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Travel pros discuss their top shots

LEE MILLER

Unseen images of Britain at war



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30th

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Forever a Snapshooter

Welcome



One of the great joys of this magazine is learning about photographers who have gone to extraordinary lengths to capture images the like of which we haven't seen before, and this week we bring you two such stories. Shackleton's disastrous 1914

Antarctic expedition on the aptly named *Endurance* is one of

Britain's greatest survival stories. Less well known is how expedition photographer Frank Hurley documented the voyage in hostile conditions and then, when the ship sank into the pack ice, saved 120 of his heavy glass plates, carrying them across ice and icy seas, and surviving 10 months with the stranded team until they were rescued. Thanks to their efforts we are now able to marvel at those wonderful photographs, which are among the first ever taken in Antarctica. And you can now enjoy them in a beautiful new book published by the Royal Geographical Society.

Find out more on page 16. The insect photography of Cambridge University lecturer John Brackenbury may be very different but what he shares with Hurley is a tenacity and determination to solve problems that most of us would walk away from, in order to capture the seemingly impossible. John's barriers were technical rather than geographical: how do you get sharp photos of tiny insects in flight? Answer: by using custom-made shutters, adapted lenses, and a now obsolete budget mirrorless camera.

Enjoy our interview with John on page 30.



One of Frank Hurley's photos of *Endurance* taken during Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, 1914



Nigel Atherton

Nigel Atherton
Group Editor

This issue's contributors...



Peter Dench

Peter talks to three travel photographers about their favourite images, and curates your winning black & white entries from Round 2 of APOY



Graeme Green

Our natural history specialist Graeme catches up with John Brackenbury to find out how he captures his amazing photos of insects in flight



Jessica Miller

AP's very own Miller visits the home of her legendary namesake, Lee Miller, to review the exhibition of her rarely seen photos of Britain during WWII



Andy Westlake

Our Technical Editor has the enviable job of getting to play with all the new toys. In this issue he tests the pricey but lovely new Leica SL3-P



Kingsley Singleton

Tamron's 90mm f/2.8 has been one of the most popular macro lenses for decades. Kingsley takes a close look at the latest version



Will Cheung

Venerable photo magazine legend Will Cheung finds out whether AI can take the pain out of cataloguing and finding your photos



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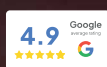
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Our cover photo was taken by John Brackenbury. See more of his work on page 30

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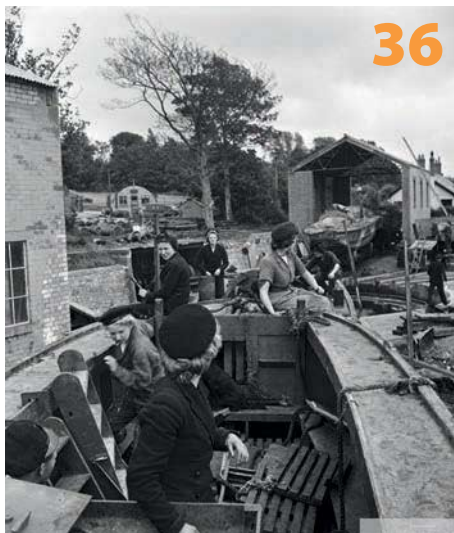
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Amateur Photographer

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Nigel Atherton

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What's new

New Tamron 12-20mm F2.8 ultra-wide zoom

A lot of lens-naming conventions sound like Wi-Fi passwords, but Tamron's latest optic is just called the 12-20mm F2.8, following its new policy of simple naming. This new ultra-wide zoom lens is made for full-frame Nikon Z and Sony E-mount and will be available from the end of July in E-mount, and the end of August in Z-mount.

With a relatively fast F2.8 aperture that remains constant throughout the zoom range, the lens is particularly aimed at interior and astro photographers. The alphabet soup returns when we look at the key features, which include Tamron's VXD focus mechanism, an XGM (eXpanded Glass Molded Aspherical) element, and three GM (Glass Molded Aspherical) elements. These are designed to suppress peripheral blurring and fringing, whilst correcting sagittal coma flare – important for ultra-wide angle lenses and astrophotography.

The new Tamron 12-20mm F2.8 lens is also designed to be compact and lightweight considering the level of performance on offer, measuring 119.3mm in length and weighing 570g. So it seems less

of a workout than the Sony FE 12-24mm F2.8 GM, which weighs 847g and is 137mm long, or the Nikon Z 14-24mm f/2.8 S lens, which weighs in at 650g, and is 124.5mm in length. The new Tamron lens also offers a minimum object distance (MOD) of 18cm at the 12mm wide end, which delivers "outstanding close-up performance," according to the company. Other features include a zoom lock switch, manual focus lock switch, AF/MF switch, a custom switch and a custom button. There are also three rings on the lens, including focus, zoom control, and aperture/control ring that can be de-clicked with the click control switch. The E-mount version costs £1449, while the Nikon Z iteration will set you back £1529.

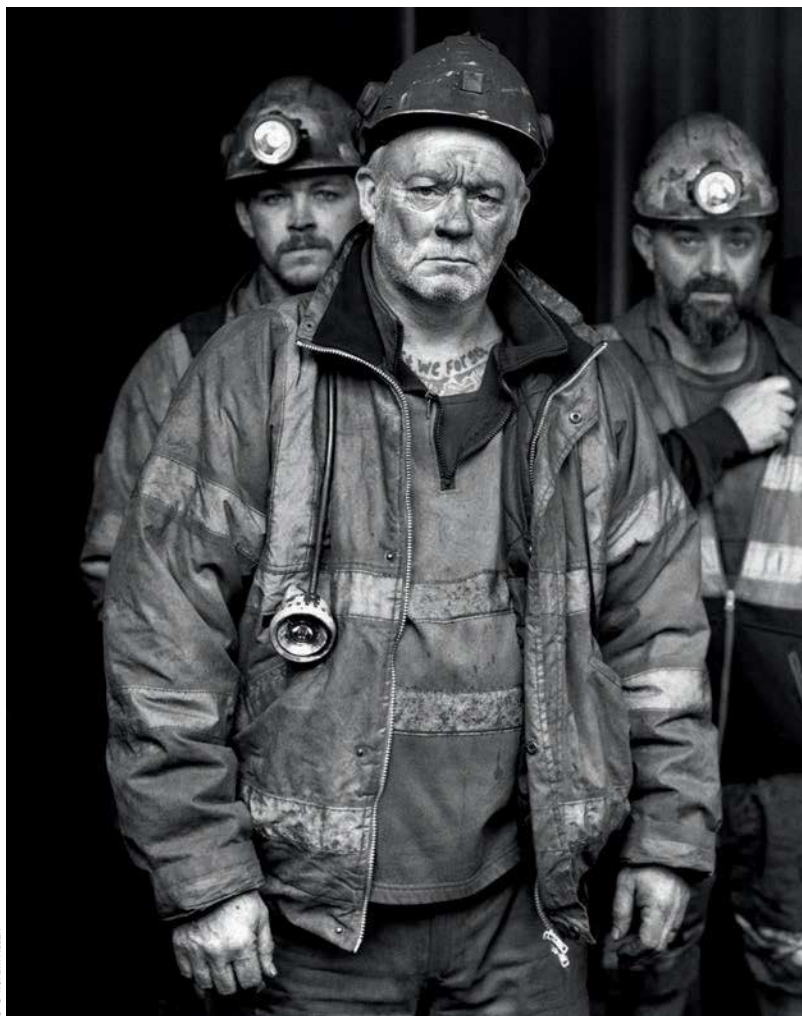


AOP reveals latest student winners

The Association of Photographers (AOP) has announced its Annual Student Award Winners. Rupert Allen, who is studying photojournalism and documentary photography at the University of Gloucestershire, was named overall winner and Best in Show, for his series Church of Coal. This project used large-format photography to document current and former miners from the last working drift colliery in western Europe, situated in South Wales. His prize includes £2500 worth of kit from Fujifilm and a one-year Capture One Studio subscription. Meanwhile, Lorena Bujalance Jimenez, an HND Photography student at the City of Glasgow College, won a Gold medal in the Places category, while Ed Butty bagged the gold award in the Things category.

'Our annual AOP Student Awards are acknowledged as an industry standard for identifying the next generation of talent,' said Isabelle Doran, CEO of the AOP. 'Whether it's people, places or things as the categories, the undiluted visual perspectives from this year's finalists show confidence and consideration for the subject matters they've photographed; some challenging our perspectives, others celebrating authenticity.' See aopawards.com/awards/student-awards/

Aberpergwm Miners, from the series Church of Coal





© MICHAEL YAMASHITA

Soaking up Japan

A world away from gritty coal mines, this evocative image of Japanese hot springs appears in *Nature of Japan*, a collection of work by National Geographic photographer, Michel Yamashita. The book traces Yamashita's journey from his first visit to Japan, sparked by a desire to understand his heritage, through years of immersion in the country's landscapes and key spiritual and aesthetic traditions. These include wabi sabi – finding beauty in imperfection and impermanence – while Yamashita also references the hugely influential haiku poet and inveterate traveller, Matsuo Basho (1644-1694). *Nature of Japan* is published by Abrams on October 15th and costs £45. See abramsandchronicle.co.uk

Win big with Wellcome

In more competition news, this year's Wellcome Photography Prize is open for entries, with a generous £52,000 prize pot. Both professionals and amateurs are invited to submit images that reveal how health is experienced, represented and understood, and entry is free. According to the organisers, you can submit work spanning all areas of life, from scientific imaging and biomedical research through to personal stories of care, illness, connection and change. There are three categories: a striking single image, a storytelling series (up to five images) and a single image that captures the marvels of scientific and medical imaging. The three category winners will each receive £10,000, while the remaining finalists will each receive £1,000. Entries close on October 21st – see bit.ly/wprize for details.



Madeleine Waller was a finalist last year for this image of her mother, called 'I spend 150 hours alone each week'



Comprehensive Hasselblad app now runs on Android devices

A long-requested update has been released for the Hasselblad Phocus Mobile app. After years of being available only on iPhones and iPads, it now comes to Android devices, offering a comprehensive editing toolkit.

The app supports Hasselblad's Natural Colour Solution, with options for tweaking exposure, curves, and white balance.

It includes lens corrections, noise reduction, sharpening, cropping, rotation and keystone correction, as well as an HDR highlight-adjustment feature for working on high-contrast images. You can also use the Phocus Mobile app to catalogue and rate your images, and apply Hasselblad Natural Noise Reduction if your Android device is powered

by the Snapdragon 8 Gen 3 or newer processor.

This first Android version of the app is compatible with Hasselblad medium-format digital cameras, such as the X2D II 100C, which features a 100MP sensor and LiDAR autofocus, or its earlier version, the X2D 100C. You can also use it with the 907X CFV 100C, which our online editor Joshua Waller dubbed the world's most beautiful camera.

The app is now available from the Google Play store or the Hasselblad website at hasselblad.com/phocus



New Lomography half-frame camera

Quirky analogue specialist Lomography has released the Half-frame Simple Use Reloadable Film Camera. It comes in two editions, one pre-loaded with LomoChrome Classicolor 200 film, and the other with Lady Grey Black & White 400, each offering 40 exposures. The camera itself features a 21mm f/9 lens, a fixed shutter speed of 1/120th sec, and a built-in flash, while power

is provided by a single AAA battery. After you have worked your way through the pre-loaded film, you can load any 35mm film and expose two 17mm x 24mm vertical images per regular frame. There are also three gel filters for the flash (cyan, yellow and magenta). It's available now for £24.90 with LomoChrome Classicolor 200 film or £21.90 with Lady Grey Black & White 400 film.

Important notice

You may have seen recent news reports regarding the planned closure of some TG Jones stores, formerly WH Smith. At present, it's unclear whether your local store will be affected. To ensure you continue to receive future issues of the magazine, we encourage you to consider one of the following alternative options, should your local store be one of those marked for closure.

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What's new

New Viltrox pancake lens

Another issue of *Amateur Photographer*, another new Viltrox lens, or so it seems. The industrious Chinese company has recently announced a pancake lens for Sony FE and Nikon Z-mount full-frame mirrorless cameras, dubbed the Viltrox 26mm F2.8 EVO. Viltrox's EVO lens line-up is designed for hybrid stills and video use, and the new lens joins the recently announced 35mm and 55mm F1.8 lenses in the EVO lineup alongside the 85mm F2.0 portrait shooter. It has a tactile design with two control rings, a ribbed focusing ring and a dedicated aperture ring. Constructed of eight lens elements in six groups, the 26mm F2.8 EVO includes a high-refractive element that not only helps to make the lens slim, but also helps control colour fringing. There are also two aspherical elements that improve sharpness and reduce distortion. The AF 26mm F2.8 EVO is compact and portable too, weighing only 130g despite its all-metal body, and measuring just 66mm across by 23.8mm long. Furthermore, the lens hood is magnetic, making it easy to snap on and to add filters.

The Viltrox AF 26mm F2.8 EVO is available now from Viltrox's official store at bit.ly/viltrox26mm and from Amazon for £279.



New Voigtlander lens for Leica M-mount

We end this issue's news section with another interesting lens release, the Voigtlander APO-Lanthar 90mm F4 Close Focus VM. This is a manual-focus, close-focusing medium telephoto lens optimised for full-frame Leica M-mount sensors. Key features include an apochromatic design that eliminates chromatic aberration, and a high-precision rangefinder coupling mechanism. 'The minimum focusing distance is 0.5m, achieved by extending the straight-type helicoid beyond the 0.7m set by the rangefinder' notes UK distributor, Robert White. 'The apochromatic design ensures there is no need to worry about image quality degradation even during close-up photography.' The Voigtlander APO-Lanthar 90mm F4 Close Focus VM also features an all-metal barrel and a compact design, with a total length of 54.8mm. It costs a competitive £599 and is available from Robert White (bit.ly/voigtpancake).



THE BIG QUESTION

Finish this sentence:
"Photography has taught me..."



Ben Burchell

How quickly I can deplete my bank account by purchasing gear.



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To enjoy the little moments in life



@ajphotos99

That the most beautiful things are often the least obvious



@tina.3_0

My perception being different doesn't make me wrong



Dibs Photography

To slow down and look around me, but most importantly, to always be me



Hugh Maxwell Photography

Respect for the world that we live in!



@the_absence_collective

Another way to stay creative, after an injury and losing my career.



Paula Third

to take pictures I like, not what I think others will like



Did you know?

In June 2022 Oscar Barnack's 1923 O-Series Leica became the most expensive camera ever sold when it fetched €12,000,000 (£10.6 million) at auction in Wetzlar, Germany. The camera, no.105, was Barnack's personal prototype, and one of just twenty or so that were made to test whether a pocket camera shooting 35mm film would be something that people would want. Spoiler alert: it was. Barnack went on to design the Leica I which debuted in 1924, and the rest is history. AP's Andy Westlake was lucky enough to see the record-breaker the day before the auction.

© ANDY WESTLAKE



Back in time 1949

Nigeria National Football Team UK tour

In 1949 the newly formed Nigerian national football team arrived in Liverpool for its first ever international tour. The 18 strong team of amateurs toured Britain on a goodwill mission playing local teams around the country, drawing large crowds. Their first match (shown here) was against Marine A.F.C. at Rossett Park, Crosby, Merseyside on 31st August, and attracted 6000 spectators. Nigeria won the game 5-3 despite ten of their team playing barefoot. Today, three members of England's 2026 World Cup football squad are of Nigerian heritage, including Bukayo Saka who scored a hat-trick against France.



@izzie_holz

To appreciate the world around me - even the parts that go unnoticed



@ged.photographs

There's art in every nook and cranny that's easily missed



Trae Muldoon

That there are incredible things happening in fleeting moments in time.



Brian Miller

That the \$2000 I spent on gear is the best \$10000 I have ever spent



Susan Brown

You can never stop learning!



@harvey_tomo

To notice



Liam McNaughton

To slow down and stop rushing



Damien Collier

How to be present in the moment and appreciate my surroundings.

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Opinion Gavin Stoker

Why are more and more punters deciding that retro cameras are more satisfying to use than smartphones?

“Forty per cent of us own a digital camera, while around 20% of us have opted for either an ‘old’ analogue, or Polaroid-style instant print camera (which it’s fair to assume includes Fujifilm Instax). So reveals a recent survey commissioned by insurance giant Aviva. Its findings, based on 2,000 people questioned across the UK, also note that just 11% of us own a ‘newer’ form of camera, such as an action camera or drone.

It’s interesting that a significant number of people are gravitating towards a more nostalgic and, as the insurer points out, potentially more costly form of technology. In other words, a decent number of us are not satisfied with just using smartphones to take pictures or listen

to music. Have we got sick of our phones, sick of the hold social media has on us? Or are photographers both young and slightly more senior realising that there is something to be said for possessing a dedicated capture device (aka a conventional camera) without ‘always on’ Internet access?

While cynics would label the Aviva report as just a marketing ploy designed to encourage us to insure these retro products with the company, the report further reveals that 24% of UK residents

own a record player, which includes 18% of those aged 18-28 years old and 16% of ‘Millennials’ aged 29-44. There is a link here with photography.

Everything just clicked

At AP we’ve long suggested a newer, younger crowd is buying up second-hand point-and-shoots and vintage digicams on eBay to enjoy straightforward handling and the nostalgia of low-resolution snaps – while noting that disposable film cameras are also enjoying a comeback. It seems that there is something greatly appealing about the tactile, tangible nature of such products. We are visibly affecting the outcome with our desire to turn a dial, flick a lever or rotate a knob – just as we’re doing when adjusting bass, treble and balance on

old-school audio amplifiers.

My daughter recently upgraded her phone, and while her greatest concern was the functionality of the camera, she and her teenage pals also very much enjoy playing with her decade-old Olympus Stylus TG-870 ‘Tough’ compact. Even if they do grow impatient while the internal card is read and results uploaded to Dropbox to be more widely shared.

Both real world experience and feedback from the Aviva survey would indicate that it’s not always convenience that wins out. Sometimes when we put a little bit more effort into our passion – whether that be for vinyl records, old cameras, or in my personal case, both – then the reward and the satisfaction is that much greater.

Plus, as humans, we like the instant gratification and sense of personal control that comes from simply pressing buttons and seeing or hearing what happens.

Oddly, we also enjoy a satisfying dopamine hit when we hear the sound of something click; which works well in terms of cameras – but maybe less so when listening to our favourite less-than-pristine vinyl records!

Gavin Stoker is a highly experienced photography journalist and magazine editor, and a regular contributor to AP



Youngsters aren’t queuing up to trade-in their phones for old-school cameras quite yet, but nostalgic and lo-fi capture devices are definitely on-trend

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Do you have something you’d like to get off your chest? Send your thoughts in around 500 words and you could win a year’s digital subscription to AP.



ALL IMAGES © JILLIAN EDELSTEIN

Career High

A major new exhibition celebrates the career of photographer Jillian Edelstein and her enduring fascination with power, community and human resilience

This exhibition curated by AP contributor Tracy Marshall-Grant presents previously unseen photographs alongside Edelstein's best known. What becomes evident is the remarkable consistency of vision and determination that has become her legacy.

Edelstein began her career as a press photographer in her native South Africa during the latter years of apartheid. Working amid political unrest and systemic inequality, helped develop balanced journalistic observation with a high level of empathy with her subjects.

Based in London since the mid 1980s, Edelstein was recipient of Amateur Photographer's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2026. The exhibition opens with images made beyond the harsh political realities in South Africa – beaches, bars and community gatherings, revealing Edelstein's interest in the social spaces where a sense of belonging is established among people.

Edelstein's landmark project, *Truth and Lies*, documenting South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission following the end of apartheid, is likely to be the exhibition's centrepiece. Commissioned by The New York Times Magazine, the project saw Edelstein travel across South Africa photographing individuals who came forward to testify about human rights abuses committed during the apartheid era.

Avoiding the more obvious approach of press photography from the sidelines, she invited both victims and perpetrators into a temporary studio she created close to the hearings. The resulting book remains one of the most powerful visual records of South Africa's efforts to confront its past.

Some of the portraits featured in the exhibition are drawn from her project *Affinities*, a long-running series exploring creative partnerships and collaborative relationships.



Above: Sitting on a truck – Cape Town c.1980-90.

Left: President Nelson Mandela, Tuynhuys, from Truth and Lies series 1996-2001.

Jillian Edelstein
– *Among People*
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Water Rats focuses on the community of open-water swimmers who congregated at London's Hampstead Heath pools during the COVID-19 lockdowns, and reflects Edelstein's determined fascination with rituals, resilience and the ways individuals unite during periods of upheaval.

Those familiar with Edelstein primarily as a portrait photographer won't be disappointed, with figures ranging from Nelson Mandela to leading actors, writers and musicians. More than 100 of her portraits are held in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery.

Collectively the exhibition suggests that Edelstein's work has never been about fame or politics alone: the true subject is people and how they survive, adapt, collaborate and find meaning within larger social forces. As Marshall-Grant notes, the photographs move effortlessly between intimate personal encounters and wider social histories. Viewed collectively, a body of work emerges that unites an enduring interest in the complexities of human experience with curiosity and compassion. **Peter Dench**



ALL IMAGES © RGS-IBG

An extraordinary testament

Shackleton's 1914 Antarctic expedition didn't go as planned – but photographer Frank Hurley still came back with the vital images.

John Gilbey reviews a new collection of his work.

Australian photographer and cinematographer Frank Hurley was already a seasoned Antarctic hand by the time he joined Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. Shackleton clearly understood the value of powerful and evocative imagery, and his choice of Hurley was a canny one.

The story of the expedition is well known: Shackleton's ship "Endurance" was trapped in thick sea ice which eventually crushed the hull, causing the ship to sink – leaving the crew on the ice floes with three small boats and some scavenged supplies. Knowing that rescue lay in their own hands, the party hauled themselves over the ice towards open water, with the ultimate aim of reaching the island of South Georgia where there was a whaling station. Incredibly, and against apparently overwhelming odds, they succeeded – without loss of life.

Throughout this extraordinary episode, Hurley continued to record the progress of the expedition in a series of superbly executed images – which are a testament to his skill,

ingenuity, insight and hard work. This new collection of his images is described as a "definitive visual record of the expedition" and it is hard to disagree – as this new large format volume has new elements not seen in previous synopses.

The first of these is the presentation of the negative alongside each positive image. While these are (sadly) not actual size they give a very strong impression of the original capture – a "raw" image in the true sense!

Secondly, while the selection of plates in the book is based on the holdings of the Royal Geographical Society, the book includes a curated gallery of all the images known to exist, with contextual information and details of where these pictures are held.

I once acted as expedition photographer on a small research vessel in the Arctic – so I have some inkling of what Hurley faced in making these images. The fact they survived at all is close to miraculous: when the expedition took to the small boats, Shackleton and Hurley between them selected the best

images – as many as they could carry – then had the negatives, mostly glass, sealed up to survive the ocean crossing. To cover the late stages of the voyage, Hurley abandoned his full-plate camera in favour of a Kodak vest pocket model, and three rolls of film.

The book's design and print quality are both excellent, and at £35 represents something of a bargain. It also includes essays by the likes of Frans Lanting and Jean de Pomereu which provide a useful context.

The original negatives were apparently digitised in 2015 on a Hasselblad H1 with a Leaf Aptus-II 12 digital back, and the quality and detail is excellent. The positive images are presented 'warts and all' without being excessively cleaned up, which could have compromised the archival validity of the work.

This collection is a tribute to the skill and resilience of Frank Hurley, and those who worked with him. It should form part of the core library for any photographer who values powerful environmental imagery, strong technique, and an incredible story.



The Endurance Photographs - A Definitive Visual Record of Shackleton's Expedition
£35, Royal Geographical Society / Riverside Press, hardback, 128 pages, ISBN: 9781917226233



Clockwise from top left:

Ice stalactites

The Nightwatchmen's Story

Exercising dogs on the ice

The floe cracking up

Leonard Hussey lifting Samson



What's On

Some dates for your photographic diary

Now - Until 4 October

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

1-15 August EXHIBITION Annual Photoshow, Lytham St Anne's Photographic Society at The Drive Methodist Church Hall

7 August - 11 September

EXHIBITION RPS International Photography Exhibition 167 at Saatchi Gallery, London

8 August - 1 November

EXHIBITION Catherine Opie: *To Be Seen* at National Galleries Scotland, Edinburgh

14 August EVENT

Creative Smartphone Photography RHS Garden Hyde Hall, Chelmsford

22-23 August WORKSHOP

Street Stories Workshop with Jocelyn Bain Hogg at Leica Akademie UK, London

28-30 August EVENT

London Street Photography Festival at The Heath Studio, Hackney Wick

5 September WORKSHOP

Wildlife Photography Workshop with Paul Way at WWT Llanelli Wetland Centre

7 - 11 September WORKSHOP

Alternative Photography workshop series at Institute of Photography, Falmouth University

2 - 31 October EVENT

FfotoCymru at various venues, Wales

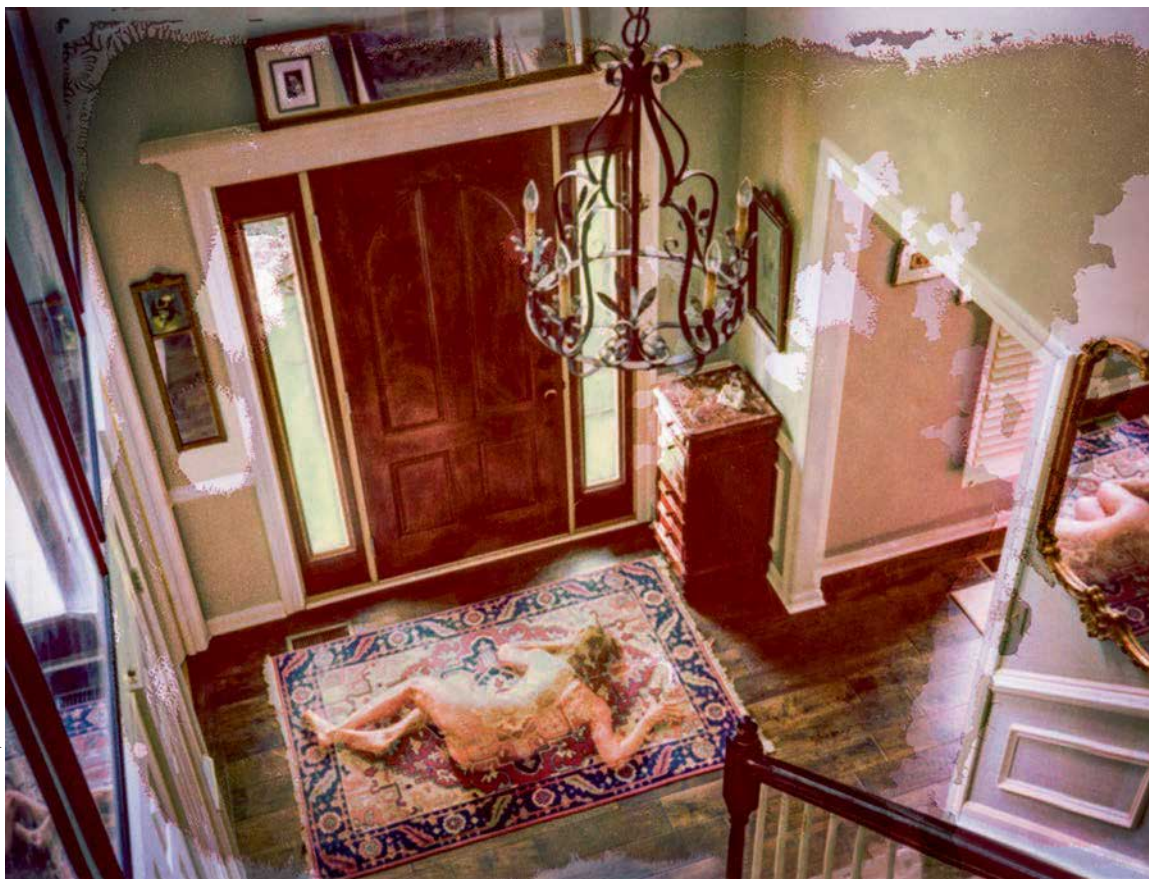
16-29 October EVENT

Chester Photo Festival at various city centre venues

2 - 31 October EVENT

BOP 26 Photobook Festival at Martin Parr Foundation, Bristol

To be included in these listings, please email ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk



ALL IMAGES © CINDY KONITS / SCHILT PUBLISHING & GALLERY



This Room Will Survive Me – Architecture and Interiority by Cindy Konits

€45, Schilt Publishing, Softback, 202 pages, ISBN: 9789053309667

Ghostly Figures

A chance happening upon some expired instant film led to an intriguing set of images

If there's one subject you can always rely on to show up to a photoshoot, it's yourself. There's lots of fun and creativity to be had with instant cameras, especially if you experiment with expired film – and that's exactly what Cindy Konits has done for this project.

After discovering some expired film at the bottom of her studio closet, she decided to turn the camera on herself. The results are a series of slow, meditative self-portraits, making use of sunlight and shadow and exploring the spaces in and between rooms as well as the surrounding landscapes.

Konits aims to think about how rooms, buildings and the physical features of the spaces that you find yourself in become "containers" for emotions and reflective thought. Reflecting on something she read in an old interview with Don Paterson, who said, "Almost everything in the room will survive you. To the room, you are already a

ghost", she became intrigued by how in these film photos, her body and her self seemed to blend and merge with the background.

This is a book which invites the viewer to think about how you become part of and separate from the spaces in which you inhabit. It's beautifully sequenced and interesting to see the results of the different poses and experiments she tried.

The book itself is also a thing of beauty, using partial Japanese bindings, some of the pages fold out, some are hidden from view and the printing is also excellent.

Also included in the book are a collection of essays that provide interesting background and insight into the work, which is also fascinating.

If you're looking something slightly unconventional, and have a penchant for interesting and old film photography, then this book should be right up your street – I loved it. **Amy Davies**





ALL IMAGES ©MAPALAKATA ROBIN BERNSTEIN



MAPALAKATA by Robin Bernstein
£45, GOST,
Hardback, 120
pages, ISBN:
978180590292

Left: Alpha, Sihle, Sphehile & Omega, 2022

Below: Marlie, 2022

Bottom: Marycate & Sibahle, 2025

Being There

**How does place affect a people's consciousness?
This intriguing project aims to find out**

This fantastic collection of documentary, portraiture and landscape photography all come from the Mpumalanga province in South Africa, where there is an escarpment bordering Mozambique and Eswatini.

Here, cliffs pierce through the hot, red earth of the lowlands. Long serving as a symbol of the edge of the South African frontier, it's a place which has inspired many folk tales, as well as the beginnings of the modern-day story of the discovery of gold in the region.

Now, plantations blanket the landscape, filled with foreign trees used to create paper. The valleys below house gold mines, while the surrounding terrain is scattered with relics from a bygone time, the remnants of a pre-colonial society, with wild horses descended from those abandoned during wars and a failed gold rush.

The title of the book comes from a word

meaning "visitors", and the aim of MAPALAKATA is to look at how transient visitors to the landscape alter and affect it. How the story of the area is continually rewritten as different groups come and go.

Using photography to look at those who have previously inhabited the space as well as those who currently live there, it aims to consider the present social conditions of the country, and how the place in which we live, grow up and work roots itself into our consciousness.

It's a beautiful look at what is obviously a fascinating area and culture, and the written contributions from South African authors Lidudumalingani and Desmond Latham help to place everything in context.

If you're interested in documentary photography, long term projects and the history of a fractious region, it's well worth a look. **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

Dazzled by your charm by Anna Matczuk

Canon EOS R5, Canon EF 100mm f2/8L Macro IS USM, 1/4sec at f/16, ISO 200, in camera multiple exposure

Through still life photography, I reimagined familiar botanicals as poetic, expressive forms. Created entirely with in-camera multiple exposure, this image combines several exposures made from subtly different viewpoints, allowing the flowers to overlap, soften, and dissolve into one another - creating a dreamlike sense of movement, depth, and romance.

Instagram [@ania.m.photography](https://www.instagram.com/ania.m.photography)



**PRIZE
WINNER**



Green waves and water drops by Cathrin Möhring

Sony A7III, Sony FE 90mm f2.8 Macro G OSS,
1/1600sec at f/4.5, ISO 320

I captured this photo in our garden, when the sun came through the trees in the morning after a rainy night, and the sky was caught in the reflection of this tiny water drop. That is the fascination about macro photography, capturing nature's everyday miracles in the tiniest details.

Instagram: @caddiknipst

PRIZE
WINNER





Your best Photos

Daydreamer by Bonnie Gilmore

Canon EOS R7, Sigma
150-600mm F5-6.3 DG
OS HSM | Contemporary
015, 1/1250sec at f/8, ISO
1250

After two years of photographing little owls, I finally captured the image I'd always dreamed of. This quiet moment of calm, peace and trust, shared on a weathered fence post, reminds me why I love nature. Patience brings extraordinary encounters, and moments like this make every hour worthwhile.

Instagram:
@bonnieleonie_photography

What's new



Your best Photos

Double Vision by Gareth Edge

Nikon Z8, Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3 DG OS HSM Contemporary, Nikon FTZ II adapter

This image was shot on the Isle of May off the east coast of Scotland. Great for photographing puffins. This pair lined up almost perfectly for this shot! It wasn't the greatest weather but I think it adds a bit of atmosphere to this image.

Instagram: @birdsandthat

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. See page 3 for how to find us.



Lines by Jerry Abbott

Fujifilm X-T5, 56mm F1.2 lens, 1/500sec at f/7.1, ISO 250

This shot was taken just behind the National Theatre at the South Bank, London. I was out at the time shooting for my main Instagram account (@man_plus_fuji) which is mostly quite cinematic street photography but, I do still have a weakness for simple, minimal shapes and lines shots such as this!

Instagram: @man_plus_fuji
@mr.a.london

Your best **Irys** Photos

We've partnered with Irys to share your best photographs!

Irys is a new photography-first app, made by photographers for photographers. Designed to give images and the people who make them the space they deserve. For a chance to feature on this page: create an account on the Irys app, visit our profile and submit your images to the "Your Best Photos" group. Two images from the group will be selected for publication in every issue and on our social media. You can find Irys in the Apple and Android app stores



Posing Swan by Russell Ferguson

iPhone 14 Pro Max,
24mm main camera,
1/240sec at f/1.78, ISO 80

The posing swan is one of my first images taken with real intention, taken in on Ulverston Canal, a small market town on the edge of the Lake District. I was still reliant on an iPhone as my creative outlet at this time but this certainly paid dividends with this image. Using a Bluetooth shutter button and my iPhone with a circular polariser attached to a camera pole I was able to capture a low angle to the water surface to really pull out the details in the reflection.

Instagram: @russell_ferguson_photography
Irys: Russell

The Father by Donia Ahmed

Sony Cyber-shot
DSC-WX70,
1/200sec at f/6.3,
ISO: 100, 22.5mm

Captured in the city streets of Alexandria, Egypt. This photo utilizes a puddle reflection to create a surreal atmosphere. I spent time observing this father and his child, waiting for the perfect moment. Deeply moved by their bond, I wanted to transform an everyday urban detail into a contemplative story of fatherhood.

Instagram:
@_dunyaph
Irys: dunyaph
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1DSu6fdZhY>



Picture Perfect

BEST SHOTS: TRAVEL

One genre. Three photographers. Three standout images, each revealing how vision, timing and technique come together in a single frame.

For this issue, AP invited three TRAVEL photographers to share one image they consider among their best. From split-second decisions to carefully crafted compositions, they reveal the thinking, technique and experience behind the shot, offering insight into not just how the image was made, but why it matters.

Diana Jarvis

Diana is a photographer and writer specialising in sustainable travel, the outdoors and environment. She has photographed destinations worldwide for editorial and commercial clients including Rough Guides, National Geographic Traveller and Airbnb for over 20 years. Holding an MSc in Environment and Sustainability, her writing has appeared in The Guardian, The Independent and Wanderlust and she writes a regular column for GreenTraveller magazine. **Instagram @diana_jarvis**

Tell us about this image, and why you chose it?

This image was taken in Nagaland, India. It shows the leaders of the Angami tribe, one of 16 tribal groups in the region, at the head of a long line of fellow tribespeople. They're all holding onto a long rope, which is attached to a giant rock at the far end of the procession, and they're pulling it up a hill. It's a tradition among Naga tribes to commemorate events by erecting large ceremonial stones in their villages. It happens only once every few years and this one took place during the annual



Hornbill Festival, held every December in Kohima. I chose it because it was such a unique, colourful spectacle and exactly the kind of festival I'd envisaged documenting when I set out to be a travel photographer.

What was happening just before and after this frame?

My guide Chander had heard about this event from other guides. He'd driven my brother and I up into the hills, around steep hairpins bends overlooking stunning scenery. When we eventually found the procession, there was a calm anticipation filling the air and a gentle hum of activity.

What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?

Getting there! To see this kind of spectacle I'd travelled to India via Delhi and then onwards to Guwahati. From there, Chander drove us up into the heart of Nagaland. The Hornbill Festival takes place every December and saving up for such an ambitious trip took a while, too.

What key creative decisions did you make with this photograph?

I sat on a wall and observed the scene before getting my camera out. While it was clear that visitors were welcome, it was very much a community celebration. Once I was sure that taking photos wouldn't be



You can see more images from the series here:
<https://www.dianajarvis.co.uk/travel-photos#/india-hornbill-festival-nagaland/>

frowned upon, I gestured to the men at the front asking for permission. The international language of pointing at my camera and smiling seemed to do the trick; they nodded in approval. I crouched down to take a low shot which added scale to the drama of the situation, plus allowed the colours of the outfits pop against the gentle blue sky.

How did the technical details shape the outcome?

This one is very much a case of 'f/8 and be there'. Although I shoot in RAW, later in the trip, the hard drive later failed, so all I have now is jpegs. This version is edited in Lightroom, from jpeg, with only minor adjustments to bring out the colours.

Was it luck or judgement?

I took this trip with my brother. He's a lot more daring than me and simply found a local guide by scouring the internet, rather than going with a tour operator. I would never have felt comfortable booking a random guide this way (it's less easy as a woman, and I prefer to go with reputable tour operators) but, thankfully, Chander was perfect and it was his judgement and local intel that allowed me to see this event. So, yes, judgement, but mostly in trusting my brother and the guide!

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

I took this image back in 2013. Although I was working as a full-time travel photographer, this trip was really a holiday. Commercial travel photography work doesn't usually take me to such incredible cultural spectacles (it's much more about depicting the saleable parts of travel, like hotels, restaurants and transport). This shot shows what, for me is the essence of travel – connecting with people and their cultures. The opportunity wouldn't have happened if I hadn't trusted our guide, or learned the art of communicating with people with whom I had no common language.

What advice would you give those trying to make a similar shot?

If you're thinking of visiting tribes and festivals around the world, go armed with as much knowledge of those cultures as possible, try to learn a little language, too. Don't even think about taking your camera out of the bag until you've observed the scenes and made a personal connection to the people you're visiting; respect and understanding can go a long way. Having a good guide who knows the culture and can translate is a key way into turning observation into connection.

Finn Beales

Known for his cinematic style and intimate documentary storytelling, Finn Beales creates campaigns for clients including Apple, Aesop, Lufthansa and Lloyds Bank. His personal work explores the relationship between people and the natural world, blending documentary authenticity with a refined visual style. He is the bestselling author of *The Storytelling Photography Workshop*, and his second book, *Let's Get Lost*, was shortlisted for the Edward Stanford Travel Photography Book of the Year. **Instagram @finn**

Tell us about this image. What are we looking at, and why did you choose it?

You're looking at my daughter, Seren, walking beneath "Anna", a monumental sculpture by the Catalan artist Jaume Plensa at Pilane Sculpture Park on the island of Tjörn, off Sweden's west coast. The head rises some fourteen metres from a Bronze Age burial ground and gazes out over the sea; it's a hauntingly serene presence in an already otherworldly landscape. I chose this image because it captures something I'm always chasing in travel photography: that collision of the monumental and the human. Without Seren in the frame, the sculpture is impressive. With her, it becomes a story. There's a surreal, almost dreamlike quality to the encounter that a straight record shot of the artwork could never deliver.

What was happening just before and after this frame?

I was directing Seren around the base of the sculpture, asking her to walk, pause, look up, look away, building a series of options to edit from later. I rarely settle for the first frame when a subject offers this much; I treat it almost like a portrait session, working the scene until something clicks. This was the photograph that spoke to me most. She's mid-stride, head dipped, hand raised to her sunglasses, and that small unguarded gesture gives the frame a sense of movement and life. The posed alternatives felt static by comparison. Afterwards we simply sat on the rocks and looked at the sea.

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

The sculpture is enormous, a massive, beautifully strange head overlooking the ocean, and the first decision was how to communicate that scale. Numbers mean nothing in a photograph; you need a reference, and another human made sense. The second decision was to crop into the head rather than show it whole. Letting the face run out of the top of the frame makes it feel even larger, almost limitless, and pushes the image away from documentation towards something more cinematic. Finally, I placed Seren low in the frame against all that negative space of sky and stone, so the eye travels between the two figures, one colossal and still, one small and moving.

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

I shot this with my Dad's old Pentax Takumar lens adapted to my Canon R5, and that choice shaped everything. Vintage glass like this renders in a way modern lenses have engineered out: sharp in the centre of the frame, falling away softly towards the edges, with a gentler contrast curve. It lends a nostalgic, filmic feel to an otherwise contemporary photograph, which suited the subject; the sculpture itself feels both ancient and futuristic. There's also a personal layer to it. Working with my father's lens to photograph my daughter connects three generations in a single frame.

What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?

Overhead sun. We visited in the middle of the day, the hour every photography tutorial tells you to avoid, and with good reason: the light is hard, the shadows fall straight down, and skin and landscape alike can look brutal. But I've learned not to write off any light, only to match it to the right subject. Sculpture is one of the few things that genuinely benefits from harsh top light. Those crisp shadow lines carve out the contours of the face, the lips, the seams in the surface, in a way flat

overcast light never would. So rather than fight the conditions, I leaned into the contrast and let the sun do the modelling. The lesson: bad light doesn't exist, only the wrong subject for it.

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

This was made on one of our favourite family trips to Sweden. We'd house-exchanged with a couple of architects through Behomm, a swap platform for creatives, and while they were staying in our home in Wales they messaged to say: you must visit Pilane, you'll love it, we've seen the art on your walls. They were right. We would never have found that island through a guidebook or an Instagram geotag, and that's what I'd like readers to take from this. First-person, local, on-the-ground knowledge beats the algorithm every time. The best travel photographs rarely come from the saved-posts folder; they come from conversations with people who know a place. Be open to the detour that someone else suggests.

Was it luck or judgement?

Judgement, largely. This is a considered photograph: the location was a deliberate recommendation acted upon, the framing and scale were worked out on the spot, the directing of Seren was intentional, and the lens was chosen for exactly the rendering it gave me. That said, no photographer should ever claim the weather. The clean Scandinavian light and that graduated blue sky were gifts. I'd put it at ninety per cent judgement, ten per cent the gods of the Swedish summer.



Sue O'Connell

Sue O'Connell is an award-winning travel photographer whose work celebrates the people, places and cultures she encounters around the world. A winner in the Travel Photographer of the Year awards and recognised by National Geographic Traveller, her images have been exhibited by the Royal Photographic Society and the Royal Geographical Society. Based in Bristol, she is a Fellow of the Irish Photographic Federation, an accredited PAGB judge and a Fotospeed Ambassador.

www.sueoconnell.photography



Tell us about this image. What are we looking at, and why did you choose it?

The photographs which matter most to me are those which offer a form of time travel - taking me back to a special place, a person or an event, and letting me relive the experience and also share it with others. In this probably all-time favourite image, I can instantly return to the Omo Valley of southern Ethiopia and a brief but moving encounter in a Karo village.

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

The Karo are known for their elaborate body and face decoration. Both men and women use chalk and local minerals to adorn themselves with extraordinary designs ranging from fine dots to geometric shapes and even hand prints. So arriving in a Karo village can be seriously overwhelming and the temptation is to start shooting immediately and in every direction. My strategy was to spend the first 10 minutes just observing. That way I had a feel for the layout of the village, the areas of busyness and quiet, the buildings and the light. Ultimately my aim was to make a portrait that would be an honest reflection of a remarkable people.

What was the biggest challenge in making this photograph?

I am a travel photographer in the broadest sense, rather than by any narrow category definition. I'm happy to shoot most genres

but above all I'm drawn to photographing the ordinary/extraordinary people I meet. And for me eye-contact is everything. It represents a magical moment of human contact between strangers from different worlds, preserved over distance and time. The challenge here, as ever, was to capture the subject at ease, in an unguarded moment before they became self-conscious or distracted.

What was happening just before and after this frame?

Others in my group were busy organising portraits posed against a black backdrop. Never one for set-up shots, I had wandered to the edge of the village when I caught sight of a lone woman sweeping a cattle enclosure. As I paused, curious, so did the woman, and then she came over with her tiny child to get a better view of this outlandish interloper. So used to being the observer, I found myself for once the observed, an object of curiosity for mother and babe. Minutes later she had returned to work.

Was it luck or judgement?

Successful travel photography depends on observation, timing and luck. But you can increase the odds by making sure that you cover all bases. There's nothing more disappointing than the "Not Quite" image, especially when the chance of returning for a second go is pretty much zero! In the few moments while the woman paused at the perimeter, I shot 21 frames, varying focal

length and composition, trying landscape and portrait format. The baby appeared late, and in only one frame (# 10) was the child not only fully visible, but staring straight at the camera, its tiny hand reaching out to the viewer. In the very next frame, it was gone.

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

The shot was taken from around 20 feet away using a 200 - 400mm lens (f/9, 1/125 sec). This was perhaps a counter-intuitive choice of lens for a trip involving close encounters with people, but it turned out to serve me well, cutting through chaotic village activity and, as in this case, allowing candid shots without intrusion. Crucially, the quality was sufficient for me to crop tightly later, and the image went on to form part of an IPF Fellowship panel of tribal portraits.

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

My advice to aspiring travel photographers (or photographers who travel) is to make space - mental as well as physical - for photo opportunities to happen. That may mean moving away from the group and from the set-up or obvious shots, and looking for the fleeting, the quirky and the more personal connections. Be prepared to wander randomly, engaging with the environment, in the moment and open to whatever arises. And when the moment does come, just be sure to seize it.

Wing Commander

John Brackenbury is one of the world's leading experts at capturing insects in flight. He talks to **Graeme Green** about the complex methods he employs to achieve his eye-popping images

On his regular expeditions to the Picos de Europa mountains in northern Spain, John Brackenbury saw a type of insect kept catching his eye. 'An Owlfly is one of the most incredible insects,' he tells me. 'It's like a dragonfly, but it flies high up in the blue skies of the alpine meadows of northern Spain. It's coloured like a hornet, black and yellow. It glitters in the sunshine, and it's fantastic to see.'

Brackenbury was desperately keen to photograph an Owlfly in-flight, which is not an easy task for a small insect that likes flying high above ground, especially when your chosen photographic technique involves getting within three centimetres of your subject. Year after year, trip after trip, he successfully captured plenty of other insect life but always failed to get a photo of an Owlfly.

His breakthrough came two years ago. 'I had to wait until it came down from the sky and was ready to land,' he explains. 'I learned that I could predict that, because as soon as the sun went behind a cloud, they didn't want to be up in the sky and they would come down. It'll then hover about, looking for a place to land. That was my chance. Two to three seconds is all I need.'

The Owlfly experience illustrates that when it comes to insect photography, before even thinking about lenses or shutter speeds, the most important aspect is knowledge, including where to look, when to look and how an insect behaves. 'Field craft is so important, Brackenbury tells me. 'It's like any

branch of photography: you have to know your subject.'

Brackenbury's new book, *Insects In Flight*, contains many images of insect species, from Harlequin Ladybirds and bumblebees to the Common Darter dragonfly, Mediterranean Mantis and parasitic wasps, as well as various kinds of butterflies and moths, all captured in glorious detail, not just in standalone images but composites that demonstrate a sequence of flight. 'I'm into the way that insects behave, not just in what they look like,' he says.

Over the decades, he's used and developed complex techniques, based around macro photography, to reveal a world that is either too small

or too fast for most people to experience in everyday life and to celebrate creatures that many people might ignore or walk by. 'The reason I got interested in high-speed photography is that you're showing people things they could not see with their own eyes, Brackenbury explains. 'With insects, I'm showing them something that's hidden, but also complicated and beautiful.'

Born in 1948, Brackenbury grew up in Weardale, County Durham, his interest in insects going back to his teenage years. 'They were 'mechanical' – that's what attracted me to them at first,' he says. 'And they're accessible, on your doorstep, so you can look at them and think about them.'

Right: Painted Lady Butterfly. Reconstructed take-off sequence. Created using four frames from a high speed burst of 20 frames at 60fps, combined using Photoshop

Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

Below: Damselfly with moth prey which it has just captured mid-air.

Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800







➤ His photography developed alongside his academic career, as a lecturer in Veterinary Science at the University of Cambridge. 'For the last 20 years,' he tells me, 'I was trying to balance these two careers.'

He has applied high-speed photography to other subjects, including 'water and the kinds of patterns water can create in different circumstances.' But it's flying bugs that occupy most of his time.

The majority of the images in the book were taken using two techniques. The first, used since 1988, he describes as an 'old, complicated set-up, triggering a camera using a laser or infrared beam, which got good results but was very technical.'

Brackenbury had been working on the biomechanics of insect flight in his laboratory in Cambridge, but wanted to do more work out in the field. 'I set up my equipment in

northern Spain,' he says. 'It consisted of a laser beam, which is arranged in a space. I pitched a tent high up in the mountains in Picos de Europa. The tent was open at both ends. I would spend four hours a day going out and collecting insects, then coming back. I'd release them from one end of the tent to the other. In the middle of the tent, I'd arrange a laser beam, and focused on the middle of that laser beam was my macro camera.'

'Synchronised to the camera very powerful, custom-made, high-speed flash bulbs. I would release the insect and they'd fly towards the end, because they saw the light at the other end. Once in a hundred, it would hit the laser beam at the right spot, the flash would go off, the shutter would open, and I'd capture my picture.'

These photographs were captured using a Nikon FM2, with a 105mm

Above: Red Admiral Butterfly. Reconstructed take-off sequence
Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

Top right: Laser triggered capture of a Flea Beetle leaping into flight
Nikon FM2, 105mm Macro, flash exposure of 1/20,000sec at f/22, ISO 50

Bottom right: a Longhorn Beetle viewed from directly above
Nikon FM2, 105mm Macro, flash exposure of 1/20,000sec at f/22, ISO 50

Right: Painted Lady Butterfly taking off
Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

f/2.8 Micro-Nikkor macro lens, shooting on film. At the time, the cameras available didn't have shutters that were fast enough. 'It wasn't the shutter speed that was the issue but the shutter opening time, which is different,' Brackenbury explains. 'By the time the shutter had opened, the insect would be gone. So I made my own shutters. Many cameras had a shutter opening speed of around 100 milliseconds. Mine opened within two or three milliseconds.'

There were other problems that needed to be resolved too, including a 'red streak' appearing in many photos caused by the laser. This required a modification to the set-up in which the laser beam would be cut off just before the image was taken. The powerful flash going off at the required 1/20,000sec also created a blue tint on photos, which Brackenbury corrected by using red

filters on the camera.

One of the toughest insects he ever photographed in the UK using this complicated process is the common froghopper. 'It's a little insect,' he tells me, 'but it leaps at enormous speed. It accelerates at 400 times the force of gravity (400 g). An astronaut taking off in a rocket accelerates at around 4 g. If he took off like the froghopper does at even 6 or 7 g, he would die. Capturing the froghopper leaping into flight at 400 g is a real problem for a photographer.'

Brackebury managed to do it, though. 'I found that if I got close to the froghopper, its acceleration was so fast that I couldn't capture it with a normal shutter – which is why I invented my own shutter, with an electronic engineer's help. It cost about £20, but it was able to do something that no other shutter could do.'

After years of working with this complex system, it's hardly surprising that Brackebury started to crave a simpler method. He also wanted to open up the possibility of producing more satisfying, creative images. 'I wanted to capture sharp photos of flying insects in the wild, using only ambient sunlight, but with infinite depth of field. The camera set-up had to be simple because I might only have two or three seconds to

react to this flying thing.

Brackebury's preferred technique now, which he has used for the last ten years, is to shoot hand-held, using a now obsolete Nikon 1 J5 – a retro-styled, ultra-compact mirrorless camera released in 2015. He chose it because it's small and light: just 230 grams. Attached to the camera is a specialist C-mount fish-eye video lens of around four to



five millimetres focal length that he calls the 'insect-eye lens', and which attaches to the camera via a Pixco C to N1 adaptor.

'The set up looks very simple but it took me years to get to that simple solution. It enables me to move very quickly. It also has a small sensor, which is important because that increases the depth of field. It creates effectively a macro image but with 'infinite' depth of field. You can have a macro subject in the foreground with everything in the background nearly in focus. For me, it's a new kind of macro image. It's a fisheye lens, but with a tiny focal length, much smaller than any focal length you'd find in normal photography.'

The huge depth of field, he explains, creates images that look similar to what an insect would see, with everything in focus. He fixes the camera's focus manually, in advance, to two to three centimetres, also setting a shutter speed of 1/7000sec at F5.6 and an ISO of 800 or 1600. His approach requires him to get within three centimetres of the insect he's photographing.

'I'm always on the move, often on my knees or even lower,' he says. 'I look for a nice patch of flowers, as insects often congregate around bunches of flowers. I try to get closer and closer – within three centimetres of, for example, a butterfly, to capture the take-off. Or of an insect already in free flight. The depth of field of the lens ensures the background's in focus, although slightly hazier than that of the prime subject. That's why I strive to get so close to the insect, to achieve the best focus on it. There's no time to compose the picture. I do it all blind. I see the insect on the fly, go in, take the shot and come out again.'

Brackenbury usually shoots a rapid burst of images, then picks out the best standalone shot. But he also likes to demonstrate the flight of an insect with a composite, taking multiple images of the subject against the same background, which he pieces together in Photoshop.

'With a series, you see the movement of the wings and different wing positions, which is interesting,' he explains. 'It's a single sequence that happened in a third of a second, then I insert the different images as the insect flies through the air. But validity is important: I will only use that single sequence for



that particular composite.'

In other situations, Brackenbury might walk into a swarm of insects, such as winter gnats, taking images as he 'walks through them with the camera. Quite a lot of insects are in focus as I go through the swarm.' His methods take a lot of trial and error, often with no insects in the frame.

More recently, he's starting working with high-speed video, picking out standout stills from the footage. 'I use the same lens and get the same kind of image: a macro

Flight sequence of Common Wasp foraging amongst Ivy flowers

Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

Top right: Marbled White Butterfly

Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

Right: Painted Lady Butterfly

Nikon 1 J5, fisheye lens, 1/7000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

subject in the landscape, he says. 'Only a 'machine vision' camera [a specialized industrial camera engineered for speed, used in automation, manufacturing and robotics to capture visual data for computer processing] can do the job. I use a machine vision camera manufactured by the specialist high-speed company Fastec in America. As far as I know, no-one else is making this kind of video of insect flight behaviour in the wild.'

He's keen to keep pushing the



boundaries, particularly capturing insects mid-flight while demonstrating interesting behaviours. In the book, there are images of insects mating during flight, for example.

'I'm doing this more and more, capturing the insect as it's in the air, not just taking off,' he says. 'Yesterday, I spent four hours trying to do this with a particular dance that butterflies do, where they circle around each other. It lasts about a second, so I have to get in very quickly, again within three centimetres. It's so difficult. I got one shot yesterday. I did about 50 but only one worked. You've got to put in the hours with this kind of photography, and by hours I mean tens of thousands of hours. It's the most difficult thing I've ever done, capturing this thing in flight as it moves. I do that with the mating flight of butterflies, too.'

He's prepared to put the time and effort in because he believes the resulting images are both eye-opening and educational.

'My motivation behind all of my photography is that I want it to be aesthetically attractive but I want it to inform as well,' he says. 'Probably 95% of people will look at my pictures and think 'My goodness, that's nice, I've never seen an insect like that before.' But there will be those who will want to know why it's doing something, how it does something – they're interested in the technical aspect of it.'

As well as his ambitions to capture more complex and unique fleeting insect behaviours, there are still species on his To Do list that he's never photographed.

'The one I'd really like to see is a mole cricket,' he tells me. 'If you go to the Mediterranean in summer, places like southern France, Spain and Greece, you can hear a piercing, churring sound filling the night sky, and that's a mole cricket. It lives underground but occasionally it comes out because it needs to fly, so it can find a new mate. It's a strange-looking creature. It looks like a mole at the front end, as it's got big front legs. To capture that in flight would be incredible.'



Insects In Flight by John Brackenbury is published by Pelagic (£30): pelagicpublishing.com/products/insect-flight. See www.john-brackenbury-photography.com.



Lee Miller's Britain

A new Lee Miller exhibition offers a rare record of Britain at War this Summer. **Jessica Miller** visits Farleys House and Gallery in Sussex ahead of its opening

A new exhibition on show at Lee Miller's East Sussex home, Farleys House and Gallery, this Summer displays a significant selection of photographs from the pivotal period of the Blitz. During which, American Surrealist photographer, Vogue model and World War II correspondent, Lee Miller, remained in London to document the life of civilians, surrounding destruction, and wider contributions to the war effort, particularly those by women.

On show from 30 July – 30 October 2026, Grim Glory: Lee Miller's Britain at War will share a deeper insight into an overlooked and partially unseen area of the Lee Miller Archives.

Farleys Farmhouse

Farleys House and Gallery from the outside looks like many other countryside homes in the Sussex Downs. But step inside and you will find brightly coloured walls, winding corridors, irregular and oddly shaped rooms and an incredible collection of art waiting to greet you. Beautiful gardens and countryside views set the scene. Here you can step into the remarkable lives of Lee Miller and English Surrealist painter, curator and collector Roland Penrose.

Miller and Penrose moved to Farleys Farmhouse in East Sussex 1949, where they lived for 35 years. During this time, they were visited by some of the key personalities of twentieth century art – including close friend Pablo Picasso, as well as Max Ernst, Joan Miró, Man Ray, Leonora Carrington, Dorothea Tanning, Eileen Agar, and Henry Moore.

Today, Farleys is the base of the Lee Miller Archives and The Penrose Collection. Miller and Penrose's son, Antony Penrose and granddaughter, Ami Bouhassane, have sought to re-establish Lee Miller as one of the most prominent photographers of the 20th Century, from her Surrealist work to photojournalism as a female war correspondent during WWII.

Antony told me, 'Lee Miller's work has had an excellent elevation but 50 years ago only a handful of people knew of her. When we started to make her work more widely known it was an uphill fight, not because of the quality of her work but mainly because she was a woman.'

Now operating as a charity, Antony has given the entirety of the house, galleries and wider site to the newly formed Farleys House & Gallery Trust, securing his childhood home for the public for decades to come. This progress represents an important milestone in fortifying this unique house, now more crucial than ever given the current backdrop of turbulence for arts and heritage sites, especially those in rural locations like Farleys.

The unbelievable Archives

The Lee Miller Archives are made up of Miller's 60,000 negatives, manuscripts and more. On my visit, Ami told me about the discovery of some of Miller's archive, particularly clothing, which were stored in the attic. Boxes and boxes of clothes from designer bikinis, jackets, and cardigans of bright bold colours – all of which were still in incredible

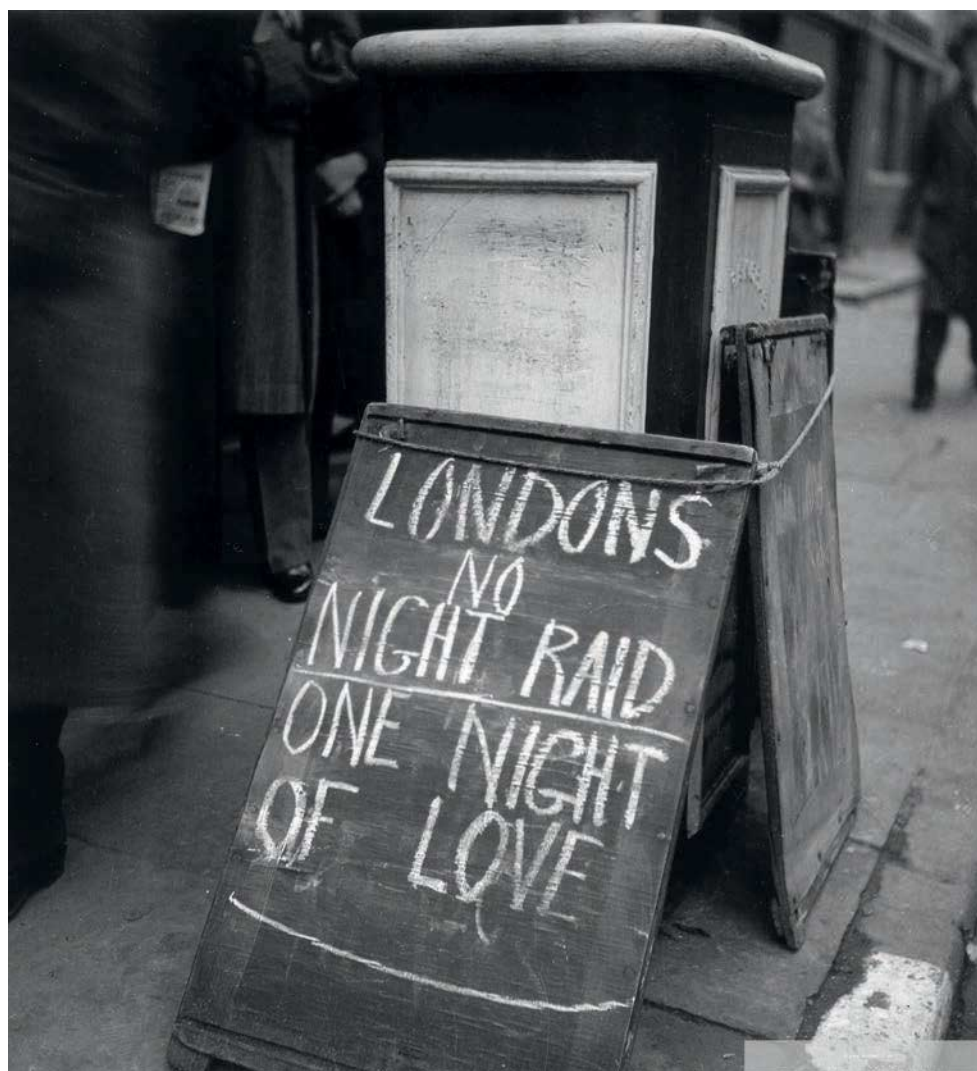
Left: Lee Miller photographing two Torpedo Wrens, United Kingdom, 1943-1 © Lee Miller Archives

Below: One Night of Love, London, England, 1940-1 © Lee Miller Archives

condition.

Originally shoved in boxes labelled 'rags', Ami and Antony didn't think anything of it and left them for another day. It wasn't until they came to open the boxes that they had come across a gold mine. But also, one that then immediately needed to be sorted and catalogued into the archives, with appropriate storage as well as conservation advice. 'Thanks a lot Nan', Ami laughed. According to Ami, Miller was notorious for removing itchy labels, so in some cases they weren't even sure who the designer was. Some of these garments went on to have replicas made for the film *LEE* (2023).

While the archives are not open for public viewing, some items are regularly loaned out for exhibitions around the world, such as Lee Miller at Tate Britain (winner of the Exhibition of the Year



award at the 2026 AP Awards), or used for exhibitions at Farleys like the upcoming Grim Glory show. There is also regularly a new configuration of objects used inside the house too.

Captivated by the House tour

The kitchen sets the scene for the whole house tour, you can feel presence and the weight of its importance from the moment you walk inside. Still used by staff today, the kitchen includes the original cupboards designed by Miller and a

working oven that she won in a cooking competition.

The original kitchen table sits pride of place and is overlooked by a Picasso lithograph on the wall. This is where Miller and Penrose's guests regularly sat chopping vegetables. The thought of Picasso or Man Ray sitting here having casual conversations over cooking feels incredibly surreal in itself.

Most interestingly, there is a special Picasso tile, brought back from a visit to him, placed in the wall above the Aga. Slightly

Below: Non-conformist chapel, London, England, 1940-1 © Lee Miller Archives

discoloured by time and cooking oils, there was a regular attempt by Patsy Murray, the housekeeper at the time, to clean up the tile.

Unfortunately, this proved ineffective but I think this adds to its charm.

The dining room features a huge mural in the fireplace by Roland Penrose, inspired by the Sussex Downs chalk figure, The Long Man of Wilmington, as well as bright yellow walls resembling the cover of 'Farmers Weekly'. This is where we get a deeper look into the life and





relations of Penrose, as the guides share an insight into some of his paintings that don the walls.

Throughout the rest of the house are Miller's belongings including her trusty Rolleiflex TLR, her collection of books, and knick-knacks from her travels and friends.

Having taken a course to become a gourmet chef, it's clear that Miller loved cooking. There are hints of this found joy within the house, but also amongst the rest of the grounds. Ami adds, 'We try and further the experience of meeting other aspects of Lee Miller and Roland Penrose at Farleys by adding products made by contemporary artists that relate

Above:
Maintenance
Wrens carry out
repair work on a
Coastal Forces
boat, United
Kingdom, 1940-1
© Lee Miller
Archives

solely to them and Farleys in our giftshop.'

Exhibition programme

The exhibition programme changes regularly and showcases the work of Miller from the permanent collection, but also brings light to others, especially women photographers and contemporary artists; something that Antony and Ami are incredibly passionate about as they continue Miller and Penrose's legacy of supporting emerging talent.

Typically, a show by another artist, such the recent exhibition Dorothy Bohm: About Women, is followed by

a Lee Miller specific show that takes elements of the archive, responding to a theme or section of her work. The next, Grim Glory: Lee Miller's Britain at War will draw consideration to her time documenting World War II in Britain, before travelling to the European warzone in 1942 as one of just four female photojournalists accredited to the US – a welcomed and moving investigation into British history, as well as Miller's life.

Miller's later harrowing photographs from the frontlines of Europe – including Normandy, Paris, Buchenwald and Dachau – have become defining images





Grim Glory: Lee Miller's Britain at War, 2026 book cover © Lee Miller Archives

Left: Lee Miller Photomaton picture, New York, USA, c1927 © Lee Miller Archives

Below: Kitchen, Chiddingly, Sussex, 2023 © Lee Miller Archives

of twentieth-century conflict. However, her vital contribution to documenting Britain during 1940-1944 has often remained comparatively overlooked within the wider narrative of her career.

Lee Miller in London

Miller arrived in London with Penrose in 1939, just as war was declared. As an American citizen ineligible for work in the UK, she used photography as her principle means of making a contribution to the war effort.

Offering her services to British Vogue ('Brogue'), Miller worked closely with editor Audrey Withers. As the British government saw women's magazines as crucial tools for morale and persuasion, Vogue used theirs to encourage women to enter the workforce and embrace clothing restrictions.

Miller became the magazine's leading photographer, and her images took a sophisticated spin on the messaging and went on to steer the publication in a radical new direction. Withers noted that Miller 'had borne the whole weight of our studio production through the most difficult period in Brogue's history.'

The Blitz

Between September 1940 and May 1941, Miller stayed in London rather than retreating to safety in the US, to photograph the rapidly changing landscape as German bombs fell heavily over the city. She documented and created a visually arresting record of wartime Britain and a nation adapting to conflict: civilians navigating the devastation of the Blitz and those left homeless, communities sheltering underground, and fashion under

rationing.

Many of Miller's photographs of a bombed-out London were chosen for 'Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire' (1941), a book intended as propaganda to appeal to American audiences, who had not yet become involved in the war.

Graphic images of violence were discouraged in the media, so in response Miller created a captivating record of life through poetic and surreal photographs with dark and humorous titles that evoked her defiant spirit. At a moment when Britain faced aerial bombardment and social upheaval, Miller's photographs brought together surrealist sensitivity, journalistic immediacy and profound humanity.

Women at war

Following the introduction of conscripting for women in December 1941, to either industry, auxiliary or nursing services, Miller also created a series of photographs that demonstrated the essential and varied roles carried out by women which were traditionally reserved for men: such as pilots, mechanics, signallers, and transport crews.

Celebrating their contributions, Miller's coverage of women working in the armed forces offers a rare record of this part of history, whilst also reflecting her own frustrations of not being able to work closer on the frontline during this time.

Several of these images were published at the end of World War II in 'Wrens in Camera' (1945) but have not been widely exhibited since. These will be curated alongside a selection of unseen photographs from the Lee Miller Archives.

Alongside the exhibition will be an





Top left: There's plenty to see at Farleys, including a beautiful sculpture garden. Image: Jessica Miller

Right: Farleys House is a must-visit for any photography or art lover. Image: Jessica Miller

Bottom left: View of the Dorothy Bohm exhibition at Farleys House and Gallery, May 2026. Image: Jessica Miller

expanded, republished edition of the 2020 'Grim Glory: Lee Miller's Britain at War' book published by the Lee Miller Archives, containing 50 additional photographs and an updated essay by Ami Bouhassane that reconsiders Miller's role in shaping the visual language of Britain at war.

Legacy

Talking about his parents' legacy, Antony said, 'We aim to represent Lee as a person and a photographer as completely as possible. Both my parents were dedicated to supporting young artists and we are keen to continue that. The way she inspires others is a constant source of delight to us all here at the archives. I frequently meet young people who tell me how Lee's life has prompted them to follow their dreams and in many cases, become photographers.'

About gaining charitable status and the future of Farleys, Ami says 'I'm incredibly excited to be moving

into this next chapter, with the Trust championing caring for Farleys and my grandparents I see it as a way for safeguarding their legacies for future generations.'

Their public programme includes a series of workshops and events including talks led by exhibition curators and by Antony himself. A particular highlight of the calendar is the Farleys Annual Surrealist Picnic on the Sunday of the August Bank Holiday weekend, with a range of other such events taking place across the weekend. Farleys House is also home to a range of local arts and crafts people working in studios on the site.

The go-to destination

If all of this wasn't enough to whet your appetite, it was here that Kate Winslet spent a lot of time getting to know her character for the *LEE* film.

'When the movie was premiered at TIFF (Toronto International Film Festival) in 2023 it was during the

Screen Actors Guild strike which was supported by Kate Winslet and other members of the cast. The public release was delayed until the following year with a big premier at The Odeon Leicester Square so it was not until 2024 that we felt the effect of all the press and publicity' says Antony.

'We doubled our Farleys visitor numbers overnight. Ami and the team had anticipated this so they had already enrolled extra staff. Then came the Tate Britain show with its phenomenal attendance. Our 2024 increase in visitor numbers has held up well, and with the very successful release of *LEE* in Europe and the Tate Britain show going on to Paris we are now getting a good number of European visitors.'

Like Winslet, I too have been inspired by Lee Miller's vision, drive, and determination to not be pigeon-holed into one box. Being able to walk in her footsteps and experience all of this for myself has really emphasised her part in photographic and art history.

Antony, Ami, and the rest of the team at Farleys and the Lee Miller Archives, are doing incredible work to bring Miller to light. A trip to Farleys is a must-visit day out for any photography lover.

AP

Farleys House and Gallery is open on Thursdays, Fridays, Sundays and select Saturdays 10am-4.30pm from April-October each year. House, Galleries and Garden ticket including 50-minute guided house tour (allocated time slot for the tour): £26. Galleries and Garden ticket: £10, free for under 12s. Booking is required for the house tour: farleyshouseandgallery.co.uk. See more about the Lee Miller Archives at leemiller.co.uk

APOY 2026

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Amateur Photographer of the Year

Here are the top ten images uploaded to Photocrowd from Round Two, Black and White, with comments by the AP team and our guest judge.

Round Two Black and White

Black & white photography strips an image back to its essentials, removing the distraction of colour and placing greater emphasis on light, shadow, form, texture and composition. Whether capturing people, landscapes, architecture or abstract details, successful monochrome images rely on strong visual design and emotional impact. Far from being a nostalgic throwback, black & white remains one of photography's most powerful creative tools, encouraging photographers to see the world differently. This round's top ten demonstrates the remarkable breadth of monochrome photography, from bold graphic compositions to intimate human moments. While each image takes a distinct approach, they all prove that when colour is taken away, imagination, observation and careful craftsmanship come to the fore.



1 Azim Khan Ronnie
A Young Fisherman with Hilsa 100pts

Hasselblad L2D-20c, 24mm, 1/40sec, f/4, ISO 100

The winning image immediately commands attention through its striking aerial perspective and masterful use of pattern. Hundreds of gleaming Hilsa fish create an almost abstract tapestry, their silvery forms contrasting beautifully against the dark background, before the eye is drawn to the young fisherman nestled at the centre of the frame. His broad smile and raised catch inject the picture with warmth and personality, transforming what could have been a purely graphic study into a compelling human

story. The judges admired the photographer's ability to balance order and spontaneity, with the carefully composed arrangement punctuated by the boy's joyful expression and confident pose. The monochrome treatment proves particularly effective, allowing texture, shape and tonal contrast to take precedence over colour while emphasising the shimmering quality of the fish. Beyond its visual impact, the image also offers a glimpse into the livelihoods and traditions of coastal Bangladesh, making it both aesthetically powerful and culturally resonant. A worthy winner that combines artistry with authentic storytelling.

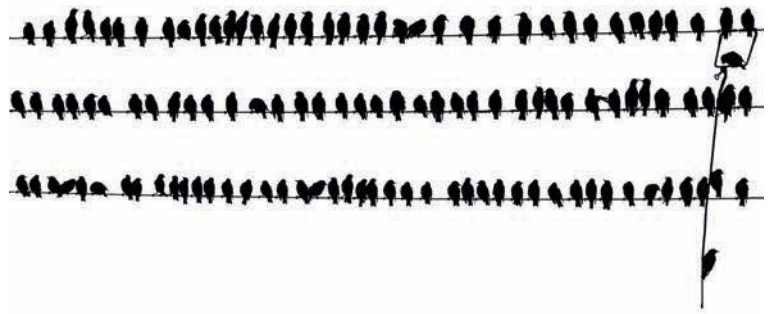


2 Azim Khan Ronnie Eyes of Exile

Canon EOS 7D Mark II, EF100mm, f/2.8L Macro IS USM, 1/50sec, f/2.8, ISO 250

Ronnie also takes second place for this compelling portrait with an unforgettable gaze. The child's direct eye contact creates an immediate connection with the viewer, inviting us to pause and consider the story behind the expression rather than simply glance and move on. The judges applauded the photographer's restrained approach, allowing the power of the image to come from honesty rather than embellishment. A shallow depth of field isolates the subject beautifully, while the monochrome treatment emphasises the rich tonal range of the skin, hair and clothing, drawing even greater attention to those phenomenal eyes. There is a dignity to the portrait that avoids sentimentality, despite the difficult circumstances surrounding the subject's life. Every element, from the uncluttered composition to the soft, natural light, works in harmony to produce an image that is both intimate and universally relatable. It is a portrait that demonstrates how black & white photography can strip away distraction and reveal something profoundly human. Well done Ronnie!

3



3 Karen Morris Home to Roost 80pts

Not supplied

This deceptively simple image is a wonderful example of how black & white photography can transform an everyday scene into something visually arresting. At first glance, the rows of birds perched on overhead wires create a beautifully ordered, almost musical arrangement across the frame. Look closer, however, and subtle variations in spacing, posture and movement begin to emerge, with a lone bird breaking away from the formation to add a welcome point of tension and balance. The judges appreciated the photographer's eye for graphic composition, reducing the scene to its essential elements without losing its sense of life and spontaneity. The generous use of negative space strengthens the minimalist aesthetic, line, rhythm and repetition take centre stage. It is a photograph that rewards careful observation, demonstrating that successful black & white images do not always rely on dramatic light or complex subjects, sometimes the simplest ideas, executed with precision and restraint, have the greatest impact.

4



4 Erika Howard Quiet Strength, Madagascar 70pts

Canon EOS R5m2, RF70-200mm at 172mm, 1/100sec, f/2.8, ISO 8000

This striking portrait demonstrates the enduring power of simplicity. With little more than soft directional light, a dark background and an unwavering gaze, the photographer has created an image of remarkable presence and emotional depth. The judges were particularly impressed by the careful control of light, which gently sculpts the subject's face while allowing the surrounding shadows to enhance the mood rather than obscure detail. The monochrome treatment lends the portrait a timeless quality, encouraging the viewer to focus on expression, texture and form. The subject's poised hand and eye direction add a sense of confidence and dignity, creating a connection that feels both intimate and respectful. Every element within the frame appears considered, yet nothing feels forced or theatrical. Rather than relying on dramatic gestures or elaborate settings, the image succeeds through a less is more approach. A beautifully judged study that leaves a lasting impression.

5 Adam Humphrey

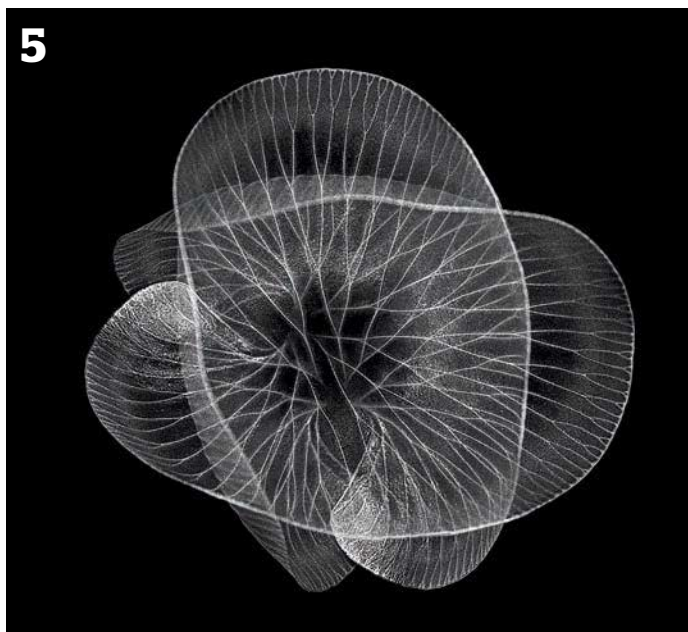
Jellyfish Kiss 60pts

OM-1MarkII, 12-100mm at 92mm, 1/100sec, f/6.3, ISO 2500



Guest judge Paul Sanders says:

Among the images built on story and human presence, this one earns its place differently, through form alone. Nothing here shouts for attention, yet everything holds it. The overlapping curves feel less composed and more discovered, as if the photographer waited for the moment these lines agreed to speak to each other, layer over layer, until something almost weightless emerged. There's a stillness bordering on meditation. Black and white does real work here too. Stripped of colour, the eye has nowhere to rest but the relationship between light, shadow and form, and that relationship carries genuine feeling: calm, curiosity, a quiet sense of wonder. It doesn't ask to be understood at a glance. It asks to be sat with. That, to me, is what makes an image beautiful rather than merely impressive: it rewards patience, and gives something back each time you return to it.



6 Anthony Bliss

Take Me Home. Upper New York State. USA 50pts

Nikon F2as, 180mm, 1/2000sec, f16. Photographed on Tri X film, pull-processed in D76.

This evocative photograph has the feel of a cinematic still, inviting the viewer to imagine the story unfolding beyond the frame. The judges were drawn to its understated narrative creating a picture rich in atmosphere and ambiguity. There is a distinctly Robert Frank American road-trip aesthetic at work, recalling the tradition of classic documentary photography where ordinary moments are elevated through careful observation and timing. The composition is beautifully balanced, using the diagonal sweep of the road to guide the eye. Black & white proves the perfect choice, enhancing the graphic qualities of the scene while reinforcing its timeless character. The visible grain of the Tri-X film adds a subtle texture that complements the subject. A confident photograph that rewards repeated viewing, asking more questions than it answers.



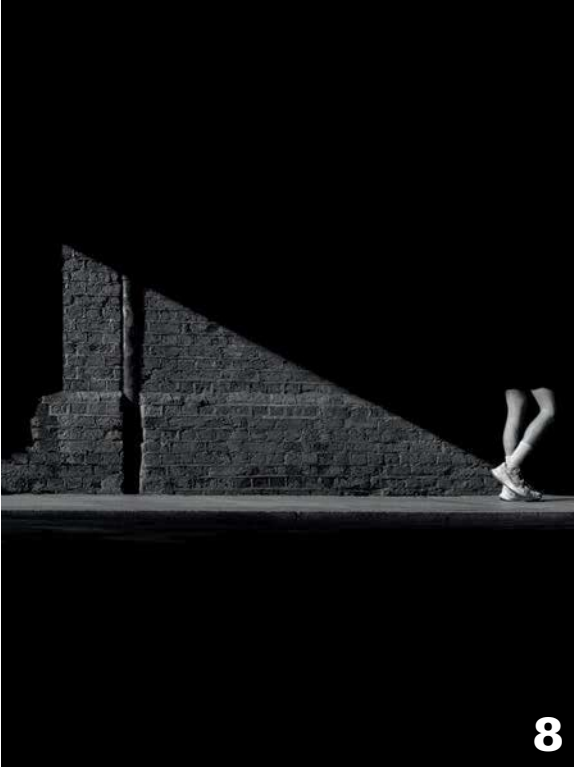
7 Calum Carpenter

Rosie On Wall (Derelict) 45pts

Not supplied

This imaginative image demonstrates how black & white photography can blur the line between portraiture and landscape. Rather than allowing the model to dominate the frame, Calum has balanced the figure against the weathered wall and expansive surroundings, creating a composition that feels both intriguing and enigmatic. The judges admired the restrained approach, with the subject becoming an integral part of the environment. The peeling textures of the derelict building contrast with Rosie's tattoos. The monochrome treatment unifies the scene, encouraging the eye to explore shape, texture and tonal relationship. The composition is strong, making excellent use of space and allowing the viewer time to absorb the details. It is a photograph that proves an environmental portrait can be just as much about place as it is about the person within it.





8 Ben Speed Anonymity in Motion 40pts

FUJIFILM X-H1, 56mm, 1/4000sec, f/5.6, ISO 200

Timing is everything in street photography, and this image demonstrates just how effective a fleeting moment can be when paired with a strong eye for composition. The judges were struck by the elegant interplay between the static geometry of the architecture and the figure moving through the frame. The carefully controlled light creates a dramatic stage, with the illuminated wall providing a striking counterpoint to the anonymous legs. By withholding detail, the Ben encourages the viewer to imagine the identity and destination of the passer-by.

8

9 Lorraine Robins Smile 35pts

Nikon D750, 85.0 mm, 1/1000sec, f/6.3, ISO 800

This charming image succeeds through observation, humour and timing. The judges were immediately drawn to the delightful role reversal at its heart, with a young child enthusiastically pointing a toy camera back towards the photographer. It's a simple moment, but one that celebrates the universal curiosity that often sparks a lifelong interest in photography. Compositionally, the picture is equally assured. The repeating line of park benches creates a



strong sense of depth, while the out of focus figures in the background provide context

without distracting from the main subject. A warm, witty image that brings joy.



10 Neil Johansson Cast a Dark Shadow 30pts

RICOH GR II, GR Lens, 1/1250sec, f/8, ISO 1600

This beautifully minimalist photograph demonstrates how a simple idea, executed with precision, can have a tremendous visual impact. The judges were captivated by the dramatic interplay between the lone figure and the elongated shadow stretching across the frame, creating a composition that feels both cinematic and mysterious. Viewed from above, familiar surroundings are transformed into an almost abstract arrangement of shape, line and negative space, encouraging the viewer to look beyond the obvious. Every element appears carefully considered.

Winning kit from PARK Cameras

What gear did our top ten photographers use?



For his 2nd place image, Azim Khan Ronnie used the EOS 7D Mark II which provides consistent and accurate exposure metering thanks to its 150,000-pixel metering sensor which splits the scene up into 252 areas. It analyses each one, and either automatically sets the correct exposure settings or recommends them to you. Available used from Park Cameras for around £319-479.



For his stunning 5th place capture, Jellyfish Kiss, Adam Humphrey opted for an OM-System M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-100mm f/4 IS PRO Zoom Lens. This impressive piece of kit suits both video and stills shooting with lens image stabilisation and constant aperture. Available from Park Cameras for £1,199.



In 9th place, Lorraine Robins used a Nikon D750, lightweight and weather-sealed, and has a grip that is slightly deeper than previous Nikon DSLRs to ensure that holding the camera is comfortable and secure. Available second-hand from Park Cameras for around £479.

To see the full range, visit
www.parkcameras.com

BEST OF THE CLUBS

Each round, we shine a spotlight on a selection of standout entries from the many camera clubs taking part in APOY



Mike Martin, Bristol Photographic Society *That Hat*

OM-1, 40-150mm at 75mm, 1/125sec, f/10, ISO 200

Minimalist composition and beautifully controlled light transform a simple profile into an elegant study.



Dave Tucker, Smethwick Photographic Society *Eric's Fireside Seat*

Not supplied

Rich textures, thoughtful composition and understated lighting create a portrait that feels steeped in character and reflection.



Ian Smith, Launceston Camera Club *Where's the Ball?*

FUJIFILM X-T3, 100-400mm at 190mm, 1/125sec, f/5, ISO 1000

The tangle of limbs, flying mud and determined expressions perfectly captures the physical intensity and camaraderie.



Kevin Dawson, Visions Photography Club *The Quiet Between Moments*

Not supplied

The dramatic low-key lighting and direct gaze give this striking portrait an air of mystery, with the flowers providing a subtle point of contrast.



Sharon Lewis, Mid-Somerset Camera Club *Angelique*

Not supplied

Soft natural light, graceful posing and exquisite tonal control combine to produce a timeless portrait.

YOUNG APOY WINNERS



1 Antisha Thakur 100pts

Not supplied

The judges were captivated by the atmosphere and energy of this beautifully balanced scene. While the flock of birds fills the frame with movement, the lone boat provides a calm focal point, creating a compelling contrast between stillness and activity. The monochrome treatment enhances the misty conditions, simplifying the composition and allowing shape, tone and rhythm to take centre stage. A wonderfully observed image and a deserving winner.



3 Matteo Botta The Journey or the Destination? 80pts

DJI FC7303, 20.7 mm, 1/1600sec, f/2.8, ISO 100

The judges admired the photographer's eye for graphic composition, transforming a snow-covered landscape into an elegant abstract study of line and form. The

sweeping black road cuts dramatically through the pristine white surroundings, creating a striking visual rhythm that is punctuated by the tiny vehicles moving through the frame. Captured from above, the scene takes on an almost map-like quality, demonstrating excellent timing, patience and a strong appreciation of geometry.



2 Grace Learoyd-Hill Invisible Man 90pts

Canon EOS 2000D, 18-55mm at 55mm, 1/200sec, f/8, ISO 800

This imaginative photograph impressed the judges with its bold simplicity and conceptual strength. The billowing cloud obscures the subject almost entirely, leaving only the hat and jacket to emerge from the white backdrop, creating a striking visual paradox. Minimalist, graphic and thought-provoking, it lingers in the mind long after first viewing.



4 Cavon Hajimiri In the Deep End 70pts

Canon EOS R8, 24-105mm at 58mm, 1/1250sec, f/5.6, ISO 640

This dynamic image demonstrates excellent timing, capturing the decisive moment as two players stretch for the ball amid a dramatic burst of water. The judges admired the photographer's ability to freeze the action while maintaining a strong, uncluttered composition. The deep black background isolates the subjects beautifully, allowing the spray, movement and athleticism to take centre stage. A powerful monochrome image full of energy, drama and visual impact.

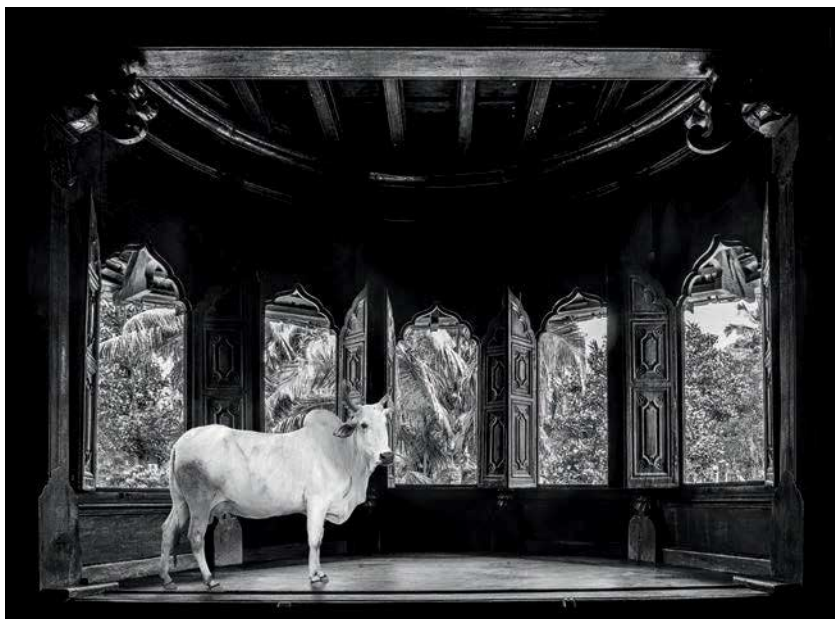
BEST OF THE REST

APOY judges choose their favourite images that didn't make the top ten of our Black and White category

Peter Dench, APOY project manager, chooses **Lady of the Manure by Eden Antho, Milan**

Nikon D7000, 10.0-24.0 mm at 16mm, 1/40sec, f/8, ISO 200

Peter Says: Some photographs ask questions. Others answer them. Lady of the Manure does neither, preferring instead to leave the viewer gloriously bewildered. Why is there a cow standing alone inside what appears to be an ornate wooden pavilion? Is she performing? Auditioning? Waiting for the curtain to rise? We may never know, and that's precisely the point. The photograph succeeds because it embraces the surreal without feeling contrived. The symmetry of the architecture creates an almost theatrical stage, while the pristine white cow stands with all the poise of a seasoned actor, perfectly placed beneath the sweeping timber roof. Great photography doesn't always have to explain itself. Sometimes it simply makes you stop, smile and invent your own story.



Nigel Atherton, editor, chooses **Morning Mist by Charles Ashton, Pershore**

Nikon Z8, 14-24mm f/2.8, 1/125sec f/16, ISO 140

Nigel says: Charles took this beautifully atmospheric photo during a misty early morning walk on the Bund, Shanghai. Having visited this amazing city a couple of times and never got a photo as good as this one I'm a little jealous, but maybe I just didn't get up early enough. The only highlight in the frame is the rising sun. Everything else is either dark grey or black. The silhouetted figure is perfectly placed on the third and Charles has signposted exactly which city we're in by including three of Shanghai's most iconic and recognisable skyscrapers – the sphere-tastic Oriental Pearl (which looks like a building on a distant planet in the Star Wars universe), the Shanghai World Financial Centre (the 'bottle opener') and Shanghai Tower (the world's second tallest building). The use of a 14mm wideangle has created a strong diagonal leading line drawing the eye through the frame.



Amy Davies, features editor, chooses **Q by David Davies, Penarth**

SONY DSC-RX10M4, 8.8-220.0 mm at 62mm, 1/1000sec, f/5, ISO 100

Amy says: Judging photography competitions can be quite a strenuous process. Hundreds or thousands of images all vying for your attention and not enough time to possibly give every single one quite what they deserve. So, in essence what I'm looking for is something out of the ordinary. Something which stops me in my tracks. Something which I haven't seen 100 times before as I move through the entries placed in front of me. This is one such image. What is going on here? Somebody appears to be dangling out of a giant toilet roll. Why? Whose legs are they? Who can say – not me. Checking the caption included by the photographer tells me somebody is having a snooze outside a museum of modern art. On reflection, I think I preferred it when I didn't know what was going on. Anyway, this shot works particularly well in black and white for me because it reduces everything down to the form, shape and lines. Perhaps the trainers are a bright colour – it would be totally distracting if so. I look forward to seeing what piques my interest in the next round!



Geoff Harris, deputy editor, chooses
Untitled by Deborah Hutt, Birmingham

Not supplied

Geoff says: There is something very satisfying about this image of two dancers, which doesn't have a title. While the subject matter is hardly new, or the approach radically different in any way, the photographer should be applauded for the perfectly balanced composition, spot-on exposure and focus, and atmospheric use of light and shadow. The dancers' limbs complement each other perfectly in the frame, yet there is strong sense of dynamic action. The background looks realistic too, without ever distracting the viewer. Yes, the photographer could have tried motion blur or intentional camera movement, etc, but sometimes a more traditional approach just works really well. The image is a technical tour de force, both on the part of the dancers and the photographer.



Jessica Miller, deputy online editor, chooses
Flight Pattern by Mats Carduner, Paris

LEICA Q (Typ 116), 28.0 mm, 1/1000SEC, f/6.3, ISO 100

Jessica says: A skateboarder performs a jump in front of the photographer and whilst suspended in midair above the bowl his board is seemingly balanced on another skater's head below. A well-timed photograph that even just a moment earlier or later would not have had the same effect. Black and white is a great category, and images in this round often highlight details in tone, texture, shape and shadow. In colour, it's possible this shot would have been filled with different distractions. However, stripping to monochrome means we focus on the shadow, contrast and choreography of the main skater here and his balancing act that beautifully fills the negative space at the top of the shot.

The 2026 leaderboards

With two rounds now complete, the APOY 2026 leaderboards is beginning to take shape.

APOY

1=	Azim Khan Ronnie	110
1=	Susan Hall	110
3	David Travis	90
4=	David Davies	80
4=	Karen Morris	80
4=	Richard Coulstock	80
7	Erika Howard	70
8=	Adam Humphrey	60
8=	Neil Johansson	60
8=	Yasser Alaa Mobarak	60

YOUNG APOY

1	Antisha Thakur	110
2	Henry Salter	100
3=	Grace Learoyd-Hill	90
3=	Neel Anil	90
5=	Ankit Ghosh	80
5=	Matteo Botta	80
5=	Zakaria Yahia	80
8=	Cavon Hajimiri	70
8=	Mac Motz	70
8=	Sam Morris	70

CAMERA CLUBS

1=	Launceston Camera Club	100
1=	Mid-Somerset Camera Club	100
3	Leek Photographic Club	90
4	Maghull Photography Club	80
5	London: Hampstead PS	70
6	City of London & Cripplegate PS	60
7=	Royston Photographic Society	55
7=	Truro Camera Club	55
9	Visions Photography Club	50
10=	Royal Wootton Bassett CC	40
10=	Stafford Photographic Society	40

To see more images from APOY Round One and Young APOY, visit amateurphotographer.com/APOY



At a glance

£5150 (body-only)

- 44.9MP full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 50-200,000
- Up to 40 frames per second continuous shooting
- 5.76m-dot, 0.76x viewfinder
- 3.2in, 2.3m-dot tilting touchscreen
- 8K 30p, 4K 120p, Full HD 120p video recording

Leica SL3-P

Leica's latest model combines high resolution with impressive speed, but does that make it the firm's best camera yet? **Andy Westlake** finds out

For and against

- + Best autofocus yet from a Leica camera
- + Rapid continuous shooting
- + Extremely robust build
- + Generally clear, straightforward user interface
- No live view during continuous shooting
- Slightly obtuse AF area size setting
- No Auto subject detection option
- Visible rolling shutter distortion with the electronic shutter

Data file

Sensor	44.9MP full-frame CMOS
Output size	8144 x 5424
Focal length mag	1x
Lens mount	L mount
Shutter speeds	30min - 1/8000sec (mechanical), up to 1/16000sec (electronic)
Sensitivity	ISO 50-200,000
Exposure modes	PASM
Metering	Spot, centre-weighted, highlight, multi
Exposure comp	+/-3EV in 0.3EV steps
Continuous shooting	Up to 7fps (mechanical shutter), up to 40 fps (electronic shutter)
Screen	3.2in, 2.3m-dot tilting touchscreen
Viewfinder	5.76m-dot, 0.76x OLED EVF
AF points	819
Video	8K 30p, 4K 120p, Full HD 120p
External mic	3.5mm stereo
Memory card	1x CFexpress Type B, 1x UHS-II SD BP-SCL6 rechargeable Li-ion
Power	
Battery life	383 shots
Dimensions	141.2 x 108.1 x 84.6mm
Weight	855g with battery and card

Leica's latest camera, the SL3-P, is a high-end full-frame mirrorless model designed for professional photographers. It employs the same body design as the firm's existing SL3 and SL3-S models, but with different sensor. To recap, the SL3 is a 60MP stills-oriented camera for such things as portrait and studio photography, while the SL3-S is a 24MP model with a stronger focus on video. The SL3-P sits in between the two with a 45MP sensor, and a feature set that's designed to allow it to take on almost any task, for both photography and video.

At £5150 body-only, though, the SL3-P is almost twice the price of the Panasonic Lumix S1R II, which shares the same sensor and offers pretty much the same capabilities. It's also rather more

expensive than proven pro-spec cameras such as the Nikon Z8 or the Canon EOS R5 Mark II, both of which aim to do essentially the same thing. So what is it about the SL3-P that might persuade buyers to justify the price tag?

Features

Let's take a look at the camera's core feature set. That 45MP full-frame sensor is of a conventional design, with no suggestion it uses any kind of stacked architecture, as employed by many recent high-performance cameras. It provides a sensitivity range of ISO 50-200,000, although settings below ISO 100 are clearly 'pulled', at the cost of decreased highlight range.

Using its mechanical shutter, the SL3-P can shoot at up to 7 frames per second, which is the



The SL3-P is Leica's most advanced camera to date

Leica SL3-P, 100mm f/2.8 macro,
1/200sec at f/5.6, ISO 64

same as its SL3 siblings. But switch to the electronic shutter, and it'll go as fast as 40fps, complete with continuous autofocus. Leica provides a good range of intermediate speed settings too, to match whatever activity you might be shooting.

As for autofocus, this uses a hybrid system that combines phase detection for speed, contrast detection for accuracy, and intelligent subject recognition. The latter is capable of detecting and tracking people, animals, or cars. You have to select between them in advance of shooting, though, as unlike most recent cameras, the SL3-P can't automatically detect the subject type itself.

In-body image stabilisation is built-in, and rated for up to 5 stops of shake reduction when shooting hand-held. Leica has

also included a 176MP multi-shot mode, with both tripod-based (pixel-shift) and hand-held (super-resolution) options included. The composite raw file is generated in-camera, with the option to record a single-shot file alongside.

One feature included in the SL3-P that isn't available on many other cameras is Content Credentials. This allows either JPEG or raw files to be securely signed in the metadata according to standards established by the Content Authority Initiative (CAI). The provenance of the images can then be checked using free online tools, to verify their authorship and that they are genuine photos rather than AI-generated. That's not something many enthusiasts will need, but for photojournalists, it could be invaluable.

Video specs are impressive, too. There's a mind-boggling array of resolutions and frame rates on offer, including 8K at 30fps, 6K at 60fps, 4K at 120fps, and Full HD at 120fps. Open gate output is available for capturing the full sensor area at up to 8K and 24fps, allowing greater flexibility in post-processing. Files can be saved directly to an external SSD, while RAW can be output over HDMI to an external recorder. Apple ProRes is also available, for resolutions up to 5.8K.

Video shooting is treated entirely separately within the user interface, with its own settings. The camera can also be switched to a Cinema Mode that works in terms of the T-stops and shutter angles often favoured by experienced videographers, rather than F-stops and shutter speeds. Microphone and headphone

sockets are provided, alongside full-size HDMI video output and USB-C for data transfer and charging.

Both Bluetooth and high-speed Wi-Fi are on board for connecting to your phone, via the Leica Fotos app. It's possible to copy photos across for sharing, and to use your phone as a remote control, complete with a live view feed and the ability to change wide range of camera settings. With an iPhone, there's also the option to use a wired connection via a USB-C cable, which is quicker to set up and allows even faster file transfers.

The Leica Fotos app also brings support for Leica Looks. These are more stylised and interesting JPEG colour profiles compared to the rather basic options that come pre-installed on the camera. You can browse





Monochrome High Contrast mode gives nice results for black & white
Leica SL3-P, 50mm f/1.4, 1/125sec at f/8, ISO 100

through them in the app and transfer the ones you like to the camera – or indeed, just install the whole lot.

Build and handling

Leica has used exactly the same design as before, although the SL3-P is distinguished from the other SL-3 models by the lack of a Leica red dot on the front. This means that fundamentally, the SL3-P, SL3-S and SL3 all work in pretty much exactly the same way. For that reason, much of the following text is derived from my reviews of those cameras.

You get the same chunky, metal-shelled body that measures 141.2 x 108.1 x 84.6mm and weighs in at about 855g. The camera feels extremely robust, including dust and splash resistance to the IP54 standard. While the handgrip isn't as sculpted as those on its competitors, I still found it reasonably comfortable to hold.

Two large dials on the top plate are used for setting exposure settings, complemented by one embedded in the body underneath your thumb. Clicking this dial inwards also allows exposure-mode selection. A well-placed joystick on the back is used to position the AF area. Unlike on most cameras, though,

you can't quickly recentre the AF point by clicking this inwards. Instead, you have to set up a different function button: I used the one beside the viewfinder.

You can set which exposure parameter is controlled by each of the three dials separately for each exposure mode, and in whatever way you please. The two right-hand dials are nicely placed, but I find the dial on the left to be inconveniently positioned, as you have to shift your hand from underneath the lens every time you want to make an adjustment. This is particularly awkward with larger lenses. By default, this dial changes ISO, and I think it's best left that way.

Where other pro cameras are covered with lots of buttons for direct access to different functions, the SL3 design makes do with a smaller number of unlabelled custom function buttons. The idea is that you set these up to suit your specific needs. You can also save different camera setups as User Profiles for different shooting situations, and give them sensible names for easy recall.

Two function buttons are placed on the front of the camera, and I find they're reasonably easy to reach using the second and third fingers of my right hand.

Meanwhile, the one beside the viewfinder requires a slight stretch of my right thumb. However, the other two are placed behind the top control dial, which means they can only be operated with a significant shift in grip. I'd make a point of assigning these buttons to functions that you don't need to change on a shot-by-shot basis.

While the external controls may be sparse, they're complemented by a nicely designed touchscreen interface that gives quick access to a wide range of functions. Simply pressing an onscreen icon lets you adjust the associated setting. Alternatively, tapping the menu button once brings up a nicely designed control panel with well-spaced touch buttons.

Likewise, the menus are pared right back, with considerably fewer options compared to other high-end models. And yet, I've never really felt that any crucial setting was missing.

Viewfinder and screen

Leica has fitted the SL3 range with an excellent electronic viewfinder. It's bright and detailed, with 5.76m-dot resolution and 0.76x magnification, and it gives a nice, clear view all the way into the corners. Detailed exposure information is overlaid on black

bars above and below the preview image, and the entire interface rotates when you turn the camera for vertical shooting.

Likewise, the rear screen is also very good indeed, measuring 3.2in diagonally and boasting 2.3m-dot resolution. It tilts up and down, for overhead or low-angle shooting, but it's a shame you don't get a third hinge for portrait-format work. This limits its usefulness to in landscape-shooting only.

Leica previews exposure, colour

Leica's latest 50mm f/1.4 is small and gives lovely background blur
Leica SL3-P, 50mm f/1.4, 1/200sec at f/1.4, ISO 100



and white balance by default. There's no depth-of-field preview, but you can assign this to a custom button – I used the lower of the two on the front of the body. Usefully, a second press of the button previews the shutter speed, which is great for visualising image blurring with long exposures.

There's a good set of exposure and compositional aids on offer, including gridlines, a live histogram, electronic levels, focus peaking, and blinking highlights to warn of possible clipping. Helpfully, you can define four 'Info Profiles' with any combinations of these you require, and then cycle through them using the FN button.

Autofocus

One area where Leica has been steadily upgrading its offerings comes with autofocus, and the SL3-P promises its most sophisticated setup yet. You get on-chip phase detection that supports autofocus across almost the entire frame. Subject detection now understands cars, as well as humans and animals, and the camera can be set to home in on the most important part of the subject (either the face/eye, or the front/windscreen of a car). Unlike on the SL3 and SL3-S, subject detection is now set independently of the focus area and tracking.

I tested the SL3-P's autofocus

in a couple of ways. Firstly, by shooting portraits with various lenses, including the new 50mm f/1.4 and 100mm f/2.8 macro announced at the same time as the SL3-P, and secondly for motor racing with the Leica Vario-Elmar-SL 100-400mm F5-6.3 telezoom lens. I found it performed well in terms of identifying and tracking subjects, giving a good hit-rate of in-focus shots (in fact it's very much like the Panasonic S1RII in this respect). The biggest problem comes with working out how to configure it how you need.

On the SL3-P, now Leica offers three AF area options: field/spot, zone/multi-field, and tracking. In the first two, the camera will detect a subject positioned at the selected AF point, but will only attempt to follow it across a very small surrounding area. With a subject that's moving around the frame, you'll need either to switch to tracking AF, or select the largest available AF area from zone mode.

However, the latter is complicated by the fact that you could easily be forgiven for assuming that no such option exists. This is because Leica's method of the changing focus area size is distinctly obtuse. You can't apparently use the buttons or dials; instead, you have to press down on the touchscreen for a second. Then you get a choice between four AF area sizes



Focal points

The SL3-P can be distinguished from its immediate siblings by the lack of a Leica red dot on the front

Tilt screen

The 3in, 2.1m-dot touchscreen tilts up and down. But there's no additional hinge for vertical shooting.

File storage

There are two card slots, one for CFexpress Type B and the other for UHS-II SD. They can be used simultaneously or sequentially, or you can record raw to CFexpress and JPEG to SD.

Power

The BP-SCL6 battery is rated for 383 shots by CIPA standard tests, which is an improvement on the SL3 and SL3-S. It can be recharged via the USB-C port.



Connectors

On the left side, beneath chunky rubber covers, you'll find USB-C, full-size HDMI, and 3.5mm stereo microphone and headphone ports. The latter two are both compatible with Leica's RC-SCL6 cable release (£90).

Top screen

A top-plate LCD display shows your key settings at a glance, including exposure mode, shutter speed, aperture, ISO, and exposure compensation.

L-mount

There's a wide range of designed-for-mirrorless full-frame L-mount autofocus lenses from Leica, Panasonic, and Sigma. Some other third-party makers are starting to join in, too.



➤ in each of the field/spot and zone/multi-field modes – with the largest of these being the multi-field option that covers the full image area. I think it would be better if this were selected as a separate option, as before.

Switch to the AF tracking option, and the camera will initially pick up the subject using a target area that you can position freely within the frame. However, in this mode you're restricted to only using a small focus point. That's great if you know your subject will appear at a specific location, for example a certain point on a racetrack. But it can be much trickier to pick up small, erratic subjects.

Once you've focused and shot a burst, you'll then find that the SL3-P is set up so it resets the target focus point to the centre of the frame, every single time. Personally, I don't really understand why you'd ever want the camera to do this. Thankfully you can change this, so it returns to the position you originally chose instead. But I think that should be the camera's standard mode of operation.

It's also worth noting that the SL3-P shares the same irritation in tracking mode as the Panasonic S1II-series cameras with which it shares a lot of its

technology. When subject detection is enabled, but the camera can't detect a suitable subject, it won't fall back on its conventional tracking mode. Instead, it will focus only at the selected point.

Performance

On the whole, the Leica SL3-P is every bit as fast and responsive as a professional camera should be. It takes a moment to wake up after you press the large power button on its left shoulder, but it will be ready to shoot by the time you've got the viewfinder up to your eye. It can take just a little bit longer to become fully responsive if you want to change settings using the touchscreed, but while this is long enough to be noticeable, it's not so bad as to be really annoying.

As for the shutter sound, it's pretty quiet, and shouldn't unduly disturb bystanders or attract unwanted attention. Select the electronic shutter and the camera can be completely silent, but there's a risk of image distortion due to rolling shutter effects with fast-moving subjects. The SL3-P fares much better than the SL3 in this regard, though.

One area where Leica has made headway compared to previous SL3 models lies with battery life. Based on CIPA-

standard tests, the SL3-P promises 383 shots per charge, compared to 315 for the SL3-S and just 260 for the SL3. In my experience, this is highly dependent upon how you use the camera in practice – perhaps even more so than with most other cameras. If you tend to shoot a lot of high-speed bursts, you can easily get a thousand or more shots per charge. But on the other hand, when I was mostly using single-shot drive mode, and only taking two or three shots at a time, it felt like the battery was depleting rather quickly. At any rate you'll want to pick up a spare, and they're not cheap, at £155 each.

Turning our attention to continuous shooting, the SL3-P has no trouble meeting its specified 40fps maximum speed. It has a reasonable buffer, too; it'll keep going for at least 70 frames when shooting raw, and more in JPEG-only or when using the slower shooting speeds via the mechanical shutter. My main concerns with the camera are, again operational.

Firstly, there's no clear feedback in the viewfinder when you're shooting with the electronic shutter. There's a small counter at the bottom right of the frame that ticks down the frames remaining, but that's all.



The SL3-P is crying out for a more visible indicator in the viewfinder to show when it's actually shooting (and perhaps more importantly, when it isn't).

Secondly, you only get live view between frames when shooting at the slowest rate, which is just 2 frames per second. At faster speeds, the camera instead plays back the images you've just shot, in between frames to help you keep track of what's going on. That works reasonably well at 20, 30 or 40fps, but at slower shooting speeds, the viewfinder is, in effect, lagging further and further behind the subject. This makes it difficult to track anything that moves quickly or erratically across the frame. It's a real disadvantage compared to other high-speed, high-resolution cameras with stacked sensors and blackout-free viewfinders.

I've found Leica's in-body image stabilisation to be very effective, though. Using the new Summilux-SL 50mm F1.4 ASPH, I was able to shoot at shutter speeds as slow as 1 second and still get



In my experience, the SL3-P returned a good hit-rate of in-focus images
Leica SL3-P, 100-400mm at 267mm, 1/4000sec at f/6.2, ISO 2500



usable results. Broadly speaking, that's on par with what I've got from similar high-end full-frame cameras.

One area where the SL3-P does stand out, though, lies with the usability and effectiveness of its high-resolution multi-shot modes. Unlike most of its competitors, multi-shot is both easy to access from the drive mode menu, and consistently effective in recording useful extra detail. The fact that you get a 164MP DNG generated in-camera means that you don't have to fit clunky proprietary software into your workflow, either.

In practice, the main operational drawback is that the camera locks up for a long time while processing – about 15 seconds in tripod mode, and twice that in hand-held mode. Personally, I'd still see it very much as a special-purpose mode for such things as still-life and static landscapes. Even so, it adds another string to your bow. However, it's also worth noting that the Panasonic S1R II shares the exact same technology.

Metering is generally reliable, and it's easy to see in the viewfinder when you may need to dial in some exposure compensation. Auto white balance works well for the most part, too. I'm not a huge fan of Leica's standard JPEG colour mode, which I find a little too muted, and I preferred the punchier colours of Vivid for everyday shooting. The various

Leica Looks are worth trying too, if you prefer something a bit more stylised. Meanwhile, Black & White lovers are well served by the Monochrome High Contrast setting.

Image quality

As for image quality, the SL3-P uses the same sensor as the Panasonic Lumix S1R II. It therefore gives pretty much the same results. This means you get a level of detail that's on a par with its 45-50MP rivals, such as the Nikon Z8, Canon EOS R5 Mark II, or Sony Alpha A1 II.

Images are almost completely free of any visible noise at ISO 100, and continue to look very clean and detailed up to ISO 1600. Beyond this noise inevitably has an increasing impact on detail and colour, with both suffering visibly by ISO 12,500. I'd still be happy shooting at ISO 25,000, and even ISO 50,000 could be usable with the latest AI noise reduction software. But I think the top two settings really are best avoided, and ISO 200,000 really should be left well alone.

As for dynamic range, there's immense scope to bring up extra shadow detail from low-ISO raw files. Indeed at ISO 100, you can adjust the tonality sliders in raw processing to your heart's content, without ever really being bothered by noise. Files remain impressively malleable at higher ISOs, too.

Verdict



In many respects, the Leica SL3-P does what it promises. It's super-fast and the autofocus works very well. Leica's design approach can take a bit of getting used to, especially if you're accustomed to using more mainstream cameras. But if you're prepared to use it as Leica intends, and spend some time setting up User Profiles to suit how you shoot, I find it works well.

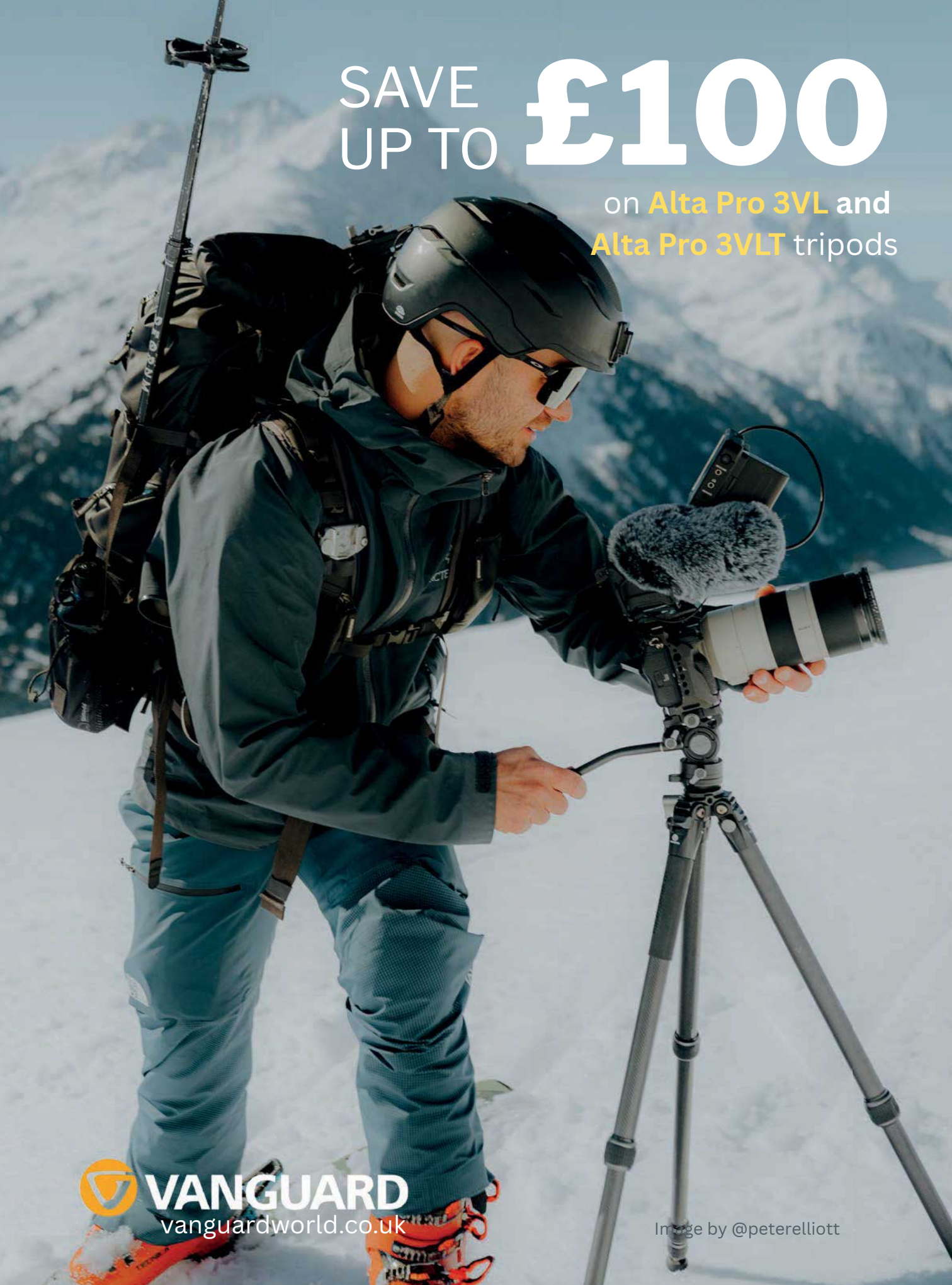
With its particular balance of features, the SL3-P becomes the most versatile model within the current SL range, and therefore arguably makes the most sense to the widest audience. Studio and portrait photographer will still get the best stills image quality from the original 60MP, but the SL3-P is more capable for when faced with fast-moving subjects. It matches or surpasses the SL3-S for video, too.

Many readers will, naturally, wonder why you'd spend so much money on a Leica when you can get cameras from the mainstream Japanese makers that do much the same thing for rather less money. To be honest, it's probably not a camera for most enthusiasts. Rationally, cameras like the Canon EOS R5 Mark II, Nikon Z8, Panasonic Lumix S1R II and even the Sony A7R VI offer a better value proposition. In particular, they provide a better experience during continuous shooting.

Buying a Leica is, however, not purely a rational decision. For some photographers, the exceptional build quality and streamlined, user-friendly interface could be reason enough to buy. And for working professionals, the support for Content Credentials, and indeed the sheer cachet of turning up for a job with a Leica, could make the SL3-P worth the outlay.



FEATURES	9/10
BUILD & HANDLING	9/10
METERING	9/10
AUTOFOCUS	9/10
AWB & COLOUR	8/10
DYNAMIC RANGE	9/10
IMAGE QUALITY	9/10
VIEWFINDER/LCD	9/10



SAVE
UP TO

£100

on Alta Pro 3VL and
Alta Pro 3VLT tripods



VANGUARD

vanguardworld.co.uk

Image by @peterelliott



RGBCW

LED head offers 36,000 colours, as well as warm-to-cool temperatures of 2500-7500K

Advanced DMX

As well as the regular DMX in and out, the AS600C offers Art-Net protocols via Ethernet

At a glance

\$1399.99

- Multi-colour LED light
- Bowens mount
- Mains or battery power
- www.neewer.com
- Available in the UK late summer

All-weather

The head and the power pack have IP54 ratings, and Neewer says they can be used in the rain

Neewer AS600C

There's a price to be paid for the adoption of an RGBCW LED formation in Neewer's super-bright AS series of continuous lights, says **Damien Demolder**

Neewer now has three lights in its AS series of bright continuous LED lights. I reviewed the excellent AS600B for AP 13th January 2026, and there's a 1200W version, the AS1200B, that sits at the top of the line. This AS600C is essentially the full colour version of the bi-colour AS600B. So, while the AS600B and AS1200B can produce warm, neutral and cool tones across a colour temperature range of 2700-6500 kelvin, this light adds Red, Green and Blue LEDs. This

allows it to produce a wider range of temperatures, as well as a seemingly infinite number of colours by mixing the RGB LEDs with the warm white and cool white LEDs of the B-series heads.

While I was expecting that adding RGB LEDs to the super-bright AS600B would create my dream light, there's a cost to this that I'd rather forgotten about. Neewer gives generously with one hand, but takes away something significant with the other, that changed the dynamic of how I see this light.

Features

The Neewer AS600C is a COB-type LED light, with a maximum 600W power and a quoted maximum illumination of 56,000lux at 1m. Neewer, in common with most light manufacturers, uses a Chip-On-Board (COB) LED design as, with its more densely packed construction, it should produce a more even light that avoids the multiple-shadow effects of standard, cheaper, LED lights. The quoted 56,000lx/1m figure, while still respectable, is however

far below the 96,300lx/1m we are told the AS600B can manage. So the trade-off for all the colour control is that we get just 58% of the brightness.

Those coloured LEDs have to go somewhere, I suppose, and a large number of the brighter white LEDs have been sacrificed to make way. Neewer also tells me that the glass cover that sits over the lamp, which is designed to soften the output of individual LEDs and to create even coverage, blocks about 35% of the light through its diffusion. It's another price to pay for a better quality of light that doesn't show multiple shadows or look harsh.

The addition of coloured LEDs, though, gives us a wider range of colour temperatures, allowing the warm end to reach 2500K (instead of 2700K) and the cool end to reach 7500K (instead of 6500K). Plus we get the green/magenta tuning that



The light is controlled using three buttons and a dial

Bluetooth connection to the excellent Neewer Studio app, that allows multiple lights to be dealt with at once. A new USB port allows firmware updates from a USB stick, but we can also do the job via the app – which is, frankly, a lot simpler.

Build and handling

In use, the greatest handling issue of this kit is its size and weight. The roller case that comes with the light is even bigger than that which the AS600B is supplied. But it is very good and extremely convenient for storing the light and for taking it on location.

The actual head and control block are the same size and weight as those of the AS600B: 510x235x155cm and 5kg for the light, and 32x19.5x12.5cm and 3.74kg for the controller.

However, once it's mounted on the light stand, it doesn't really matter how heavy or bulky it is. Neewer supplies a handy clamp that lets us mount the control unit to the centre column of a light stand too, so everything is in the same place. It keeps the controller off the ground, bringing the things we want to see to a working height.

It's all very nicely made too, and gives the impression it will last well, and may even survive a

is missing from the bi-colour heads.

In common with the other AS series models, the AS600C comes in two parts – the head and the control block. The head is literally just a box with a light and a fan inside, with a Bowens S-mount for modifiers and a large yoke for mounting it on a stand. The control block is where all the action happens, as it's from here we access all the features.

The block is powered from the wall, but it also has a pair of V-Mount adapters that allow V-lock batteries to be attached directly to two sides of the block. This battery option makes the light more portable, allowing us to use the head outside away from a mains power source. But it doesn't provide the same level of light output as mains electricity.

As well as the 2500-7500K colour temperature adjustments in CCT mode, Neewer offers us six approaches for getting colour out of the head. The basic mode, HSI, allows users to select the Hue they want, the Saturation level of that colour, and its Intensity. RGBCW mode lets us mix each of the LED colours individually, and XY mode can be used to pin-point specific areas of a colour space, which should make matching the colours of different lights a little more

accurate - to the eye at least.

Gel mode gives us access to a heap of gel effects from Lee and Rosco, and Source Mode uses a collection of pre-sets to match 17 standard lighting fixtures, such as halogen lamps, tungsten domestic bulbs, sunset etc.

Via the Neewer Studio app, we can use our smartphone camera to record the colour of any object we like and have the light match it. Finally, the FX mode offers 18

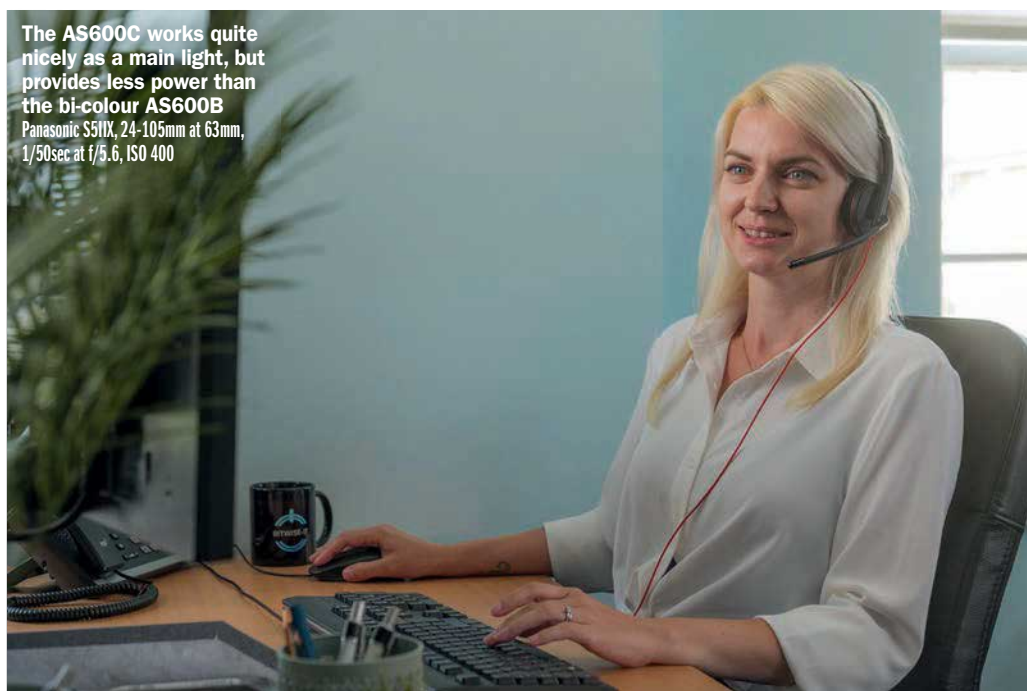
flicker-box effects, such as lightning, fireworks, gun fire etc.

When you find a combination of settings that you like, and would like to use again, there are 30 places in Favourites where they can be stored and recalled later.

The control unit features DMX in and out ports, as well as an Ethernet port that supports the Art-Net protocol for DMX control over regular Ethernet cabling. Further control can be had via

The AS600C works quite nicely as a main light, but provides less power than the bi-colour AS600B

Panasonic S5IIX, 24-105mm at 63mm, 1/50sec at f/5.6, ISO 400





A supplied clamp allows the control block to be mounted on a light stand

minor fall. The buttons press nicely and the main dial turns with pleasant clicks and presses when we want to make a selection.

So we can keep track of menus and selections, there's a decent sized display on top of the control unit, which is bright enough to see easily even when used outside. Perhaps the next stage would be to make this screen touch-sensitive, to cut down the number of presses and turns we need to get from one place to another.

Despite the number of options available, and how many new ones come into play when a bi-colour head becomes a RGB head, the whole thing is pretty simple to use and the menu clearly laid-out. As much as apps are usually a faff to use, the best way to control this head is actually via the Neewer Studio app. It connects quickly, every time, and is convenient to use.

Even heavy softboxes can be

attached to the Bowens mount without the whole light angling down, as the clamps holding the head to its yoke are strong and do their job well. I fitted a 180cm umbrella and then a 120cm softbox to the head and found the weight didn't trouble it at all. Big lights attract big modifiers, so this is important.

In use

I really enjoy using these AS series heads. I like the way they set up, the way they are straightforward to use, and especially the amount of light they put out. They do generate some heat, but they get rid of it quickly, and they don't remain too hot to put away again at the end of the shoot without a lengthy delay. I turn them off first and pack them away last, by which time they are cool enough.

It's great to have the option of so many colours in this AS600C, but the price of this functionality is a general loss of brightness.

While the AS600B gives me $f/11$ at $1/125\text{sec}$, 2m and ISO 100 when set to 5500K, this model can only manage $f/5.6$. If you thought a 600W lamp will give a set amount of light, think again. That's just the power going in, not the light coming out.

With the solid colours playing the brightness drops again, depending on the colour, so we can expect anything from $f/1.4$ and $5/10\text{th}$ to $f/4$ when the HSI, Gel or XY modes are throwing out hues – again at 2m and $1/125\text{sec}$ at ISO 100. As usual with RGB lights, maximum output comes in CCT mode with the temperature set to daylight – or around 5500K.

Of course, $f/1.4$ $5/10\text{th}$ at ISO 100 translates to $f/4$ $5/10\text{th}$ at ISO 800, which is closer to a normal operating aperture. But remember too that when in colour mode this light will likely be working the background or as a funky fill to a main light running in daylight mode, so it doesn't necessarily need to be as bright as a main light. The drop in power across the whole set of lighting modes though is certainly something to consider.

Colour-wise I found the Neewer AS600C to be pretty accurate in the CCT modes, with very little, if any, of that GM correction needed. As usual, when used as the main light a custom white balance will inevitably deliver the right colours. But even without one, only the slightest red shift is needed to correct the native colours here.



Verdict

Amateur Photographer
Recommended
★★★★

Although disappointing on paper, the light lost for

the sake of having RGB output isn't quite so bad in practice. Before I'd run my exposure tests on the AS600C, I'd taken it out on a job and used it as the main light. Firing through a softbox with secondary diffusion, and then an additional diffuser panel between the light and the subject's face, I was quite happy with $f/4$ at ISO 400. However, the $1/80\text{sec}$ shutter speed meant I had to ask the sitters to remain still. Had I used the AS600B instead, I could have selected a much safer shutter speed around $1/125\text{sec}$.

Later, with the additional diffuser out of the way, I got $f/5.6$ with the same settings. Then when I used it to light a whole room, with the Neewer CB300C as the main light, it gave me a good-enough $f/4$.

The conclusion, then, is that if you are looking for a main light, the AS600B is the one to go for. But if you need a coloured light for the background, or to add a splash of colour to the subject, then the AS600C is your answer. It is definitely for the colour you'd buy this light.

By my measurements, the Neewer CB300C is only $4/10$ – $8/10\text{th}$ of a stop behind this light, and costs so much less you could buy three and still have change. But the AS600C uses a more diffused glass over the lamp to create a light that needs less softening and which is distributed more evenly. It will also give you DMX control, a more solid yoke and the option of battery power. Which of the two heads you need will be a question for your priorities.

For and against

- ✚ A nice light to use
- ✚ Lots of colour control options
- ✚ Mains and battery power
- ✚ Wide range of DMX control
- ✖ Dramatic loss of power over the bi-colour AS600B
- ✖ Big and heavy kit



There's a colour screen, but it's not touch-sensitive



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Tamron's latest 90mm f/2.8 gives true macro at a tempting price
Nikon Z8, 1/125sec at f/9, ISO 500



Tamron 90mm F/2.8 Di III Macro VXD

This affordable macro lens promises a proper 1:1 magnification and excellent image quality, so is it worth a closer look? **Kingsley Singleton** finds out.



Tamron has a very strong track record in making short telephoto macro lenses, having produced multiple 90mm versions, firstly f/2.5 models from the late 1970s, before moving to f/2.8 iterations from the mid 90s. This culminated in 2004's legendary SP AF 90mm F/2.8 Di which,

if you had a DSLR and a yearning to shoot closeups at the time, was likely to be near the top of your wish list. It was produced for all major mounts. A new internal-focus, optically-stabilised design appeared in 2012, which was further updated and improved in 2016.

This latest model was

announced in late 2024 and is specially designed for full-frame mirrorless. At £549, it's notably more affordable than other similar lenses such as the Sigma 105mm F2.8 DG DN Macro, let alone the camera makers' own macro lenses. It's available for both Sony E and Nikon Z mount bodies; I tested it on a Nikon Z8.

Features

At 90mm, the lens sits in the middle of the traditional range of options. This focal length is preferred by many photographers as it gives a decent working distance, meaning you're less likely to disturb the subject, and can more easily fit light in between it and the lens.



Blurred backgrounds are
beautifully rendered
Nikon Z8, 1/160sec at f/5, ISO 320



➤ The longer focal length also means it's easier to isolate the subject. But most importantly, this is a true macro lens, capable of 1:1 magnification, which is to say the image is projected at life size onto the sensor.

The lens has a construction of 15 elements in 12 groups, four of which are Low Dispersion lenses to suppress aberrations. It also boasts Tamron's Broad-Band Anti-Reflection Generation 2 (BBAR-G2) coating to fight off ghosting and flare. There's an unusual 12-bladed aperture,

which should give more circular and soft bokeh when shooting wide open, while also creating 12-pointed sunstars at the smallest apertures. It uses Tamron's 'VXD' autofocus system, a frictionless, electromagnetic drive that replaces traditional mechanical gears, so should be near-silent and highly responsive. The minimum distance is 23cm, and there the greatest magnification is achieved.

Unlike its predecessor, the lens has no optical stabilisation, which is likely due to the prevalence of

in-body image stabilisation in modern mirrorless cameras, although a few models still lack it. This is worth bearing in mind, as along with subject movement, camera shake is massively exaggerated in macro frames.

It has an f/2.8 maximum aperture, giving a decent amount of light gathering power. However in exposure terms, this falls to an effective f/5.6 at the 1:1 magnification setting, something that happens with all regular macro models.

The lens has a three-stage focus limiter and a customisable focus button. However, there's no physical aperture ring, AF/MF switch or separate control dial on the barrel. The lens claims weather sealing and there's an obvious rubber grommet around the rear element, while it takes 67mm filters and comes with a large lens hood, including a port for controlling filter position.

Build & handling

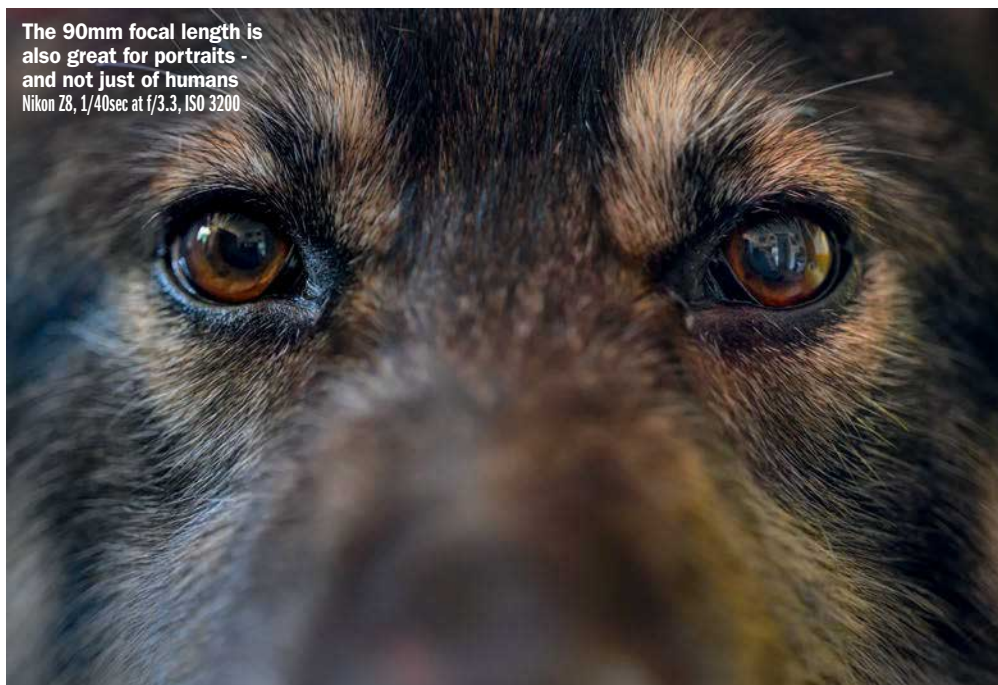
The Tamron 90mm F/2.8 Di III Macro VXD performed very nicely in terms of handling. At 640g in weight and 127mm long, it's not an unusually small or light lens,

but it balanced nicely with my Z8 body and didn't feel front heavy on a tripod either. A third-party lens collar can be added fairly cheaply if you're going to add a ring light or similar. But this is the preserve of macro enthusiasts and product photography professionals, and unlikely to concern everyday still-life and nature fans like me.

The minimum focus of 23cm is measured from the camera's sensor, which means that the subject can be as little as 9cm in front of the lens. So working distance isn't huge, and practically, when the hood is fitted, this falls to about 1.5cm, close enough to shade or startle the subject. But in real world macro situations you are not always seeking the minimum focus distance, and the lens does not physically extend when focusing, so there is no additional risk there.

The use of a sliding port in the hood is welcome, though the one time I could have used a polariser I'd left it at home! I did test the ease of use however and rotating a bezel was fuss-free. The hood reverses neatly over the body





The 90mm focal length is also great for portraits - and not just of humans
Nikon Z8, 1/40sec at f/3.3, ISO 3200

when not in use without adding much width, though it's worth noting the manual focus ring is rendered inaccessible that way.

The f/2.8 maximum does help freeze subject movement and camera shake, offsetting somewhat the lack of image stabilisation. More stability would be welcome, but thanks to the camera's IBIS, at no point did I believe I lost shots to camera shake. Blur is more likely due to low shutter speed or poor handling, or distance changes leading to missed focus.

I never got the lens wet enough to test its weather sealing. But I did feel the need to add a cheap rubber cover to the USB-C port cover, mainly to stop the ingress of husky fluff, which is the bane of many of my electronic devices.

Focusing

The VXD mechanism gave sprightly results in testing and if the correct focus point wasn't picked up immediately, the manual focus ring can be used to override it and bring roughly the right range into play. While it didn't feel quite as snappy as the Tamron 35-100mm I recently tested, it was still fast, going from near to far in under half a second. In conjunction with the

focus limiter, it's an easy lens to lock on.

Throughout my testing, I used several methods of focusing, from on-the-hoof methods like using Continuous AF and keeping the AF point on the subject, to fastidious manual focusing from a tripod with enlarged previews. All worked excellently, and although there was the slightest audible grunt when the VXD motor engaged, it was by no means alarming.

Focus breathing can be important for more serious macro fans who use stacking techniques, as the frames can then need cropping. Although it was noticeable across large distances, it didn't seem to be a problem when stacking a centimeter or so, which is how most people will use it.

If you've read a 90mm macro lens review before, you'll know that this is the point I'm contractually obliged to say that this is also a good portrait option. And it is, albeit slower to focus and with less ability to blur backgrounds than larger-aperture 85mm primes. But it had no problem with eye-AF on the Z8.

When manual focusing, the ring's resistance is on the lighter side, but not so much that it's inaccurate. Out of the box it was set up as non-linear, so it's more

precise, with slower turns meaning the distance shifts more gradually. This and the focus button can be customised with the Tamron Lens Utility.

Image quality

Even at f/2.8, the lens is very sharp, improving through to f/3.5, while corner-to-corner resolution was best around f/4 through to f/5.6, I thought. Results in my testing were slightly crisper away from the very minimum focus, but despite that I wouldn't hesitate to use the lens there, as it's still very impressive. There is also very little colour fringing, even when shooting against high-contrast subjects, while flare is exceptionally well handled if you can't shoot in the shade, as is usually better for macro.

Bokeh was good too. Points of light are round and fairly flat until the frame edges, and while backgrounds are possibly a little fussy when focusing further off, they are beautifully smooth close up. Vignetting is noticeable wide open, but seemed to be more prevalent focusing towards infinity, so isn't an issue for most subjects, and it only extended to around a stop with the profile switched on. Field curvature seemed to be very low, so it's ideal for flat subjects.



Verdict

I am by no means a regular macro shooter – or a particularly good one! – but I do take great enjoyment from using such lenses. They provide a tremendous sense of discovery, and the challenges that macro photography brings in terms of technique can make results even more satisfying. That said, I've never been moved to actually buy a dedicated macro lens, but the Tamron 90mm F/2.8 Di III Macro VXD is well placed to change that. It has impressive sharpness with very few optical flaws, handles nicely, focuses quickly and is significantly cheaper than its competitors. Only the lack of stabilisation really lets it down, but of course this only accounts for camera shake, not subject movement.

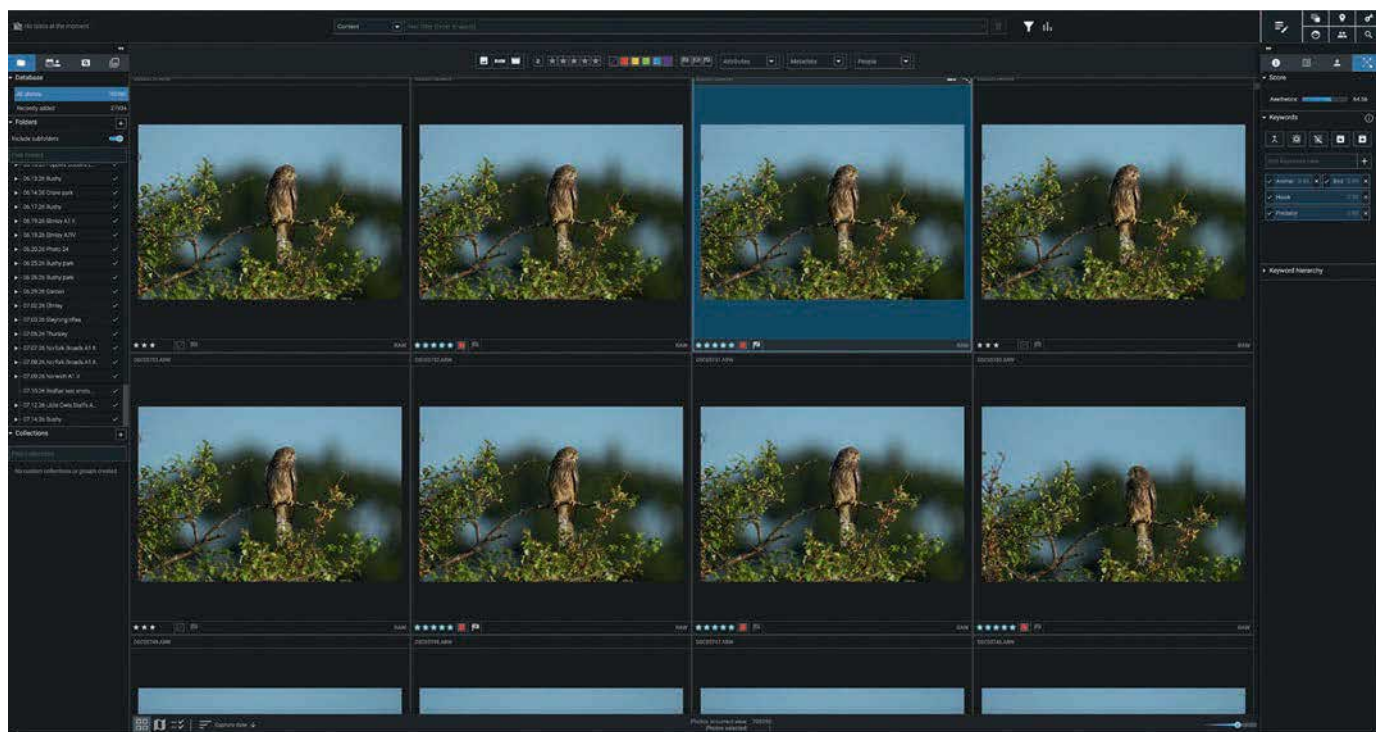
Some of the benefits of this lens are aided by it being native to mirrorless bodies. For instance, the speed of focusing from the camera and lens means you can comfortably use modes like continuous, tracking or subject-detection AF and expect to keep the critical point in focus even working handheld, which was a lot tougher with a DSLR. Using a body with IBIS is also important, but most now offer it. These may not be facets unique to this lens, but when combined with its various strengths, they do make the process easier and results better, and all at a decidedly reasonable price.

Data file

Price £549	Length 126.5mm
Filter Diameter 67mm	Diameter 79.2mm
Lens Elements 15	Weight 630g (Sony); 640g (Nikon)
Groups 12	Lens Mount Sony E; Nikon Z
Diaphragm blades 12	Included accessories Caps, hood
Aperture f/2.8 - f/16	
Min focus 23cm	



Amateur Photographer
Recommended
★★★★★



Excire Foto 2027

Keeping on top of your photographic output can be challenging and it takes a great deal of work to catalogue, keyword and rate images. **Will Cheung** checks out a program that could give your workflow a massive boost

Enthusiast photographers shoot lots of pictures because it's their passion; professionals do it because they are paid. Either way, at the end of the day the results need to be looked at, sorted and rated while the also rans, duff shots and duplicates have to be identified and discarded. It all takes time and one thing is for certain: sitting in front of a computer dealing with the aftermath of a photo shoot is not as much fun as being behind the camera.

Therefore, anything that can lessen the tedium of organising and sorting thousands of images is very welcome and Excire Foto 2027 is a software solution with the potential to do exactly that. It has no image editing skills, but it does have powerful and versatile AI-powered technology to manage

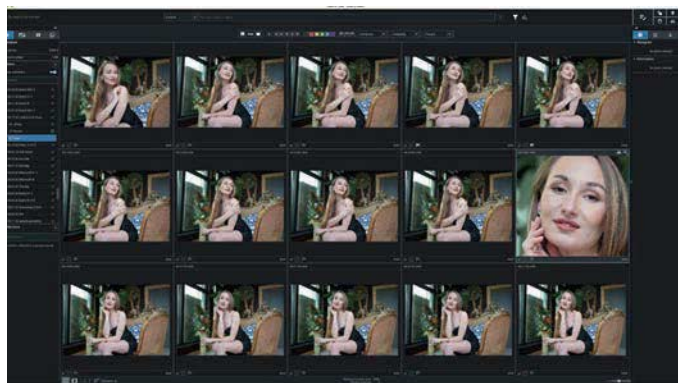
the biggest photo and video collections, and it works locally so there's no privacy risk.

Excire is a software brand specialising in AI-driven image management apps. The recently launched Excire Foto 2027 is a standalone image management app that uses the same technology as the award-winning Excire Foto 2025, but has gained extra features and gives a better user experience. If you're an Adobe Lightroom Classic user, your preference might be for Excire Search 2026, which works as a Lightroom plug-in and has broadly the same features as its brothers.

Here, our focus is on Excire Foto 2027, which is available for Mac and Windows at the discounted launch price of £199 for an outright purchase. There's no subscription option.

Starting off

Open Foto 2027, and you're presented with an easy-to-navigate interface. It's dominated by a large central area where images can be viewed in a gallery, which can be zoomed in for



The highlights of the Excire Foto 2027 interface are the new filter bar and timeline graph that run across the top. Tucked away in the bottom left corner are the buttons for the Map view and Survey view modes

At a glance

£199 Launch price

£229 Standard price

- Mac and Windows compatible
- AI-assisted culling
- Powerful Find tools – Text prompt, Text recognition, People, Face, Keyword, GPS
- Automatic AI keywording
- AI-powered aesthetic rating
- AI runs locally
- Free trial available



Skimming through and rating large previews in Excire Foto 2027 is a breeze. It's fast and there's no time wasted waiting for images to refresh and sharpen. Furthermore, it doesn't slow up even with a large database, which in this test comprised over 303,000 images, mostly 45MP and 50MP raws

bigger thumbnails or shown singly. One big handling benefit of Foto 2027 (and Foto 2025) is its speed, you can view and rate large images very quickly. There's no lag waiting for an image to refresh before you can make an assessment.

Every image must be initialised by Excire first and that creates a database, so you need a fast hard drive with plenty of extra capacity for future images. My 303,000 images created a 104GB database.

Kick off the process by going to File>Open database>Choose new folder for database. For my image catalogues I use a 4TB NVMe SSD in a 40Gbps enclosure, so I used that. This HD was connected with Thunderbolt 4 cable to a 32GB RAM Mac Studio

with a M2 Max Chip running the latest Tahoe OS.

To add folders to Excire use the File drop-down menu or use the '+' in the Folders palette. During import, the app creates previews, analyses images, adds keywords and aesthetically rates your images. Everything is done locally, so no files or data are uploaded to a remote server, which means no privacy risk.

Given the processes that Excire runs, you won't be surprised to hear that it takes time. Excire suggests importing big image collections overnight and that is good advice. I started with a year's worth of work which was 183,520 image files, mostly high res raw files but also large DNGs (including some of around 500GB), TIFs and JPEGs. This

took 17 hours, 22 minutes and 35 seconds according to the Status Report, although to be fair, I was using the computer for other tasks for much of that time. The good news is that you only need to initialise your work once, and uploading fresh shoots is much quicker. For example, a day's shoot of 8376 shots was processed in 20 minutes 33 seconds.

Key functions

During initialisation, Excire automatically adds keywords and an Aesthetics rating out of 100 to your images and you can check these by clicking on the Excire logo on the right side of the interface.

How many keywords are added and in how much detail varies

depending on the image.

Of course, you can add your own keywords too. In the accompanying screenshot (below left) featuring a man walking through the City of London at night, we have a good range of keywords including City, Skyscraper and Frontal Face. For a picture of a heron standing in a lake (left) the keywords were Animal and Bird, while for a kestrel I also got Hawk and Predator.

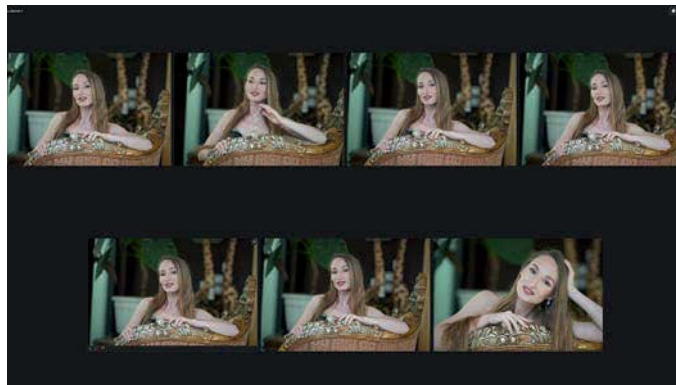
Generally, the auto keywording is more effective with people pictures, and while you get general keywords, with nature you don't get specific species or location details with landscapes. Famous spots, however, do seem to be recognised so a photo of Big Ben was correctly identified together with keywords Tower, Travel, Clock, City, Sight, Building and Architecture. Excire's AI-driven keywording skills are worth having and they are useful, especially if, like me, you're not a committed keyworder.

Whether the app's Aesthetics rating skills is useful is a matter of opinion. It's useful if you need to quickly pick the best images from a shoot, according to Excire's judgement. But if you took time to look at your photos critically, your opinion is likely to differ from Excire's. Of course, a photo's aesthetics is a subjective matter, so it doesn't mean Excire's Aesthetics rating are not worth using.

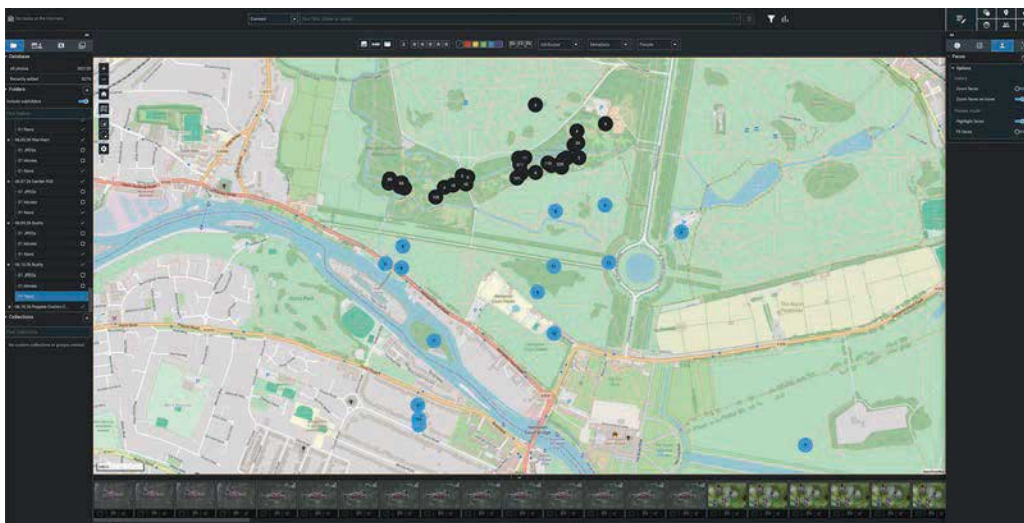
Map view is a new function and to use this you need photos with GPS co-ordinates, whether you add them at the time of shooting or afterwards.



This image of a man walking through the City of London received a selection of useful keywords and a decent Aesthetics score of 61.84 out of 100



Survey view presents the selected images against a plain black background, and previews get bigger as images are deselected



In Map view, each dot shows how many images were taken at that spot and if you click on that dot the images appear as thumbnails along the bottom. The black GPS dots are pretty accurate but those highlighted in blue are not correct. Excire can only use the data that it gets from the image file



Using the Text in photos tool I searched for images featuring the word 'London'. In images where the word is found it's highlighted in yellow. It's interesting in this scene that although the tool did its job it didn't highlight every 'London'

For travel, press and landscape photographers this level of detail is important.

Apart from my phone photos, I didn't have any raws with GPS data. So for this test, I set up the Sony Creator app on my phone to record GPS details and did a few photo shoots at local locations.

Map view works well and being able to click on each location and see the images shot at that spot is really cool. Obviously how

accurate the feature is depends on the GPS information. On a shoot in London's Bushy Park, the GPS was accurate enough for captioning purposes. But when I took a seriously deep dive into the map, I noticed it had marked some shots as taken south of the river Thames, which wasn't the case. This is not Excire's issue, as it just uses data from the image file. To prove this, I imported the same images into

Lightroom and checked its map function, and the same errors occurred. So this was an issue with the GPS data.

From an Excire Foto 2027 perspective, the Map view feature is a neat arrival. Equally cool is Survey view, which shows just images against a black background. Being able to view from one to a lot of images in such an uncluttered environment is excellent. On my 32in screen, I selected 200 files and Survey view showed 103 individual images with the remainder off-screen waiting to make an appearance as those on show were deselected.

The only extra I would have liked is a way to rate images with a single key stroke. Hover in the top right corner and an 'X' appears so you can remove the image from Survey view with a single click, but to star or colour rate you have to click on the bottom left corner, and a sub-menu appears where you do the rating.

Image searching skills

The search tools in Excire Foto 2027 are very powerful. The ability to search by GPS, duplicates, similar images, keywords, faces, and people were present in Foto 2025, and they showed themselves to be very effective.

My favourite search tool was Find by text prompt. I loved being able to type in a description of what you're looking for, and the software does a great job at finding it. Better still, if you're looking for images to depict a mood, emotion or people performing a specific activity, Excire coped with that too.

Searches using the find tools can be refined. You can put a limit on the number of images you want the software to find, or you can ask it to be Strict or Loose in its search, with a bias towards the former being recommended.

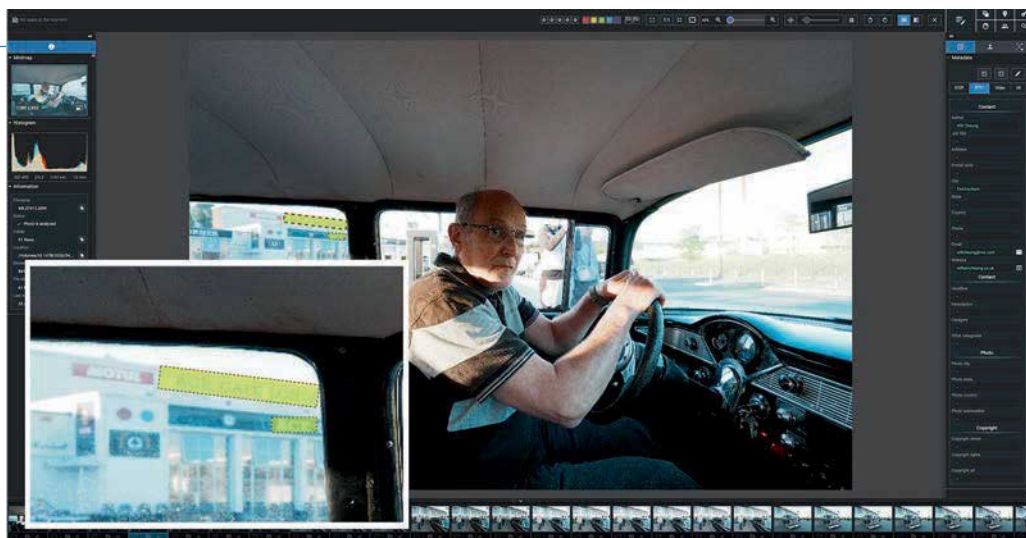
AI text recognition is the new talent in Excire Foto 2027, and it worked fine and it's fast too. The option is available in the Find by text prompt or in the top context bar which has the options of searching for Content, Text in photos or Metadata.

What impressed was that even small words in the scene were found, although in the London example shown here not every 'London' in the scene was highlighted. In another image found in the same search I was impressed that Excire even managed to find shots where the first 'n' in London was flipped in a retailer's logo.

In the other example shown here was a shot of my friend Tony in his car outside Ace Café. Excire still found the word 'Ace' even though in the original picture it was small and overexposed. If you have a need for this feature, I think you will be pleased with its effectiveness.



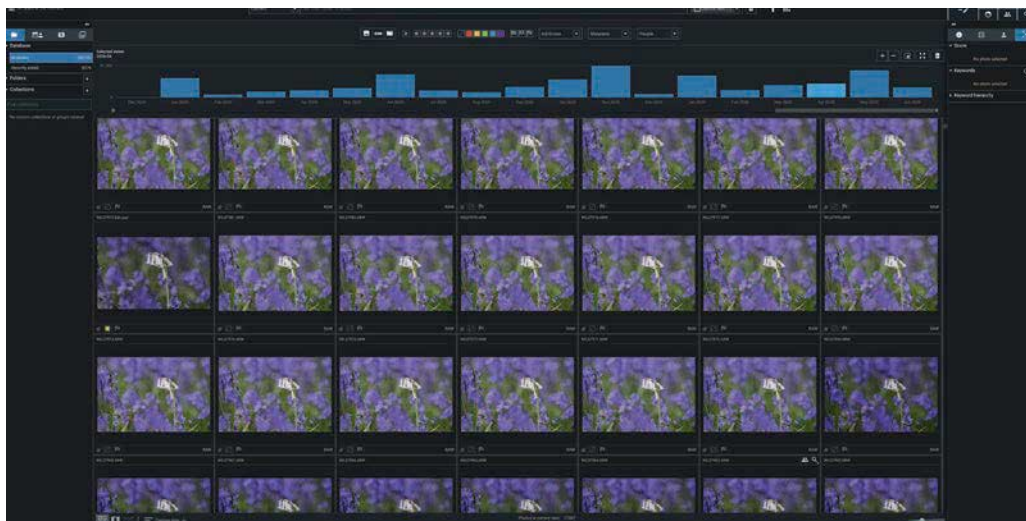
'I loved being able to type in a description of what you're looking for, and the software does a great job at finding it.'



The word 'Ace' in this photo was small and overexposed but Excire's Text in photos tool found it. The inset shows the how tiny and how bright the word was



You can check sharpness in Excire 2027 with the new focus peaking mask (the red lines on the right image) and it's available in single image preview mode. The Peaking Mask threshold can be adjusted to suit your taste



New in Excire Foto 2027 is the image timeline, the blue graph along the top of the interface, which you can zoom in and out of. Here you can view your images according to their capture date

Verdict

I tested Excire Foto 2025 earlier in the year I was impressed. Excire 2027 is a step on from its predecessor (which remains available at a lower price) with several worthwhile new features.

AI text recognition worked well and is a practical search parameter that photographers of many genres will find handy. If you are looking for a location, say a particular street, a brand or sponsor name, this tool could save you time. I liked Map view, too, and while I am not going to revisit existing files to add GPS data, I will try to exploit this feature on future trips.

Survey view was also a hit with me and I liked being able to view a selection of images in a calm viewing environment that I could funnel down quickly. I also liked the timeline and being able to see shots in gallery view from a month and even single days.

Excire Foto 2027 is a big investment, even at its launch price of £199. It won't suit everyone but if you're reasonably loose and free with your shutter finger and want to keep track of your photos and videos, this software will appeal.

For those who shoot a lot, whether for pleasure or professionally, Excire Foto 2027 has a lot going for it. It's a powerful and very capable image management software and it's easy to use too. It's not cheap but it's a sound investment and highly recommended for productive image makers. At the very least, you should try the trial version to check out its potential.

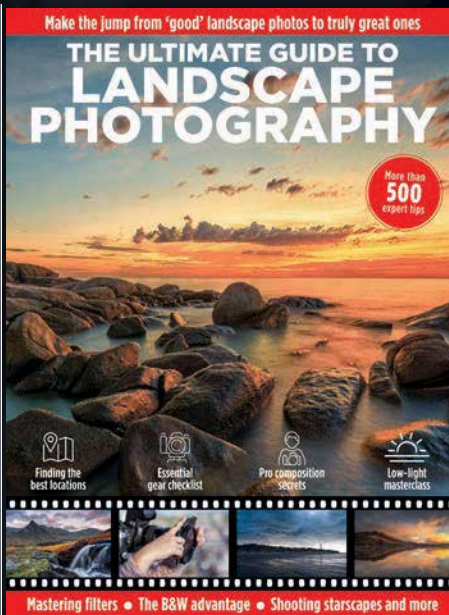
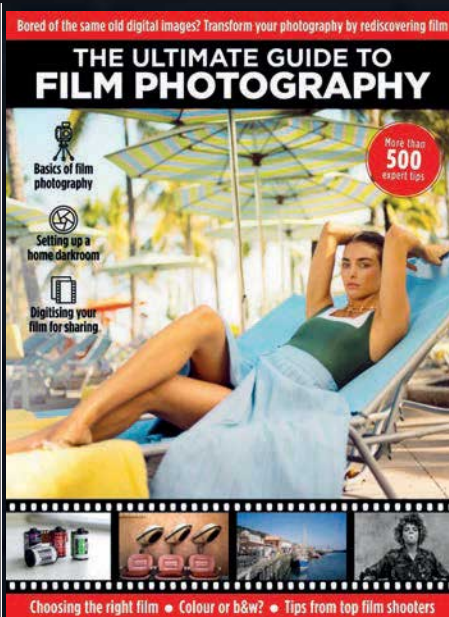
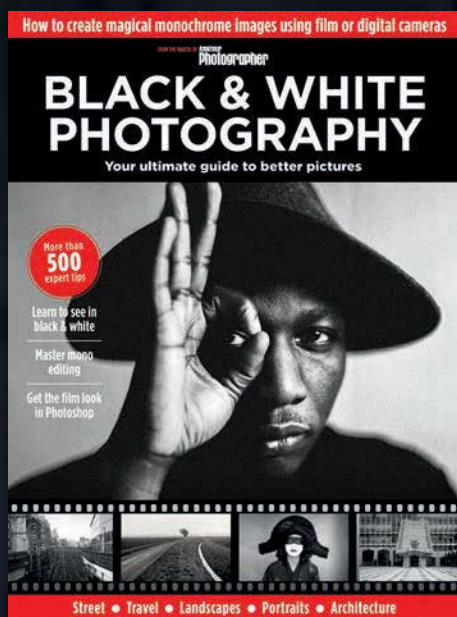
Amateur Photographer
Recommended
★★★★★

For and against

- ✚ Skimming through and rating images is very fast
- ✚ New features such as Map view and Survey view work well
- ✚ Search skills are impressive
- ✚ Particularly useful for people photographers
- ✖ High price
- ✖ You still need a photo-editing app

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SCAN ME

Freewell The Real Multi Tripod - 5 in 1

Andy Westlake tries out a remarkably versatile tripod kit

● £268 ● freewellgear.com

Freewell's 5-in-1 Multi Tripod is a real Swiss army knife of a design. It's a full-size tripod that can convert to a table-top tripod, a monopod, a stand, and even trekking poles. Clearly the idea is that one kit can do everything you need.

In normal use, the tripod employs four-section carbon-fibre legs with twist locks. Each leg can be set independently to three different angles via a push-button at the top, including practically flat. To maintain a slimline form when folded, the aluminium centre column uses a thin triangular design. Unscrewing the small weight hook reveals a hex key that allows you to split the column for low-level shooting or table-top use. A hefty ballhead is included, with a large locking lever that provides a good degree of friction control. Both the main ball and the Arca-Swiss camera clamp pan smoothly.

All three legs can be removed and replaced with a set of short, two-section carbon-fibre legs to make a table-top tripod. You can also screw the head onto one of the legs to form a monopod, although you'll need to add the centre column to raise the camera to eye level. Fitting one of the legs between the table-top tripod and the head creates a stand about 1.5m tall. You can even create a pair of trekking poles from the two legs that have foam grips, by transferring their rubber feet onto their tops.

Everything feels well-made and fits together nicely. The controls are all captive, meaning they won't fall out and get lost. The tripod feels very sturdy when the centre column is lowered, but it gets increasingly less stable the further it's raised. I'd avoid extending the column the last couple of inches, and hang something off the bottom whenever possible for increased stability. It's also important to use a remote release or self-timer.

With this in mind, I found the tripod was perfectly capable of holding my Sony A7R V and 100-400mm zoom. It was also sturdy enough to give good results shooting pixel-shift multi-shot mode with the Leica SL3-P, which demands zero movement.

Verdict

Freewell's Multi-Tripod kit is a clever design with a wealth of useful features. It works well too, just as long as you don't extend the centre column too far. Also keep in mind that you can, of course, only use it in one mode at any given time.



Feet

Unscrewing the chunky rubber feet reveals a set of spikes

Accessories

There's a pair of 1/4in threads on the central spider for attaching accessories via magic arms

Camera plate

The Arca-Swiss camera plate incorporates a cleverly designed smartphone holder

Amateur Photographer
Recommended
★★★★★

Hook

The small weight hook unscrews to reveal a hex key for splitting the centre column. It can be replaced by a carabiner clip

At a glance

- 4-section carbon-fibre legs
- 157cm maximum height
- 56cm folded length
- 17.5cm minimum height
- 1.65kg weight
- 20kg rated load

KIT CONTENTS

A nylon carry case is included, with a large internal pocket that will hold the table-top leg set, plus the instructions and supplied tools. It has both carry-handles and a detachable shoulder strap. You also get a carabiner clip that can be used in place of the weight hook.



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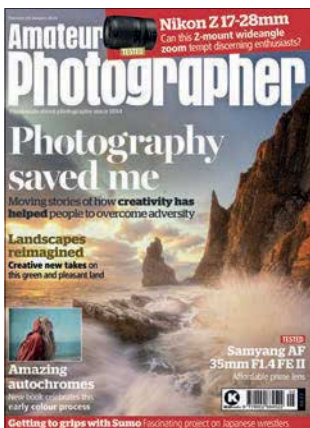
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or scan me!



Peak Design Travel Backpack 2-in-1 40L

Andy Westlake tries out a clever travel backpack that can be used for carrying your camera kit

- £349.99; £449.98 Photo Bundle
- peakdesign.com

There's any number of camera backpacks available that will do a fine job of carrying and protecting your kit. But what caught my attention about Peak Design's latest travel backpack is that it provides something a bit different. It's a multi-purpose modular design that, when used with the firm's Camera Cubes, provides a rugged, secure and highly versatile way of transporting your kit.

That '2-in-1' in the name alludes to the fact that this is actually a pair of backpacks, a 34L Base Pack and a 16L Day Pack. These can be used either individually or zipped together to form a larger bag. Both feature stretchy external side pockets, hidden AirTag holders, and internal pockets for 16in laptops; the base pack can carry a 13in tablet, too. The base pack opens by unzipping its entire back panel, while the daypack is accessed from the top.

The Large Camera Cube that comes in the Photo Bundle occupies the entirety of the base pack, and can be clipped in place so it won't fall out. It'll hold one or two camera bodies plus five or six lenses, including large telephotos. Alternatively, you could use a smaller camera cube and fill the remaining space with other items. It's a very flexible design.

It's important to note that there's no way of accessing your camera without unzipping the back panel, and the camera cube can be zipped shut, too. That's great for security, but it does mean you can't really use this bag to shoot from on the move.

Like all Peak Design products, the 2-in-1 Travel Backpack is beautifully made from high quality materials, with lots of neat touches. The zips are all waterproof, and the base pack has an array of loops for carrying items externally via a supplied pair of straps. There's a good array of pockets for organising small personal items, too. Its harness is especially well designed, with a belt that can be removed when you don't need it, and shoulder straps that clip magnetically to the back, so they don't flap around. Alternatively, both can be tucked away neatly into the back panel.

Verdict

This is a top-quality bag that stands out for the extra versatility – not to mention capacity – of its two-part design. Just don't buy it if you need quick access to your camera when walking around.

Airtags

Both bags include hidden Airtag pockets to help keep track of your possessions

Side pockets

These will hold such things as a water bottle, umbrella, on the main bag only, a tripod

Bundles

You can buy the bag in a Photo Bundle with a PD Large Camera Cube, or a Tech Bundle with a Tech Pouch and Wash Pouch

Handles

There are grab handles on the back and all four sides to aid handling while travelling

Amateur Photographer Recommended
★★★★★

At a glance

- 34L base pack + 16L daypack
- 55.5 x 33 x 21cm (external)
- Holds 16in laptop and 13in tablet
- Comes in Black, Sage or Stone

CARRY-ON FRIENDLY?

Be aware that when used together, the bags can get large and heavy. Peak Design quotes a combined thickness of 21cm, but filled right up, that can easily balloon to 30cm. For flying, the Base Pack should fit in an overhead locker, but the Day Pack may need to go under-seat.



Cowboy cameras

John Wade rides into town with two unusual snapshot cameras

LAUNCHED 1949 and 1950

PRICE AT LAUNCH about £1 (both)

GUIDE PRICE NOW Roy Rogers, £25-30; Hopalong Cassidy, £60-80

Back in the 1950s, cowboys were a big favourite when it came to films and television. Remember High Noon, The Searchers, Shane, Gunfight at the OK Corral, 3:10 to Yuma, Rio Bravo, Gunsmoke, The Lone Ranger, Have Gun Will Travel, Wagon Train, Cheyenne, Hopalong Cassidy... and many more? With cowboys being a favourite with children, it was inevitable that at least two of their heroes would be used to help camera manufacturers persuade parents to buy snapshot cameras for their kids.

Roy Rogers, also known as 'the singing cowboy', appeared along with his horse Trigger, on the metal faceplate of a small box camera made by the Herbert George Company in Chicago. The rest of the body is made of Bakelite with fixed shutter speed, aperture and focus. It has a small eye-level viewfinder on the



Made in Chicago: the Hopalong Cassidy and Roy Rogers cowboy cameras

top of the body and shoots 12 6x6cm pictures on 620 roll film. The same company made a Davy Crockett camera, but these are rarely seen and now very rare.

A year after Roy Rogers galloped onto the front of his camera, rival Chicago company Galter Products produced the now rarer and more valuable Hopalong Cassidy camera, again with a Bakelite body and metal faceplate. Resplendent on this is not only Hopalong on his horse, but also a portrait of William Boyd, the actor who played the cowboy. A small waist-level

viewfinder sits on top of the body. A choice of time or instantaneous exposures can be selected, otherwise shutter, aperture and focus are all fixed. The camera shoots eight 6x9cm exposures on 120 roll film. A flashgun depicting the cowboy hero was also available.

From day one, these were little more than cheap snapshot cameras. But today, certain types of collectors clamour for them. If you doubt that, look at the launch and current quoted prices above.

What's good Interesting illustrations that show cultural aspects of social history.

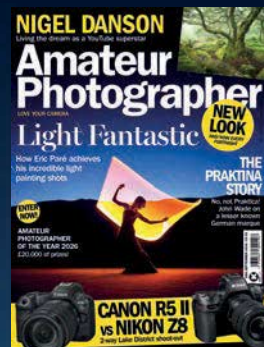
What's bad Basic lack of controls means they are of little use to the user.



How the Hopalong Cassidy camera was loaded

The flashgun specially made for the Hopalong Cassidy camera

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RF 24-105mm F4-7.1 IS STM
RF 70-200mm F2.8 L IS USM
RF 70-200mm F4 L IS USM
Fujifilm X-A20 + 15-45mm XC
X-A7 Body + 15-45mm
X-H1 Body Only
X-Pro1 Body Only
X-T2 Body + VPB-XT2 Vertical Grip
X-T30 II Body Only - Black
X-T30 II Body Only + Handgrip
X-T5 Body Only - Silver
X-T50 Body Only - Silver
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150-600mm F5.6-8 R LM OIS WR XF
16-55mm F2.8 R LM WR XF
18-55mm F2.8-4 R LM OIS XF
27mm F2.8 R WR XF - Black
30mm F2.8 R LM WR XF Macro
35mm F2 XF WR - Black
50mm F1.0 XF R WR - Black
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24-90mm F2.8-4 Asph Vario-Elmarit SL
35mm F2 Asph SL
60mm F2.8 Asph(Silver) Apo Macro TL
90-280mm F2.8-4 Apo Vario-Elmarit SL
Panasonic 70-200mm F4 OIS Pro S
Sigma 17mm F4 DG DN C - L
105mm F1.4 DG HSM Art - L Mount
28-70mm F2.8 DG DN C - L
2x Tele Converter TC-2011 - L Mount
50mm F2 DG DN C - L
56mm F1.4 DC DN C - L
65mm F2 DG DN C - L
Nikon Z8 Body Only
Z6 II Body - Black
Z8 Body Only
Z8 Body Only
40mm F2 Z
800mm F6.3 VR S Z
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E++	£1,849	£1,799	OM-5 Mark II Body Only	Mint-	£839	£829	90mm F2.5 M Black 6bit	E+	£599	£549	
E+	£1,749	£1,699	12-40mm F2.8 M.Zuiko Pro II	Mint-	£689	£649	90mm f2.8 Chrome (Visoflex)	E++	£249	£199	
E++	£2,069	£1,949	30mm F2.8 DN A - Black - Micro 4/3rds	E++	£129	£119	90mm F2.8 M Black	E+	£449	£399	
E++	£1,089	£989	24mm F2.8 Anamorphic (M4/3rds)	Mint-	£299	£279	90mm F2.8 M Chrome	E++	£899	£789	
E++	£1,379	£1,349	Sony Alpha A6500 Body Only	E++	£499	£489	90mm F2.8 Tele Elmarit M Black	E+	£399	£349	
E+	£1,699	£1,649	Alpha A7 II Body Only	E+	£399	£369	135mm F2.8 M Black	E+	£279	£249	
E++	£299	£279	Alpha A7 IV Body Only	E++	£449	£419	135mm F2.8 M Black	E+	£299	£249	
Mint-	£1,879	£1,799	Alpha A7C Body Only	E++	£1,449	£1,429	Minolta 28mm f2.8 M Rokkor	E+	£399	£349	
Mint-	£1,179	£1,149	Alpha A7R IV Body Only	E++	£859	£829	90mm F4 M Rokkor	E+	£269	£249	
E++	£329	£299	14mm F2.8 AF FE - Sony E	Mint-	£1,349	£1,329	Vogtlander 35mm F1.4 VM MC II	Mint-	£449	£399	
E++	£429	£399	20mm F1.8 ED AS UMC FE - Sony E	Mint-	£349	£299	40mm F1.2 VM Nokton Asph	E++	£449	£419	
E++	£459	£439	16-28mm F2.8 DG DN C -Sony E	E++	£179	£159	40mm F1.4 VM Nokton SC	E++	£289	£269	
E++	£379	£349	35mm F1.2 DG DN Art - Sony E	E++	£629	£609	Zeiss 21mm F2.8 Biogon ZM - Silver	E+	£549	£449	
E+	£429	£399	85mm F1.4 DG HSM Art - Sony E	Mint-	£749	£659	21mm F2.8 ZM - Black	E++	£549	£519	
E++	£679	£649	16-35mm F2.8 G Master FE	E++	£599	£549	25mm F2.8 Biogon ZM - Black	E++	£599	£549	
Mint-	£759	£699	20mm F2.8 E	E++	£1,049	£959	28mm F2.8 ZM - Black	E++	£579	£499	
E+	£1,099	£1,049	50mm F1.8 FE	E++	£179	£169	35mm F2 ZM - Black	E++	£649	£599	
E++	£949	£919	50mm F1.8 OSS E	E++	£119	£95	50mm F1.5 ZM - Black	E+	£479	£449	
E+	£249	£219	70-200mm F2.8 GM II OSS	Mint-	£149	£129					
E++	£1,299	£1,249	90mm F2.8 Macro G OSS FE	E++	£1,889	£1,849	Used Leica R Series Lenses		WAS	NOW	
E++	£469	£449	28-200mm F2.8-5.6 Di III RXD - Sony E	E++	£469	£449	16mm F2.8 Fisheye 3Cam	E+	£849	£799	
E+	£189	£159	20mm F2.8 Di III OSD Macro - Sony FE	E++	£449	£419	28-70mm F3.5-4.5 ROM	E+	£399	£349	
E++	£319	£299	70-300mm F4.5-6.3 Di III RXD - Sony FE	E++	£159	£139	28-70mm F3.5-4.5 ROM	E++	£549	£479	
Mint-	£429	£419	40mm F2 Batis Distagon T* - Sony E	E++	£299	£279	28-90mm F2.8-4.5 ROM	E+	£1,949	£1,749	
E++	£259	£249		Mint-	£539	£479	35mm F3.5 PC Shift	E+	£449	£349	
Mint-	£789	£749	Used Leica M Series				28mm F2.8 PC Super Angulon R	E+	£689	£589	
E++	£249	£229	M11-P Body Only - Silver		WAS	NOW	28mm F2.8 R 3cam	E+	£349	£329	
E++	£269	£239	M11 Body Only - Silver Chrome	Mint-	£6,899	£6,449	28mm F2.8 R 3cam	E+	£349	£329	
E++	£279	£249	M7 0.72x Black Body Only	E++	£5,499	£5,299	28mm F2.8 ROM	E+	£1,599	£1,479	
E++	£1,499	£1,449	M6 TTL 0.85x LHSA Black Body Only	E+	£2,999	£2,899	35-70mm F4 ROM	E++	£949	£749	
E++	£2,449	£2,379	M2 Chrome Body Only	E++	£7,499	£7,299	50mm F2 ROM	E+	£749	£599	
E++	£2,449	£2,249	M2 Chrome Body Only	E+	£1,349	£1,279	60mm F2.8 R 3cam Macro	E++	£499	£399	
Mint-	£2,589	£2,289	28mm F2.8 Asph M Black - 11677	E+	£1,349	£1,279	60mm F2.8 R 3cam Macro + Tube	E++	£499	£399	
Mint-	£3,149	£2,949	28mm F2.8 M Black	Mint-	£1,649	£1,579	100mm F4 Macro R 3cam	E+	£449	£399	
E+	£1,949	£1,889	28mm F2.8 M Black	E+	£1,099	£899	180mm F2.8 R 3cam	E++	£299	£279	
E++	£3,499	£3,149	28mm F5.6 M Chrome - 11895	E+	£899	£849	180mm F4 R 3cam	E+	£249	£199	
E+	£1,989	£1,789	28/35/50mm F4 Tri Elmar (11890)	E+	£1,549	£1,479	180mm F4 R 3cam	E+	£295	£199	
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E++	£879	£849	35mm F2 Asph M Black (11879)	E++	£1,889	£1,799	280mm F2.8 Apo R 3cam	E+	£2,499	£1,899	
E+	£3,199	£2,750	35mm F2 Asph M Black 6bit (11879)	E++	£1,599	£1,449	280mm F2.8 Apo R 3cam	Mint-	£3,249	£2,499	
E++	£829	£799	35mm F2 Asph M Black 6bit (11879)	E++	£1,749	£1,549	Auto Bellows R + Bellows Hood +	E++	£79	£59	
Mint-	£399	£379	35mm F3.5 Chrome (M3)	E++	£1,599	£1,549					
E++	£949	£789	35mm F3.5 Chrome (M3)	E+	£499	£399					
Mint-	£639	£579	50mm F0.95 Asph M Black - 11802	E+	£399	£369	Used Tripod Heads		WAS	NOW	
E++	£219	£199	50mm F1.0 M Black	E++	£5,249	£5,189	Gitzo G2380 Fluid Pro Video Head	E+	£159	£129	
E++	£479	£449	50mm F1.4 Asph Black 6bit - 11891	E+	£4,399	£3,999	GHFG1 Fluid Gimbal Head	E++	£349	£299	
Mint-	£279	£259	50mm F1.4 Asph Black 6bit - 11891	E+	£1,749	£1,649	Manfrotto 300 Panoramic Head	E++	£129	£99	
E+	£439	£399	50mm F1.4 Chrome	E++	£1,889	£1,799	468MG RC2 Hydrostatic Head QR	E+	£139	£99	
E+	£529	£489	50mm F1.4 M Chrome	E+	£1,449	£1,399	468MG RC4 Hydrostatic Head QR	E++	£159	£149	
E++	£889	£849	50mm F2 M Black	E+	£1,649	£1,579	MH057MO-Q6 Magnesium Ball Head QR	E++	£149	£99	
Mint-	£2,499	£2,449	50mm F2 M Black	E+	£1,049	£989	MXHPRO-BHQ2 Head	E++	£79	£69	
E++	£2,399	£2,349	50mm F2 M Black (V)	E++	£1,099	£1,049	MN143N Magic Arm	E++	£59	£49	
Mint-	£159	£149	50mm F2 M Black 6bit - 11826	E++	£1,499	£1,349	MN234RC Pan	E+	£19	£15	
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Mint-	£529	£479	90mm F2 Apo M Black	E++	£799	£729	MN468RC0 Midi Ball Head	E++	£49	£45	
E++	£1,149	£1,049	90mm F2 Chrome	Exc	£1,099	£899	National NT-530H Gimbal Head	E+	£149	£99	
E++	£419	£399	90mm F2 M Black	E+	£399	£349	Nodal Ninja 4	E++	£199	£179	
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Emerging Talent

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Chloé Breheret

Chloé Breheret's '20 Unforgettable Minutes' of a freediver swimming beneath dolphins was seen by millions as part of Falmouth University's national advertising campaign. She shares more about the photograph and her journey into underwater photography with **Jessica Miller**...

When and why did you start taking photographs?

I started taking photographs as soon as I got my first iPod Touch. My parents had a boat, and we would head out on day trips and spend weeks at sea during the summer, which I loved documenting on that tiny screen.

With parents who love diving and being in the sea, it felt natural to follow them underwater. Growing up on the shores of the Mediterranean in the South of France was a pretty ideal place to discover that photography and the sea were the two things I never wanted to be far from.

Which genre do you work in?

I've really taken the time to explore different directions. I travelled through Peru shooting exclusively on film, learnt to use a "proper" underwater rig with Nauticam housing and strobes, and discovered that I enjoy video and editing. My work keeps coming back to the sea so my main focus is underwater and coastal photography.

What draws you towards your favoured genre?

It's a mix of how I feel when I'm in or near the sea and the sheer variety it offers. There are endless species, behaviours and small moments unfolding all the time, and visually there are infinite angles, colours and textures to work with.

Tell us more about your photographic training?

I've just completed a BA (Hons)

Marine and Natural History Photography degree at Falmouth University in Cornwall. You learn the fundamentals of photography right through to working at a professional level.

A big turning point for me was choosing the underwater module. To even apply, you need to have your PADI qualifications up to at least Rescue Diver, and from there you're trained in underwater photography in the cold but wildlife rich waters around Cornwall.

We also studied wildlife issues and conservation and explored how to communicate those stories. Combining photography with nature activism felt like the most

meaningful direction and the course gave me the tools to do exactly that.

Tell us more about your work?

One of my photographs '20 Unforgettable Minutes in Marsa Shagra' taken in the Red Sea, during a two-week university diving expedition to Egypt, was selected for a nationwide University of Falmouth campaign across the UK, which has been a real confidence boost.

During our trip, most of my mornings began at 5:50am with a sunrise snorkel before the heat set in. After visiting Dolphin House (a popular dive site for dolphins) and leaving without the encounter I hoped for, I kept returning to

Right: 20 Unforgettable Minutes, Marsa Shagra, Egypt 2026.

Below: Ray Race, Marsa Shagra, Egypt 2026.



ALL IMAGES © CHLOÉ BREHERET





Above: The Curious Clownfish, Marsa Shagra, Egypt 2026.

Far left: Sunrise Encounter, Marsa Shagra, Egypt 2026.

Left: Setting Selfie – taking a selfie underwater can help double-check if your white balance settings are good; if your skin is over-exposed and too white then your subjects most likely will be too, especially when you're shooting on sand, which acts as a light reflector. South of France, 2024.



➤ the water each dawn. One morning while photographing a turtle, a family of dolphins appeared gliding gracefully through the morning light.

The defining moment came when freediver Marie entered the water and joined them, giving me the composition I needed. It encouraged me to start pushing my work out into the world.

What has been your biggest photographic obstacle?

Underwater photography with strobes. Getting the light to feel natural while compensating for how quickly colour is lost underwater is a delicate balance.

Who is your biggest influence?

Laurent Ballesta. He is constantly pushing himself to photograph the seemingly impossible and his work shows just how deep underwater storytelling can go.

What equipment do you use?

Falmouth offered an amazing range of gear we could borrow at no extra cost while studying. I've just bought my first own underwater setup: a Nikon D7000 in a Nauticam housing with a Sea & Sea strobe. I'm currently working mainly with a



fisheye lens.

What would be your dream equipment to work with?

A Nikon Z8 in a Nauticam housing. It's worth the hype and what I used on my university dive trip to Egypt.

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

My unforgettable encounter with a pod of dolphins in Egypt. They were playful and stayed with me long

Above: Hypnosis, Antibes, France 2024.

Below: Colours of Egypt, Marsa Shagra, Egypt 2026.

enough for me to create a whole series of images.

They say luck is when preparation meets opportunity. Every one of those early starts, every sunrise in the water led to that moment. I still well up when I think about it.

What are your hopes for your photography career in the future?

I hope to become an award-winning photographer. I'd also love to work with young people and use photography to spread awareness about the ocean. That feels like a natural extension of my work.

Do you have a dream assignment?

Working on a research vessel with scientists. Combining science, exploration and visual storytelling in that way is exactly where I'd like my career to head.

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

Just get in the water – or into whatever environment inspires you most. Use your eyes first and pay attention, that's where your creativity really starts to grow. Be prepared, because when preparation meets opportunity, you won't have time to think twice.

AP

Instagram: @chloeberheret_photo



Inbox

Write to the Editor at 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



Paul laments the omission of Alfred Stieglitz, among others, from our list of 'the greatest photographers'. Stieglitz, an early AP contributor, was one of the pioneers of photography. This photo from 1907, *The Steerage*, is regarded by many art historians as 'the first modernist photograph' due to its rejection of the influence of painting in favour of a candid documentary depiction of everyday life

'Greats' expectations

I've been interested in the voting for your 'Greatest Photographers' poll, and would like to mention some other names who didn't make the final cut. Edward Steichen was a versatile photographer and curator from the first half of the 20th century. A little earlier Alfred Stieglitz would have been equally as influential. They may have been missed out as they were not part of the age of mass media, nor indeed was Robert Doisneau.

Although most 'proper' photography

seems to be regarded as needing to be monochrome, I would offer William Eggleston as a leading exponent of colour photography. One last suggestion is Rankin, as an example of a photographer who can produce high quality work in both colour and monochrome, and in film and digital.

Paul Cowlishaw

This is one of three letters we received that mentioned Stieglitz, so here is one of his images, to make amends.



Mark Peachey took this on the last day of BHS

Trouble in store

I was intrigued by the recent discussion about photography in train stations, and the Metropolitan Police's quote that 'members of the public...do not need a permit to photograph in public places.'

It calls to mind an incident that happened on the last day of trading at my local BHS in St Helens. I popped in to take a few shots with my phone, it being the last day of an iconic British brand that felt worthy of record.

A manager strode towards me and asked me aggressively what I thought I was doing? I said I was a customer and explained I was taking a few photos to document their last day of trading. She asked me how would I feel if she took photos of me? I said it would be fine as it was a public place. She then took out her phone and actually took a photo of me! The irony that all of this took place beneath the store's CCTV camera, which was filming me whether I liked it or not, seemed lost on her.

Whether it was the emotion of a last day on the job, or perhaps that I'd misjudged the situation, my belief that this was a public place (albeit private property) was sufficient justification for me to take a few discreet photos.

Mark Peachey

I guess you have to take into account that what was a photo opportunity for you was to her the loss of her job that she'd probably had for years. But I can also see that this was a moment worth documenting and I'm sure that press photographers all over the country did just that.

No nudes is not good news

I've been entering fine art nudes into APOY since the days when we used to send prints in a stiff-back envelope with an SAE. This time, my picture was deleted immediately for violating 'community guidelines'. There was some text saying that the site understands that nudes are a valid form of photography: clearly not valid enough, though. I rather mourn the passing of the old world – one of the first casualties, of course, being the annual Amateur Photographer Erotica special issue.

John Duder

Photocrowd, which hosts APOY, no longer allows nudity on the site. Their community guidelines state: 'The nature of a community platform with users of ages 13+ and of all genders and cultural backgrounds means that we apply an approach that keeps the environment

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appropriate and welcoming for everyone. As such we broadly operate a 'no nudity' policy on the site.' There are some exceptions. To read these guidelines in full visit photocrowd.com.

The last Brownie

Your 200 years of cameras feature says that the last Kodak Brownie was produced in 1980.

The very last Brownie was actually made in Brazil in 1986, for one year only. It was a 110 camera of the folding cover style, in red only. It could be a most rare Brownie, as I've seen (and bought) only two boxed sets, both from Australian eBay sellers, in the last 5 years of regular searching for my collection.

Dan Mitchell

John Wade replies: I did know about this, but as it was only ever sold in Brazil, I thought it a bit obscure. The Brownie I showed is much better known

Where's Larry?

Your poll of the Greatest Photographers of All Time created an interesting list, but Larry Burrows did not get a mention.

Look at his pioneering colour work and his Life

magazine article, One Ride with Yankee Papa 13, which has been called perhaps 'the greatest photo-essay ever made.' LIFE Managing Editor Ralph Graves said in tribute, "I don't think it is demeaning to any other photographer in the world for me to say that Larry Burrows was the bravest and most dedicated war photographer I know of."

Steven Powell

Larry Burrows' most iconic image from that photo story was chosen by AP in our millennium issue as one of the 100 greatest photos of the 20th century.



The Panasonic Lumix G1

YOUR FREE APOY ENTRY CODE

Enter the code below via Photocrowd to get one free entry to Round 4: Celebrating Colour. Go to amateurphotographer.com/apoy to enter

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Digital greats

Thanks to Andy Westlake for his 'Mirrorless Milestones' which praised the Lumix G1. I agree with you that Panasonic got the design right. To me, the G1 was everything that a DSLR was not. Yes, the early EVFs were poor and the sensors were noisy, but no more so than early DSLRs of the period. Mirrorless cameras quickly advanced and soon offered superior image stabilisation and live view, silent electronic shutters, higher burst rates, better AF, and other useful technical improvements. It is not that I think that DSLRs were bad cameras. They just were not my kind of camera.

Sadly you didn't have space in your '200 Years of Cameras' list for the Minolta Dimage A1 bridge camera. I moved from a film SLR to the A1, and was blown away by the sensor-based image stabilisation, the EVF, and the well-designed control system. However, as a new parent I was to learn a hard lesson. i.e., never leave a good camera unattended when a toddler is present.

David Price

NEXT ISSUE...



Sony RX10 V

The world's best bridge camera gets even better with this major update

When Konica was king

The surprising history of a now mostly forgotten camera brand



James Balog

Why the National Geographic legend is dedicating his life to documenting glacier loss and climate change

Dench does Belarus

Our intrepid explorer visits a front line nation in the new cold war



On sale Tuesday 11 Aug

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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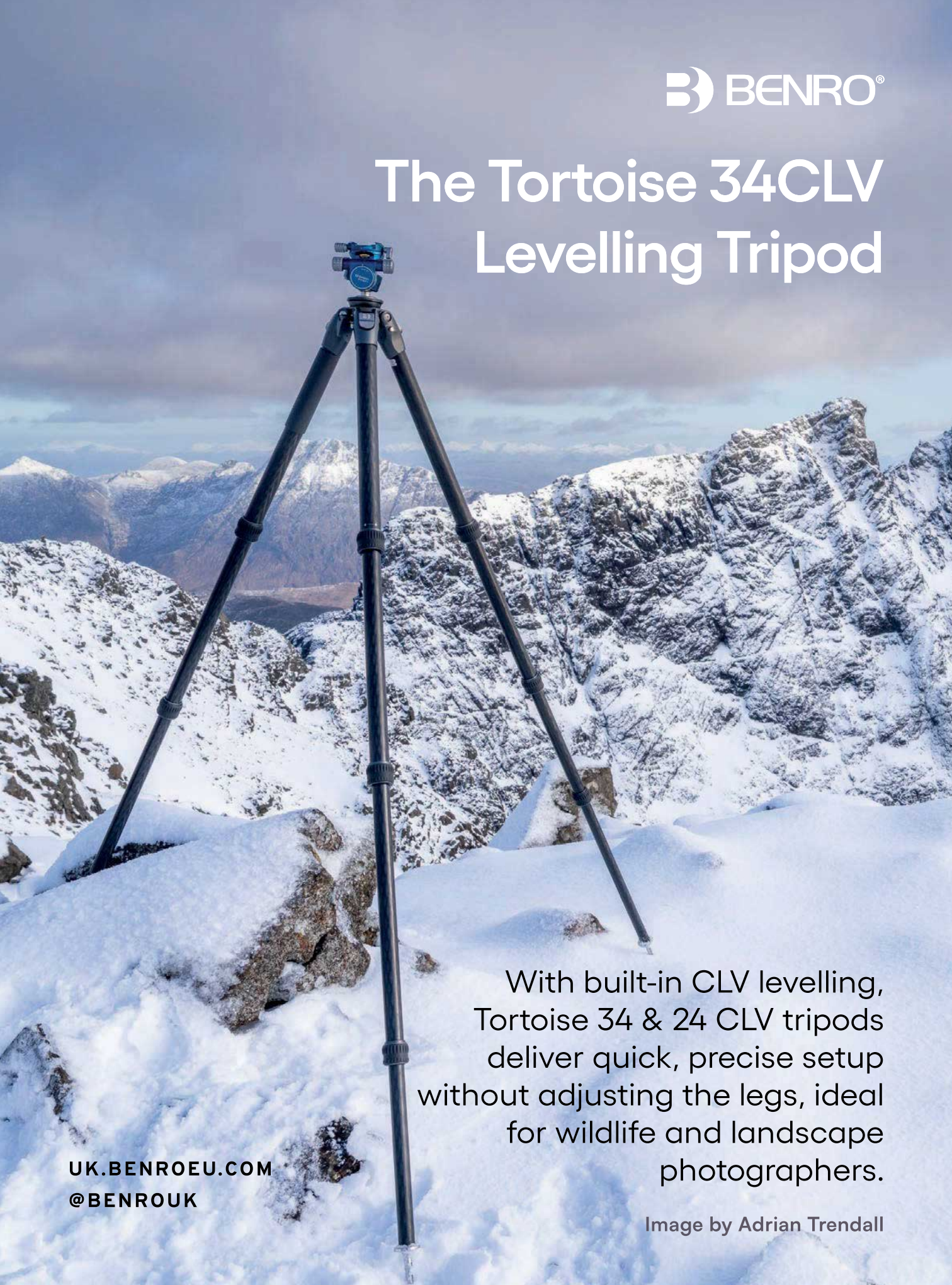
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The Tortoise 34CLV Levelling Tripod

A black Benro Tortoise 34CLV tripod is set up on a snowy mountain peak. The tripod is positioned in the foreground, with its legs spread wide. The background shows a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a clear sky. The tripod has a blue and silver head with a built-in level.

With built-in CLV levelling,
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Image by Adrian Trendall

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

● £499 ● 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

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

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.

★★★★★

Review
9 Apr 2024



Ricoh GR IV

● £1,199 ● ricoh.gr.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

Sony has somehow crammed a 24-200mm equivalent zoom, pop-up electronic viewfinder, tilting screen, 20fps 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



Panasonic Lumix L10

● £1,299 ● panasonic.com

Panasonic's latest advanced zoom compact combines a bright 24-75mm equivalent lens with a 20MP Four Thirds sensor that uses a clever multi-aspect ratio design. You get a fine electronic viewfinder, a versatile fully articulated screen, and a long-lasting battery. Subject detection autofocus and 30fps shooting round off a really impressive package.

★★★★★

Reviewed
14 Jul 2026



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



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-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



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-T50

● £1,299 body only ● fujifilm-x.com

Fujifilm's mid-range line takes a major step up, with a 40MP sensor and in-body image stabilisation. Traditional analogue dials control exposure settings, while the firm's peerless Film Simulation colour modes get their own selection dial for the first time.

The compact body is ideal for travel.

★★★★★

Reviewed
30 Jul 2024



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



Fujifilm X-E5

● £1,199 body only ● fujifilm-x.com

Fujifilm's rangefinder-style X-E line gets a triumphant reinvention, with a 40MP sensor and in-body image stabilisation. Traditional analogue dials control exposure settings, while the Film Simulation colour modes get their own selection dial. The body sports an electronic viewfinder and flip-up screen, and its compact size is ideal for travel.

★★★★★

Reviewed
16 Sep 2025



OM System OM-5 Mark II

● £1,099 body only ● explore.omsystem.com

This small, fully featured and weather-sealed mirrorless camera is both a pleasure to use, and capable of great results. Its petite body finds space for an extensive complement of controls, along with class-leading 5-axis in-body image stabilisation, yet weighs in at just 418g. On-chip phase detection enables fast, decisive autofocus.

★★★★★

Reviewed
5 Aug 2025



OM System OM-3

● £1,699 body only ● explore.omsystem.com

Don't be fooled by the retro-styled body, as the OM-3 sports many of the same high-end features as the flagship OM-1 Mark II. This includes the same 20MP stacked-CMOS sensor that offers up to 120fps shooting. Practical features such as subject detection AF are complemented by some compelling creative options, including a colour mode dial on the front.

★★★★★

Review
4 Mar 2025



Nikon Zf

● £1,729 body only ● nikon.co.uk

This lovely-looking full-frame mirrorless model combines plenty of substance with its classic retro styling. It boasts tactile top-plate dials for shutter speed, ISO and exposure compensation while delivering lovely image quality in both JPEG and raw. There's some cutting-edge technology on board too, including impressive subject detection autofocus.

★★★★★
Reviewed
9 Jan 2024



Nikon Z7II

● £1,769 body only ● nikon.co.uk

Nikon delivered a sensible update to its high-res full-frame model, with an additional SD card slot and slightly faster shooting. As before, its 45.7MP sensor gives stunning image quality, backed up by 5-axis in-body image stabilisation and fast, accurate autofocus. The viewfinder is superb, and F-mount SLR lenses can be used via the FTZ adapter.

★★★★★
Reviewed
6 Feb 2021



Sony Alpha 7R VI

● £4,399 body only ● sony.co.uk

If you want the very best image quality available from a full-frame camera, this is it. Its 66.8MP partially stacked sensor combines superb resolution, low noise and immense dynamic range, while supporting shooting at up to 30fps and 8K video recording. It also boasts a huge, blackout-free viewfinder and a new long-lasting battery housed in its large, comfortable handgrip.

★★★★★
Reviewed
30 Jun 2026



Sony Alpha 7 V

● £2,799 body only ● 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 Z8

● £3,789 body only ● nikon.co.uk

This stunning camera takes all the best bits of Nikon's flagship Z9 and places them in a smaller, less-expensive body. Combining high resolution, rapid speed, cutting-edge autofocus and pro-level build, it's capable of shooting 45.7MP raw files at 20fps. It can also record 8K video. With its superb viewfinder and tilting rear screen, it's a stunningly capable camera.

★★★★★
Reviewed
11 Jul 2023



Leica M11

● £7,299 body only ● leica-camera.com

Leica's 60MP full-frame rangefinder is a beautiful anachronism – a camera type that has been obsolete for decades, yet which still remains an object of desire for many photographers. This elegant mix of the old and the modern offers triple-resolution raw recording, including 36MP and 18MP options, and vastly improved battery life. It's a really lovely camera that can deliver stunning results.

★★★★★
Reviewed
8 Mar 2022



Nikon D850

● £2,699 body only ● nikon.co.uk

This brilliant professional all-rounder provides a winning combination of high resolution and speed. Its 45.7MP sensor produces fine results at high ISOs, and the autofocus is incredibly responsive and accurate. Build quality and handling should satisfy the most demanding of users. It's an absolutely sensational camera capable of tackling any type of subject.

★★★★★
Reviewed
21 Oct 2017



Canon EOS R6 Mark III

● £2,799 body only ● canon.co.uk

Based around a 32.5MP 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 GFX100S II

● £4,999 body only ● fujifilm-x.com

Fujifilm's third-generation super-high resolution camera places a 102MP medium-format sensor in a body the size of a full-frame DSLR. It gains much-improved AF, including subject recognition, while in-body stabilisation allows easy hand-held shooting. It's perfect if you need to shoot in the field without compromising image quality.

★★★★★
Reviewed
20 Aug 2024



Billingham Hadley Pro 2020

● £326 ● billingham.co.uk

The latest model in this iconic line of British-made satchel-style bags includes some well-considered updates, such as a detachable shoulder strap. It's impeccably constructed from premium materials to keep your kit protected, including Billingham's signature triple-layer canvas that's impermeable to water. It's pricey, but will last for decades.

★★★★★ Reviewed 5 Oct 2019



Vanguard Veo Active 42M

● £160 ● vanguardworld.co.uk

Vanguard's VEO Active backpacks are designed for hiking. This model is small enough to carry on a plane, but still has space for a camera and three lenses, plus a 13in laptop and personal items. It offers excellent protection thanks to its metal frame and padded insert.

★★★★★

Reviewed 19 Jul 2022



Tenba DNA 16 backpack

● £199 ● uk.tenba.com

This a two-section backpack lets you carry plenty of personal items alongside your camera, with its roll-top design. Uniquely, it unzips and pulls open from the front, which lets you get at your kit from above while the bag is upright. There's space for a camera and 3 or 4 lenses, plus a laptop up to 15in.

★★★★★

Reviewed 21 May 2024



Essential Film Holder Kit

● £90 ● clifforth.co.uk

Many photographers either still enjoy shooting film, or have old negatives and slides that they'd like to digitise. Probably the best way to do this is to copy them using a DSLR or mirrorless camera. This easy-to-use device holds film flat over a lightbox for copying. It gives excellent results and is much quicker than using a scanner.

★★★★★

Reviewed 29 Aug 2020



NiSi Compact Filter Kits

● £42-85 ● nisioptics.co.uk

Users of compact cameras with built-in lenses have rarely had the option to use filters creatively, so it's great to see NiSi address this with an inexpensive range of specially tailored kits. They're available for Fujifilm X100-series cameras, the Sony RX100 VI or VII, and the Ricoh GR range.

★★★★★

Reviewed 31 Oct 2020



Novo Mantis T3 Mini Travel Tripod

● £70 ● ukdigital.co.uk

This neat 27cm-tall mini tripod has two-section carbon-fibre legs that can be set to three different angles, and chunky rubber feet that unscrew to reveal ground spikes. The matched MBH-25 ball head (£60) provides impressive strength, and an optional centre column is available for £30.

★★★★★

Reviewed 6 Feb 2021



Sirui Traveller X

● £109-170 ● store.sirui.com

This remarkable travel tripod manages to combine a useful 1.5m maximum height with an extremely light weight, and without compromising too much on stability. It achieves this feat by using 5-section carbon-fibre legs that employ a 'single twist lock' mechanism. It's sold in kits with several different ball heads, or a pan-and-tilt option for video.

★★★★★

Reviewed 29 Oct 2024



Benro GD3WH

● £229 ● benroeu.com

This relatively lightweight and portable geared head employs an Arca Swiss type quick release. Three large control knobs, one for each axis of movement, drive the camera directly in the corresponding direction, allowing highly accurate setting of composition. With its sturdy magnesium alloy construction, it's rated to support a 6kg load.

★★★★★ Reviewed 26 May 2018



Vanguard VEO 2S AM-264TR

● £90 ● vanguardworld.co.uk

This unusual monopod boasts an extended height of 1630mm, a folded height of 565mm and a maximum load capacity of 6kg. Three foldable legs at the base provide a tri-stand platform, and are linked to the four-section carbon fibre leg via a ball joint that allows smooth panning and tilting motions.

★★★★★

Reviewed 30 May 2015



Adaptalux Studio Nature LED Macro Combo Pack

• £400 • adaptalux.com

This clever modular LED system is perfect for lighting small subjects creatively. The pack includes a control pod with a built-in rechargeable battery, four flexible lighting arms (two white, one blue and one green), plus three diffusers and two colour filters. Always-on LED lighting makes it easy to visualise the results in real time.

★★★★★
Reviewed
20 Sep 2022

RØDE VideoMicro II

• £83 • rode.com

RØDE's updated compact on-camera video microphone brings a number of welcome improvements. Along with a much-improved Helix shock-mount, it comes with cables for use with both cameras and smartphones, plus a choice of foam or furry windshields. Audio quality is a dramatic improvement over most cameras' built-in mics, too.

★★★★★ Reviewed 20 Jun 2023



Tenba Tools Cable Duo 4

• £20 • uk.tenba.com

Not all handy accessories have to cost a fortune. This well-designed tech organiser pouch features a dual-compartment layout, with a shallow space on one side for cables, and a deeper one on the other for such things as battery chargers or computer mice. The simple rectangular design fits easily into a bag and the tough transparent covers make it easy to see what's inside.

★★★★★
Reviewed
20 Sep 2022



Peak Design Pro Tripod

• 799 • peakdesign.com

This may well look like an insane amount of money to spend on a tripod. But for serious photographers shooting with high-end kit, it's the best tripod we've tested for a very long time. It's quick to set up, extremely stable, and will hold heavy cameras and lenses without breaking a sweat.

★★★★★
Reviewed
22 Jul 2025



Calibrite ColorChecker Studio

• £519 • colourconfidence.com

Previously known as X-Rite i1 Studio, this kit enables users to adopt a completely colour-managed workflow, from capture through display to print. It allows profiling of cameras, scanners, monitors, projectors and printers, and works with both Mac and Windows computers. It's a great tool for any photographer who likes to print at home.

★★★★★ Reviewed 19 Jan 2019



Kase Revolution Plus Magnetic Circular Entry Kit

• £210-£500 • kasefilters.com

These clever kits include circular polarising, 3-stop and 6-stop neutral density filters that snap magnetically onto adapters that screw into your lens. This considerably speeds up the process of using filters and encourages you to use them creatively. Kits are available in sizes from 67-112mm, with adapter rings from 49mm up.

★★★★★
Reviewed
21 Feb 2023



Epson Expression Photo XP970

• £249 • epson.co.uk

An update to the XP960, which won our coveted gold award, this impressive multifunctional unit provides A3 printing ability while retaining a compact footprint. Along with a conventional USB connection, it can print over Wi-Fi, or directly from an SD card or USB stick, controlled using the excellent colour LCD touchscreen. Other useful features include an A4 scanner and double-sided document printing.

★★★★★



Biolite Charge 80 PD

• £85 • ubioliteenergy.com

Powerbanks can be invaluable when you want to keep shooting for longer. This device houses a 20,000mAh Li-ion battery, which is capable of replenishing the average camera battery up to ten times. It can also be used to power certain cameras directly.

★★★★★ Reviewed 10 Jul 2021



Fujifilm Instax Mini Link 3

• £115 • instax.co.uk

Powered by a built-in rechargeable battery, this smart little printer connects to your smartphone via Bluetooth and is controlled using an attractively designed and intuitive app. It's small enough to slip into a coat pocket or bag, and delivers gorgeous little prints with fine detail and vivid colour.

★★★★★
Reviewed
3 Dec 2024



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+ Plain Prism
+ 120 back

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Hasselblad Used

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+ WLF

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Pentax 67 Used

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500CM body black.....	£599
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18-135 F3.5/5.6 IS EFS nano.....	£299
18-200 F3.5/5.6 IS EFS.....	£149
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24 F3.5 USM LII TSE box.....	£999
24-70 F2.8 USM LII box.....	£999
24-70 F4 IS USM L.....	£599
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35 F1.4 USM LII box.....	£999
35 F2 IS USM box.....	£399

40 F2.8 STM box.....	£169
50 F1.4 USM box.....	£249
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65 F2.8 MP-E macro.....	£699
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70-300 F4.5/5.6 IS USM II Nano.....	£499
85 F1.2 USM LII.....	£699
100 F2.8 IS USM L macro.....	£699
100-400 F4.5/5.6 LII box.....	£999
135 F2 USM L box.....	£549
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105 F2.8 EX DG HSM OS.....	£299
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TC1401 1.4x extender.....	£149

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20 F1.4 DG HSM Art box.....	£499
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50 F1.4 Art DG box.....	£499
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100-400 F5/6.3 DG OS box.....	£599
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40-150 F4 Pro box.....	£599
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12 F1.4 Summilux DG.....	£599
14 F2.5.....	£149
14-42 F3.5/5.6 HD.....	£99
14-140 F3.5/5.6.....	£299
25 F1.4 box.....£399 25 F1.7.....	£149
45 F2.8 DG macro.....	£399
45-175 F4.5/5.6.....	£249
45-200 F4.5/5.6 box.....	£99
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50 F1.2 GM.....	£1199
50 F1.4 ZA box.....	£699
70-200 F2.8 GM OSS MKII box.....	£1799
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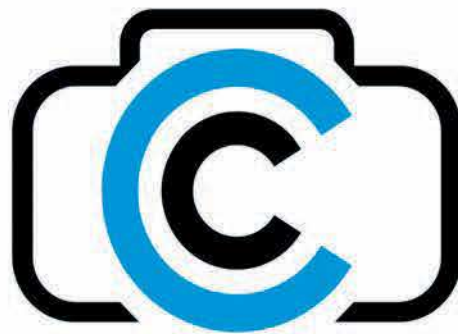
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Final Analysis

Nigel Atherton considers...

A commuter sits as members of the group Patriot Front ride the metro, by Cheney Orr

A lone Black woman sits in a carriage on a Washington DC commuter train, on 4th July, surrounded by white supremacists from the Patriot Front, on their way home after 400 of them had marched through the capital, carrying Confederate flags and calling for a white ethnostate.

This photo, taken by Reuters photographer Cheney Orr on the day the USA commemorated the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, went viral earlier in the month and became an instant symbol of US race relations today.

The vulnerability of that sole black woman sitting quietly in the centre of the frame contrasts sharply with the quasi-militia styled masked men around her. They look faintly ridiculous – like ComicCon is in town and everybody decided to go as the same character.

It turns out she didn't know who the men were, or that they all despise her for committing the heinous crime of having skin of a different colour. She was certainly unaware that she was about to become famous, whether she wanted to or not – and it's now clear that she didn't. But sometimes people become a symbol of something bigger just



by being in a place at the right/wrong time.

Orr, hemmed in on the packed train and unable to move, took the shot with his arm outstretched, over the heads of some seated Patriots, using the rear screen to compose. He took a lot of photos of them that day but didn't realise just how special this shot was until later.

To many it sums up just how far the country is from fulfilling the noble statement made in that 1776 declaration:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that

among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

In reality this was never fulfilled from day one. The US was built upon the genocide of the native population and the enslavement of Africans. Even the men who wrote that declaration owned slaves. The subjugation of the non-white population continued for a century after slavery's abolition.

Great strides have been made since the 1960s, as the election of Obama proves, but now white supremacist groups are on the rise again.

Today's USA is a far cry from a century ago when great ocean liners brought

millions of immigrants from all over the world, drawn by the invitation inscribed on The Statue of Liberty:

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..."

Most of the country is descended from those huddled masses. The USA was largely built by their toil and ambition, and many of their progeny went on to change the world and help 'make America great'. The melting pot that became the USA has led the world for decades in creativity and innovation in so many different fields.

But now the American

Dream is turning sour for many, as the world's wealth is sucked ever upwards and the angry poor look for scapegoats. The elites of course are only too happy to direct that anger downwards rather than upwards.

This powerful photo perfectly captures the misplaced hate that is growing not just in the USA but around the world, including the UK.

For this reason this most American of photos, taken on the 4th July, speaks to us all, and I'll be very surprised if it doesn't end up winning a Pulitzer Prize or World Press Photo Award. It surely deserves to.

© REUTERS / CHENEY ORR

Nigel Atherton has been the Editor of Amateur Photographer since 2013, having previously been Editor of What Digital Camera. He studied photography at Plymouth College of Art and Design and the University of Westminster and worked in various roles in the photographic industry until joining Amateur Photographer in 1994.

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