LOVE YOUR CAMERA

## Location hot spots

**3** pros reveal their top locations that haven't been 'done to death'

### LUMIX TZ300

The travel zoom compact is back!

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MAIN IMAGE: NEIL BURNELL  
TOP RIGHT: JOSHUA K JACKSON

### STRIKING GOLD

How to win at sports photography

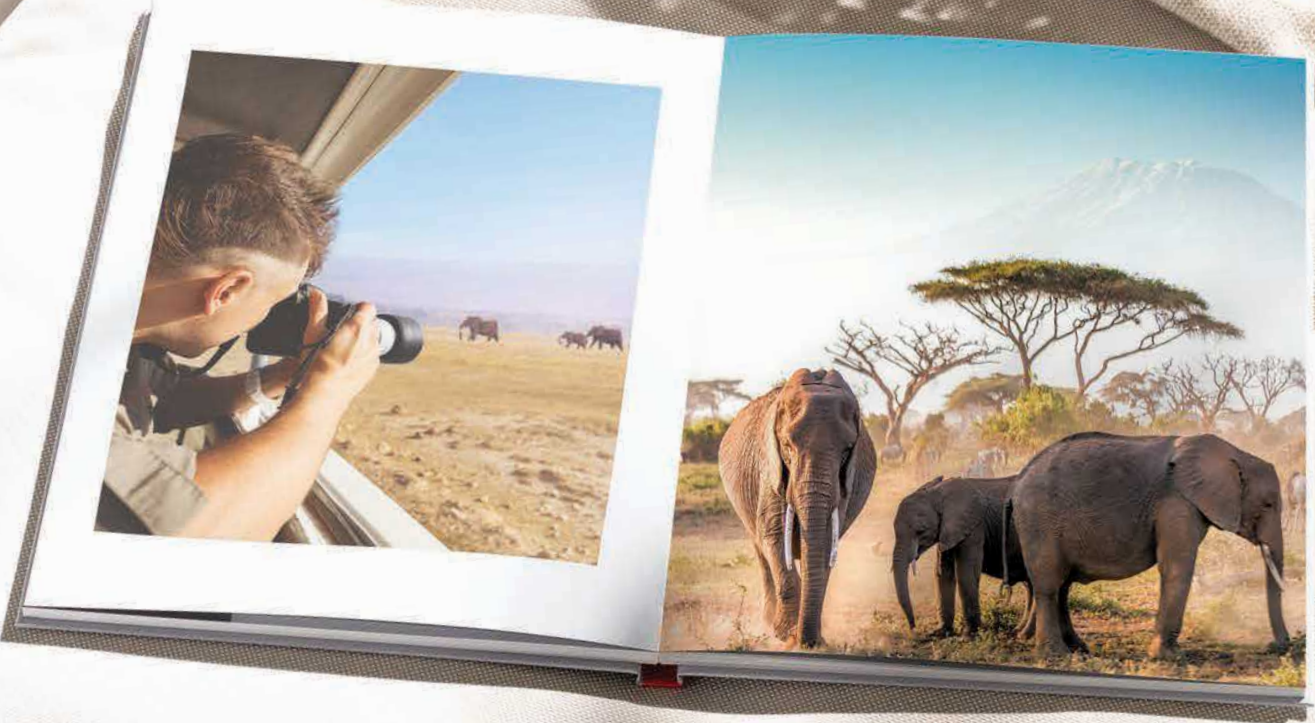
## FAST AND FABULOUS

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# Welcome



Are you a fisher or a hunter? If you're not sure you'll find the answer in our Street photography feature this week. Street is one of the most popular subjects among readers, partly because it's so accessible. Most of us live in towns and cities so we don't have to travel to do it, and we don't

need specialised equipment. Even a phone will suffice. It's all about observation and timing. But the world has changed a lot since the days of Cartier-Bresson. I used to be an absolutist about my right to take photos in public. While that right may still legally exist, mostly (though Chris Porz reminds us on page 14 that waving a big camera around in railway stations can still meet resistance) the invention of social media means there are all now all kinds of ethical considerations that photographers with morals should at least be aware of. In a world where photos of identifiable people can be seen by millions the camera can be a powerful weapon. How we use that power matters. Context and intent are everything. There's a current, growing trend of despicable men using smart glasses with hidden cameras to create sexualised video content of young women in the street, without their knowledge, to monetise on their social media platforms. Personally I think these glasses should be illegal but this extreme behaviour is a reminder that there's an ethical dimension to photographing and filming people in public, whatever device is used.



One of my own recent street photos, taken in Havana, Cuba on a Fujifilm X-E5

*Nigel Atherton*

Nigel Atherton  
Group Editor



## This issue's contributors...



### **Peter Dench**

Peter talks to Gabriele Galimberti about his new project and asks three leading landscape photographers about their top locations



### **Graeme Green**

Graeme interviews street photographers Sean Tucker and Joshua K Jackson about their new book and their thoughts about the genre



### **Tracy Calder**

AP's former Features Editor talks to Wendy Irwin about her highly creative use of photography – a pop-up book for her much-loved grandson



### **Damien Demolder**

Damien puts the new Sigma 35mm F1.4 DG II Art lens through its paces and finds out how it improves on the previous version



### **Rich Sibley**

AP's former deputy editor is now a leading expert on video tech. He tests the Canon EOS C50, their new entry level cinema camera



### **Angela Nicholson**

Angela spends some quality time with the budget-friendly Viltrox AF 50mm F1.4 Pro FE to find out how it performs in the field

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# Amateur Photographer

LOVE YOUR CAMERA

John Dearden is a wheelchair user whose YouTube channel *Chairview Chronicles* shares his wildlife, landscape, travel and street photography and discusses the challenges of working as a disabled creator. He took this lovely photo of New Brighton Lighthouse, on the Wirral, using a two minute exposure

OM System OM-1, 12-100mm lens, Cokin NX Polariser, 0.9 Soft Grad and 10 stop ND filter. Exposure 2 minutes F/8, ISO 200

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# What's new

## Panasonic unveils Lumix L10 premium compact

The Lumix L10 in its eye-catching Titanium Gold edition



Panasonic has announced the Lumix L10 compact camera, which in effect is the long-awaited update to the LX100 II. It features a 26.5MP Four Thirds BSI-CMOS sensor, with a multi aspect-ratio design and 20.4MP effective image size, along with an integrated 24-75mm equivalent f/1.7-2.8 Leica Summilux optically-stabilised lens. There is also a fully articulated screen and built-in electronic viewfinder. The new camera uses the same image processor as the Panasonic Lumix S1 II series.

Other key features include phase detection AF with subject detection, 11/30fps continuous shooting (mechanical/electronic shutter) and a relatively low weight of 508g. As you'd expect with this level of sensor and processing power, the L10 doesn't skimp on video features either. It offers 5.6K video resolution at up to 60fps, at 300Mbps, and every possible combination of resolution and frame rate below as well, including 4K at 120fps.

The Lumix L10 also comes with new colour filter modes including "film-like" L.Classic and L.Classic Gold profiles, along with Leica Monochrome, and is available now for £1299.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the Lumix brand on October 27th, Panasonic will be releasing a limited Panasonic Lumix L10 Titanium Gold edition, which features a shutter release thread and additional bundled accessories. This model costs £100 more than the standard version, and will be available from July directly from Panasonic Online ([panasonic.com/uk](http://panasonic.com/uk)).

## New Sony telezoom aimed at sports, wildlife shooters

At the same time as Sony rolled out the A7R VI high-resolution mirrorless camera – see our review online at [amateurphotographer.com](http://amateurphotographer.com) – the company unveiled the FE 100-400mm F4.5 GM OSS G Master lens. It's distinguished from the firm's existing FE 100-400mm F4.5-5.6 GM OSS by having a constant maximum aperture, meaning that it gathers two-thirds of a stop more light at the long end. This in turn will allow users to keep shutter speeds high without having to boost ISO as much.

At 328mm in length, 120mm in diameter and 1840g, this new F4.5 lens is much larger than its sibling, however. Much of this is down to an internal zoom design, which has the advantage of allowing quick and easy zooming with minimal change of balance. Other features include 28 lens elements in 20 groups and for the first time, an Extreme Aspheric (XA) element that's made from Extra-Low



Dispersion glass. There are also three regular ED elements, two Super ED elements, and an XA element, all with the intention of delivering maximum cross-frame sharpness with minimal colour fringing.

Autofocus is driven by four XD linear

motors, promising fast, silent focusing. The new lens is also compatible with Sony's 1.4x and 2x teleconverters. These provide 140-560mm f/6.3 and 200-800mm f/9 combinations, respectively. The lens is available to pre-order now for £4400.

**Sony's latest optic is larger than conventional 100-400mm telephoto zooms**



© THADDÉ COMAR

From Thaddé Comar's project, 'How was your Dream?.'

# A photo festival with a difference...

The Belfast Photo Festival kicks off on June 4th and features Camera Obsolete?, where you're invited to destroy and dismantle obsolete cameras, or 'recast' them into new sculptural forms. 'Participants can wield hammers in dedicated rage rooms or prise

apart equipment in accessible disassembly areas,' say the organisers.

If all this sounds a bit destructive, you there are also areas for trying to get an old camera working again. 'Part spectacle, part critique, the project confronts photography's unstable

future by asking what is being lost, remade or abandoned.' The festival will also exhibit work by some interesting photographers, including Thaddé Comar's project, 'How was your Dream?'. Full details are available online at [belfastphotofestival.com](http://belfastphotofestival.com).

## A busy month for Thypoch

Chinese lens maker Thypoch has announced its first autofocus zoom lens, the Voyager 24-50mm f/2.8. The lens is designed for Sony E-mount mirrorless cameras and features a constant f/2.8 maximum aperture and an internal zoom mechanism. It has 16 lens elements arranged in 13 groups, with 2 ASPH, 3 ED, and 3 RHI elements, along with a 10-blade rounded aperture. Since the Voyager is designed for full-frame Sony E-mount cameras, it supports eye AF and AFC tracking. Available now for £464 from [thypoch.com](http://thypoch.com). Just as we were going to press, Thypoch also announced the Ksana 35mm f/2 ASPH Lens for M-Mount. Designed to combine vintage character with modern optics, this solid brass lens features 8 elements in 5 groups and a 0.5m minimum focus distance. Available now for £459.

Thypoch's first AF lens is this 24-50mm f/2.8



## Major music photography contest opens

The fifth Abbey Road Music Photography Awards competition is now open for entries. Amateur and pro photographers alike are invited to enter their images (for free) into eight categories: Festivals, Emerging Photographer of the Year, Music Moment of the Year, Live Music, Behind The Scenes, Portrait, Underground Scenes and the guest category, 50 Years of Punk. The judging panel includes such luminaries as Rankin, Nile Rodgers, Dennis Morris and Raye, and there is a wide range of prizes on offer. Deadline for entries is Tuesday 30 June at midnight UK time and the winners will be revealed at an awards ceremony at the hallowed Abbey Road Studios in September. These awards are now the



**Top US music photographer Roberta Bayley has already been named the recipient of the competition's ICON award. This is one of her photos of Ramones**

leading element of the Abbey Road Music Photography Accelerator, which encompasses events, exhibitions, workshops, learning resources and

more, with the goal of championing and empowering photography talent. For full details and entry, see [bit.ly/abbeyroadmpc](http://bit.ly/abbeyroadmpc)



**The black paint Leica MP-33 should make big money**

## Leica auction is back in black

An exceptionally rare black paint Leica a Gun RIFLE camera and one of the first cameras capable of recording motion pictures are among the lots at the 48th Leitz Photographica Auction, taking place in Weztlar, Germany, on June 13th.

One of the star attractions is the Leica MP-33 black paint. Only 402 cameras were ever produced, with only 141 featuring black paint. Another particularly interesting lot is a chrome-finished Leica MP, used by pioneering Italian photojournalist Tazio Secchiaroli. He inspired a character in the iconic 1960 film *La Dolce Vita*, which in turn spawned the term 'Paparazzo.' Another big draw is the E. Leitz New York Leica Gun RIFLE. Inspired by wildlife photographer Attilio Gatti, it was designed to reduce camera shake while handling telephoto lenses and was often used at sports events. Cinema history buffs will be drawn to the Lumière Cinématographe no. 207, from 1895. This compact hand-cranked camera was capable of recording, developing, and projecting motion pictures in a single unit. The auction starts at 11am CET on June 13th, and bids can be submitted in advance online ([www.leitz-auction.com](http://www.leitz-auction.com)), in written form, or by phone.

### THE BIG QUESTION

*What has been the hardest thing to learn in photography?*



**Joe Nicholas Boris**

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**Donna Lloyd**

That you can go out with your camera loaded up with your favourite film, with perfect light and not take a photograph, but that is okay, and doesn't make you a bad photographer.



**@reubster20\_avfc**

How to be confident in shooting what you like such as street or sports photography.



**Libby Fermanel**

How to politely tell people to MOVE OUT OF THE WAY!



## Back in Time **1970**

### **Pele celebrates as Brazil wins the World Cup**

21st June 1970: Edson Arantes Do Nascimento Pele of Brazil celebrates victory after Brazil wins the 1970 World Cup final 4-1 against Italy at Estadio Azteca, Mexico City. The first World Cup to be broadcast in colour, it is also the last to feature the Jules Rimet trophy – Brazil got to keep it after winning it for the third time. The 2026 World Cup also kicks off in Mexico City, with the opening match between Mexico and South Africa on the 11th June, (Photo by Alessandro Sabattini/Getty Images).

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**Daniël Mortier**

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**Jenny Short**

The menus and all the possible combinations for different purposes.



**Kevin Lehmann**

That you don't need high-end gear to get high-end images!



**Graham White**

New gear improves nothing.



**John O'Neill**

Creativity, the rest is just numbers.



**Anthony Dixon**

To do your own thing and develop your own style.



**Michael Radford**

Exposure with a manual camera, shooting slides!

Share your photos and comments with us on social!

See page 6 for how to contact us



# What's new



## Analogue Wonderland PURE 35

Leading analogue photography retailer and film developer, Analogue Wonderland, has released its first reusable 35mm film camera, the PURE 35. Aimed at analogue newbies, the PURE 35 features a 31mm lens with a fixed f/9 aperture, along with a 70% field of vision viewfinder, a fixed shutter speed of 1/120s, and a built-in flash. The camera is powered by a single AAA battery and is also available to buy with Kodak colour and black-and-white film bundles (Analogue Wonderland recommends using film with an ISO range of 200-800). The colour choices are black, green or violet.

**Price:** £39.90

**Web:** [analoguewonderland.co.uk](http://analoguewonderland.co.uk)

## DJI RS 4 Pro Combo

Drone giant DJI has released the DJI RS 4 Pro Combo (2026 Edition), which includes the DJI RS 4 Pro and DJI SDR Transmission. The RS 4 Pro is the flagship product in DJI's Ronin stabiliser range, and sports carbon fibre arms with a 4.5kg payload capacity – so it's capable of supporting many mainstream mirrorless and cine cameras, plus assorted lens combinations. The SDR Transmission, meanwhile, ensures stable video transmissions in complex shooting environments; videos can be transmitted up to 1.8 miles away.

**Price:** £1,169

**Web:** [dji-retail.co.uk](http://dji-retail.co.uk)



For this issue's in-depth reviews, turn to page 68 now



WARBY PARKER

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## Samsung/Google Intelligent Eyewear

Samsung has teamed up with Google and designers Gentle Monster and Warby Partners to develop a new range of 'intelligent eyewear.' Owners of these stylish, hi-tech specs can ask the Google Gemini AI tool for directions or place orders, get on-the-spot translations of menus and signs, and, as you'd expect, take photos. No details of the camera specifications are available at this stage, though they are unlikely to give Sony A7R VI owners too much buyer's remorse. The range is scheduled to launch in the autumn.

**Price:** TBC

**Web:** [bit.ly/samsungspecs](http://bit.ly/samsungspecs)

## 3 Legged Thing AirHed Cine CC

New from 3 Legged Thing is the AirHed Cine CC, a compact video head with 360° panning and 165° of total tilt (90° forward / 75° back). Each axis has smooth cinematic movement and separate lockable controls, making it suitable for a wide range of content creators, as well as wildlife and birding enthusiasts. Improvements over its predecessor include an Arca-Swiss-compatible clamp which rotates 90° enabling use with Arca L-brackets and cages for shooting vertical video. The panning arm is retractable for easier transportation.

**Price:** £229.99

**Web:** [3leggedthing.com](http://3leggedthing.com)



## APL-ETF-M1 smart birding camera

Staying with bird photography and video, the aptly named GoBirding has announced the APL-ETF-M1, which it claims is the world's first professional AI-powered smart birding camera. Key features include 8MP image capture (including raw) and a 30x optical zoom lens with hybrid optical and electronic image stabilisation; combined with the digital zoom, the reach can be extended to 120x. It also offers AF subject tracking and can record 4k video. Moreover, if you struggle to tell a bittern from a blackbird, the device uses AI to help identify over 1,500 bird species. This new birding camera will launch via crowdfunding soon.

**Price:** TBC (crowdfunding soon)

**Web:** [www.shopapexel.com](http://www.shopapexel.com)



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## Opinion Chris Porsz

Why do railway staff hassle you for shooting with DSLRs, but not smartphones?



Without wanting to start on a downer, I have recently found something else for photographers to worry about. I am working on a street photography project, documenting everyday life across London, and railway stations are a vital part of that story. However as soon as my 'fancy' DSLR camera is spotted I am frequently (and frustratingly) challenged by staff who say it is 'not allowed' and told to seek permission to take photographs.

Over a decade ago. Amateur Photographer, along with the Royal Photographic Society (RPS), Liberty and personal heroes of mine such as Martin Parr and Don McCullin, ran a sustained campaign to defend the rights of photographers. AP published guidance (including printing the law on lens cloths

which were given away with the magazine) and highlighted cases where photographers were wrongly challenged.

The campaign worked. The Metropolitan Police later confirmed that "members of the public and the media do not need a permit to film or photograph in public places and police have no power to stop them filming or photographing."

This campaign also resulted in guidance that applies to all UK Network Rail-managed stations, that non-commercial photography is generally permitted and that no permit is usually required for handheld photography.

### Cross at Kings Cross

However, at London Waterloo, Euston and Kings Cross stations, and around the UK, I have often been challenged with something like this: 'You have a professional camera and therefore need written permission.'



Train and subway stations are important subjects for street photography, but your choice of capture device can cause issues.



Using a DSLR shouldn't leave you tangled in a web of officialdom, says Chris.

I know the easy answer is just to keep moving but sorry I can't help myself. My polite riposte being 'it's my hobby, I am a minor amateur and those with malign intentions would not stand openly with a big camera around their necks but use a discreet and all powerful smartphone.' Or words to that effect...

What is the experience of my fellow photographers reading this? I feel this attitude reflects a big gap between modern photographic technology and outdated public perceptions and rules. It is based not on what's being photographed, but how 'visible' you look.

Digital SLRs and mirrorless cameras may not be banned, but they trigger a different category of attention. Phones blend in, while cameras stand out, so we are an easy and 'justifiable' target.

All this feels like outdated thinking from railway staff. Clear, consistent rules from Network Rail would help ensure that genuine, non-commercial photography is allowed to continue unhindered.

Apart from anything else, the current approach of challenging the occasional photographer may distract staff from spotting real potentially serious security concerns that phone users could pose.

It's time to normalise DSLR usage again. The more people visibly and calmly using 'proper' cameras, the less unusual it will appear, and the less staff will feel the need to intervene. This is exactly how Amateur Photographer helped street photography recover before – is now the time for another campaign? Do let me know your thoughts.



Chris Porsz is an accomplished street photographer whose work has been published and exhibited worldwide. See [www.chrisporsz.com](http://www.chrisporsz.com)

### Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest?

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## A stunning look at this diminishing but critical resource

This new collection vividly reveals the beauty of Earth through stunning aerial photographs, while also highlighting the destruction of our planet, says **Craig Blackley**

Photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand's latest book, with help from biophysicist Bill Francois, is looking to raise awareness by revealing how human-made issues are affecting Earth's freshwater systems which are essential for life on the planet.

From rivers to lakes and streams, both Arthus-Bertrand and Francois emphasise through their work within the book how overlooked our natural water sources have become. They

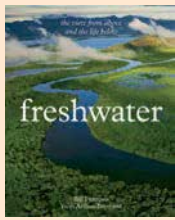
demonstrate how significant they are which happen to make up a large amount of the Earth's surface.

Told through spectacular aerial imagery by Arthus-Bertrand, the photographer takes the viewer on an awe-inspiring and thought-provoking ride where both the beauty and devastation are depicted throughout the book. The message that rings true through each image is that to fully appreciate the wonders of our world,

**Above: Row boats on the Buriganga River, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

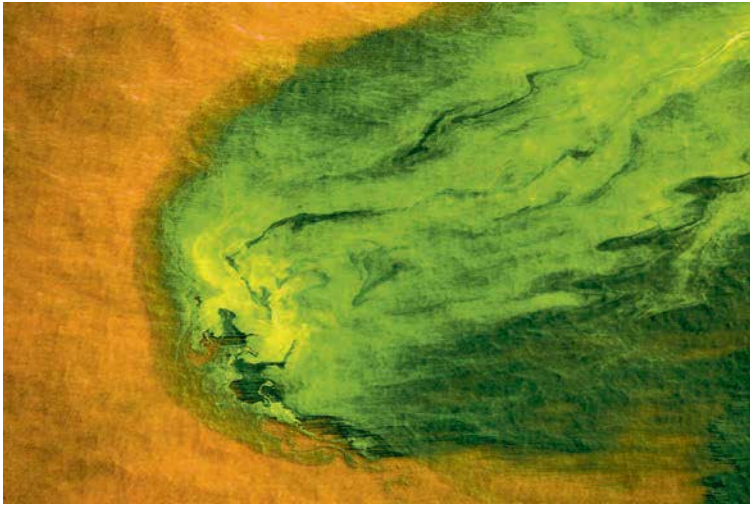
we need to understand the true scale of our own actions.

Examples of human-made issues that contribute to the destruction of our fragile planet include overfishing, pollutants, mis-management, climate change, and many others. What's so unique about 'Freshwater' is its ability to perfectly balance both the world we want to see, and the world we choose to ignore, which is a current reflection of the state we are in.



**Freshwater: The View from Above and the Life Below**  
by Yann Arthus-Bertrand

£44, Abrams,  
Hardcover,  
256 pages, ISBN:  
9781419787676



Subjects include the Balkan caves, the American Great Lakes, the Parisian Seine, and the high mountain tops of ice-cold glaciers as they flow through to the Mexican cenotes, among many others. Arthus-Bertrand's photographic style and approach is incredibly powerful, and he has a rare ability for creating astute compositions while shooting from above. He perfectly conveys scale and drama and creates impactful imagery in the process.

Knowing what to shoot is the first step but knowing how to present it visually is another and more important aspect. Depicting a specific scene in a way that will have an effect on the viewer is what makes Arthus-Bertrand's

**Top: Two colours of seaweed in the waters of Lake Turkana, Rift Valley, Kenya**

**Above: Nests of tilapia cichlids on the banks of the Ogooué River, Ogooué-Maritime Province, Gabon**

work so appealing and authentic. He manages a fine balance between the sharing beauty of Earth and conveying his concerns about its future, which he feels should be more thoroughly attended to, sooner rather than later.

The photographer uses a variety of angles and focal lengths. Choosing to concentrate tightly on certain details and shooting wide for grander scales and significance. His image of the La Leona River in Argentina is one of the most compelling and striking within the book. The river's distinct turquoise colour presents a captivating visual that could also be mistaken for an abstract painting because of its intriguing patterns and smoothness.

## What's On

Some dates for your photographic diary

### 1 - 30 June EVENT

*Remedy Photo Festival* at various venues, Lincoln, Skegness and Sutton-on-Sea

### 4 - 30 June EVENT

*Belfast Photo Festival* at various venues, Belfast

### Until 5 June EXHIBITION

*Bird Photographer of the Year* at Rugby Art Gallery

### 13 June - 4 October EXHIBITION

*Cecil Beaton: Staging Icons* at Harewood House, Leeds

### 18-20 June EVENT

*Wales & West Photography Show*, at International Convention Centre Wales, Newport

### 20-21 June EVENT

*Photo 24: London26* at Fujifilm House of Photography, Covent Garden

### Until 29 June EXHIBITION

*International Garden Photography of the Year* at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

### Until 12 July EXHIBITION

*Wildlife Photographer of the Year* at Natural History Museum, London

### 17-19 July EVENT

*Summit Photo 2026*, Royal Geographical Society, London

### 23 July TALK

*Curator Tour: Japanese Women Photographers* at The Photographers' Gallery, London

### Until 3 August EXHIBITION

*Astronomy Photographer of the Year 17* at National Maritime Museum, London

### 24 October EVENT

*Photo Book Fair* at Ffotogallery, Cardiff

**To be included in these listings, please email [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk) at least a month in advance**



**London in Frames**  
by Ovidiu Selaru  
£60, teNeues,  
Hardcover, 224  
pages, ISBN:  
9783961717385

## An unusual and vibrant take on the street photography genre

Many years of walking the streets of the capital is the result of this stunning collection

Photographer Selaru Ovidiu has been working on this book for the past 16 years. He describes the city of London as his 'studio, classroom and the place where I grew as a photographer'.

For all that time, he's been walking the streets of the city with a camera, curious about its inhabitants, the lights of the streets and the unexpected moments that are prone to popping up directly in front of you.

The idea for the book came when the photographer decided to return to his native Romania. Before leaving London, he wanted to leave something behind – and a book felt like a more permanent record that wouldn't be

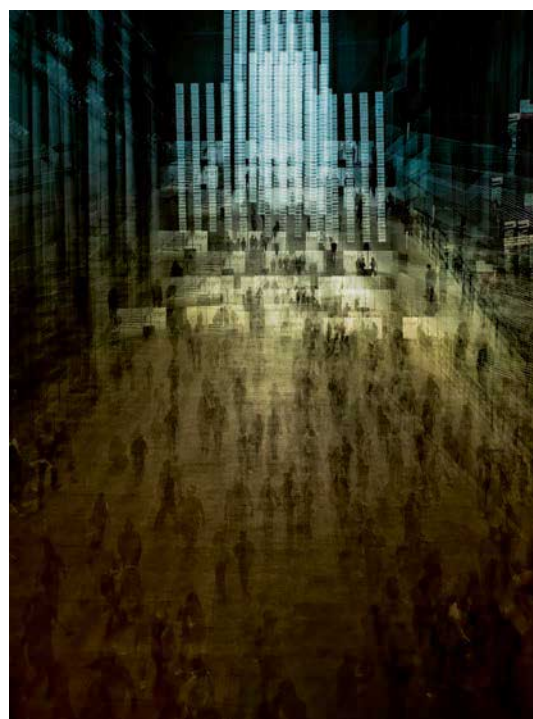
forgotten unlike any online equivalent.

Many of the pictures in the book are typical London street scenes, arguably nothing special – but there are many others that are quite remarkable and interesting to behold.

I particularly like the multiple exposure shots which show off a different side to the city, and give a taste of the vibrancy, hustle and bustle of the capital.

Overall it's a great collection and is a testament to what can be achieved if you always make sure you take your camera with you, and simply wait for life to unfold in front of you.

**Amy Davies**





**Imperfect**  
 by David George  
 £35, MuseumsEtc,  
 Paperback, 248  
 pages, ISBN:  
 9781912528653

Left: Beadnel

Below, top:  
 Billingham

Bottom: Druridge  
 Bay

# Walking the North

A culmination of more than 4000 images made while traversing carefully planned routes along North-East England

Some 200 unpublished photographs, including striking night-time colour shots, and images made using a very old printmaking technique, make up this interesting new book from David George.

The most significant collection of the photographer's work, the pictures are drawn from more than 4,000 which were created while walking hundreds of miles over meticulously planned routes along the major river corridors of North-East England.

George decided to cover all three main rivers in the North East: the Tees, the Tyne and the Wear. He began at Hartlepool on the River Tees and walked up the coast to Berwick. The Wear was walked the following year, the Tyne the year after that and then the North and South Tyne.

There's lots of interesting work on display here, but perhaps the most interesting are the monochrome photogravures, a centuries-old intaglio method which are rarely seen and have been hand-printed.

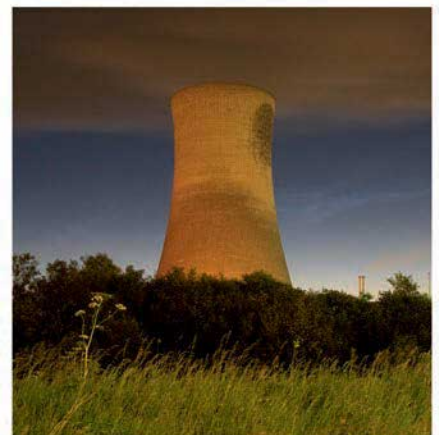
By using a method like this, George accepts that the finished result won't be 'perfect'.

Instead, the work is subtle yet powerful – it aims to create a memorable record of land which is shaped by industry, and which encourages us to think about our landscapes and what they reveal about our society.

George taught himself the method – which is why he says it has seen him end up with a lot of mistakes, but which also gives them a 'loose' feeling – with everything looking handmade. Each print from the same plate can be different, with little marks and imperfections that give them a character.

The end of the industrial revolution in the West is the key theme of George's work, and thinking about how we treat the land. He says it's not to tell people what to think, or criticise the actions of humans, but just to say 'it exists, what do you make of it?' and then open a conversation.

David George was raised in Middlesbrough and has worked for 45 years as a freelance photographer. Currently, he also teaches analogue and alternative-process photography at London Metropolitan University, living and working in East London. **Amy Davies**



# What's new



## Your best Photos

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels. To see your photo here, post it on Instagram or Facebook with the hashtag

**#appicoftheweek**



**WIN!** Every issue, Europe's leading photo printing company CEWE will be giving two AP Pic of the Week winners a total of £100 each in vouchers to spend on CEWE's exceptional photo products. Visit [cewe.co.uk](http://cewe.co.uk)

\* PRIZE IS VALID IN THE UK ONLY

### The Abyss by Andrew Robertson

Canon EOS R5 Mark II, Canon RF10-20mm F4 L IS STM, 1/30sec at f/13, ISO 1000

Photographed from inside an ice cave in Alaska. I found the shapes on the floor to use as leading lines and asked my friend to stand at the entrance to provide scale. It was very narrow and a tripod wasn't possible so executed a handheld focus stack.

**Website:** [www.andrewrobertsonphoto.com](http://www.andrewrobertsonphoto.com)

**Flickr:** Andrew G Robertson

[www.flickr.com/photos/31779113@N06/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/31779113@N06/)

**Instagram:** @gallantryphotos



**PRIZE  
WINNER**



## **Stonechat posing for the camera by Thomas Drew**

Nikon Z50II, Nikon Z 180-600mm f5.6/6.3 VR, 1/400sec at f/6.3, ISO 3200

A bit of colour can brighten up a dark day. This Stonechat perched nicely for me on top of tree and with the dark clouds and dull sky in the background, it really made the rusty orange colours of this bird stand out.

**Website - [www.thomasdrewwildlifephotography.co.uk](http://www.thomasdrewwildlifephotography.co.uk)**

**Instagram: [@thomas\\_drew\\_photography](https://www.instagram.com/thomas_drew_photography)**

**Facebook: [Thomas Drew Wildlife Photography](https://www.facebook.com/ThomasDrewWildlifePhotography)**



## Your best Photos

### Aligned and waiting by Georgia

Olympus Miju 2, Kodak  
Ultramax 400

This photo was taken in a beautiful flat in Berlin which had the most amazing light in the evenings. The chair was just the perfect subject. It's ultimately a very simple image, but I enjoy capturing liminal or quiet spaces which the viewer could imagine being a part of.

Instagram:  
[@breakfastfruit](#)



PRIZE  
WINNER



## **Pause on a Post by Clio**

Canon EOS R6 Mark III, Canon RF 100-500mm,  
1/1600sec at f/6.3

A blue tit pausing briefly on a signpost, I like the soft light with a clean background and how it looks almost on tiptoes. Just stopping quickly, but long enough to show off its beautiful colours and details.

**Instagram: @WildlifeReframed**



## Purple beauty by Mojca Zugna

Canon EOS 90D, Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM, 30sec at f/14, ISO 100, 60mm

I love photographing flowers. I am intrigued by their details and intricacies! This time I bought a bunch of different coloured anemone in my local supermarket! I was busy bracketing the centre of one of the open flowers, when I noticed this one which was just starting to open! I was very much attracted to the more mysterious look of a half hidden centre and the way the petals kind of cradled it. I considered focus bracketing it too, but then decided that a bit blurry strokes of colour might give more attention to the centre. Aside from basic sharpening and a bit of clarity, I didn't think the photo need any other editing.

**Instagram:** @mojc.z

   
**Your best  
Photos**

Want to see your pictures here? Simply share them with our Instagram or Facebook communities using the hashtag **#appicoftheweek**. Or you can email your best shot to us at [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk). See page 6 for how to find us.

**WIN!**



**WORTH  
£150**

# Win a Vanguard VEO Lite B20L backpack

We've got five of these lightweight, weatherproof 20 litre backpacks to give away in a choice of red, cream or blue

The stylish VEO Lite B20L has room for a full-frame camera with a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens plus up to three additional lenses, a 14" laptop and accessories. It features an upper dayback section for personal items and a rear access camera compartment below with wide access, and the option for top access.

The B20L has multiple pockets, inside and out, including a hidden internal pocket for valuables and a smartphone pocket built in to the shoulder strap, plus expanding side pockets for a tripod or water bottle, and an ergonomic padded back and shoulder harness system. If you need extra space, you can attach the matching VEO Lite S2L Compact Shoulder Bag (available separately) to the front of the backpack. Externally the B20L is constructed from a high quality, wipe clean polyester material with an eco-friendly PVC coating, along with weatherproof zips, for optimum waterproofing. There is also a foldaway rain cover for additional protection.



## VEO Lite B20L key specs

- Weatherproof bag with additional rain cover
- Choice of three colours
- External Dimensions 290 x 205 x 420mm
- Upper compartment 275 x 140 x 410mm
- Camera section 275 x 140 x 190mm
- Laptop section
- Weight 1500g
- Laptop section

## How to enter

We've got five of these great bags to give away worth £150 each. All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning one is to visit <https://shorturl.at/VNDB8>. Or point your phone's camera at this QR code. Five winners will be chosen at random. Closing date: 19th July 2026



TERMS AND CONDITIONS CAN BE FOUND ON [AMATEURPHOTOGRAPHER.COM](http://AMATEURPHOTOGRAPHER.COM)

## NEXT ISSUE...



### 200 Years of Photography

We celebrate the bi-centennial of the world's first permanent photo.

### Landmark cameras

John Wade's mammoth guide to the most important cameras of all time



### Recipe for success

Food makes a great subject, as the tasty winners of this year's World Food Photography Awards shows

### Marilyn Monroe at 100

We present a pictorial celebration of the icon who would have been 100 years old this month



**On sale Tuesday June 16**



# Toy Stories 2



What can a child's favourite toys tell us about the world they're growing up in? In *Toy Stories*, Gabriele Galimberti turns playtime into a powerful study of culture, privilege and identity. **Peter Dench** finds out more...

Seventeen years on from taking the project's first photograph, Italian photographer Gabriel Galimberti's *Toy Stories: Photos of Children from Around the World and Their Favorite Things*, is published in a new form seeking a new audience. The visual exploration of children around the world with their prized toys was originally intended for and consumed by photo enthusiasts. Two revised editions in French and Italian are for children, with rigid pages and tactile durability. It's not just a shift in design but also intent.

It's a smart rethinking for a reportage that helped launch Galimberti's photographic career and like many great projects, it began almost by accident. 'I took the first picture in 2009. A friend asked me to photograph her daughter. She was playing with her toys, and I liked the scene. There was no plan,' he tells me via Zoom from Milan, Italy.

The image of three-year-old Alessia, standing in front of feeding farm cows with her bright plastic toy tools, established a visual formula that has defined much of his subsequent technique - a central figure surrounded by objects that speak volumes about their culture, identity and circumstance. At the time it was simply a constructed moment, then later recognised as an approach that would consume Galimberti.

Shortly after that portrait of Alessia, Galimberti left on a two-year assignment for Italian magazine *D La Repubblica*, not to document children and their toys but for a weekly column on travel and hospitality - visiting over 50 countries to sleep in the homes of people who were hosting him through the website *couchsurfing.org*. A weekly portrait of the people who hosted him was published alongside their story. The idea of children and their toys stayed and he decided to replicate the same concept in every country visited during the couch surfing world tour. 'After five or ten pictures, I felt like something was growing. That's when I understood it could become a project,' he says.

The appeal and endurance of *Toy Stories* is in the simplicity and repetition of style yet each portrait is deeply revealing. Strength builds



from the tension between neutrality and interpretation. 'I like the idea that people see different things in my photos. It's a simple story, kids and toys, but you can see differences in wealth, culture, religion. I don't want to take a position. I prefer to show things as they are, and let people decide,' he says.

His later projects, most notably *The Ameriguns*, where adults pose with their arsenal, reflects his neutral approach and structured portraits. It's at times an uncomfortable comparison but unavoidable and one Galimberti acknowledges. 'The way many Americans use guns is similar to how kids use toys,' he admits. His portraits tread a fine line between being observational and a touch provocative, but not overly pedantic.

While Galimberti's projects may begin organically, the results are visually exacting. Every image is highly controlled. Every toy soldier, tin car or cuddly toy is meticulously arranged. 'My way of photographing is very slow. I don't take many pictures. I have one idea, and I try to get that one image,' he says. He starts with two Speedlight flash units adding more if necessary. A Canon EOS1 Mark III DS was followed by a Canon R5. The precision borders on



**Above, top:** Ernesto, 3, Florence, Italy

**Above:** Alessia, 3, Castiglion Fiorentino, Italy

**Left:** Erika, 3, Moscow, Russia

obsessive. He laughs at the suggestion but concedes: 'Maybe I have a little OCD... but I use it for photography.' Despite the distinctive clarity and approach of his *Toy Stories* series, the overall effect feels rooted in reality and provokes debate.

The portraits hinge on a balance between gentle direction and genuine collaboration with the children. Galimberti only photographed three to six year





**Far Left: Gabriel, 3, Vila Madalena, Brazil**

**Left, below: Ayotomiwa, 4, Lagos, Nigeria**

**Left: Henry, 5, Berkeley, California, USA**

**‘I never tell them how to play or what to do, I just ask them to show me their toys.’ It’s a disarmingly simple prompt that shifts control towards the child.**

the editorial landscape that once allowed a project like *Toy Stories* to flourish. A two year commission today would be rare. ‘Fifteen years ago, 80% of my income came from magazines. Now it’s maybe 20%,’ he says candidly. Galimberti has done what he needed to do to survive, adapt and diversify, taking on commercial and corporate work to fund and support his personal projects. The relentless travel of his early career may have become more geographically grounded and he is at peace with focusing on assignments

closer to home. ‘I was lucky. I travelled a lot, I made projects I loved, and most of them were successful,’ he says simply.

Being lucky is perhaps modest. Galimberti has the knack of recognising a personal, almost throw away idea and refining it into something impactful and lasting. When he was about to embark on his couch surfing odyssey, his grandmother Marisa prepared his favourite ravioli. The care with which she prepared it and the pride she took in her dish, led Gabriele to

seek out grandmothers and their signature dishes in the countries he visited. The resulting book, *In Her Kitchen: Stories and Recipes from Grandmas Around the World*, also became a best seller.

*Toy Stories* could be seen as a lightning-bolt moment but its evolution and reimagining suggests something more durable.

Galimberti’s way of seeing the world can be applied to different subjects and audiences without losing his core vision. He has adapted his career to the shifting landscape of the photography industry but he has remained true to a distinct challenge - to organise the chaos of the world into a single, compelling frame. One idea, one picture, perfectly placed.



**Toy Stories. A World of Toys** is published by OTM Company and is available to buy now. RRP €18, ISBN: 9788899901189. Visit [shop.cortanaonthemove.com](http://shop.cortanaonthemove.com) to buy.



# Picture Perfect

## BEST SHOTS: LANDSCAPE

One genre. Three photographers. Three standout images. AP invited three photographers working in the landscape genre of photography to share one image they consider a 'hidden gem' of a location in the UK. Each pro reveals how vision, timing and technique come together in a single frame, says **Peter Dench**

### Rachael Talibart

Rachael Talibart is an award-winning fine art landscape photographer famous for her dramatic photographs of Britain's coast. She grew up on the south coast of England in a yachting family and this close connection with the sea informs her work. **Instagram @rachaeltalibart**

#### Tell us about this image.

My photograph, 'Twins', is a breaking wave from the Cornish coast captured during Storm Eunice in February 2022. I chose it because it was such an amazing moment for me, these two wonderful curls and a beam of light breaking through the clouds just at the right moment. I've built a career photographing rough seas, chaotic moments when waves intersect, and tended to overlook classic rolling surf as too obvious, but on this day, I am very glad I changed my outlook.

#### Can you share the technical details?

360mm (full frame), 1/1250, f/8, ISO 400. With ocean photography, shutter speed is the key choice. I usually try to achieve a shutter speed of at least 1/1000 when taking fast-shutter photographs of the sea. Anything less risks blurring some of the wave and that can look jagged and ugly. f/8 and ISO 400 were the compromise needed.

#### What was happening just before and after this frame?

With fast-shutter wave photography, you have to be willing to press the



shutter a lot. So, just before and after this frame, I was photographing more waves. I made about 2000 exposures that day. This sort of photography is more like sports photography – fast reactions are key. Don't waste time reviewing the photos on the back of the camera, just dig in and get busy!

#### What were the key creative decisions you made?

I suppose the obvious one is making it black and white. I love the elemental timelessness of black and white, and it seemed very right for this photograph. The colour version is too pretty for the mood I was trying to evoke. Another big decision, which is quite typical for me, is to exclude landmarks. I was not trying to document how a particular place looked – it's all about the sea. Finally, I try not to be too fussy about perfection in wave photography. An element of rawness suits the subject, and I really like the out of focus spray.'

#### What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?

Being somewhere new. I made my career photographing storm waves



at Newhaven in East Sussex. I know that beach incredibly well and have an established style that suits it. I know exactly which weather conditions will be right for it, and I know what I want to achieve when I'm there. When the forecast for Storm Eunice came out, the UK's first red weather warning, I was far away, on holiday with my husband in Cornwall! I could tell from the forecast that the waves were going to be absolutely amazing at Newhaven. I had to decide whether to cut short our holiday or try to do something where we were. The FOMO was intense! After much agonising, I decided to stay in Cornwall and went instead to Porth Curno beach with my friend, Cornish photographer, Lucie Averill. The waves were indeed completely epic at Newhaven and I missed that, but I am glad. The surf and the light were different in Cornwall, I really enjoyed the challenge of adapting to somewhere new, and I captured five portfolio pictures that were very different from my normal storm work. 'Twins' is my favourite.

**What does this photograph mean to you?**

For me, this photograph is an attempt to express the power and the

beauty of the ocean. It never ceases to amaze me that our planet is seven tenths ocean, yet we, the dominant species on this planet, are land-dwellers. The ocean is the great unknown – majestic, terrifying, and utterly fascinating. It overwhelms me and fills me with awe, and I hope I have shared something of that feeling in my photograph.

**Was it luck or judgement?**

A little of both, like most things, and a lot of very hard work, kneeling or lying on a beach for four hours without a break, holding a heavy DSLR and 100-400mm lens, in a force 10 storm.

**What advice would you give someone trying this kind of thing?**

I know it's not exciting advice but be careful! Working in strong storms can be dangerous. Trust your instincts – if you feel unsafe, you probably are. Move back, use a longer focal length, rather than putting yourself at risk. Know the tides, observe the surf before you start working and always be wary of the rogue wave that will be stronger and behave differently from all the others.



## Neil Burnell

Neil Burnell is a multi-award-winning fine art landscape photographer based in Devon, South West England. With a background in graphic design and early training in art and photography from college in the 1990s. Neil has developed a distinctive style that captures the evocative, atmospheric essence of the natural world.

**Instagram @neilburnell**

### **Tell us about this image. What are we looking at?**

This atmospheric woodland is one of my favourite hidden spots on Dartmoor. While it shares the same ancient, moss-covered,

gnarled character as the famous Wistman's Wood, it is not part of Dartmoor's official ancient woodlands. I visit many locations across the moor, but this little wood remains a personal favourite. Because so few people

know about it, I've chosen to keep its exact location secret.

### **What was happening just before and after this frame?**

This was one of the first frames I captured that day. Before the shot, I had driven to the moor and then walked into the woodland with this specific composition already in mind. I had scouted the location on a previous visit and had been patiently waiting for the right weather conditions to return.

### **What were the key creative decisions you made when making this photograph?**

For me, balance is crucial in woodland photography. Often, it's more about what you choose to leave out of the frame than what you include. My key decision here was to tightly compose the image to exclude the sky and any distracting elements, creating a more immersive and intimate feel.

### **Can you share the technical details and how they shaped the outcome?**

The image was shot at f/11, ISO 100, and a shutter speed of around 2 seconds. Fortunately, it was a completely still morning with no wind, which allowed me to use base ISO and achieve maximum sharpness and image quality without needing to raise the ISO or introduce noise.

### **What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?**

Framing scenes like this is always the biggest challenge. There's a constant temptation to include more of the beautiful surroundings, but restraint is essential. The difficulty lies in knowing when to stop and resist over-complicating the composition.

### **What does this photograph mean to you and what would you like readers to take from it?**

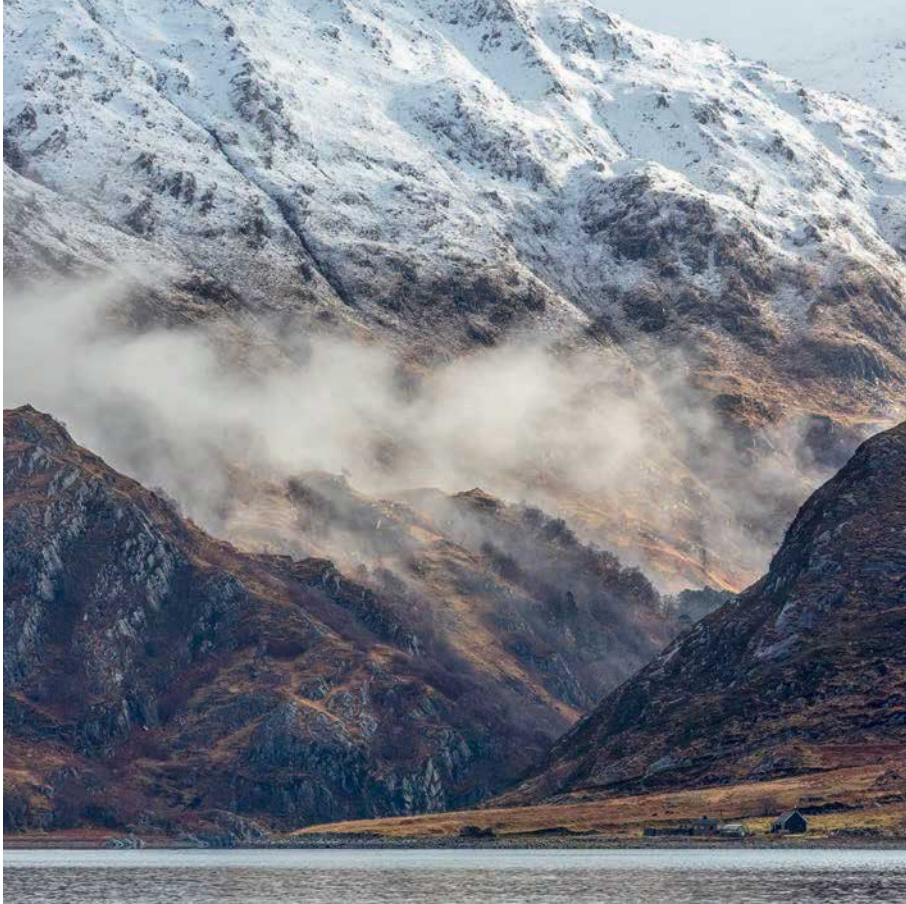
I prefer not to over-explain my images. They mean more to me when viewers bring their own feelings and stories to them. I'd love people to spend time with the photograph and let it create its own narrative in their imagination.

### **Was it luck or judgement?**

I don't really believe in luck when it comes to photography. Consistent good results come from time, preparation, and effort — repeatedly returning to a location and knowing your craft.

### **What advice would you give someone trying to make a similar shot?**

Be patient, take the time to really learn your craft, and focus on developing your own distinctive style. The best woodland images rarely happen on the first attempt.



## Quintin Lake

Quintin Lake is a Cheltenham-based British photographer and former architect specialising in landscape and architectural photography. His work focuses on themes of beauty, geology, and serenity. He is arguably best known for, *The Perimeter*, a five-year, 11,000KM walk around the coast of Britain, documenting his journey through 170,000+ photos. *The Perimeter* book is published by Hutchinson Heinemann in hardback and eBook, see more on his blog at [theperimeter.uk](http://theperimeter.uk). **Instagram @quintinlake**

### Tell us about this image.

Skiary, Loch Hourn from Knoydart, 2019: On a winter's day in the north of Knoydart, I wake to alternating rain and snow flurries by Loch Hourn. It's so cold that I walk quickly not only to cover miles, but simply to stay warm. As I round one headland, a magnificent sight emerges: a tiny, solitary, resilient cottage by the loch shore, above which rises a mountain like a never-ending wall of rock. Its upper half is snow-covered, with the transition at the snow line accentuated by a swirling sheet of mist. Looking through the viewfinder, a tingle runs up my spine as I capture what I know will be a special photograph. This is the kind of epic landscape I had no idea existed in the UK when I first set out from London, four years before this moment, on my 11,000km coastal circumnavigation, later documented in my book *The Perimeter*.

### What was happening just before and after this frame?

I'd been camping for several days in wet and bitterly cold conditions. Knoydart is a true wilderness peninsula in northwest Scotland. The only dwellings are the village of Inverie and the surrounding farms, both accessible

only by boat. The route I took on foot involved three days of walking through the aptly named Rough Bounds: a mountainous region of peat bog, cliffs, and remote terrain.

On this particular morning, wind-driven sleet made progress especially difficult, while mist continuously obscured and revealed the view ahead.

Afterwards, although I was thrilled with the image I had captured, the few minutes I'd spent standing still photographing had left me even colder, so I quickened my pace to Barrisdale bothy, a few miles away.

### What were the key creative decisions?

Framing was the key decision: deciding what to leave out to make the image stronger. I wanted to show a potent fragment of the scene rather than the whole landscape to emphasise texture and scale. If I had zoomed out to include the mountain tops, the image would have appeared more pictorial and less awe-inspiring because the imagination fills in what is cut off, and the contrast of the cottage and the mountain would be less apparent. I spent considerable time manoeuvring from side to side and adjusting focal length to compose the line of mist and

ridges so they created an intelligible image.

### Can you share the technical details?

A telephoto focal length of 200mm compressed the perspective, emphasising the relative scale of the mountains behind the cottage. An aperture of f13 ensured optimal sharpness for the deep depth of field I desired, essential for rendering the intricate textures that draw the eye through the image, especially when printed large, my end goal. Because conditions were so windy and light levels were relatively low, I needed a high shutter speed of 1/1000 second and an ISO of 800 to freeze the frame.

### What was the biggest challenge?

The weather was awful—sleet and gale-force winds. I had to remove the camera from my backpack during brief lulls in the weather, work quickly, and use nearby rocks for what little shelter they could provide. Reaching this location had already required three days of self-sufficient backpacking, so the challenge was as much about long-term mental endurance as it was about photography.

### What does this photograph mean to you?

For me, the image is about the resilience of humanity against the elemental forces of geological deep time and the natural processes that shape our world. It's also a celebration of the beauty of Scotland: of how rain and mist are just as integral to the landscape as granite and heather. In this photograph, deep time and transient weather blend, and in that union, landscapes can truly touch the soul - or at least they do for me!

### Was it luck or judgement?

I believe photographers make their own luck by consistently putting themselves out there. For me, long-distance walking maximises the time I'm 'out there', connected to the landscape, which in turn increases the likelihood of witnessing sublime, fleeting moments when land and weather collide in thrilling ways.

### What did this image teach you?

That even after hundreds of days exploring the same subject, there are always rewards waiting if you persevere and keep an open mind. The importance of maintaining the innocence that you haven't seen it all, and keeping at bay the cynicism.

### What advice would you give someone?

Undertake a multi-day walk somewhere that genuinely interests you, even if you don't know why yet. Understand that weather shapes the landscape's mood; while we cannot control it, we can be prepared for the fleeting moments of flux that often create the most powerful images.



# Street smarts

Sean Tucker and Joshua K Jackson are two of the world's most influential street photographers working today - here they share some of their secrets with **Graeme Green**

Oxford Street in London doesn't look like a good location for fishing. But in street photography terms, being a 'fisher' means finding a promising location and waiting for the right moment. 'Fishers wait in a space where they feel there's something in the composition,' explains Sean Tucker. 'I often find a space and wait to see what comes to me.'

Tucker describes how the process worked for one of his favourite images. 'There was a place on Oxford Street with dappled lighting from the trees on the siding. A gentleman was walking past - I spotted him coming down the road. He had white hair flying out at the back, but his face was in shadow. When the light hit his hair, it mirrored the dappled lighting in the background. There's also someone fiddling with a door, casting a shadow. I felt instinctually there was something good in this space, but the right subject had to come at the right time and things had to snap into place together.'

The opposite approach is a 'hunter', which is how fellow street photographer Joshua K. Jackson describes himself. 'I keep moving around, looking for subjects,' he says, pointing to an image taken in Islington on an otherwise quiet day, during the Covid pandemic, of a woman reading with her feet out of the window. 'I try not to be too fixated on one particular location or image, and to be fluid and reactive to whatever I see.'

Though their strategies differ, what

**Left: Echoes of Humanity © Joshua K Jackson**

**Below: Mansion House, London © Joshua K Jackson**

Jackson and Tucker both share an interest in pushing street photography as an art form. The two photographers have produced a book together, *The Art of Street Photography*, featuring their images, along with advice and inspiration for other photographers.

Street photography has become incredibly popular, with over 134 million #streetphotography posts on Instagram, and dedicated collectives and online groups around the world. Its rise has been helped by the accessibility of high-quality cameras on phones, as well as advances in

smaller, more discreet digital cameras. 'It hasn't got any barriers for entry for anyone who's a beginner,' says Jackson. 'You can use any camera, practice it anywhere, in a village or a big city, and it doesn't require you to travel or to have a specific subject to work with, so it's quite a democratic genre. So many people are getting into photography via street photography.'

Part of the appeal is that it's exciting - it demands a keen eye and fast reactions to changing scenes, shifting light and authentic, unscripted moments. 'It's the



challenge that I enjoy, trying to tap into something that is overlooked in the everyday,' explains Jackson. 'You're looking for little notes that are out of place in the song. Sometimes the most pedestrian subject matter can grab your attention in a way you can't explain.'

The two men - Jackson originally from Farnham in Surrey and Tucker originally from Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire - met in London in 2018. 'I reached out to Josh on Instagram because I liked his work,' Tucker recalls. 'We met for a coffee and went on an impromptu photo mission afterwards. We began shooting together fairly regularly.'

Though Tucker's now based in Kirkbymoorside, North Yorkshire, both men still see London as the most exciting city for street photography. Both also work on other photography to pay the bills, including portraiture, advertising and commercial work. 'I started doing street photography as an antidote to the day job,' says Tucker. 'I was doing product photography at the time, which is like a production



## 'Sometimes the most pedestrian subject matter can grab your attention in a way you can't explain'



line. You have to set the lights up and push through 70-100 products in a day at the same angle. Street photography felt more like intuitive photography. I like the unplanned, unprepared nature of it. I started on my phone. It was a way to fall back in love with photography, capturing whatever might happen. It sharpens you like no other genre of photography because you have to think so fast and react so quickly. It gives you a set of skills that helps with all the other types of photography you might be doing: using your camera quickly, how to frame on the fly and anticipating what's going to happen.'

Classic street photography often involves moments of action, human interactions, or juxtapositions between people and the environment that have a humorous or tender effect. Images can also hint at a larger story. 'We talk about something called the Curiosity Gap, where you leave room for the viewer to fill in the gaps,' says Jackson. 'There's a photo in the book of a phone booth where someone has written a message 'Your cocaine is killing me.' We're asking people to try to capture some sort of mood or

emotion, whether it's an echo of humanity or the marks we leave behind. It doesn't need to be explicit.'

Though some of their images are documents of everyday life, Jackson and Tucker prefer a more artistic approach. Citing the likes of Ernst Haas, Alex Webb and Harry Gruyaert as influences, they create images that are abstract or impressionistic, rather than journalistic, making creative use of light, shadow, colour, shapes, reflections.... 'By stepping away slightly from the documentary DNA of the genre, it gives you permission to play and experiment,' says Jackson. 'Maybe I'll use a lens one day that breaks with convention, such as a 90mm, or maybe you want to do a creative focus or slow shutter speed.'

'I like to pick up on what's temporary in a city,' he goes on. 'It could be the light, or some form of harmony or disharmony between things. One exercise is doing laps in a tiny area and noticing what's different each time you loop around. That state of flux creates opportunities for images.'

Tucker also particularly enjoys playing with light. 'That's the main

thing I use to abstract, using the fact that the camera doesn't have the dynamic range of my eye,' he tells me. 'If I'm exposing for the brightest thing in the image, I'm creating a lot of shadow, mood and mystery in the rest of the shot, and maybe some negative space. It's a trick I've nicked from cinema - this is how cinematographers work.'

Deciding which images from the many experiments work 'comes down to gut feel,' says Jackson. 'But there are some basic things, like 'Is there too much going on?' or 'Are there too many colours that jar?' You look and know immediately.'

'It's definitely not what Instagram thinks is right,' adds Tucker. 'There are so many times that I make an image that feels good, then I post it online and no one cares. As soon as you go down this more artistic route, you have to trust your own instincts in what's good and what isn't, and to make images over time, regardless of what people think, so that you have a body of work that gets its own aesthetic.'

For beginners or any photographers more used to the controlled environments of a studio

or the slower pace of landscape photography, working on the street does take time to get into the required mentality. 'There is no substitute for getting out and photographing a lot,' Tucker suggests. 'You have to be out as often as possible, walk as far as you can, take as many photos as possible. You learn how to take better images and how to find your style. While you're out there, you're also going to work out the things you're noticing that other people aren't. You have to listen to your personality and find your way.'

Being in an uncontrolled environment, often with crowds of people moving around, can be intimidating. 'It's normal and rational to feel some fear,' Jackson says.

It's also possible that people around you as you take photos might be intimidated. There are important conversations going on currently within street photography around ideas of privacy, consent and intrusion. With more impressionistic or expressive work, which doesn't focus on faces and easily identify subjects,



**Top left: Working the scene**

**Top right: Building layers of interest**

**Below right: New York**

**Below left: Getting over creative block**

**All images on this spread © Joshua K Jackson**



➤ photographing people going about their daily lives might be less of a problem. But whether they're anonymous in the final image or not, many people are uncomfortable with a random stranger on the street pointing a camera at them. 'In the UK, street photography is legal,' Tucker says. 'If you're in a public place, you don't have a right to privacy. But the other side is ethics, how you approach street photography and what lines you draw. I don't photograph children – it's not illegal, I just don't want to do that when I might make people feel uncomfortable. I don't photograph homeless people because I feel like I might be taking advantage of a difficult situation for somebody. I'm not telling other people they shouldn't do those. You have to figure out what your own ethical lines are.'

For both men, their intention behind each image is important.





**‘We don’t want to be noticed. It’s not because we’re trying to be sneaky. It’s because we want the honest, authentic moment.’**

‘I’m not out to make people look bad,’ says Jackson. ‘As long as my positive intent carries through in the image, I don’t think anyone will have a problem with it. Whereas if someone tripped over and you’re making an image of that, I don’t think that has a good intention behind it, because someone’s the butt of a joke.’

Jackson and Tucker both tend to be unintrusive and respectful in their approach, unlike more aggressive street photographers who get up-close and often leave startled people in their wake. ‘I saw a video of Mark Cohen on Youtube,’ says Jackson. ‘He’s within two feet of someone and he’s using a flash in someone’s face. It’s a bravado thing: ‘How close can I get?’ You’re almost photographing the person’s reaction to the photographer’s presence, whereas we tend to step back, let things evolve naturally and take more of an outsider’s view. It’s not a case of pointing a camera in someone’s face, as I don’t think that has any value whatsoever.’

‘We don’t want to be noticed,’ Tucker nods. ‘It’s not because we’re trying to be sneaky. It’s because we

want the honest moment. Joel Meyerowitz calls it ‘bruising the scene’. When people start to become aware of you and react, you’ve lost the authentic moment.’

The two street photographers are sympathetic to the idea that their mere presence might be unnerving for some people, something that the pair always aim to avoid if at all possible. ‘We’re in a world now that is a lot more suspicious of photographers in public,’ Tucker says. ‘Photography is so ubiquitous. Everyone has a decent camera in their phone. Where that image is going has become a bigger question over the last fifteen years than ever before with social media. That image might possibly be seen by millions of people. A lot of people’s fear or suspicion is legitimate. It’s therefore our job as street photographers to learn how to flex and change with the times. How can we keep doing this artform that we love, but doing it in a way that doesn’t make people feel that we have bad intentions or where our images are going to go viral and embarrass them somehow? Our intentions matter more than ever.’

AP

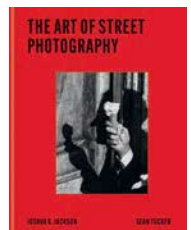
Top left: Shadow work

Top right: Timeless Monochrome

Left: Echoes of Humanity

Right: The Science of Seeing

All images on this spread © Sean Tucker



The Art of Street Photography by Joshua K. Jackson and Sean Tucker is published by Illex Press and is available to order now. ISBN: 9781840919950 See [www.joshkjackson.com](http://www.joshkjackson.com) and [www.seantucker.com](http://www.seantucker.com) photography

# Beyond the touchline

As audiences consume sport across multiple screens and platforms, the role of the sports photographer is rapidly evolving. Nottingham Trent University's groundbreaking BA, developed in partnership with Getty Images, is preparing students for a profession that now extends beyond the pitch.

**W**e've all seen the sports photographer sitting pitch side in all weathers tracking the action, alert to each decisive moment. What's required from the modern sports photographer however, has dramatically changed. When Jonathan Worth, Principal Lecturer in Photography at Nottingham Trent University (NTU), began drafting the UK's first dedicated BA in sports photography course three years ago, he believed that universities risked sending students into a model of sports photography that no longer existed.

Worth's students are as likely to be editing images in real time from a major sporting event as they are

shooting one. They're being taught about rigging up remote cameras, managing live metadata streams and working within the high-pressure environments of world sport. Worth argues that today's audiences don't necessarily experience sport as a fixed broadcast. The screens they watch it on are multiple, highlights consumed in seconds, sports heroes are followed in detail via behind-the-scenes footage and social feeds.

Worth developed the course in consultation with an expert industry panel and pulled in Getty's Director of Sport Content, Laurence Griffiths. The premise was simple: if the audience's experience of sport has changed, then the photographer's role must change with it. 'He was

**Right: Harry Kane of England is congratulated by Phil Foden after scoring the second goal during the UEFA Euro 2020 Championship Semi-final match between England and Denmark at Wembley Stadium on July 07, 2021 in London, England. © Laurence Griffiths/Getty Images**



wide open to that and saw the relevance. Yes, of course you want to move into moving images. Yes, of course you need sound. Yes of course, we should be looking at 3D and immersive experiences. If the photographer doesn't provide them, then who is?' explains Worth.

The expectation is for content to move smoothly between still images, video and immersive formats. A generation has grown up experiencing sport through gaming consoles, inhabiting the action rather than observing it. 'Given that anyone with a smart mobile device is a potential photographer, a witness photographer, publisher, given that the mobile devices can capture 3D as quickly as they can capture 2D and render that in real time. Why would the viewer of the near future watch sport from the terraces when they could watch it immersively through the eyes of Lionel Messi or Lewis Hamilton? If



**Left: Nottingham Trent University's BA Sports Photography students have engaged in exclusive, high-profile experiences at St George's Park National Football Centre in Burton upon Trent**



anyone with a smartphone can capture and publish a moment, then what does the professional photographer offer that is different?' reflects Worth.

He believes the answer is building a broad visual literacy where students understand workflow, distribution and emerging forms of storytelling. The course was structured around what he describes as the 'capture and immersive experience.' Alongside conventional image making, students are encouraged to think about how sport might be experienced in the future.

The approach resonated with Griffiths. A multi-award winning sports photographer and videographer, he has witnessed the job of photographer expand. Teams at major tournaments work in tandem - photographers, editors and technicians. Images are transmitted from remote cameras from every

nook within stadiums and edited live as the drama unfolds and distributed globally within minutes. Photographers are increasingly expected to understand video, audio and hybrid forms of storytelling alongside stills.

Both Worth and Griffiths believe bringing that reality into the classroom is necessary. Their collaboration evolved beyond designing the curriculum. Since the course began, Getty Images has opened its doors to students in ways rarely available to undergraduates. Griffiths has delivered a series of masterclasses and one-to-one portfolio reviews.

Giving students real time experience, placing them at the heart of elite sports coverage has been a significant shift. 'I came from humble beginnings. I had some incredible people looking after me and mentoring me and supporting me and passing on knowledge. And I



**Laurence Griffiths,**  
Director, Sport  
Content, Editing  
and Talent  
Development at  
Getty Images

have always thought, if I was ever in a position to do the same, then I would and this seemed like a really good opportunity to do that,' remembers Griffiths.

NTU students have been stationed not only on the pitch side but in the live editing room, where images from agency photographers are selected, colour-corrected, captioned and transmitted in





real time. 'They see very quickly that it isn't just about taking a great picture. It's about understanding what happens to that picture next, how fast it moves, who needs it, how it's described, how it lives in the system,' says Griffiths.

Getty's connections are vast and students have been granted extended access to England's football training camps and to major rugby fixtures. It's not a box tick gesture, it's immersive and sustained. On several occasions they have worked alongside experienced agency photographers, examining long-lens positioning, remote camera placement and match-day logistics. 'If you're in a stadium environment, it changes everything you know, your approach, the elements, the atmosphere, the pressure that that builds,' explains Griffiths.

For Griffiths, the partnership with NTU is as much about widening access as sharpening skills. He acknowledges sports photography has long been dominated by men and by those able to navigate its informal networks. 'If we want the industry to reflect the sport it covers, we have to think about who gets through the door and how,' is his analysis. 'We're looking for raw talent. We're looking for a willingness to learn and just a really good attitude from people. And I think that goes a hell of a long way,' he adds.

The intake on NTU's sports photography course is roughly a 50-50 gender split. It's unusual. Worth believes quotas alone are not enough but building confidence,

opportunity and visible pathways. Shanni Davis, now in her second year, arrived on the course with an enthusiasm for photography. Through the course and with guidance from Griffiths she was able to navigate the accreditation processes. 'Once students understand how the system works, they realise they belong in it,' suggests Worth.

As a former competitive ice skater, Shanni understood the dedication and rhythms of competition. Entering professional arenas as a photographer felt very different. 'You're suddenly in a room where everyone seems to know each other. They've been doing it for years. You're trying to work out where you fit,' she says.

**Above: Jutta Verkest of Team Belgium competes in the floor exercise on day two of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at Ariake Gymnastics Centre on July 25, 2021 in Tokyo, Japan. © Laurence Griffiths/Getty Images**

**Below: Shanni Davis at the NTU Editing Module**



Shanni began pitching independently, securing access at the British Gymnastics Championship in Liverpool. It became a turning point. She travelled on the train alone, without the protective cloak of being amongst classmates. She began to see the profession as something tangible. 'Whatever I learn from this course, I'll be able to take it into any other niche. I'm still not set on where I want to take it after university. My own business in photography would be ideal, but it's a lot of work to get there. It's something that I've started from year one, trying to find and learn more of the business side,' she says.

Shanni is the first from her family to attend University. Her growing independence instilled the confidence to enter some of her images into international competitions. From tens of thousands of images, three were shortlisted at the World Sports Photography Awards, one winning silver capturing the winning Women's Rugby team celebrating on the pitch at Twickenham Stadium. 'It made me realise it's not just about being there. It's about trusting your eye,' she says.

Worth is keen to point out other students on the course produced equally impactful photographs but were too shy to submit. A Black woman in sports photography, Shanni resists being defined by it. 'I don't think I shoot differently because I'm a woman. I shoot differently because I'm me,' she says.



To be the best you need to use the best. A professional camera body capable of high frame rates and rapid transmission paired with a long lens can amount to thousands of pounds, obliterating student budgets. Even those with loans and part-time jobs, industry costs are prohibitive. 'It's not a genre you can practise properly with an entry-level kit. You simply can't access certain moments without the tools,' explains Worth.

With the help of Nikon Ambassador Griffiths, the course secured access to ex-demo Nikon cameras and lenses at a fraction of their high street price. The number of students able to experience

photographing simultaneously at sporting fixtures operating with professional-grade equipment increased.

The emphasis isn't on brand alignment but on removing disadvantages. Sports photography in the past has relied on informal internships, apprenticeship models, freelance risk and personal investment. Without financial backing or industry contacts, students can struggle to break through. Embedding them inside professional environments, with the appropriate kit and guidance, attempts to level the playing field. Griffiths believes Getty can also



**Top left: England defeat Canada at the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup. © Shanni Davis**

**Above, right: NTU students pitch side ready to capture the action.**

**Below: Players of New Zealand perform the Haka. © Shanni Davis**

benefit from expanding the pool. 'We need people who understand how modern sport is consumed. That means technical fluency but also adaptability.'

The first full cohort at NTU has yet to graduate. Some students have already begun dipping their toe into paid freelance work alongside their studies. For Worth, that affirms his original vision - sports photography education should anticipate the profession's next iteration. He acknowledges Griffiths input. 'He has opened my eyes, our







**Far left: Portfolio image of women's rugby captured by NTU student Amelie Rudkin**

**Left: NTU student Amelie Rudkin**



**Above: NTU student Leah Somerset and below, one of her sports portfolio images.**

► eyes to the raft of opportunities for people who are visually and digitally literate. It's not just about camera operation, there's so many jobs out there that we just didn't know were an option. Transferable skills just need tweaking to get you in there. The benefits we have derived from the relationship have been massive.'

The sports photographer as hero, hunched behind the goal, long lens poised for that front page moment remains significant but is only part of the story. At the highest levels of competition, sport is now a live, global content stream. Photographers are embedded in

highly skilled, coordinated teams. Images are fed directly to editing desks, into social media channels and to broadcast partners. Laptops trigger remote cameras. The lines between still and moving images continue to shift.

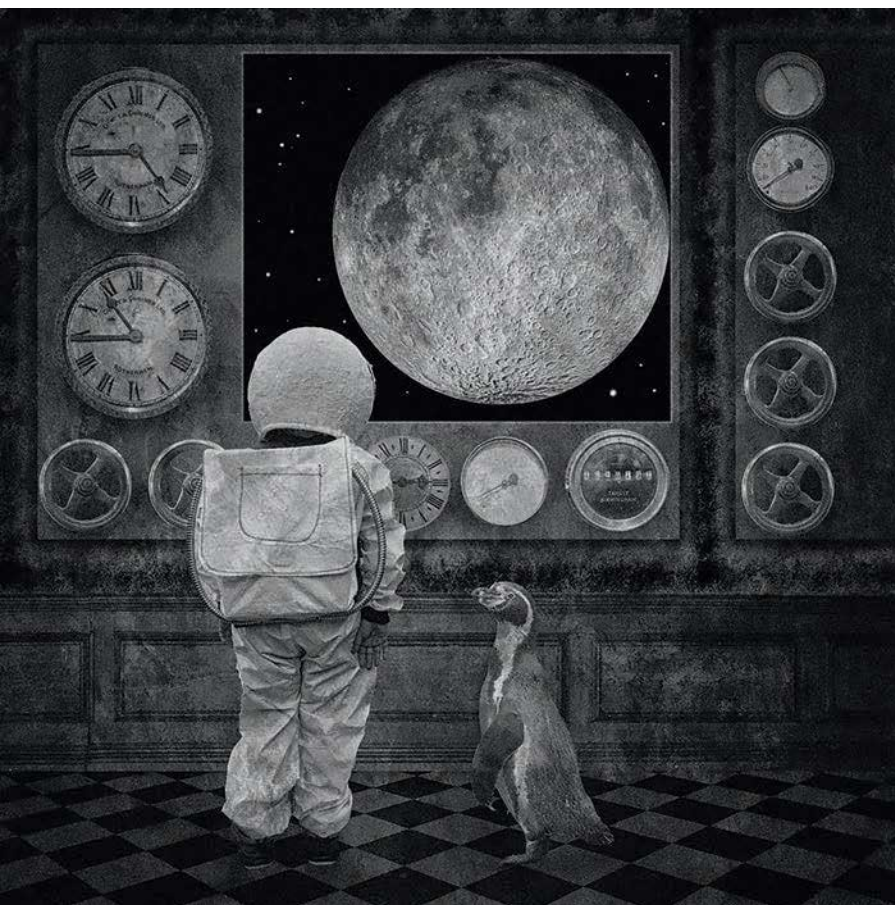
Worth and his team at NTU are dedicated to preparing students to not only survive but thrive post-University. 'If the audience's experience has changed, the role has to change too,' he says. Griffiths sees the same evolution from the agency side. Technical skill remains paramount but so is an understanding of workflow, collaboration and audience

behaviour. He suggests a successful sports photographer will need to be as adept in an editing suite as on a touchline and as aware of distribution as composition.

For students at NTU, that future is within their grasp. It's introduced in class, rehearsed at matches and inside live environments in the very profession they hope to enter. Whether NTU's model becomes the education norm remains to be seen. As sport continues to fragment across platforms and formats, photography education has to adapt. The touchline photographer will likely remain, but it's not the only destination.

AP





# Shoot for the moon

Seeing her grandson dressed in a homemade spacesuit inspired Wendy Irwin to create a pop-up book celebrating his adventures. **Tracy Calder** hears the story behind her brilliant and inspiring project



## Wendy Irwin

Wendy Irwin has been taking pictures since she was a child when her uncle bought her a Kodak Instamatic. When she retired from her career teaching art and design, she joined a camera club where she learned Photoshop skills and became interested in making composites. Many of her composites feature her grandson, Humphrey, who loves dressing up and going on adventures.

If you were a child in the 1970s, you will no doubt remember the cartoon series Mr Benn. The concept was pretty straightforward: a man in a bowler hat would enter a costume shop and be greeted 'as if by magic' by a shopkeeper. Having selected a costume, he would disappear into the fitting room, put on the clothes and walk through a door that 'led to adventure'. Mr Benn was wonderful. It offered excitement, escapism and comfort. One day this businessman was a knight clearing the name of a misunderstood dragon, the next he was a balloonist abandoning a race to assist a fellow contestant. It was Thursday afternoon chicken soup magic.

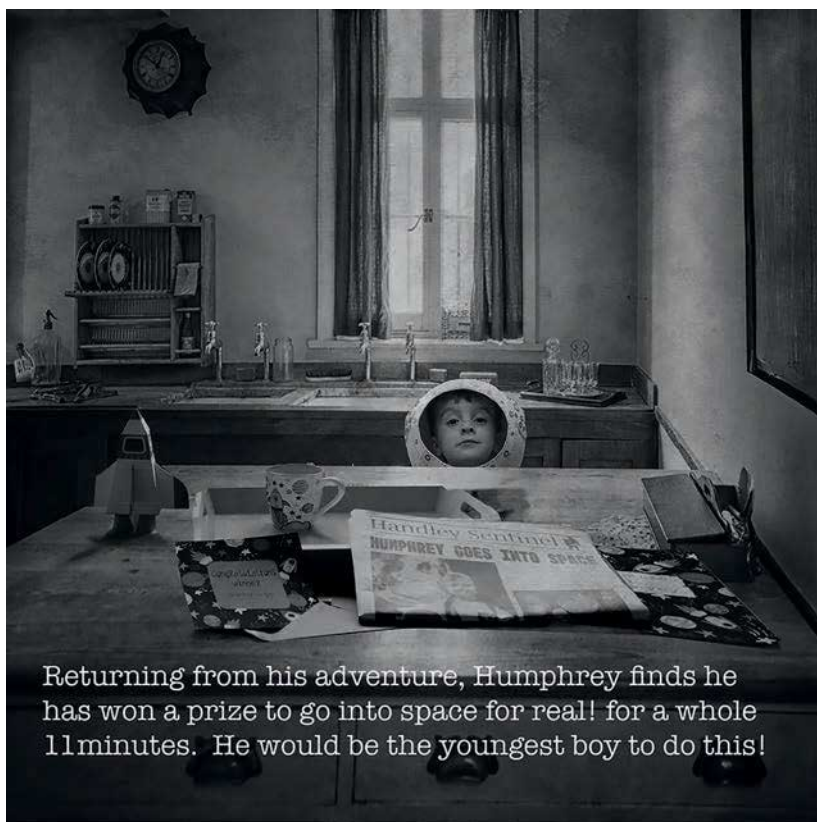
### An idea is born

Photographer Wendy Irwin is both a fan of Mr Benn and a fan of adventure. In 2024, she took her grandson, Humphrey, to see Cheadle Moon, a celebration of the life and achievements of astronomer and selenographer Mary Adela Blagg at St Giles the Abbot church in Cheadle. To keep children amused, the organisers had laid out some fancy-dress. 'Humphrey got dressed up in a spaceman suit,' recalls Wendy. 'He loved it so much he wore it around the church posing in front of the moon [an art installation by Luke Jerram] and doing all sorts of movements.'

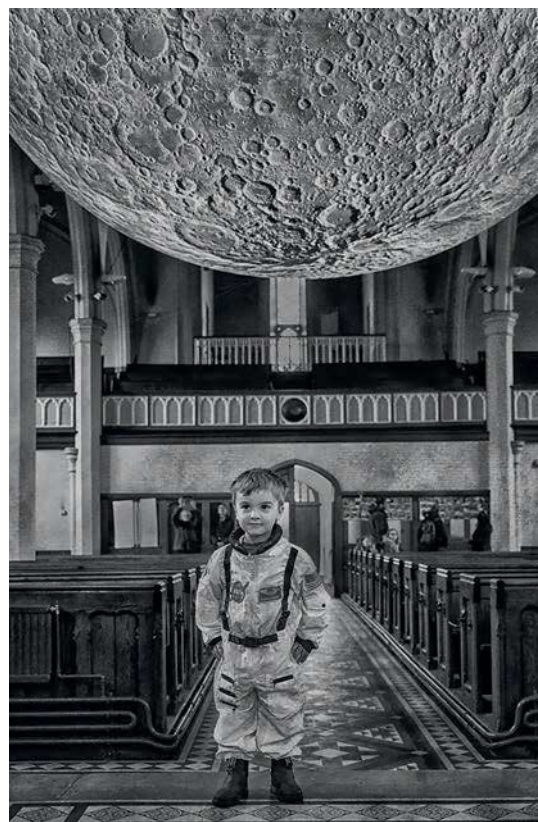
### The first cut

When Wendy got home, she asked her husband if he had any work overalls that she could cut up to make Humphrey a spacesuit of his own. 'I used to be a textiles teacher,' she explains, 'but later on I taught all sorts of things: resistant materials, graphic design etc.' Having fashioned him a spacesuit, Wendy made Humphrey a helmet out of papier-mâché and a fake cooling system out of old shower tubing. The project soon became a family affair. 'My daughter designed some badges which I had printed on to fabric and sewed on,' she reveals.





Returning from his adventure, Humphrey finds he has won a prize to go into space for real! for a whole 11 minutes. He would be the youngest boy to do this!



### Get it down

Much to Wendy's delight, Humphrey adored his new spacesuit. Seeing him all dressed up, she decided it would be fun to make a pop-up book featuring composite images of Humphrey and his adventures as a space explorer. Having taught basic paper engineering at school, she knew it wasn't going to be easy. 'I sensed it was going to be a massive project, so I kept putting it off,' she laughs. To try and anticipate some of the problems, she sketched ideas in a notebook and decided to make a two-dimensional version first. 'If I get an idea in my head I just try and get it down on paper,' she says, holding up a journal full of storyboards and crossings out.

### Condensing the story

Most pop-up books comprise five or six spreads, so the first challenge for Wendy was dealing with limited space. 'I had to condense the story so it could be told across just five spreads,' she recalls. To make the most of each page, she carefully mapped out pop-up elements, fold-out sections and even doors and windows leading to other parts of the book. Using this method, it wasn't long before key components were settled on. After that, Wendy set about gathering all the elements she needed to tell her story.

### Posing and persuasion

Obviously, images of Humphrey were paramount. 'He was four at the time so persuading him to get dressed up and do all of the different poses I needed took time and a bit of bribery,' laughs Wendy.



**Far left: The space ship**

**Left: Reading Mr Benn**

**Above left: The newspaper I made is in shot**

**Above right: in front of Luke Jerram's Moon installation in Cheadle**

**Above: I designed the wall paper in ProCreate**

Luckily, Humphrey enjoys being part of the creative process. 'A few years ago, I made a composite featuring him in a tin bath,' she recalls. 'I added a seagull, a fishing rod and a few fish jumping out of the water, and it did really well for me.' On the odd occasion, Wendy might use AI as a springboard. 'If I get stuck, I type something in and just see what comes up,' she says. 'It makes it easier if you've got something to start you off.' Alongside images of Humphrey in his spacesuit, Wendy took pictures of floors, toys, textures and details of Jerram's moon installation to use in her composites.

### Gathering images

As pop-up elements stand clear of the page, they can be seen from all angles, which presented Wendy with a problem. 'I didn't want people to see too much white paper, so I decided to add texture, pattern or something else on the back of each part,' she explains. But gathering images to decorate these 3D elements proved challenging. 'St Giles the Abbot church was one of the first things I tackled,' she recalls. 'I took pictures of the front, the sides and the tower, but as it stands on a hill, I couldn't get a shot of the roof!' As a result, Wendy photographed another church roof of a similar age and used that as a stand-in.

### Finding inspiration

When it came to the mechanics, Wendy turned to her favourite pop-up books for inspiration. Paddington Pop-Up London is high on her list, but the work of Jan Pienkowski is hard to beat. Her online search started with Instagram, where she found the work of pop-up artist Matthew Reinhart. 'He does some great things with paper,' she explains. 'He uses a lot of doors which I took inspiration from.' To sharpen her skills, Wendy also completed a few online courses. 'These gave me the confidence to tackle slightly more complicated things,' she reveals.

### Making test models

Wendy made models out of old envelopes and scrap paper to check everything worked before committing herself to the final designs. 'It's important to give yourself time to make mistakes,' she advises. By way of an example, she turns to a spread with a concertina pop-up element, and holds it up to the camera. 'I made the fan shape and drew a moon on it but when I opened it out the moon was an odd shape,' she explains, 'I had to manipulate the design to make sure it stayed



Right, top: Pop up St Giles Church, Cheadle; Right, below: Inside the pop up space ship featuring a rotating space ship going round the moon

## WENDY'S TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL POP-UP PHOTO BOOKS



### Keep a sketchbook

Use a sketchbook to storyboard ideas. It doesn't matter if you can draw or not, just get your ideas out of your head and onto the paper. Cross things out, add things in, experiment. These sketchbooks will develop and change over the course of your project.



### Do your research

Look at other pop-up books for inspiration – Wendy's favourites include Paddington Pop-Up London, Jan Pienkowski's Dinner Time and Haunted House. She also turned to Instagram for ideas, where she found the work of Matthew Reinhart, among others.



### Condense the story

For a pop-up book you need to be able to tell the story in just five or six spreads, so think carefully about what's going to go on each page before you start. Wendy found it useful to make paper models to try things out before committing herself.

## EQUIPMENT

Wendy's main camera is a Sony A7R IV, but for gathering textures and details she often uses a Sony RX100 VI. 'The RX100 VI has 20.1 megapixels, so for a lot of the bits and pieces I take it's great,' she suggests. Recently, she's started taking pictures on her phone too. 'I've always got my phone with me, so if I see a good sky or texture I can capture it straight away,' she explains. Wendy uses Photoshop for her composites and Affinity Publisher for book designs. The cover of Humphrey's Adventures - to the Moon and Back was made using Procreate. Wendy prints with an Epson P700.



Humphrey returned through the door back to Nan's House

circular.' Most of the composites were created in Photoshop, but Wendy also uses Affinity Publishing for book designs.

### Next steps

It took Wendy about a year to make both the standard and pop-up versions of Humphrey's Adventures - to the Moon and Back, but all the

cutting, folding and sticking was worth it. Humphrey is delighted that his space adventures have been recorded in 3D, and Wendy has plans for more Mr Benn style tales. 'I've just made Humphrey a chef's outfit with chequered trousers and a white double-breasted top, so he wants me to make a book with him as a chef,' she smiles. As if by magic, Wendy will make it happen.



### Cover all sides

Pop-up elements can often be seen from all sides, so make sure you have plenty of pictures to cover the back, front and sides of anything you show in three-dimensions.



### Look at surfaces

You never know when you'll need a patch of grass, piece of wallpaper or section of flooring for a composite, so take plenty of detail shots. Wendy often creates her own textured layers to use in composites.



### Give yourself time

Pop-up books require a lot of problem-solving. Remember that any pop-up elements need to fold inside the book without sticking out of the sides. If it gets too much, put the project aside for a while and come back to it.



## At a glance

£869

- 20.1 MP, 1-in type sensor
- 24-360mm equivalent f/3.3-6.4 lens
- ISO 125 - 12,800 (standard)
- Up to 10fps shooting
- 3in, 1.84m-dot fixed touchscreen
- 4K 30p video recording

# Panasonic Lumix TZ300

Panasonic's premium travel zoom compact has been reborn, but with one key feature missing.

**Andy Westlake** puts it to the test



## For and against

- ➕ Small, genuinely pocketable size
- ➕ Extremely versatile zoom range
- ➕ Good build quality and responsive operation
- ➕ Delivers decent image quality in most situations
- ➖ No electronic viewfinder
- ➖ Screen is fixed, not tilting
- ➖ No subject recognition autofocus
- ➖ 4K video is heavily cropped

## Data file

Sensor	20MP BSI-CMOS, 13.2 x 8.8mm
Output size	5472x3648
Focal length mag	2.7x
Lens	24-360mm equivalent, f/3.3-6.4
Shutter speeds	60-1/2,000sec (mechanical); 1-1/16,000 (electronic)
Sensitivity	ISO 125 - 12,800 (standard); ISO 80-25,600 (extended)
Exposure modes	P, A, S, M, Auto, Scene
Metering	Multi / Centre weighted / Spot
Exposure comp	+/-5 EV in 0.3 EV steps
Continuous shooting	10fps (AF-S); 6fps (AF-C, live view)
Screen	3in, 1.84m-dot fixed touchscreen LCD
Viewfinder	None
AF points	49
Video	4K 30fps (1.4x crop); Full HD 120fps
External mic	None
Memory card	UHS-I SD
Power	DMW-BLG10E
Battery life	360 shots
Dimensions	111.2 x 66.4 x 45.2 mm

The Lumix TZ300 is the latest iteration of Panasonic's premium 'travel zoom' camera. This means it places a versatile long zoom lens into a compact body that'll slip easily into a small bag or a jacket pocket. And because it uses a larger 1-in type sensor than its cheaper sibling, the TZ99, it should deliver noticeably better image quality.

In most respects, the TZ300 is the same camera as its predecessor, the TZ200 from 2018. It employs the same 24-360mm equivalent lens and 20MP sensor, and essentially the same body design. But it now has a USB-C port for charging, rather than micro-USB, while a couple of the button functions have been reassigned to better suit current tastes.

There is, however, one glaring

difference. Because where the TZ200 had a small electronic viewfinder in one corner, on the TZ300 there's just a sad, empty space. And unlike on the TZ99, the rear screen is fixed and doesn't tilt. As a result, whenever you're taking pictures, you have to hold the camera up and out in front of you to see the screen. A lot of photographers don't like this way of shooting.

But the thing is, if you want to buy a new premium zoom camera right now, the TZ300 doesn't have a whole lot of competition. Canon offers the PowerShot G7 X Mark III with a much shorter 24-100mm equivalent lens, tilting rear screen, and enthusiast-friendly controls at about the same price (although good luck finding one in stock). Then there's the Sony RX100 VII, which has a 24-200mm equivalent zoom,

With its pocket-friendly size,  
the TZ300 is ideal for travel  
Panasonic TZ300, 24mm equivalent,  
1/1000sec at f/5, ISO 125



pop-up viewfinder and tilting rear screen, but is considerably more expensive. So how does the TZ300 stack up against its competitors that you can actually buy right now?

## Features

Without doubt the TZ300's standout feature is its 24-360mm equivalent optically stabilised zoom lens, which is by the far longest on any pocket camera with a 1in sensor. This means that it can tackle almost any kind of subject, from landscape and architecture at wideangle, through to sports, action and wildlife at telephoto. The minimum focus distance is 50-100cm in normal shooting, but switch to macro mode, and this drops to as close as 3cm from the front element at wideangle. As a result, it's not at

all bad for close-ups, either.

Optically, the lens is constructed using 13 elements in 11 groups, including 1 aspherical ED lens, 5 aspherical lenses, and 3 ED lenses. Its maximum aperture is f/3.3-6.4, but the minimum aperture is f/8. This is entirely sensible with a 1-in sensor, as f/8 will suffer the same degree of diffraction blurring as f/22 on full-frame. But it does mean that there's not a whole lot of adjustment to play with for creative effect.

Images are recorded using a 20.1MP backside-illuminated 1-in type sensor. It provides a standard sensitivity range of ISO 125-25,600, which is expandable to ISO 80-25,600. Images can be shot at up to 10 frames per second at full resolution, or 6fps with continuous autofocus and live view between frames.

One area where the design shows its age lies with autofocus. The TZ300 still employs the firm's old Depth From Defocus (DFD) technology, in contrast to Panasonic's recent mirrorless models which have switched to phase detection instead. There's also no subject recognition on board, beyond face detection for people. But that long zoom lens means that animal and vehicle detection could be genuinely useful on this camera.

Unlike most of Panasonic's recent models, the TZ300 is very much tailored towards shooting stills rather than video. You can record in 4K at 30fps, but just like on the TZ200, this comes with a significant 1.4x crop, resulting in a 34-500mm equivalent view. There's no way of using an external microphone for higher quality sound, either.

This being 2026, Panasonic has placed JPEG colour modes very much to the fore. These get their own position on the mode dial, plus an onscreen touch button, plus a physical button to switch them on or off in any exposure modes, which feels like overkill to me. However, unlike the firm's latest cameras, the TZ300 doesn't support LUTs, so instead it's all about decade-old creative filter effects. Most of these feel quite cliched, to be honest, but there are some nice monochrome options that are worth trying.

Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are built-in for smartphone connectivity, but this uses Panasonic's older Image App, rather than the Lumix Lab app employed by its more recent cameras. You still get the most important functionality, though. You can use your



That long zoom lens is good for relatively tame wildlife  
Panasonic TZ300, 277mm equivalent,  
1/200sec at f/6.3, ISO 2500

phone as either a simple remote release via Bluetooth, or a comprehensive remote control over Wi-Fi, including live view. Then after shooting, you can copy your favourite photos to your phone for sharing.

### Build and Handling

In your hand, the TZ300 comes across as a premium product, with a solid-feeling metal front and top. The back / baseplate has a slightly different colour and texture, though, and now appears to be plastic. But overall, this feels like a camera that should survive the odd bit of careless handling easily enough.

At 111 x 66 x 45mm with the lens retracted and 337g with the battery and card, this is also a camera that you can easily carry around all day, every day, without being weighed down. Most of the time, I simply slipped it into a jacket pocket. It won't take up much space in a bag, either.

Panasonic has fitted a small handgrip on the front, with a textured rubber grip. There's also a rubberised thumb rest on the

back. Together these work wonders, and unlike some other small cameras (most obviously the Sony RX100 VII), I was quite happy carrying the TZ300 around one-handed, secured by a wrist strap.

A mode dial on top includes the usual PASM options for experienced photographers, plus full auto and scene modes for more casual users. You even get two custom positions where you can save camera setups for different shooting scenarios, which is actually pretty useful. I set one up for shooting moving subjects such as wildlife, with C-AF tracking and continuous shooting, and the other for portraits with face detection enabled.

There's a control dial on top beside your thumb, plus a smoothly rotating ring around the lens, for changing exposure settings. But what you'll quickly find is that the TZ300 doesn't offer a whole lot of creative freedom, outside of that vast zoom range. The lens doesn't give much control over depth of field, and most of the time

I found myself shooting with the aperture wide open to keep the ISO as low as possible and minimise diffraction blurring. For general photography I often ended up shooting in program mode, which I rarely use on other cameras.

A conventional lever around the shutter button controls the zoom. Unfortunately, though, it's still every bit as twitchy as that on the TZ200. So while you can get from one end of the zoom to the other very quickly, the problem is that you can't hit intermediate settings with any kind of certainty. This means it's difficult to achieve precise compositions.

Help is at hand, though, in the shape of that lens ring, which can also be configured to operate the zoom, and which gives finer control over composition. Most of the time that lens ring simply duplicates the function of the top dial anyway, so you don't lose much by reassigning it. Another option is to set the zoom lever to step zoom, so it selects between familiar-looking focal lengths.

Exposure compensation is accessed by pressing the 'up' key

on the d-pad, with the other three buttons setting focus mode, drive mode and white balance.

Panasonic clearly expects you to use Auto ISO all the time, but I reconfigured the Fn1 button for direct access to ISO. Overall, though, I think this really isn't a camera for photographers who like to tinker with their settings



The small size and quiet shutter enable discreet street shooting  
Panasonic TZ300, 48mm equivalent,  
1/100sec at f/4.2, ISO 125

every shot, although the manual control is there when you need it.

## Viewfinder and screen

As I mentioned at the start of this review, the TZ300 is entirely reliant on its rear screen for composition. The screen is fixed, too, so you can't tilt it up for waist-level shooting, or flip it forwards for selfies. And unlike the TZ200, there's no viewfinder.

To be fair, the screen is pretty much what I'd expect to get on a current compact camera. It's a 3-in, 1.84m-dot unit, which makes it higher resolution than the TZ200's was. It does a good job of previewing colour and exposure over a +/-3 stop range, and it offers all the usual compositional aids, including gridlines and an electronic level.

But here's the thing. Every time you want to take a picture, you have to hold the camera up and out in front of you to see the screen. Unfortunately, though, that screen is really difficult to make out in sunlight, even when set to its maximum brightness. Yet this is precisely when you're most likely to want to use the camera. When I reviewed the TZ200 I used the viewfinder most of the time for exactly this reason, and it's pretty galling that the TZ300 is such a clear step backwards.

Likewise, if you want to take photos at high or low angles, then on the TZ200 that's essentially

just guesswork. I ended up taking loads of shots and hoping one would work out. Sometimes it did, but more often, it didn't.

## Autofocus

When it comes to autofocus, the TZ300 again inherits exactly the same setup from the TZ200. In 2018, it was close to being state-of-the-art, but in 2026 the lack of either phase detection or subject recognition makes it look rather dated. In practice, though, it still works pretty well, within certain limitations.

For static subjects, you just tap the screen to position the focus point. The AF area box can be positioned anywhere you want within the frame and set to 8 different sizes. Or if you're feeling lazy, you can just let the camera select the best focus point for you, which usually means the closest.

For when you're photographing people, face detection is available. The camera will outline a detected face and even place a crosshair over an eye. If there are two people in a scene, the camera will focus on the closer one and draw brackets around the other. But there's no obvious way to tell it shift its attention specifically onto that second person.

There's also a tracking mode for moving subjects, which will aim to follow an object around the frame based on

# Focal points

To all intents and purposes, the TZ300 is the same camera as the TZ200, but without a viewfinder

## Power

Panasonic's long-running DMW-BLG10E battery should last 360 shots, and is recharged via USB-C.

## Ports

A door on the handgrip conceals a USB-C port for data and charging, plus micro-HDMI for video out.

## Storage

There's a single SD card slot alongside the battery. It accepts both UHS-I and UHS-II cards, but it can't take advantage of the faster write speeds of the latter.



## Flash

A small flash pops up from the top-plate, released by a sliding catch. Panasonic specifies a maximum range of 6.8m at wideangle and 3.9m at telephoto.

## Zoom focus assist 4K Photo

Pressing the Fn2 button zooms the lens out temporarily, so you can reacquire a subject that's left the frame. Releasing the button zooms back in again.

This mode allows 8MP still images to be captured at up to 30 frames per second with a 1.4x crop. This includes a pre-burst mode for unpredictable subjects.



colour and pattern. I found that this worked well for relatively large and predictable subjects such as vehicles. But it struggles with smaller, more erratic subjects such as wildlife.

Overall, the autofocus works well in good light when faced with static or slowly moving subjects. But it does slow down noticeably when light levels drop. And unsurprisingly, it's no match for any current mirrorless model with faster moving subjects.

## Performance

In practical use, the TZ300 is a quick and responsive performer. It takes a second or so for the lens to extend and be set for shooting after you flick the power switch, but chances are it'll be ready to go by the time you have the camera held up in front of you for shooting. If you turn off the operational beeps and the fake shutter sounds, it's essentially silent, too.

Operation is snappy enough, with the camera responding instantly to the buttons and the touchscreen. If I have one irritation, though, is that you can't tap the screen to set the focus point when the focal length display is shown onscreen. And it persists for a second whenever you've adjusted the zoom, which can slow down operation just enough to be annoying.

I've been happy with the battery life, though. Panasonic specifies 360 shots per charge, which I think is a fair representation of what you're likely to get when taking single frames at a time. I never had the battery run out on me during the course of this review, and you can top up from a powerbank during breaks in shooting. The BLG10 battery has been around for a long time, too, so spares are easy to source (£50), with cheap third-party clones widely available too.

Panasonic's in-lens optical stabilisation works well both for keeping your composition steady and your images sharp at the long end of zoom. It also lets you shoot with fairly slow shutter speeds hand-held at the wide end, although the lack of rotational correction means it can't match in-body stabilisation

systems in this respect. Even so, I was able to get acceptable results shooting at 1/5sec at wideangle, which was fine for shooting city scenes at dusk.

As for continuous shooting performance, it's pretty impressive for a pocket camera. I'd recommend setting the camera to continuous autofocus (AFC) and the 'M' Burst setting. Then you'll get live view between frames, which makes it much easier to follow motion. Used this way, it's possible to shoot a burst of 28 frames at about 6fps. The camera can slow down considerably if it needs to make large focus adjustments between shots, but I'd rather have fewer properly sharp images than loads which are mostly out-of-focus.

I've found Panasonic's metering to be generally reliable, giving consistently well-judged exposures. It can get thrown occasionally, though, for example clipping highlights in bright, high-contrast conditions, and underexposing strongly backlit subjects. In these situations, you can intervene with a touch of exposure compensation – but that assumes you can see the screen clearly enough.

Similarly, auto white balance works well most of the time, especially when shooting outdoors in daylight. But things can go awry under artificial or fixed lighting, or in tricky scenarios such as woodland. As always, the best option then is to shoot in raw and either use in-camera raw conversion after shooting, or process your files on a computer.

I'm not a huge fan of the default Standard Photo Style, which I find a touch bland. I'd probably switch to Vivid most of the time if were planning on sharing camera JPEGs on social media, although you have to be wary that it can do odd things to skin tones. If you like to shoot in black & white, I think the L. Monochrome option gives really nice results.

## Image quality

When it comes to image quality, the TZ300 is a camera for which you need to set realistic expectations. Its 1-in sensor may

be large for a compact, but it's rather smaller than those found in interchangeable-lens cameras. Likewise, it has an extremely ambitious lens whose f/3.3-6.4 maximum aperture is equivalent to f/9-17 in full-frame terms, which means that resolution is limited by diffraction blurring over much of the zoom range. As a result, you simply can't expect the kind of noise-free, super-detailed images that we've become used to seeing from modern mirrorless cameras, particularly when examining them close-up onscreen.

That said, the sensor delivers pretty clean images at ISO 125, with only a little luminance noise visible when looking at evenly toned areas. Noise does increase visibly the moment you start to go up through the sensitivity range, but I was still entirely happy using settings up to ISO 1600 as a matter of course. This seems to be the highest the camera is prepared to use as a matter of course in Auto ISO.

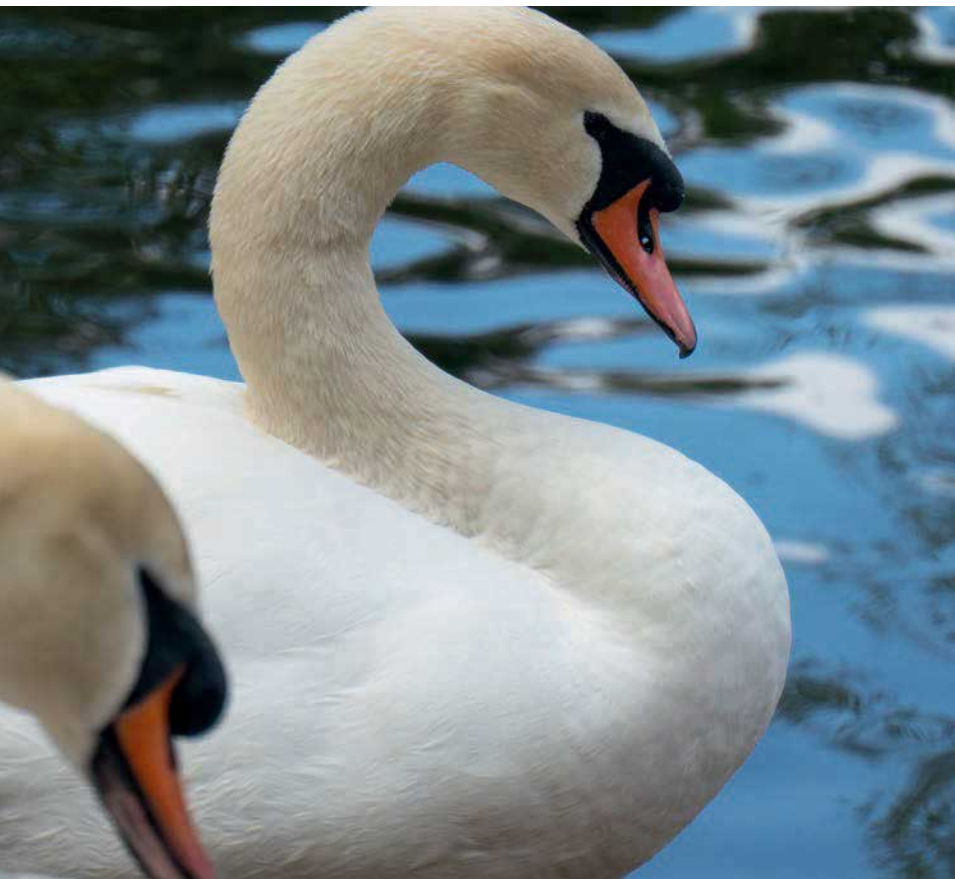
However, with careful raw processing using AI noise reduction algorithms such as Adobe Denoise, you can easily go higher still and still get acceptable images, to ISO 3200 or even ISO 6400. This means it's possible to get rather better low-light images from the TZ300 in 2026, than it was from the TZ200 when I reviewed it in 2018. (Of course, the same thing now applies to the TZ200's files.)

Unsurprisingly, you don't get the same dynamic range as from cameras with larger sensors. In particular, highlights tend to clip to white noticeably quicker. You can't delve as deep into the shadows when processing raw files, either, although you can still boost them by a couple of stops. But a lot of the time, this doesn't really matter – only in very high-contrast situations.

And here's the thing. Going back through my hundreds of real-world samples shot with the TZ300, across a wide range of subjects and lighting conditions, the vast majority look absolutely fine, just as long as you consider the image as a whole, rather than the pixels. And surely, that's what really matters.

**The AF system works just fine with static or slowly moving subjects**  
Panasonic TZ300, 360mm equivalent, 1/320sec at f/6.4, ISO 160





At its best, the 20MP sensor should be good for detailed 18x12in prints  
 Panasonic TZ300, 46mm equivalent, 1/100sec at f/5.6, ISO 125

## Verdict



Testing the Panasonic Lumix TZ300 has been a decidedly mixed experience. I love having that incredibly versatile long zoom lens in my pocket, and I'm very happy with a lot of the photos I've taken with it. It's easy to get hung up on the perceived drawbacks of smaller sensors and overlook their considerable benefits in terms of camera and lens size. And this is, very definitely, a camera you should judge on the pictures it lets you take, not the pixels.

However, using the TZ300 has also reinforced that personally, I really want a viewfinder in a camera of this type, and the lack of one is a serious drawback here. I took it out to do exactly the thing it's designed for, walking around London on a sunny Sunday morning, photographing the sights. But that small, not-very-bright screen is really difficult to see in sunlight, which is precisely when users are most likely to want to use it. When I reviewed the TZ200 I used the viewfinder most of the time, and it's just a bit galling that the TZ300 is such a clear step backwards. Also, if you'd like to take photos at high or low angles, that's basically just guesswork.

Ultimately, I'm rather conflicted about this camera. There's still no other way to get this combination of long zoom lens and decently large sensor in a pocket camera, and if you think you can live with using that fixed screen all the time, it could be a great option for travel. But personally, I'd recommend springing a bit more money on a Sony RX100 VII or seeking out a second-hand TZ200.

In fact, it's a shame Panasonic didn't just re-release the old camera, really.



FEATURES	7/10
BUILD & HANDLING	8/10
METERING	8/10
AUTOFOCUS	7/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	7/10
IMAGE QUALITY	7/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	6/10



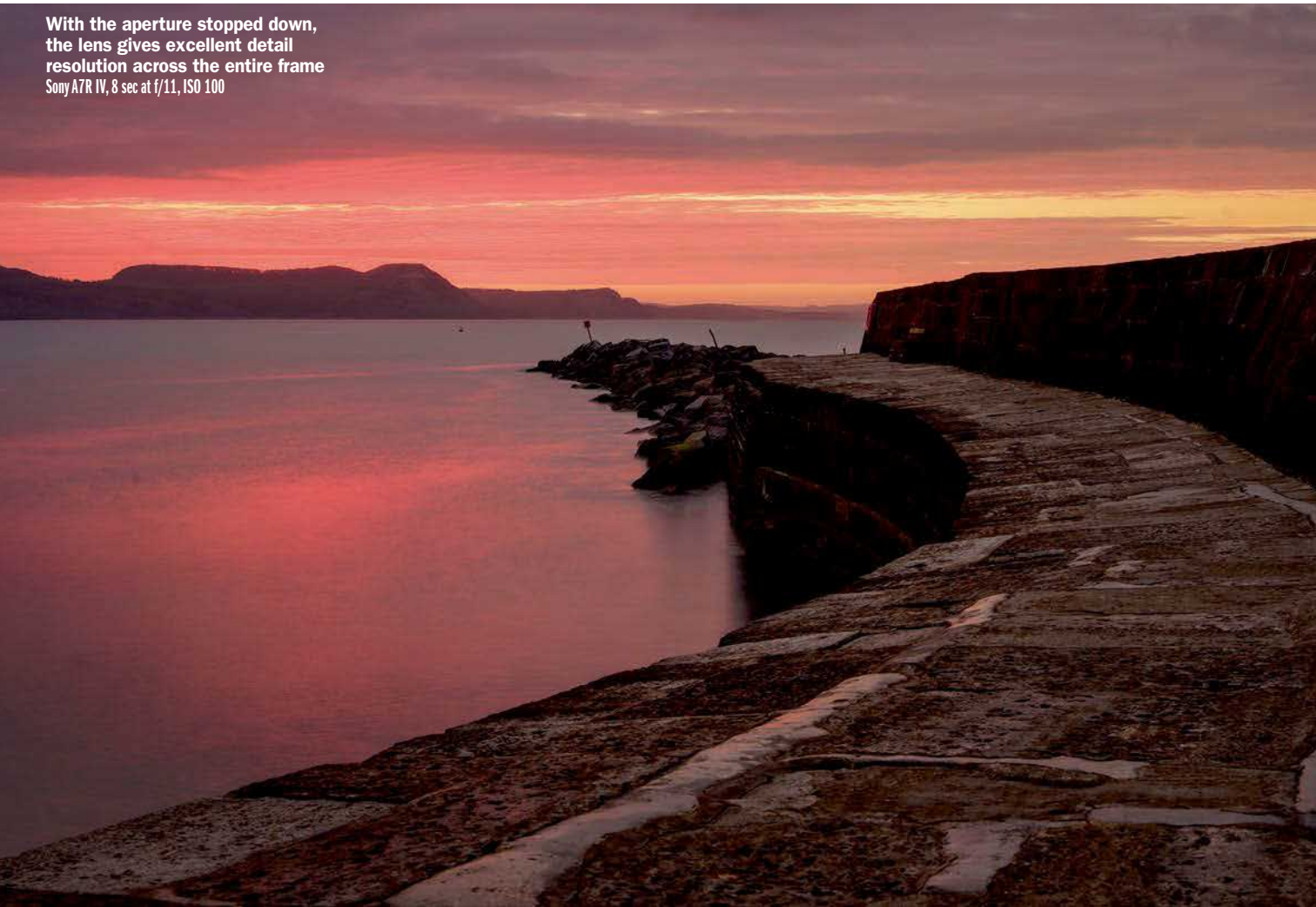
Arca compatible

Up to 10kg load capacity

Weighs from 840g

Folds to as little as 34cm

With the aperture stopped down, the lens gives excellent detail resolution across the entire frame  
 Sony A7R IV, 8 sec at f/11, ISO 100



# Viltrox AF 50mm F1.4 Pro FE

**Angela Nicholson** takes a closer look at Viltrox's budget-friendly f/1.4 standard prime to find out whether it can really rival the big names without the big price tag.



Viltrox was founded in China in 2009 and in 2019 it launched its first autofocus lens. Since then, it has become something of a disrupter in the lens market, gaining a reputation for producing high-quality optics at attractive prices. The AF 50mm F1.4 Pro, which is available in Sony E or Nikon Z mount, follows

that pattern, offering a fast aperture and solid specification at a price that undercuts its main rivals. I tested the E-mount version on Sony cameras.

At £525, this lens sits well below the cost of its key comparable options. Sony's FE 50mm F1.4 GM is positioned as a premium optic and, even with typical street pricing around

£1,400, it's in a different league financially. Sigma's 50mm F1.4 DG DN Art is more accessible at around £849, but still a fair step up from the Viltrox. That price difference inevitably raises questions about compromises, but it also makes the lens immediately interesting.

A 50mm focal length remains one of the most versatile options

available. It delivers a natural perspective that suits everything from portraits and street photography, to still life and general everyday shooting. Pairing that with an f/1.4 maximum aperture brings useful low light capability too, along with the opportunity to isolate subjects with shallow depth of field.



This was shot using a neutral density filter, via the lens's 77mm thread  
Sony A7R IV, 20 sec at f/11, ISO 100

## Features

Viltrox has given the AF 50mm F1.4 Pro a fairly ambitious optical design, with 15 elements arranged in 11 groups. There's one ultra-precision aspherical element, three extra-low dispersion (ED) elements and eight high refractive (HR) elements. Together, these are intended to maintain good sharpness across the frame

while suppressing aberrations.

There's an aperture range of f/1.4 to f/16, formed by an 11-blade diaphragm that aims to produce smooth out-of-focus areas. Meanwhile, the closest focusing distance is 45cm, at which the magnification is 0.15x. For comparison, the equivalent Sony lens focuses as close as 38cm in manual focus mode, giving 0.18x magnification,

or 41cm and 0.16x in autofocus.

In this case, focusing is driven by Viltrox's Dual HyperVCM system, using voice coil motors to move the focusing group quickly and smoothly. There's also support for face and eye detection when used with compatible camera bodies.

Conveniently, a USB-C port is built into the lens mount for easy firmware updates, and the

aluminium lens barrel is weather-sealed to protect the delicate interior from moisture and dust.

## Build and Handling

At 84.5mm in diameter, 111mm in length and weighing 800g, this is not a small 50mm lens. It's noticeably larger and heavier than Sony's FE 50mm F1.4 GM and also outweighs Sigma's 50mm F1.4 DG DN Art. That extra bulk is apparent when you first pick it up, but it also contributes to a solid, well-made feel. That larger diameter means the Viltrox lens uses 77mm filters, compared to 67mm for the Sony lens, while Sigma's sits in between with a 72mm filter thread.

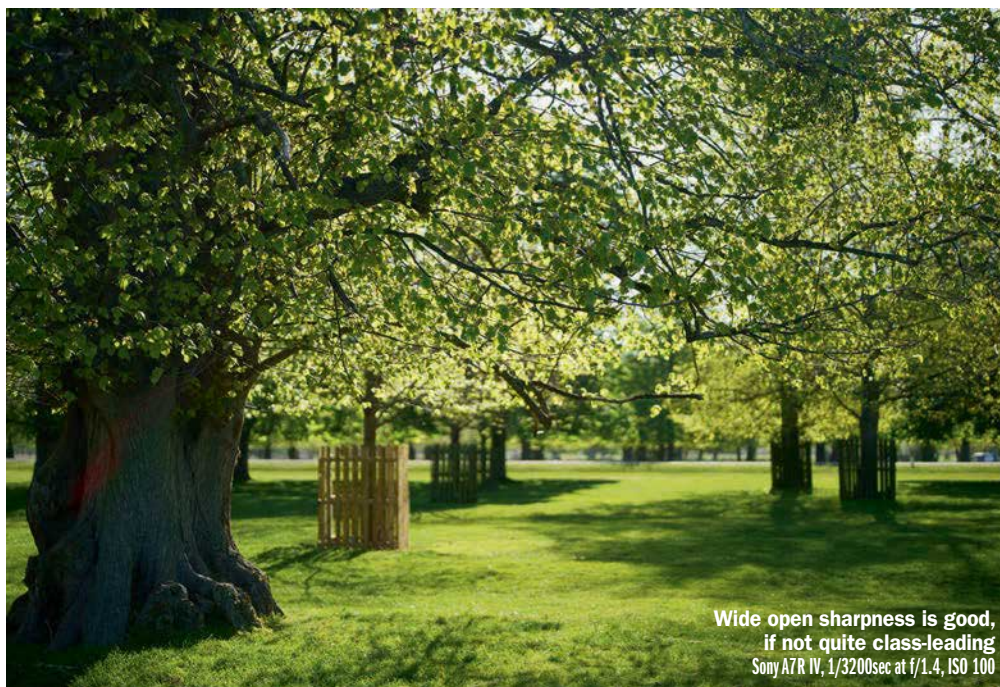
Mounted on a full-frame Sony body such as the A7R V or A7 V, the Viltrox lens feels balanced, but it's certainly not the kind of optic you forget you're carrying.

A broad manual-focus ring occupies the front section of the barrel and has a smooth, well-damped action. There's just enough resistance to allow precise adjustments without it feeling stiff. Switching to manual focus and turning the ring

## Out-of-focus backgrounds are attractively blurred

Sony A7R IV, 1/2500sec at f/1.4, ISO 100





Wide open sharpness is good, if not quite class-leading  
Sony A7R IV, 1/3200sec at f/1.4, ISO 100

activates the MF Assist function on Sony cameras, making it easier to check focus accuracy.

Positioned closer to the mount, the aperture ring is clearly marked in one-third stop increments from f/1.4 to f/16, along with an 'A' setting for camera control. A switch allows the clicks to be engaged or disengaged. While there's no lock between the 'A' setting and the marked apertures, the wider spacing and different feel in the movement make it easy to distinguish between them.

A customisable function button and AF/MF switch are also included and both fall readily under your left thumb during use in landscape orientation. Overall, the layout is straightforward and the lens handles well, with controls that feel considered rather than token additions. A second customisable button would be appreciated when shooting in portrait orientation, but the lack of one is far from a deal-breaker.

### Autofocus

In use, the lens proves to be a dependable performer. When paired with a camera such as the Sony A7R IV, I find the autofocus is quick and accurate in a wide range of situations, including when tracking people.

Its operation is quiet, although not completely silent. In single AF mode, there's a faint sound as the internal elements move, while in continuous AF mode, it's more of a subtle sensation of movement rather than something clearly audible. It's unlikely to be an issue for most stills or video uses.

I found the Sony A7R V, A7R IV, A7 V and A7 IV are quick to respond with the Viltrox lens mounted and their subject detection and eye detection systems prove reliable. Thanks in part to that wide aperture, the lenses focus transitions are fast and predictable with minimal hunting, unless you are very close to the nearest focusing distance.

### Image quality

Image quality is generally strong from the Viltrox AF 50mm F1.4 Pro FE and in keeping with my expectations of the company's Pro series. Wide open at f/1.4, central sharpness is good, although not exceptional. Stopping down to f/2 brings a clear lift in detail and from that point onwards, the lens delivers extremely good results across most of the frame. The corners follow a similar trend, with a more noticeable improvement by f/2.8 or f/4.

Chromatic aberration is very well controlled. Even when examining images closely, I struggled to find any obvious fringing along high contrast edges, which is an impressive result for a fast prime. Similarly, flare is handled well, with good resistance when shooting into the light. I shot a series of images into the low sun and while there's some reduction in contrast, the results look great, capturing the conditions well.

Vignetting is visible in images shot at the widest aperture settings, but it reduces steadily as the aperture is closed and becomes only just noticeable at f/4. In many cases, it's subtle enough to go unnoticed or may even suit the image. There is a hint of barrel distortion, but it's modest and unlikely to cause concern in most situations.

With an f/1.4 maximum aperture and an 11-blade diaphragm, there's plenty of scope for shallow depth-of-field effects. The transition from sharp to soft is handled nicely and out-of-focus highlights are round towards the centre of the frame. As expected, they become more cat's eye shaped towards the edges. Background blur is generally smooth, but in more detailed scenes it can appear a little busy.



## Verdict

Viltrox has produced a lens that delivers much of what photographers want from a fast 50mm prime without pushing the price too high. The build quality is good, handling is well thought out, and the feature set feels competitive against more expensive alternatives.

At 800g, it's larger and heavier than some rivals, and while the performance at f/1.4 isn't class-leading, it's still good. I'm happy to shoot wide open when the situation calls for it, and from f/2 onwards the results are very good, with particularly impressive control of chromatic aberration and flare.

The autofocus is reliable, and the inclusion of an aperture ring and customisable function button adds to the shooting experience, giving it a more considered feel than you might expect from a lens at this price.

In the past I've often found 50mm lenses to be neither one thing nor another, but the combination of this focal length with an f/1.4 maximum aperture gives excellent scope for creative shooting. It's the kind of lens that has me reaching for it when heading out for the day, sometimes leaving others behind.

For anyone looking for a fast standard prime for Sony E-mount or Nikon Z-mount without a heavy cash outlay, this lens makes a strong case. It may not quite challenge the very best options available, but it gets close enough in most areas to be a very sensible choice.

### Data file

<b>Price</b> £525	<b>Length</b> 111mm
<b>Filter Diameter</b> 77mm	<b>Diameter</b> 84.5mm
<b>Lens Elements</b> 15	<b>Weight</b> 800g
<b>Groups</b> 11	<b>Lens Mounts</b> Sony E, Nikon Z
<b>Diaphragm blades</b> 11	<b>Included accessories</b> Lens caps, lens hood
<b>Aperture</b> f/1.4-16	
<b>Min focus</b> 0.45	



Amateur Photographer  
Recommended  
★★★★★



## At a glance

£2,999.99  
(body with XLR handle)

- 32MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- 7K 30p internal RAW recording
- 3:2 open gate recording
- 3in, 1.62m-dot fully articulating touchscreen
- Dual Base ISO 800/6400
- 15+ stops dynamic range
- Dual Pixel CMOS AF II

# Canon EOS C50

It's the entry point to Canon's cinema camera line-up, at an affordable price. **Richard Sibley** finds out what it offers for videographers, as well as those who want to shoot both photos and video.



## For and against

- + 7K RAW open gate recording
- + Excellent top handle with dual XLR microphone connectors
- + Canon colour science
- + 32MP still photo shooting at up to 40 frames per second
- + Dual card slots
- + Dual base ISO sensitivity
- No sensor stabilisation
- The screen isn't very bright
- Cinema menus may feel alien

## Data file

Sensor	32.3MP CMOS, 35.9mm x 23.9mm
Output Size	6960 x 4640
Lens Mount	Canon RF
Shutter Speeds	1/16000 to 30sec
Sensitivity	ISO 100-25,600 (standard); ISO 100-102,400 (extended)
Exposure Modes	P, Av, Tv, M (photo mode)
Metering	Evaluative, partial, spot, centre-weighted average
Exposure Comp	±3 EV in 1/3 EV steps
Cont Shooting	Up to 40fps (electronic shutter)
Screen	3.0in, 1.62m-dot touchscreen
Viewfinder	N/A
AF Points	Approx 100% coverage
Video	7K 30p RAW; 4K 120p; 2K 180p
External Mic	3.5mm stereo; 2x XLR via detachable handle
Memory Card	1x CFexpress Type B; 1x UHS-II SD
Power	LP-E6P Li-ion
Battery Life	Approx. 90 min video recording
Dimensions	142 x 88 x 95mm
Weight	670g (body only); 1105g (with handle, battery and card)

There are just a handful of digital cameras that could be considered classic, but the Canon EOS 5D Mark II is certainly a contender for the title. At a time when the Canon EOS C100 and C300 were the cinema cameras of choice for many commercial videographers, the EOS 5D Mark II brought cinema-grade features and quality to the DSLR audience. This, in turn, helped create the content creator and YouTube markets that exist today. However, mirrorless cameras allowed others to catch up, with every major brand now offering cameras that filmmakers could only dream of a decade ago.

Recently, Canon's entry point has been its EOS R range, with the Canon EOS R5 C and the EOS R6 Mark III being the go-to models for those who veer more

towards video than stills. But now the Canon EOS C50 has come along to offer a true entry point to the cinema line-up, competing with the likes of the Sony FX3 and more recently the Nikon ZR.

## Features

At the heart of the C50 is a newly developed 32MP full-frame CMOS sensor that's shared with the Canon EOS R6 Mark III. It's capable of recording 7K open gate RAW footage at up to 30fps, or compressed footage at up to 60fps. The 3:2 aspect-ratio open-gate mode is significant; it gives shooters the flexibility to frame for multiple formats in post-processing and enables anamorphic shooting.

The sensor and processor support internal 12-bit Cinema RAW recording, oversampled 4K up to 120 fps, and Canon Log 2



With the same sensor as the EOS R6 Mark II, the EOS C50 delivers great still image quality  
Canon EOS C50, 24mm, 1/60sec at f/16, ISO 125

and Log 3 colour profiles, with a claimed 15 stops of dynamic range. There is also Dual Base ISO when shooting log footage, with ISO 800 and 6400 the two native sensitivity settings. This offers cleaner footage as the ISO limits go over that ISO 6400 setting, compared to a single-base-ISO sensitivity camera.

Autofocus is handled by Canon's Dual Pixel CMOS AF II system, with subject detection for people, animals, and vehicles. The RF lens lineup continues to grow steadily, offering a wide range of native lenses, along with the option to use the EF mount adapter for those with legacy EF lenses.

In the box, you will also find the detachable top handle and audio interface. It is one of the most impressive accessory top-handles, providing two full-size

XLR sockets, audio gain controls, and phantom power. Impressively it also has a zoom rocker control and a start/stop record button. The handle does weigh 440g, which, when combined with the camera, brings the total to 1.1kg.

Whilst the C50 is very much a Cinema camera at its heart, it also offers some great features for photographers. It's capable of shooting 32MP raw images at up to 40fps, thanks to its use of an electronic rather than mechanical shutter. The downside is that the electronic shutter reduces the flash sync speed to just 1/60th sec and may also cause readout speed issues for those photographing fast-moving subjects. To make photographers feel at home, switching from video to photo mode changes the menu system to the familiar photo-centric Canon EOS R menu.

As for storage, the C50 uses a CFexpress Type B card for primary recording - required for 7K RAW - with an SD card slot for proxy files or lower-resolution footage. CFexpress Type B cards remain relatively expensive, and it is worth factoring this into the total cost of ownership.

### Build and Handling

The first thing you notice about the C50 is that it looks and feels nothing like a Canon R-series camera. It is a much 'boxier' cinema-style shape. It is a well-made box, with thoughtfully placed buttons, but you cannot escape its shape, especially compared to the Nikon ZR and Sony FX3. Cinema camera users will feel right at home with the familiar shape, often rigged with accessories. But photographers transitioning from an EOS R

camera will need time to adjust.

All of that said, the body is fairly compact by cinema camera standards, measuring 143 x 88 x 95mm and weighing just 665g without the handle. That makes it the smallest and lightest camera in the Cinema EOS line-up. However, it is very definitely a cinema-first design.

Part of the reason for the form factor is the C50's built-in fans. Around the rear of the box are air vents to let heat out and draw in cool air, with the fans kicking in as the camera heats up. They aren't loud, per se, but they are audible. It shouldn't be given too much consideration for anything but the quietest film shoots.

The top handle transforms the camera into something that certainly looks like a more serious cinema camera. It locks securely to the

## Focal points

While it shares its sensor and processor with the EOS R6 III, the C50 has a very different design

### Dual Card Slots

The Canon EOS C50 uses both CF Express and SD cards, and usefully has small LED indicators on the side of the camera that let you know without checking the camera screen/menu, which are in use.

### Top Handle

The detachable handle comes included as standard and is one of the C50's best features, adding two full-size XLR inputs, a start/stop button, and a zoom rocker.

### Tally Lights

There are three tally lights total - two on the body and one on the top handle. They light up when recording, useful when the camera is on a rig, or the screen isn't visible.



### Full-size HDMI

The C50 has a full-size HDMI Type-A port. This is a more robust connection than a Micro HDMI port, which the Nikon ZR has been criticised for having.

### Timecode Terminal

A dedicated DIN timecode input/output port on the body - a proper cinema feature that lets multiple cameras sync timecode on a multi-camera shoot.

### USB-C port

This offers high-speed USB 3.2 Gen 2 for data transfer, but it also supports UVC/UAC, meaning it can be used as a webcam or audio interface.



camera body, and the XLR input supports professional microphones. Plus, the zoom rocker and start/stop record make it a much more useful addition. That said, it's overkill for vlogging or more casual work.

Controls are logical once you have spent some time with them, and Canon has provided good customisation options. However, as a photographer, I found the cinema menu system to be a very different world. Photographers coming from an R-series camera should put aside plenty of time to familiarise themselves with the cinema menu, especially before doing a serious shoot. However, features such as a 180-degree shutter priority mode help to ease the transition.

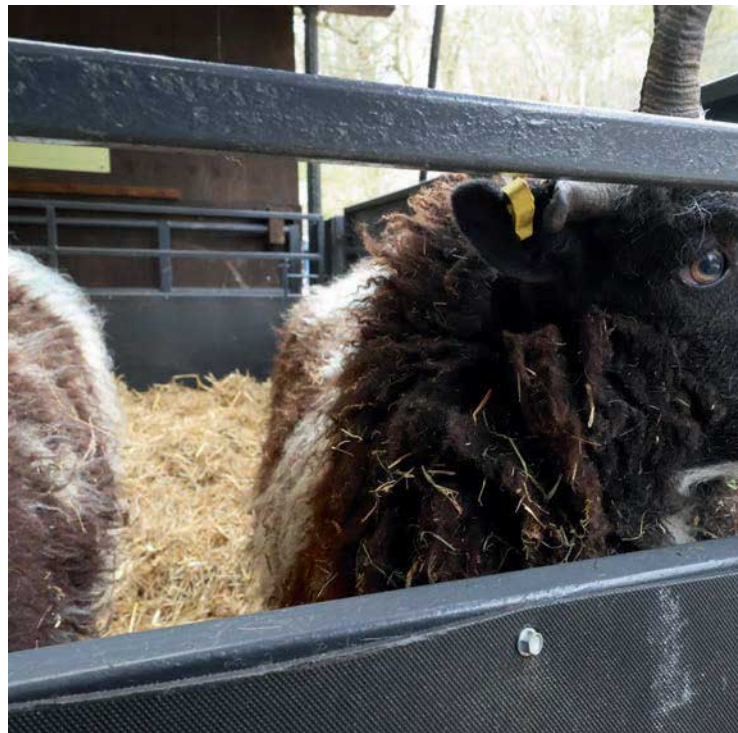
The rear screen is a 3-inch, fully articulating touchscreen with 1.62 million dots. It is functional and responsive, but it is the camera's most obvious weak point. Compared to the Nikon ZR's superb 4-inch, 1000-nit display, it falls far behind. Even on overcast days, I found myself pushing the screen's luminance setting, which, in turn, makes the image appear brighter than it will be recorded. There is a warning reminder to use other exposure aids, such as the histogram or zebra patterning. Sadly, there is no electronic viewfinder, nor is there even the option to add an external one.

Power comes in the classic LP-E6 battery shape, this time in the latest P variant. It is quoted as providing around 90 minutes of continuous recording, which I found matches real-world use, shooting bits of video, still images, as well as reviewing both on the camera's rear screen. As always, I would recommend having at least one spare battery.

### Performance

For stills, the C50 performs as you would expect from a Canon full-frame sensor. The 32MP files are detailed and well-rendered, with the familiar Canon colour science. There is an electronic shutter limitation for those who shoot with flash or for sports or wildlife, but this really isn't the camera for any of those pursuits.

It is a similar story with the C50's video quality, which performed well across the various modes. It is worth noting that all the recording options can be intimidating for those getting into video, with options such as XF-AVC 10-bit 4:2:2, XF-HEVC S 10-bit 4:2:2 (which are H.264 and H.265, respectively) and then there is also XF-AVC S which is H.264 but in an MP4 wrapper rather than the MXF wrapper, which is more for professional broadcast workflows. Sit down and take some time to look at all of the options before shooting, and also note that there are





Canon has a good range of video-optimised hybrid lenses, with the RF 70-200mm F2.8 Z used here  
 Canon EOS C50, 146mm, 1/250sec at f/2.8, ISO 125

separate options for the crop used, with 3:2 (open gate), 16:9, Super 35 and Super 16 options all available.

The dual base ISO is a genuine practical benefit. Switching to ISO 6400 in low light produces footage that is clean and usable, whereas a single-base-ISO camera at the same setting would not. I recorded some video of myself lit only by my computer monitor, and it was usable at ISO 6400. But obviously, noise starts to increase in the shadow areas the more you push it from the two base ISO settings.

Focusing was straightforward thanks to the Dual Pixel CMOS AF II system. Using the touchscreen to select a point of focus was easy, with the camera staying

locked on if you wanted to reframe a shot. In its default setting, I found that whilst the Face Detection locked on well, the focus was slow to settle or lost quickly if I moved quickly or jumped in and out of the scene. Changing the AF and tracking speed improved this significantly, and those filming themselves may also want to increase these settings before shooting. Anecdotal, the C50 autofocus speed feels on par with the competition. I have the feeling that the Sony FX3 and Nikon ZR may just edge it out in terms of performance, but in practice, the C50 is perfectly capable. Any difference would really be splitting hairs or for niche use cases.

The lack of in-camera stabilisation will be headline concern for many potential buyers. There are, of course, many R-series lenses with excellent optical stabilisation, and there is also in-camera digital stabilisation, albeit with the usual caveat that it crops the images. Handheld footage will require a little more care, but honestly, again, this isn't really designed as a vlogging camera, so the need for super-steady gimbal-like shots isn't as applicable as it would be for a more 'handheld-friendly' camera body such as the Nikon ZR or Sony FX3. That said, if I were considering features relative to price, I would always opt for sensor-based stabilisation if possible.

I edited the raw footage from the Canon EOS C50 in Da Vinci Resolve, and once the initial

colour workflow was established, it was straightforward to produce nice-looking colour grades with plenty of detail in highlights and shadows. As a photographer, it can take a while to get your head around how the different raw formats and Log modes behave, but it was quite straightforward with the C50 files. Similarly, I shot some MP4 video using the standard Canon image style, and the result looked good straight out of the box, which will be good news for those who want more instant results and aren't as concerned with getting every ounce of cinema style out of the camera.

Of course, the headline feature is still that open gate recording option - a 3:2 ratio image from the sensor, which you can then crop as you please. In a 16:9 format, this means you will lose the top and bottom of the image, so this needs to be considered when framing. What it does mean is that square or vertical output is less awkward than when coming from a native 16:9 frame. In practice, it is still quite tight going from 3:2 to a 9:16 vertical frame - you do really have to shoot wider than feels comfortable to get the best result, but it is still a big improvement and easier. But square format still feels like the ideal dual orientation output, which is why 6x6 cm Hasselblads were the go-to cameras for editorial photography for so long. It was much easier to crop the shot for a magazine cover, double-page spread or a square insert image.



# Verdict



**Amateur Photographer Recommended**  
 ★★★★★

The Canon EOS C50 is a solid entry point into

Canon's Cinema EOS range, and for the right user, it is a genuinely exciting camera. The 7K open-gate RAW recording, dual base ISO, Canon Log colour science, and that excellent top handle add up to a compelling package at under £3,000, with specifications that outpace the ageing Sony FX3 on paper and match it in many areas of real-world performance.

However, there are limitations: the 3-inch screen and its brightness already feel dated compared with the Nikon ZR; the cinema menu system may take some users a while to get their heads around; and, of course, there is no built-in sensor stabilisation. For photographers, there is the electronic shutter caveat, but the colours and features will feel very familiar, even if the body shape does not.

It is also worth clarifying where the EOS C50 sits in the broader market. The Nikon ZR offers 6K RAW, IBIS, a superb 4-inch screen and 32-bit float audio, packaged in a more mirrorless-style body, for £1,000 less. The EOS C50 makes most sense as a first dedicated cinema camera for those who want the flexibility of open gate shooting and know they want to build within the Canon R mirrorless ecosystem. For professionals already working within the Canon Cinema EOS system, it will represent a fantastic B camera, especially with features such as the Timecode sync port.



Subject recognition covers humans, animals and vehicles  
 Canon EOS C50, 24mm, 1/80sec at f/13, ISO 4400

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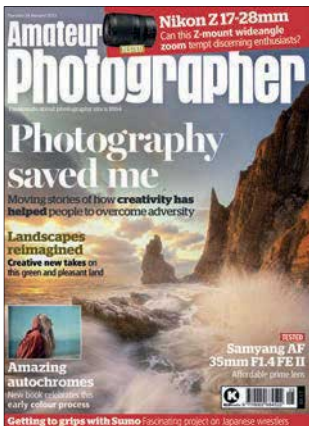
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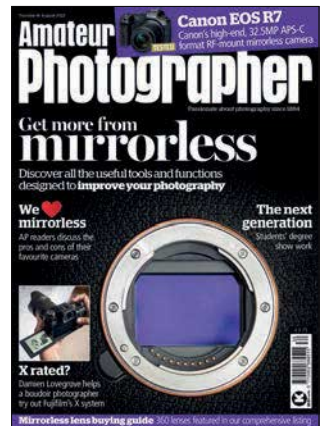
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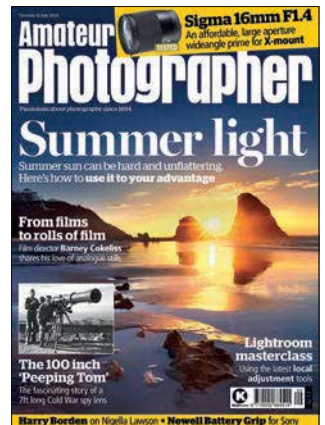
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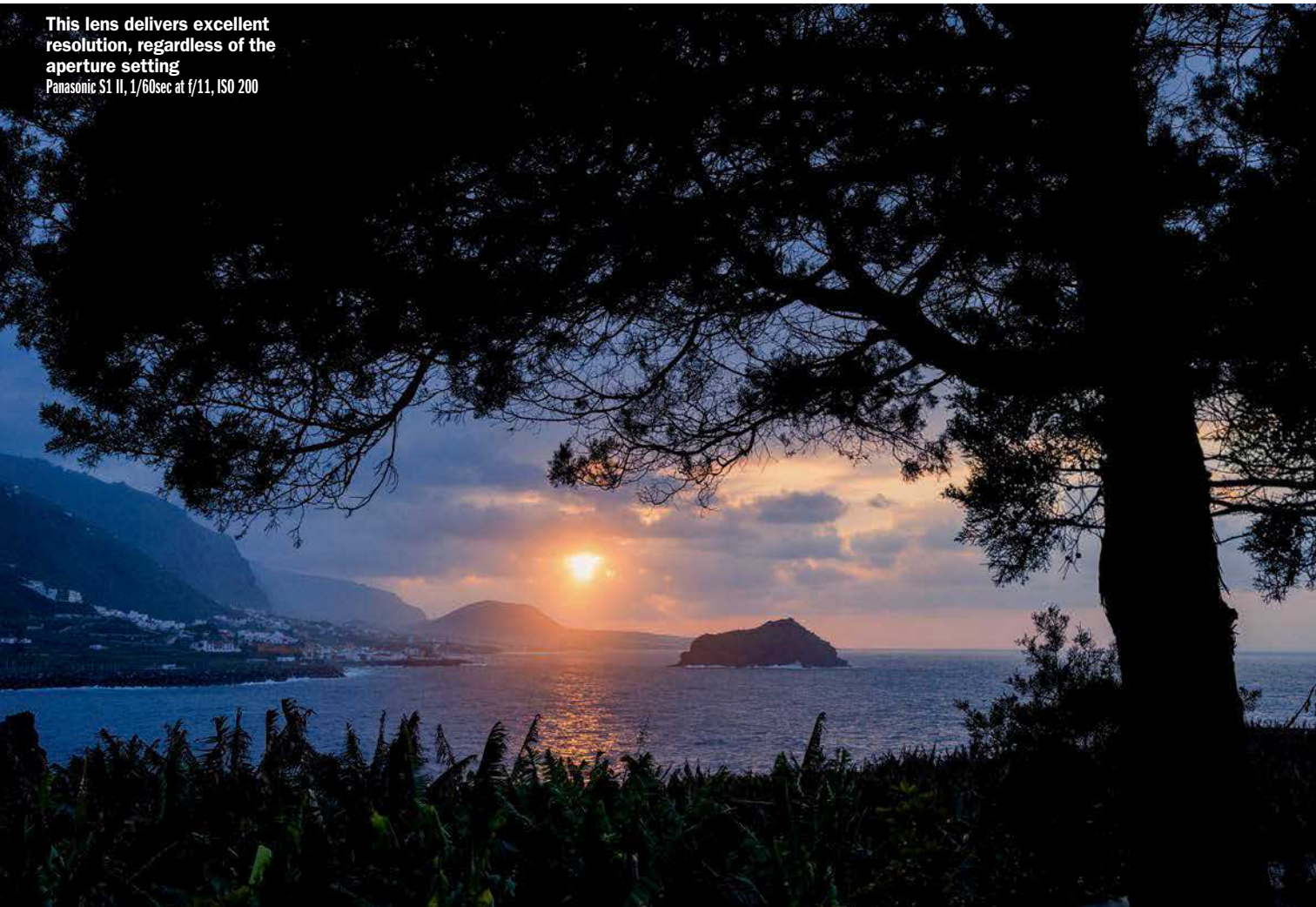
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or scan me!



This lens delivers excellent resolution, regardless of the aperture setting  
 Panasonic S1 II, 1/60sec at f/11, ISO 200



# Sigma 35mm F1.4 DG II Art

Sigma says that this is its best ever 35mm f/1.4 lens. So it should be, and so it is, reports **Damien Demolder**



**M**y exclusive relationship with the standard lens is coming under some pressure from the number and quality of slightly wider focal lengths that have passed my way in recent times. I thought I'd decided that for full-frame shooting, 50mm was the only way to go for my style of photography.

But suddenly I'm questioning the feasibility of allowing the 35mm a greater share of my attention. I know where it started – filming a drama about PTSD in Ukrainian soldiers, I found a 35mm gave me dominance for the character and a great sense of the environment in the 16:9 aspect ratio, an effect that I then tried to replicate in 3:2 stills. Sigma's

35mm F1.2 DG II Art lens made a massive impression on me, and this 35mm F1.4 DG II Art promises a similar experience at a lower cost of £849 – just without the drama of f/1.2. I have been rather fixated with wide apertures in the last ten or so years. That's possibly as a consequence of living in the UK where we need all the help we

can get with light gathering, but it's also because I love shallow depth-of-field. With the chance to take this lens to slightly sunnier climes, though, I decided I'd try to shoot like a normal person and close the aperture more often.

## Features

This is Sigma's third 35mm f/1.4 Art lens, but the



The lens performs very well when shooting into the light  
Panasonic S1 II, 1/60sec at f/11, ISO 200



► umpteenth 35mm in the company's 65-year history. Sigma states that this is the best 35mm f/1.4 it has ever made, which is both a good thing and unsurprising. What makes it better than the last one is a new optical construction, new coatings on the elements and some new 'glass materials' in those elements. The spec sheet tells us the 15 elements now include four, instead of two, aspherical elements and two Super Low Dispersion glasses.

Those elements are arranged in 12 groups instead of the 11

groups of the previous model, which might lead us to believe the optical designs are quite similar. However, this new lens is a completely different design to the model released in 2021.

The diaphragm uses 11 rounded blades to create the aperture, and allows us to select holes from f/1.4 to f/16. That minimum aperture may not seem especially small, but it's probably small enough to get all the depth-of-field we are likely to need while maintaining good detail.

The new coatings Sigma mentions are amorphous rather

than nanoporous, so they are structure-less, smooth, glass-like films. These should be harder than nanoporous coatings, and better at reducing flare and ghosting as they create less scattering themselves. The effect should be greater contrast and improved clarity. I think this is the first time Sigma has used this Advanced Amorphous Coating (AAC), but Nikon has been using a 'Meso Amorphous Coating' on a few of its top end S-line lenses since it introduced the Nikkor Z 400mm f/2.8 TC VR S at the beginning of 2022.

The L Mount unit I had for review measured 73x94mm and weighed 530g, while the Sony E mount version is very slightly longer at 96mm and weighs less at 525g. Both offer a 67mm filter thread that is conveniently within the 'enthusiast' bandwidth of readily available, lower-cost filters, of 77mm and below. It comes with a pouch, a hood, and caps for either end. I know packaging isn't important and has no impact on image quality, but this lens comes in a really very nice box with stylish embossed details. It looks great.

### Build and handling

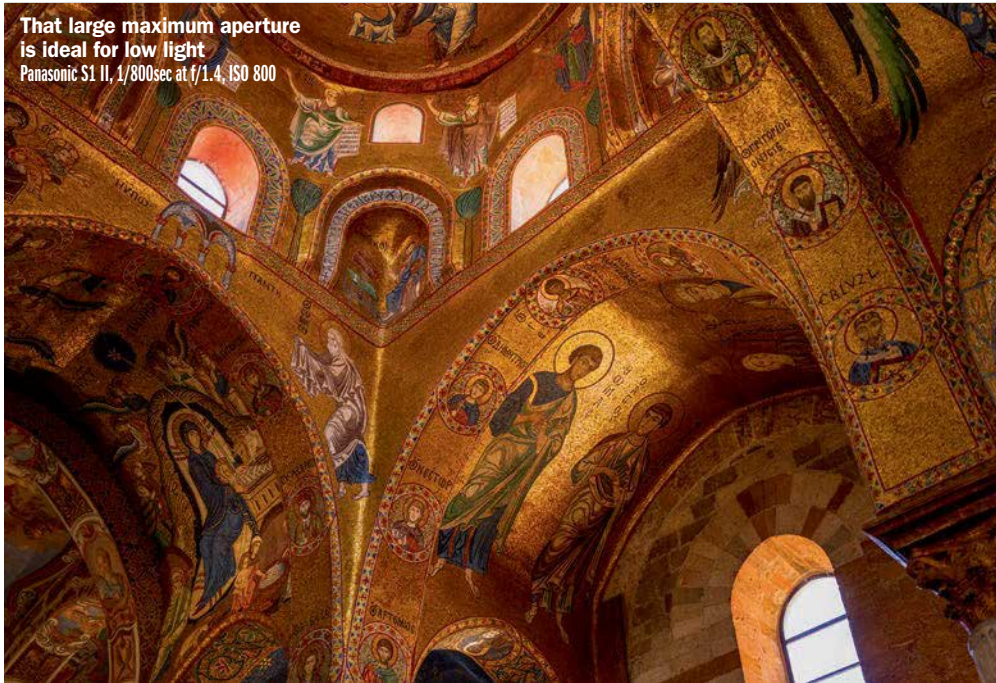
A change that doesn't necessarily make this lens better than the previous model, but will certainly make it more convenient to use, is that it is smaller and lighter. Those additional special elements in the optical construction, combined with a floating focus system and some miniaturisation in the mechanics of the lens, have allowed the designers to shave 14% from the length of the barrel and 20% off the weight.

As you would expect, this is a very nicely made lens that also looks quite smart with its mixture of gloss and matt paint finishes. We have a broad focus ring that turns smoothly, and a thinner aperture ring that can also turn smoothly when we want it to, or we can make it click every third of a stop.

We have a pair of function buttons on the barrel placed 90° apart for triggering functions that can be assigned from the camera menu, as well as a physical AF/MF switch. It is exactly what you would expect from a Sigma Art lens as the company goes to some lengths to give the whole



Shooting wide open gives nice background separation  
Panasonic S1 II, 1/500sec at f/1.4, ISO 100



That large maximum aperture is ideal for low light  
Panasonic S1 II, 1/800sec at f/1.4, ISO 800

series a uniform, immediately familiar, layout.

I'm not a great fan of lens hoods, but I did use this one. I found the rubber ring that does indeed make it easier to grip and fit also is sticky enough to pick up dust and debris. This makes it look a bit grubby, but it does a good job otherwise.

I used the lens on the Lumix S9 as well as the S1 II and the S1R II, and inevitably found it was more at home on the larger bodies despite it not being especially long or heavy. It's just a fraction too big for the S9, so users might be better directed towards the 35mm F2 DG DN from Sigma's Contemporary range instead. On the larger Lumix S bodies, though, it is very comfortable, well balanced and generally an excellent match.

### Autofocus

I found this lens never noticeably impeded the focusing abilities of any of the cameras on which I used it. It snaps nicely to attention, shifts very quickly and is capable of the tiny adjustments needed when following a moving subject. I used it to track fast moving people in the street in stills and video modes, and asked it to respond quickly to Touch Shutter requests in dramatic action, and

found it was never to blame for a missed shot. It works very well indeed.

Sigma's attempts to eliminate focus breathing seem to have been successful in movements at 'normal' distances. But I found when tracking an object from a distance a slight, but noticeable, change in the frame occurs suddenly when the focus pulls to a close position.

### Image Quality

There's little use in opting for a lower cost lens – lower than the f/1.2 model that is – only to find it isn't all that sharp. This lens, though, delivers all the sharpness and detail most of us will need, and does so at two thirds of the price. As well as concentrating on the wider apertures I spent quite a lot of time with this lens at f/16, f/11 and f/10 to see how it will serve those who - like landscapers, interior architects, travel photographers and some street shooters - look for front-to-back sharpness in scenes with depth. And, while f/16 may not be the best aperture it is certainly more than good enough, and better than the performance we got from mid-range apertures only ten years ago. I suspect one of the reasons we are restricted to f/16 at the smaller end is to

avoid disappointment were f/22 available. However, I found f/16 in a 35mm lens delivers more than enough depth-of-field for most occasions. At the middle apertures the lens is as exceptionally sharp as its f/1.2 cousin, and at f/1.4 it delivers a performance that means we need never shy away from opening the aperture as wide as it will go.

Sigma's clever new coatings don't make this lens immune to flare, but they seem to allow a lot of light to come directly into the lens without the whole image being blasted out of existence. I'm quite a fan of shooting into the sun, and found I could do so with nice effects that are well contained and restrained to a small area of the image. Bright and direct light hanging around just out of frame only occasionally marked my images even with the lens hood off, and the flare marks are hardly noticeable.

Coloured fringing perhaps isn't as fully avoided as it could be, with some red edges around very high contrast transitions – like tangles of branches against a bright sky or a back-lit window. Even so, the occasions this effect is visible are few, and we need to look pretty closely to spot it.



## Verdict

The changes Sigma has made to this lens in its 'mark II' version are really quite significant to both the handling and the performance users can expect. That it is smaller and lighter is a great benefit, but such advantages can be overshadowed when optical characteristics are compromised for those ambitions.

Sigma, though, has managed to reduce the burden of this lens while improving the optical performance at the same time, which is no small achievement. I really enjoyed using the wider apertures in the manner to which I have become accustomed, but was also very impressed with the resolution, clarity and contrast of the lens when used at its smallest aperture. Okay, that aperture is f/16 and not f/22, but taking away a smaller setting means we won't stumble into less sharp territory, and we still get enough depth-of-field for all but the most extreme situations.

Most advice suggests we shouldn't close an aperture all the way down, just as we used to not open it fully, but times have changed and all aperture settings are game. Those in the middle are best, of course, but the outer reaches give us quality we couldn't have expected not long ago. If you need f/1.2 go for it, but if you don't, this Sigma 35mm F1.4 DG II Art will do all you need, with some money to spare.

### Data file

<b>Price</b> £849	<b>Length</b> 96mm
<b>Filter thread</b> 67mm	<b>Diameter</b> 73mm
<b>Lens elements</b> 15	<b>Weight</b> 525g
<b>Groups</b> 12	<b>Lens mounts</b> Leica L, Sony E
<b>Diaphragm blades</b> 11	<b>Included accessories</b> Pouch, hood, front and back caps
<b>Aperture</b> f/1.4-16	
<b>Min focus</b> 28cm	



Amateur Photographer  
GOLD  
★★★★★

## Tiny footprint

Each transmitter weighs around 11g, making the Mic Mini 2 easy to wear all day.

## Organised storage

The charging case stores the transmitters, receiver and key accessories neatly together.

## Fast top-ups

A five-minute charge delivers around an hour of recording time.



## Flexible mounting

The transmitters can be clipped to clothing or attached using magnets.

## Custom styling

Optional interchangeable magnetic covers help the mic blend into clothing.

# DJI Mic Mini 2

This compact wireless microphone system is designed for anyone shooting video. **Angela Nicholson** investigates whether it can deliver high-quality sound without adding the hassle or bulk of high-end systems.

Good audio can transform the quality of a video, but many photographers shooting video for the first time are reluctant to carry bulky microphones and tangled cables, and worry about a complicated setup process. DJI clearly understands that audience because the Mic Mini 2 is designed to make recording better sound almost effortless.

At first glance, the Mic Mini 2 looks more like a case for wireless earbuds than a serious audio system. Open the lid, however, and there's a thoughtfully designed kit inside. The transmitters, receiver and accessories all slot neatly into place, charging as they are

stored. It feels tidy, practical and genuinely ready to go.

The transmitters themselves weigh approximately 11g each, making them barely noticeable when clipped onto clothing. DJI supplies both a clip and magnetic mounting system, and the clip can rotate to help position the microphone accurately. That flexibility is very useful, because microphone placement has a significant impact on sound quality, especially with omnidirectional units.

One of the more unusual features is DJI's interchangeable magnetic front covers. Available separately in different colours, they offer the opportunity to match the mic more closely to clothing to make it less visible.

## Straightforward setup

The Mic Mini 2 is refreshingly simple to use. During testing, I paired the receiver with a DJI Pocket 4 and used the two transmitters to record an interview on location. Setup took only moments, which matters when filming on location or when you're short in time.

The receiver can connect with up to two transmitters simultaneously, making it well suited to interviews or two-person presentations. Green status lights clearly indicate when a connection is active, while audio levels can be monitored via the DJI Mimo app or on compatible devices.

DJI has also done a good job of keeping the system flexible. The

## At a glance

£89 (2-transmitter kit)

£49 (single-transmitter kit)

- 48kHz/24-bit audio recording
- Omnidirectional microphones
- Up to 400m transmission range
- Up to 48-hour battery life with charging case
- Two-level noise cancellation
- Three voice presets: Regular, Rich and Bright

receiver features a USB-C connector that slides neatly into the base of the unit and can connect directly to smartphones, tablets and other compatible devices. A 3.5mm port and cable is also available for traditional camera setups.

For owners of Sony cameras, DJI also offers a Mic Series Camera Adapter that mounts directly into the camera's multi-interface shoe, removing the need for cables altogether. That cleaner setup works well.

Another useful feature is DJI's OsmoAudio direct connection system. Compatible DJI cameras can connect directly to the transmitters without requiring the receiver, reducing the amount of gear you need to carry.

Battery performance is another strong point. DJI claims up to 11.5 hours from each transmitter and around 10.5 hours from the receiver, with the charging case extending total runtime to approximately 48 hours. In practice, I never found myself worrying about battery life during testing. The quick-charge capability is genuinely useful too, delivering roughly an hour of use from only five minutes of charging.

### Real-world performance

The Mic Mini 2 records at 48kHz and 24-bit quality, which is more than sufficient for most online content, interviews and social media production. I found the audio quality is consistently clear and natural during testing, with voices sounding clean and well balanced without needing extensive adjustment.

DJI enables three selectable voice presets; Regular, Rich and Bright, allowing you to tailor the sound slightly depending on the speaker or environment. The differences are slight, but I prefer the Rich and Regular options.

These settings, along with the noise reduction controls, are adjusted via the DJI Mimo smartphone app. However, the transmitter needs to be



The tiny transmitters won't pull on clothing

connected to a smartphone to make changes, so it is best to decide how you want the microphones configured before you start shooting and then stick with those settings.

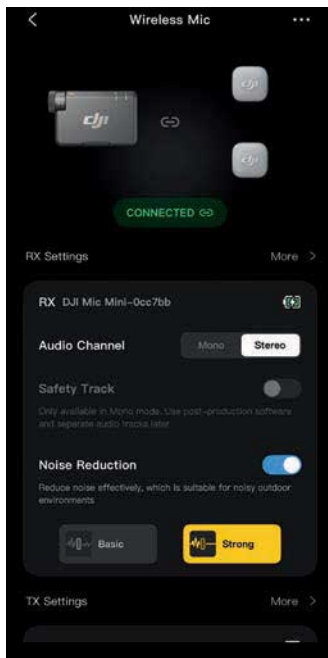
As omnidirectional microphones, the transmitters capture a considerable amount of ambient sound alongside the subject's voice. In some situations that's beneficial because it adds atmosphere and context to recordings. However, in busier environments it also means careful positioning becomes important.

I tested the Mic Mini 2 beside a busy road to evaluate its two-level noise reduction system. The effect is subtle, even at the stronger setting. It places slightly greater emphasis on speech, but background traffic noise remains clearly audible and can occasionally sound a touch processed or distorted. Fortunately, the effect is sufficiently restrained that

recordings still sound natural. But users expecting dramatic background suppression may be disappointed.

In reality, positioning the microphone closer to the speaker has a greater impact on audio clarity than switching between the different noise reduction settings. Many creators may prefer to apply more advanced noise reduction later during editing, where even one-click software solutions can often achieve cleaner results.

What the Mic Mini 2 does particularly well is remove some of the barriers that can put photographers off recording better audio in the first place. It is compact, unimposing and extremely easy to carry everywhere. As someone who often travels light, I found myself appreciating how little space it occupies while still offering noticeably better sound than relying on a camera's built-in microphone. AP



The DJI Mimo app allows some configuration of settings

## A kit for Everyone

The two-transmitter kit below left costs £89 and includes two tiny omnidirectional transmitters plus a receiver, while the £49 single-transmitter version on the right comes with one transmitter and a mobile receiver designed to connect directly to USB-C smartphones. DJI also offers a Lightning adapter for older iPhones. Both kits include a charging case and the essential accessories required to get recording.



## Verdict

Amateur Photographer  
GOLD  
★★★★★

The DJI Mic Mini 2 is an appealing wireless mic

system for photographers and creators who want better sound without introducing complexity into their workflow. Its greatest strengths are its portability, tidy all-in-one storage with charging capability, impressively straightforward operation and attractive price.

The audio quality is clear and dependable, battery life is excellent and the lightweight design makes the transmitters comfortable to wear for long periods. While the noise reduction system is only mildly effective and there is no lavalier microphone input, those limitations are unlikely to trouble most content creators.

For anyone stepping into video, vlogging or interviews, the Mic Mini 2 feels like an accessible and practical upgrade from built-in mics.

### For and against

- ✦ Extremely compact and lightweight
- ✦ Excellent battery life and charging case
- ✦ Simple setup with flexible connectivity
- ✖ Noise reduction has limited impact
- ✖ No Lavalier microphone input
- ✖ Decorative covers cost extra

# Pentacon FM

John Wade finds an East German SLR that proves West is not always best

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Zeiss Ikon was formed in 1926 from the amalgamation of four German camera companies: Contessa-Nettel, Ernemann, Goerz and Ica. In 1932, they produced the Contax I 35mm coupled rangefinder camera, followed by the Contax II and Contax III. Then World War II broke out. After the war, parts of Zeiss Ikon relocated to West Germany, where they improved on the Contax designs, calling them the Contax IIa and IIIa. Back in Dresden, now under Soviet-controlled East Germany, the Russians took all the rangefinder cameras and technology back to Russia, where they remade Contax cameras and called them Kiev. Meanwhile in Dresden, the factory became part of VEB Pentacon, where they began making 35mm single lens reflexes (SLRs) under the Contax name. Which was when Zeiss Ikon in the West threw up objections. After a bit of wrangling, the Contax name was relinquished by the East Germans who used Pentacon instead.



The Pentacon FM, made in Dresden and built like a tank

And out of this tangled web of who made what, when and where, eventually came the magnificent Pentacon FM.

It offers a couple of surprises for the unwary. First is the aperture setting. The control ring is pulled back towards the camera body to set the f-stop. Then, allowing the ring to spring back into position, it is turned again to its widest setting to focus. The aperture then remains wide open until the shutter release is pressed, when it snaps back to the required f-stop. The other peculiarity is the shutter setting. On the top plate, there is a dial with fast speeds in black on the right and slow speeds in red on the left. Fast or

slow is first selected using a slider on the back of the body, which introduces an arrow into either the left or the right side of the dial. Then a knob behind the dial is depressed and turned to select the required speed.

Completing the spec is a 58mm f/2 Biotar lens, front-mounted angled shutter release, delayed action lever and split-image rangefinder.

**What's good** The popular 42mm screw mount allows use of a vast range of lenses.

**What's bad** Non-instant return mirror, rather dim viewfinder, big and heavy.



Top plate of the Pentacon showing the unusual shutter speed controls and, around the rewind knob on the left, a handy film speed reminder

A predecessor from when the Contax name was still being used: the Contax S was the first 35mm SLR with an eye-level pentaprism viewfinder

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The Fujifilm X-E5 the perfect balance of power, style and portability

# Summer's here – celebrate with the Fujifilm X-E5

Deputy Editor **Geoff Harris** spent a day shooting a colourful May day festival with the versatile Fujifilm X-E5. Did it leave him full of the joys of spring?

**A**s a keen travel and street photographer, experience has taught me to travel light.

Smaller cameras and lenses are much easier to fit in your bags, greatly reducing the risk of busting your baggage allowance, and once you've arrived at your destination, they place much less strain on your body (particularly if it's hot or you are walking lots).

Having recently spent some time with the Fujifilm X-E5, this is now right at the top of my list of camera recommendations for travel and street photographers wanting to travel light.

Its dimensions are certainly compact – 124.9mm x 72.9mm x 39.1mm, and weighing just 445g including battery – but the X-E5 is no lightweight when it comes to image quality, or essential features for serious photographers.

Indeed, the Fujifilm X-E5 has the same

high-resolution, 40MP sensor as the company's hugely popular X100VI compact camera, and the well-regarded X-T50. Unlike the X100VI, however, you can change lenses, which greatly expands the X-E5's versatility

It's also the first X-E series camera to include in-body image stabilisation, enabling you to shoot handheld at lower shutter speeds and still get great results – with up to 7 stops of shake reduction in the centre of the frame when shooting hand-held, and 6 stops in the corners, you can leave the tripod at home.

## Handy film simulations

The Fujifilm X-E5 arrived just in time to cover one of the most photogenic events of the English spring – the Beltane, or May Day, celebrations in the ever-colourful town of Glastonbury in Somerset, UK. Beltane is the biggest party in the town,

and it attracts pagan celebrants (and the merely curious) from all over the world. The Fujifilm X-E5 proved to be the perfect camera to take along, particularly when paired with the sharp and discreet 23mm f/2.8 Pancake lens.

You immediately notice the handling improvements from the X-E4, which include the addition of a handy AF/MF switch and clickable rear dial. There's also a super-convenient film simulation mode dial, which gives easy access to Fujifilm's excellent Film Simulation modes.

As soon as I started shooting, I found the Velvia simulation ideal for punchy portraits.

On a later visit to the photogenic nearby city of Wells, I also found the ACROS and Classic Chrome film simulations when taking atmospheric shots of old buildings.

Now, Fujifilm's analogue simulations have been around for some time, but what



**Left: The Velvia simulation really makes portraits sing, but it is also great for punchy looking landscapes**

**Right: Acros – an excellent choice for monochrome fans**



also makes the X-E5 stand out is the ability to save your own favourite Film Simulation ‘recipes’ onto the dial.

It’s quite an easy process, greatly expanding your creative options – see the video at [bit.ly/xe5recipes](http://bit.ly/xe5recipes)

**Time to get focussed**

I found the X-E5 to be the ideal camera for quick portraits. The camera and lens are discreet and unthreatening, which helps your subject to relax, and the versatile autofocus modes and face detection mode deliver sharp results every time.

The X-E5’s 40.2MP APS-C X-Trans sensor also gives lots of cropping flexibility, which is really handy with quick portraits at busy events, where you don’t have ages to



**A tight crop from a portrait format image, and still very usable**

perfect the background and composition.

There are some advanced AF features too, including the option to specify three Custom AF zones, which can be rectangular groups of AF points of any user-specified size.

And if you like to photograph more than people, there are also subject-detection settings for animals, birds, cars, motorbikes, airplanes, and trains.

If you are tired of boring, bulky black boxes, the Fujifilm X-E5 is a refreshingly good-looking device, with subtle analogue-camera stylings and clean lines. You get a handsome rope strap in the box too. The controls fall naturally to hand, and another useful extra is a view mode lever. It has four functions, including accessing digital zoom, turn the Film Simulation Recipe on and off, aspect ratio selection and cycling through the LCD / viewfinder view modes.

**Video versatility**

There are plenty of video options, and you can record footage at in 6K 30p, 4K 60p, and Full HD 60p, with a Full HD 240p option also available in high-speed mode

without audio. There’s a standard 3.5mm stereo microphone input and a micro-HDMI output, and more advanced video makers can monitor audio via the USB-C port using a suitable adapter.

The camera’s compact dimensions make it easy and satisfying to record video handheld, and the video mode is quickly accessed via the drive button. All this said, the video features never get in the way of stills shooting, however. Watch a sample video from the X-E5 at [bit.ly/xe5samplevid](http://bit.ly/xe5samplevid)

**High five for the X-E5**

I found the Fujifilm X-E5 to be the perfect camera to shoot a big, noisy, colourful event like the Beltane festival in Glastonbury. You can carry it around all day long without ever noticing its weight, and the bright 2.36m-dot OLED panel viewfinder is great for composing your images or checking settings.

Meanwhile, the 3in, 1.02m-dot LCD can not only tilt up and down, but it can also face forwards over the top of the camera for photographing or videoing yourself.

At the end of the day, what really sold me was the excellent image quality and autofocus performance, along with the great handling. All this makes the X-E5 a great alternative to the also very desirable X100VI if you want the versatility that comes with being able to change lenses. So it’s a high five for the X-E5. AP



**Left: Effective continuous AF and subject detection is also very handy for unpredictable subjects!**

**Right: The screen can be set facing forwards over the top of the camera.**



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ALL IMAGES © TOM WELLER

# Emerging Photographer Tom Weller



Tom Weller is the overall winner of the inaugural Canon Emerging Talent award, part of World Sports Photography Awards competition, with a portfolio spanning Basketball to Winter Sports. He tells **Jessica Miller** more about his work and inspirations...

### **When and why did you start taking photographs?**

I became interested in photography at a very early age. It all started when I was about ten years old, and by the age of twelve I had already bought my first proper camera. Sport has always played a major role in my life. I played tennis, handball, football and went skiing.

Back then, one of my biggest goals was to photograph a handball Bundesliga game for FRISCH AUF! Göppingen, my local club here in Göppingen. Thanks to a colleague, I actually got that opportunity relatively early on.

### **What draws you towards sports photography?**

The incredible dynamism that sport naturally brings. I find it fascinating to capture moments in a way that the human eye often cannot see.

Through unique perspectives, creative shutter speeds, or the use of reflections, it is possible to photograph scenes in a way that creates a completely different visual impact.

### **Tell us about your photographic training (if any)?**

I completed my A-Levels in Germany in a traditional academic setting. Afterwards, it quickly became clear to me that I did not just want to pursue photography as a hobby but develop it into a career. I went on to study photojournalism in Hannover from 2017 to 2022.

### **Tell us more about your work, and winning the Canon Emerging Talent Award at the World Sports Photography Awards?**

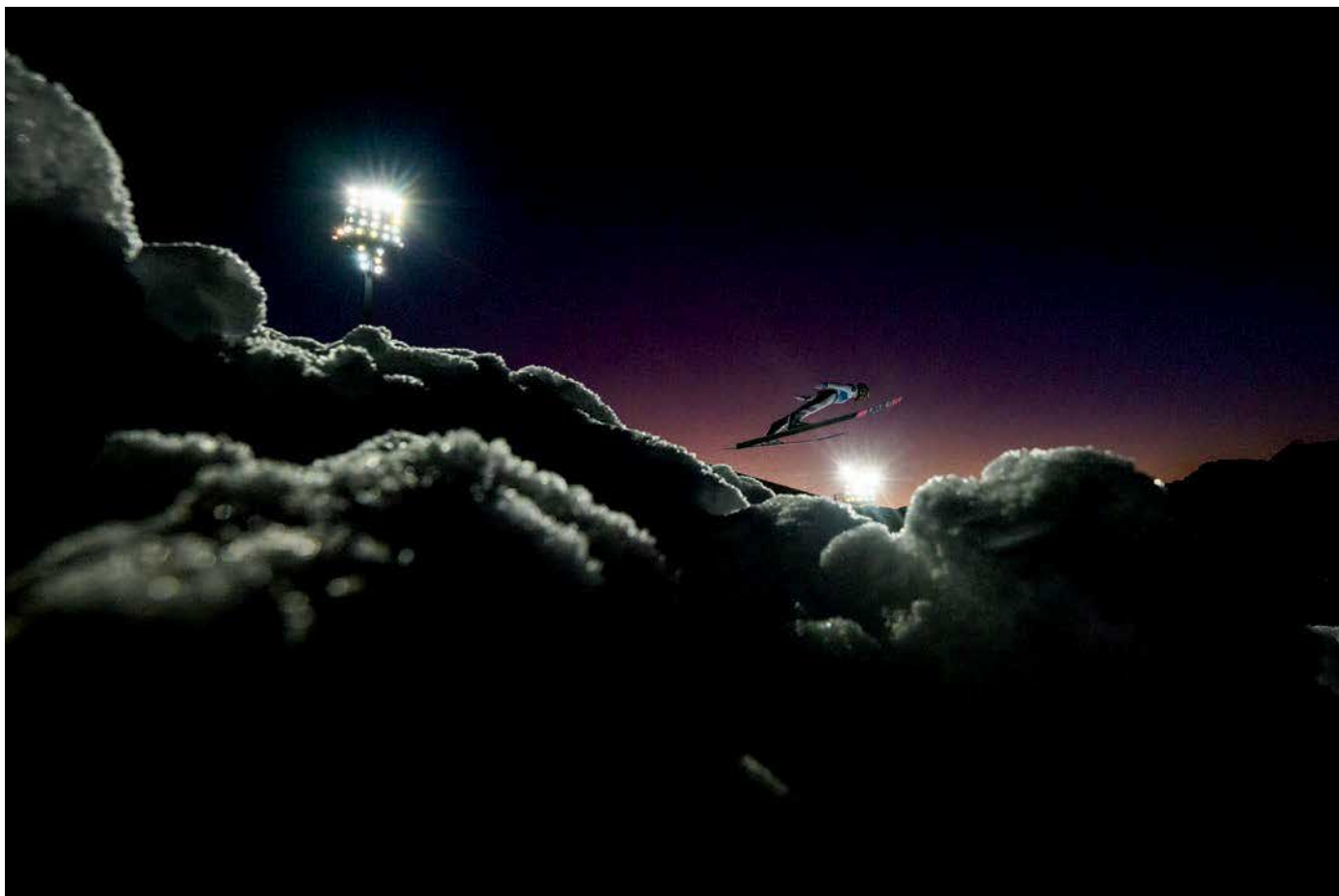
The focus for me is rather on consistently creating strong and creative images, satisfying my clients, and continuously discovering new and exciting subjects and perspectives.

If you stay open-minded and work creatively, the images suitable for competitions often come naturally. It is a great honour to be mentioned alongside so many outstanding photographers and to receive this kind of recognition.

### **What has been your biggest photographic obstacle to date?**

The biggest challenge for me in photography lies primarily in





➤ the external conditions on site. Very often, the positions for photographers are not ideal, the lighting is difficult, the angles are unfavourable, or access to certain areas is restricted. You must try to maintain a fresh and creative perspective to create strong, and ideally distinctive, images under exactly these circumstances.

### **Who are your biggest influences?**

My biggest influences and sources of inspiration are primarily many colleagues with whom I regularly exchange ideas. But also, my first agency manager, my professors and lecturers. Each of them had their own perspective.

### **What equipment do you use?**

I work with mirrorless full-frame cameras and I really enjoy using fast, wide-aperture lenses. At sports events, my standard kit usually includes a 400mm f/2.8, a 70–200mm f/2.8, and often also a 35mm f/1.2. I also like 135mm f/1.8, an 85mm f/1.2, or a 50mm f/1.2 primes.



### **What has been the highlight of your photography career so far?**

As a sports photographer, my biggest goal has always been the Olympic Games. I have already had the opportunity to photograph four Olympic Games at the age of 26 and the 2022 FIFA World Cup Final.

### **What piece of advice would you give to other aspiring photographers?**

My advice to aspiring photographers would be: just do it, do it, do it! Experiment, try things out, and test a lot.



Instagram: @wellertom.photos



# Inbox

Write to the Editor at [ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk](mailto:ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk) and include your full postal address. Please don't send letters in the post as there is no one in the office to receive them. Replies are from the Editor unless otherwise stated

## STAR LETTER



Andrew's trophy and magazine from 1952

## Silver Lining

As a subscriber I have just received notification of the changes to AP. Whilst for many years I have looked forward to the arrival of the magazine each week, I accept that things must evolve to survive in today's commercial climate.

But it brought to mind a recent purchase at a vintage trading hub in Exeter of an Amateur Photographer Silver Plaque. It was awarded to a

Mr. P Walshaw in 1952 for the best print submitted in the Advanced Section of the Monthly Competition. A brief search of internet auction sites found a printed copy of the winning image "the silver lining".

Keep up the good work on a great magazine and for the readers "every cloud has a silver lining".

**Andrew Lester**

**I love the trophy. What a great find! And well done for tracking down the original image that won it!**

## Win! SAMSUNG

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## Quids in

I am so glad to learn that film photography is making a comeback. I am 78 years old and have been taking photos since the age of 15. I still have my

original Halina 35 which still works fine, as well as 18 other cameras from the 30s to the 80s. All cost me from £4 to £18, mainly off eBay, and all work like new. My latest

purchase is a Miranda MS-1 which is a dream to use. I know film costs have rocketed but compared to the price of a good digital camera I'm still quids in. **Ted Hart**



Michael Newman writes in praise of his OM System OM-1

## The value of technology

A couple of camera reviews I've seen recently have mentioned the lack of autofocus or of image stabilisation. I'd just like to emphasise the importance of these features for certain groups of people. My eyesight has been suddenly impacted by a cataract operation that didn't go well and I can only continue with my photography because the AF on my OM-1 is so good. A friend who has Parkinson's is back to winning competitions after he discovered the OM-1 and its amazing stabilisation. I'm so glad you do cover aspects like this in your reviews.

**Michael Newman**

## Royalty and rocks

Cheers to Chris Jackson for his timeless photographs of the British Royal Family that go beyond pomp and circumstance to reveal the humanity of his subjects (AP 28 April). Within a sea of artificial images online, it is more important than ever for photographers to capture genuine personalities in a clever and impactful way.

I'm also attaching a photo I took a few weeks ago of a cairn at sunset. It was taken along the St. Lawrence River in Cape Vincent, New York (in The Thousand Islands region) as the ice was beginning

to melt at the start of spring. It would make my day to see it in print in your magazine.

**Michael Aaron Gallagher**

**Consider your day made!**

## A success

What a surprise. What a difference. What a success! Well done to all who managed the vibrant new look. AP has always deservedly been the home of knowledge, trust and authority in the photography world, and long may this well-earned reputation continue.

**Ray Markham**

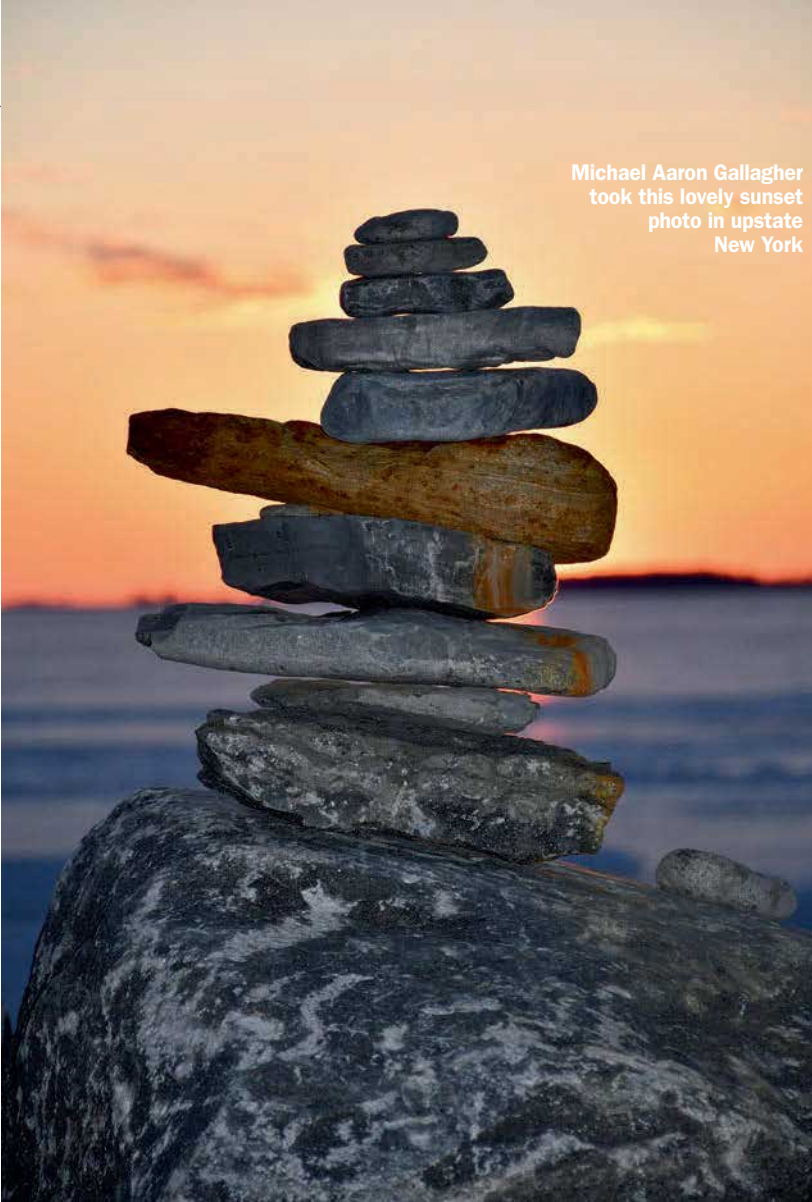
## Where's the passion?

Congratulations on the new look AP. I'll now look forward to it every fortnight. Could I make a small suggestion? I see you've removed the strapline "passionate about photography since 1884". This is an amazing heritage that no other photography magazine can boast. I know it's a small thing but it might be nice to bring it back somewhere, even if not on the cover. **Stuart Neville**

## A good refinement

I enjoyed reading this week's AP. It is a very good refinement of your excellent magazine. I especially appreciated your explanation of the word 'amateur', and I am sure that AP fosters this love of photography in your readers. It has certainly

Michael Aaron Gallagher took this lovely sunset photo in upstate New York



contributed to my personal knowledge, and by publishing my letters you have really stimulated my motivation. **Richard Neale**

Thanks Richard, please enjoy this little extra burst of motivation.

### The new look AP

Thank you for improving even further my favourite magazine. I always look forward to my weekly dose of AP but for some time now the postal service has become so 'rubbish' here in Cheltenham that we are often a week or more behind the rest of the world! So I am now hoping that becoming a fortnightly issue in delivery terms it just might be more beneficial!

The What's new section I particularly enjoyed, and am pleased that you highlight this now with even more content. That said, it is always comforting to enjoy the regular slots that are so much a part of *Amateur Photographer*, especially the fascinating sections you do on classic cameras of the past.

The only thing that astonishes me is the lack of advertisements for cameras and accessories. I used to really enjoy going

through all the ads but I suppose this is something to do with social media which does not interest me in the least. Again my thanks to you all for making something good even better!

**Donald P McLeod Hawkins**

The global decline in print advertising is one of the reasons that we are now fortnightly. But I'm glad you enjoy the changes Donald, and I hope you get AP on time now!

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Dear reader,

Welcome to

the new and improved **Amateur Photographer**! As you can see, we have a brand-new look (with 100 pages in every single issue), new content and more of the features that you love. From the world's best photographers to the newest kit, plus valuable insights and stories from the masters of the craft, we have everything photography related covered in a new and improved fortnightly package.

Best wishes,

*Nigel Atherton*

**Nigel Atherton**, Editor

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# Best Buys

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



A round-up of the AP testing team's favourite and most highly rated kit, including both cameras and all kinds of accessories, across a wide range of price points

## OM System Tough TG-7

● £449 ● [explore.omsystem.com](http://explore.omsystem.com)

This latest model in a long line of class-leading rugged cameras is waterproof to 15m, shockproof against a 2.1m drop, crushproof and freezeproof. The 25-100mm equivalent lens is paired with a 12MP sensor, with in-body stabilisation to combat shake. Viewing is via a 3in LCD. The TG-7 is also one of the few cameras of its type that can record raw files.

★★★★★ Reviewed 2 Apr 2024



## Canon PowerShot G7X Mark III

● £819 ● [canon.co.uk](http://canon.co.uk)

This lovely little pocket camera provides a good range of features for both photography and video. You get a 20MP 1in sensor, 24-100mm equivalent f/1.8-2.8 zoom lens, 4K 30p video recording, and a tilting rear screen. It's ideal for those who'd like more advanced controls than on a smartphone.

★★★★★ Reviewed 28 Sep 2019



## Fujifilm X100VI

● £1,599 ● [fujifilm-x.com](http://fujifilm-x.com)

The sixth version of Fujifilm's charismatic rangefinder-styled compact boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor in front of its fixed 23mm f/2 lens. It also gains in-body stabilisation while barely increasing in size. Traditional analogue control dials are joined by a unique hybrid optical/electronic viewfinder and a tilting touchscreen on the back. It's a truly fabulous camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed 9 Apr 2024



## Ricoh GR IV

● £1,199 ● [ricohgr.eu](http://ricohgr.eu)

A favourite of street photographers, the GR IV combines a 26MP APS-C sensor and a sharp 28mm equivalent f/2.8 lens in a slim, pocketable body. It offers sensitivities up to ISO 204,800 and 4fps shooting, with in-body image stabilisation helping to keep images sharp. Viewing is via a fixed 3in rear LCD, while battery life and controls are improved compared to its predecessor.

★★★★★

Reviewed 23 Sep 2025



## Sony RX100 VII

● £1,049 ● [sony.co.uk](http://sony.co.uk)

Sony has somehow crammed a 24-200mm equivalent zoom, pop-up electronic viewfinder, tilting screen, 20 fps shooting and 4K video recording into a body that you can slip into a jacket pocket. With the firm's latest AF technology also on board, it's without doubt the most accomplished pocket camera on the market.

★★★★★

Reviewed 5 Oct 2019



## Fujifilm GFX100RF

● £4,499 ● [fujifilm-x.com](http://fujifilm-x.com)

It's anything but cheap, but the world's first medium-format compact camera offers an unparalleled combination of image quality and portability. It combines a 100MP sensor with a 28mm equivalent f/4 lens, while viewing is via an electronic viewfinder or a tilting touchscreen. A unique aspect ratio dial encourages a creative approach to composition.

★★★★★

Reviewed 13 May 2025



### Canon EOS R50

● £859 with 18-45mm lens ● canon.co.uk

With the EOS R50, Canon has fitted some impressive technology into a compact and lightweight body. It boasts highly capable subject recognition autofocus coupled with rapid continuous shooting. Image quality is very pleasing too, with attractive files direct from the camera. It also works well with EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
6 Jun 2023



### Nikon Z50II

● £999 with 16-50mm lens ● nikon.co.uk

Nikon's Z50II is a very capable camera that offers the most advanced feature set in its class. It handles really well too, while giving excellent output in both JPEG and raw. Some users might be put off by its 20MP resolution, but in reality this counts as little practical difference to 24MP or 26MP cameras. With Nikon now offering a decent range of DX lenses, it's a great option as a first serious camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
25 Feb 2025



### Fujifilm X-S20

● £1,149 body only ● fujifilm-x.com

Styled like a mini DSLR, the X-S20 uses electronic dials for changing exposure settings, as opposed to the X-T series' analogue controls. But you still get Fujifilm's signature fine image quality, along with in-body image stabilisation. It also boasts an array of advanced video features, making it a great choice for vloggers and photographers alike.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
25 Jul 2023



### Olympus OM-D E-M10 Mark IV

● £749 with 14-42mm ● explore.omsystem.com

With a charismatic retro design, fine handling, highly effective in-body stabilisation and attractive JPEG output, Olympus has made a camera that's more pleasant to use than its entry-level competitors. Its 20MP sensor delivers good results up to ISO 3200 at least, and its tilting screen can be set to face forwards beneath the camera.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
26 Sep  
2020



### Fujifilm X-T30 III

● £999 with 13-33mm lens ● fujifilm-x.com

This lovely little camera provides excellent performance, while preserving the charm of the X-series. It's a great all-rounder, and handles exceptionally well thanks to an intuitive interface based around traditional analogue dials. Image quality is superb in both raw and JPEG, with Fujifilm's peerless Film Simulation colour modes accessed via their own dial.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
10 Feb 2026



### Panasonic Lumix G9 II

● £1,699 body only ● panasonic.com/uk

Panasonic's high-end Micro Four Thirds camera provides an impressive set of features. It can shoot 25MP still images at up to 75fps, and 5.7K video at 60fps. You get an excellent control layout, incredibly effective in-body stabilisation, and very capable subject recognition autofocus. A good range of small, excellent Leica-branded lenses is available to match.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
31 Oct 2023



### Fujifilm X-T5

● £1,599 body only ● fujifilm-x.com

Fujifilm's latest X-T model is a great choice for serious enthusiast photographers. It boasts a 40MP APS-C sensor housed in a retro-styled body covered with traditional analogue control dials. Subject-detection autofocus, in-body stabilisation and Fujifilm's lovely colour modes round off an extremely desirable package.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
3 Jan 2023



### Panasonic Lumix GH7

● £1,699 body only ● panasonic.com/uk

Panasonic's flagship Micro Four Thirds camera is aimed at videographers, but holds its own when capturing stills as well. Its 25MP sensor delivers plenty of detail, while enabling 5.7K recording at 60fps, or 4K at 120fps. Autofocus is much improved over the firm's older models, too. Pro-spec video functionality and effective in-body stabilisation round off a fine package.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
5 Nov 2024



### OM System OM-1 Mark II

● £2,049 body only ● explore.omsystem.com

Updated version of this high-speed powerhouse gains some handy new features. It's capable of shooting at 120fps with focus fixed, or 50fps with AF, but now with double the buffer for extended bursts. AI subject detection recognises vehicles, animals and birds. It also boasts IP53-rated weather-sealing and includes class-leading stabilisation.

★★★★★

Review  
12 Mar 2024



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## Nikon Z5II

● £1,379 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](http://nikon.co.uk)

Nikon's entry-level full-frame model redefines what we can expect from a camera at this price point. It's packed full of features, including subject-detection autofocus, in-body image stabilisation and a fully articulating screen, while its 24MP sensor delivers excellent image quality. It's an excellent all-rounder at a tempting price.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
17 Jun 2025



## Nikon Z6III

● £1,959 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](http://nikon.co.uk)

This mid-range camera is one of the finest all-round cameras for enthusiast users on the market. It marries excellent autofocus and super-fast continuous shooting with solid build quality and a refined control layout. The viewfinder is particularly bright, and joined by a fully articulated touchscreen. It's at least a match for any other camera in its class.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
8 Oct 2024



## Sony Alpha 7R V

● £3,999 body only ● [sony.co.uk](http://sony.co.uk)

With its 61MP full-frame sensor, the A7R V provides class-leading image quality while adding a whole array of improvements over its predecessor. These include subject-detection AF, a larger, more detailed viewfinder, and a more flexible rear LCD design. For those whose needs are more about image quality than speed, it's probably the best full-frame camera you can buy.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
17 Jan 2023



## Sony Alpha 7 V

● £2,799 body only ● [sony.co.uk](http://sony.co.uk)

Sony's enthusiast-focused full-frame model employs a new 33MP partially-stacked sensor. Not only does it deliver excellent image quality, but it can also shoot at 30fps. Its subject-detection AF can recognise birds, humans, animals and vehicles. A large, clear viewfinder and fully articulated touchscreen round off the package.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
3 Mar 2026



## Nikon Z9

● £5,299 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](http://nikon.co.uk)

Without doubt Nikon's finest camera yet, the Z9 combines high resolution, breathtaking speed, subject-recognition autofocus and pro-level build. It's capable of shooting 45.7MP raw files at 20fps for 1,000 frames, and 11MP JPEGs at 120fps. It can also record 8K video. With its superb viewfinder and tilting rear screen, it's probably the most capable camera around.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
22 Mar 2022



## Leica M11 Monochrom

● £8,300 body only ● [uk.leica-camera.com](http://uk.leica-camera.com)

Within its own specialist niche, this monochrome-only manual-focus rangefinder is almost perfect. Its build quality is stunning, and the pared-back design allows you to immerse yourself completely in the process of taking pictures. Most importantly, the 60.1MP sensor produces fantastic results, reaching a new pinnacle in black & white image quality.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
16 May 2023



## Nikon D780

● £1,999 body only ● [nikon.co.uk](http://nikon.co.uk)

This highly accomplished 24MP full-frame model shows that there's life in the DSLR yet. It's superbly built with extensive weather-sealing, handles brilliantly, and gives excellent results in any conditions. It'll provide top-level service to photographers who want to keep using their F-mount lenses and still prefer an optical viewfinder.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
4 Apr 2020



## Canon EOS R6 Mark III

● £2,799 body only ● [canon.co.uk](http://canon.co.uk)

Based around a 24MP full-frame sensor, this brilliant all-rounder will do almost anything you might ask it to. It combines reliable subject-detection AF, rapid continuous shooting, and effective image stabilisation in a body that handles well and gives great results. It also works well with adapted EF-mount DSLR lenses.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
27 Jan 2026



## Fujifilm GFX100 II

● £6,999 body only ● [fujifilm-x.com](http://fujifilm-x.com)



Fujifilm's super-high resolution medium-format camera places an updated 102MP sensor in a pro-spec modular body. Subject-detection autofocus is on board for animals, birds and vehicles, while in-body image stabilisation helps keep handheld shots sharp. It's the ideal camera for serious photographers who demand the ultimate in image quality.


★★★★★

Reviewed  
21 Nov 2023




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### Tenba DNA 9 Slim Messenger

● £110 ● [uk.tenba.com](http://uk.tenba.com)

If you'd like a small shoulder bag to carry a camera and a couple of lenses, this is among the best you'll find. Measuring 28cm wide by 20cm tall, it's well suited to holding a mirrorless camera or a compact DSLR. The quality of materials and construction is excellent, and there are plenty of handy pockets for organising accessories.

★★★★★ Reviewed 26 Apr 2022



### Vanguard Veo Metro B25L

● £185 ● [vanguardworld.co.uk](http://vanguardworld.co.uk)

This good-looking backpack will hold a camera and up to 4 lenses, with separate sections for a 16in laptop and personal items. It offers a good level of protection for your kit, while being packed full of useful pockets and clever design details. It's also comfortable to carry when full.

★★★★★

Reviewed 12 Aug 2025



### Wandrd Prvke 21 V4

● £281 (photography bundle) ● [eu.wandrd.com](http://eu.wandrd.com)

Wandrd's compact backpack offers sleek style for everyday use. Durable and comfortable to carry, it provides access from the top, side and back. Different-sized camera cubes can be used for smaller or larger kits, or the bag can be used on its own. Dedicated sleeves hold a tablet and laptop.

★★★★★

Reviewed 23 Sep 2025



### NiSi NM-180s Macro Rail

● £105 ● [nisioptics.co.uk](http://nisioptics.co.uk)

One of the best macro focusing rails available right now, the NM-180s combines excellent quality build with super-smooth operation. It's easily capable of supporting a full-frame SLR while offering up to 130mm of travel, with a large knob facilitating fine adjustment. It also boasts extensive compatibility with the Arca Swiss quick release system, with a dovetail profile along its base and a rotating clamp on top.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 Oct 2020



### Cullmann Rondo 460M RB8.5

● £80 ● [transcontinenta.co.uk](http://transcontinenta.co.uk)

If you want a fully featured tripod kit on a budget, this is a great choice. Four-section aluminium legs provide a max height of 160cm, while packing down to 43.5cm. It's rated to support a 4kg load, weighs 1.46kg, and one leg can be combined with the centre column to form a monopod.

★★★★★

Reviewed 21 Mar 2020



### Heipi W28S Travel Tripod

● £330 ● [heipivision.com](http://heipivision.com)

This compact tripod employs a space-saving design, with a unique detachable 'three pillar' centre column that can also be used as a standalone table-top tripod. The ball head is impressively large and strong, too. It boasts lots of other neat features, while being well made and unusually stable. It's probably the best example of this kind of travel tripod.

★★★★★

Reviewed 2 Sep 2025



### Benro Rhino 24C tripod with VX25 head

● £250 ● [uk.benroeu.com](http://uk.benroeu.com)

Benro has got pretty much everything right with this sturdy, well-designed tripod and head that'll support a substantial load. This four-section carbon fibre model offers a maximum height of almost 1.7m, while folding down to 49cm and weighing 1.74kg. It's easily capable of supporting a full-frame DSLR with a telephoto zoom. Quite simply, it's a fantastic kit for the money.

★★★★★

Reviewed 28 Nov 2020



### NiSi True Color ND-Vario 1-5 stops

● £89-£179 ● [nisioptics.co.uk](http://nisioptics.co.uk)

This high-quality variable neutral density filter is ideal for regulating the amount of light entering your lens, without introducing any colour cast. It's optically excellent, boasts an oil and water-repellent coating, and includes a handy and accurate density scale. It's available in sizes from 40.5mm to 95mm.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 May 2022



### Benro SupaDupa Pro MSDPL46C

● £189 ● [uk.benroeu.com](http://uk.benroeu.com)

It may have a ridiculous name, but this five-section carbon fibre model might just be the best monopod we've ever tested. One clip leg lock provides easy length adjustment, while the lower twist locks are waterproof. On the top there's a clever bowl head with an Arca-compatible clamp. It's a great choice for those who regularly shoot with large telephotos.

★★★★★

Reviewed 24 Apr 2021



## Godox iFlash iT30Pro

● £67 ● godox.com

This tiny flash unit from Godox is both portable and affordable, while offering a comprehensive feature set. There's a choice of TTL auto or manual power setting, and the built-in Li-ion battery conveniently charges via USB. It can even work as a 2.4GHz wireless trigger for the firm's larger flash units.

An optional riser/bounce adapter adds further appeal.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
11 Nov 2025



## Hollyland Lark M2S

● £149 ● hollyland.com

This excellent wireless mic stands out due to the clever design of the transmitter units. Only the tiny microphone section is visible, with the rest of the electronics hidden away behind the subject's clothing. The kit comes with one transmitter that plugs into the USB-C port of a smartphone or computer, and another that's designed to be used on your camera. Sound quality is really very good.

★★★★★

Reviewed

1 July 2025



## Hahnel ProCube 3

● £80 ● hahnel.ie

This USB-C-powered dual battery charger employs interchangeable plates that each accept a pair of batteries. An LCD display shows progress, while a 2A USB-A output allows phones or tablets to be charged once the camera batteries are full.

Versions are available for all the main camera brands.

★★★★★

Reviewed

4 Mar 2025



## Datacolor SpyderPro

● £249 ● datacolor.com

If you like to post-process your images, you need to be sure that your monitor is showing colours accurately. Datacolor has designed the Spyder to calibrate your display faster than ever before, with the process taking about two minutes. For most photographers, the Pro version makes most sense.

★★★★★

Reviewed 25 Jul  
2023



## Rotolight NEO 3 Pro

● £389 ● rotolight.com

LED lighting technology has advanced in leaps and bounds over recent years. Rotolight's compact on-camera NEO 3 Pro offers a unique feature set thanks to its full colour RGBWW LEDs, with the ability to provide either continuous light or flash in 16.7 million colours. This firm has also programmed in the characteristics of 2,500 colour filters, and it works brilliantly. Power is provided by an NP-F type Li-ion battery.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
15 Nov 2022



## Peak Design Form Rope strap

● £45 ● peakdesign.com

This minimalist rope strap is, like all Peak Design's products, expensive compared to similar-looking alternatives. But it's extremely well made from high-quality materials, and it works brilliantly. It comes in a choice of three lengths and three colours, and is perfect for carrying small mirrorless or compact cameras.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
13 Jan 2026



## Kase Wolverine K9 100mm Entry-Level Kit

● £399 ● kasefilters.com

With this top-quality filter system, Kase has carefully rethought every component. The slimline, low-profile holder benefits from extensive light-sealing, while the 82mm polariser clips into place magnetically; it's also easy to adjust from behind the camera.

All of the filters use top-quality glass, and everything fits together into a single case. The result is a top-quality set-up that's easy to use and delivers superb results.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
5 Dec 2020



## Intrepid Compact Enlarger

● £300 ● intrepidcamera.co.uk

For film photography enthusiasts wishing to make prints at home, this compact and affordable unit includes lots of handy features. Based around full-colour LED technology, it supports both mono and colour printing. It's perfect for those who don't have space for a permanent darkroom.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
17 Jul 2021



## Fujifilm Instax Link WIDE

● £140 ● instax.co.uk

This brilliant portable printer produces great-looking 6x10cm prints on Fujifilm's Instax Wide film. It connects to your smartphone via Bluetooth and is controlled using an attractively designed and intuitive app.


Powered by a built-in rechargeable battery and available in white or grey, it'll slip easily into a bag.

★★★★★

Reviewed  
25 Jan 2022




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908301	Nikon Z14-30mm f4 S	£899
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911005	Sigma 10-20mm f3.5 EX DC HSM (Nikon DX)	£99
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910534	Sigma 12-24mm f4.5-5.6 EX DG HSM ASPH (Nikon FX)	£249
902609	Sigma 14mm f1.8 DG HSM ART (Sony FE)	£749
911160	Sigma 150-600mm f5-6.3 DG OS HSM Sport (Canon EF)	£999
911003	Sigma 150-600mm f5-6.3 DG OS HSM Sport (Nikon FX)	£879
910999	Sigma 16mm f1.4 DC DN Contemporary (Canon EF-M)	£279
911007	Sigma 17-70mm f2.8-4 DC OS Contemporary (Nikon DX)	£129
910540	Sigma 19mm f2.8 DN ART (Sony E)	£119
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911134	Tamron 18-270mm f3.5-6.3 Di-II VC (Canon EF-S)	£149
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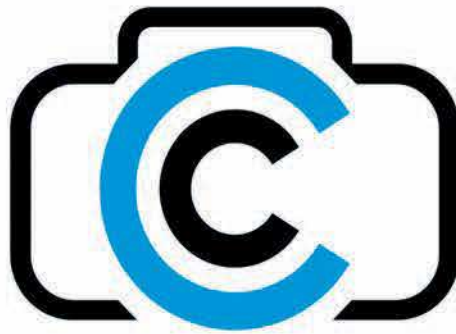
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# wales & west photography show

# 2026



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# Final Analysis

**Damien Demolder considers...**

**Dame Judi Dench, 2026 by Charlie Cliff**

Showing what it was like to be there to someone who wasn't there is one of the main purposes of photography. Often we need to transport the viewer to the scene we faced ourselves so they can see what we saw and perhaps feel what we felt. For this act of conveyance to succeed the viewer needs to place trust in us, and to believe what we are showing is the truth. When we watch a film or a play we know the world we are encountering isn't real, but a documentary we expect to present us with truths in a way that allow us to see for ourselves, with only a gentle hand for guidance.

Portraiture is fraught with fictions presented as documentary, driven I suppose by sitters wanting to be seen in their best light. Most people are glad when we show them kindly, which is fine, but sometimes a line is crossed that takes us into a realm of reality-excluding enhancements. At that stage we become aware what we are witnessing isn't all it seems. These untruths form a barrier that prevents a true connection between viewer and subject – it's hard to be friends with someone when you know they are lying to your face.

Skill in photography, like skill in make-up, lives in presenting someone in a good light without the flattery being the thing we notice first. Polished, but still natural and believable, perhaps.

What drew me to this portrait of Dame Judi Dench - which was shortlisted at this year's Sony World Photography Awards - is that it feels so natural that we might be standing outside this potting shed ourselves looking in at an old friend, much admired.

It was shot for Zeit magazine. Photographer Charlie Cliff had a crew of assistants and art directors helping create the image – but none of that is visible in the shot. It looks like it was just him and her after a chat and a cup of tea.

Charlie told me he puts in a lot of preparation for these shoots and a lot of pressure on himself to get it right, but while he arrives with masses of ideas he has to remain open to the unexpected. 'The greenhouse wasn't something I had planned for, but the moment I saw it, the picture sort of 'clicked into place' in my head. Honestly, no set designer could build anything as full of chaos and wonder.'

The light is sunlight dappled by the leaves of a tree, but helped with a 600W Aputure continuous light outside



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- a hand that gently lifts the subject's face which was 'more about enhancing what was already there than changing it' Charlie says. 'The space reminded me of Renaissance paintings of saints - figures seated in quite rigid, enclosed, embellished settings. I was also reminded of formal portraits of the

late Queen Elizabeth II: upright, very still, regal. I think I even asked Dame Judi to be regal.'

What we get to see is a little bit of theatre, but only as much theatre as I'd expect to follow Dame Judi wherever she goes. The pose, the light and the setting somehow sums up all the parts she's played, from Shakespeare

to Bond, as well as showing her exactly as we'd expect to find her when at home. To achieve all of this in a single, quiet and contemplative photograph takes a degree of skill we don't encounter every day.

You can see more of Charlie's excellent work at [charliecliff.com](http://charliecliff.com)



Peter Dench is a photographer, writer, curator and presenter based in London. He is one of the co-curators of Photo North and has been exhibited dozens of times. He has published a number of books including *The Dench Dozen: Great Britons of Photography Vol 1*; *Dench Does Dallas*; *The British Abroad*; *A&E: Alcohol & England* and *England Uncensored*. Visit [peterdench.com](http://peterdench.com)

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