

# CAMERACRAFT



TOM HILL



ALLAN WRIGHT



NEVADA WIER

# In space, no-one can see your screen...

*Earthset captured through the Orion spacecraft window at 6:41 p.m. EDT, April 6, 2026, during the Artemis II crew's flyby of the Moon. A muted blue Earth with bright white clouds sets behind the cratered lunar surface. The dark portion of Earth is experiencing night-time. On Earth's day side, swirling clouds are visible over the Australia and Oceania region. All images ©NASA.*



*Artemis II Pilot Victor Glover, Commander Reid Wiseman, and Mission Specialist Jeremy Hansen prepare for their journey around the far side of the Moon by configuring their camera equipment shortly before beginning their lunar flyby observations.*

*Jeremy Hansen captures an image through the camera shroud covering window 2 of the Orion spacecraft. The camera shroud, essentially a curtain with a hole for the lens to pass through, is used to prevent light from the cabin from reflecting on the window-panes.*



NASA has been throwing cameras into the darkness of space for decades, but two brands have been a mainstay for the space agency. Hasselblad's role in early missions is well known – but Nikon may well have been more significant over the course of space travel. Artemis II astronauts undertook the journey equipped with proven professional gear. Gear-obsessed photographers soon had plenty to say about Reid Wiseman's "Hello, world" (*top*) when EXIF data revealed the camera used was a ten-year old Nikon D5 and 14-24mm f2.8 ED lens. Wiseman captured the long exposure image (1/4 second at f4 at ISO 51,200) through the Orion spacecraft window at 6,145 miles from Earth.

The Nikon D5 digital SLR may be old in technology terms, but has been tested for durability in flight conditions and resistance to radiation. NASA's dedicated imaging team understands the camera's abilities in extreme conditions and it's also valued for high-ISO, low-light performance. A crucial factor in sending the D5 into space is related to the reason for sending humans into space. The optical finder. Humans interpret scenes very differently to scientific images, and contextualise, understand what they are seeing in a way that is almost impossible for remote observers.

No matter how good the EVF and sensor, the viewer using a mirrorless

system is basing their composition and perspective on an interpretation of a digital image. With the D5, the optical finder means the astronauts are using the same eyes they view the initial scene with. However, the capabilities of modern sensors and mirrorless systems have not been overlooked. NASA is constantly testing new hardware, and the Nikon Z9 is performing well for scientific imaging and capture in extreme environments. The Artemis II mission included a Nikon Z9 partly at the crew's insistence, partly as a testbed – but it was used with classic, adapted lenses.

There is a simple reason for this and it highlights just how deep, how precise, NASA's environment needs to be. Years of using Nikon gear mean that many F-mount lenses are approved for flight. Even if the Z system follows the Z9 body into space for future missions, it may be a while before the Z-system glass is proven fit for space travel. Until then, the classic f2 35mm AF-D, 14-24mm f2.8 ED, and 80-400mm f4.5-5.6 VR have captured the most iconic images we've seen from this groundbreaking mission to the far side of the Moon. The mission produced over 10,000 images in total, with the Nikon kit supplemented with many GoPros around the spacecraft.

– Richard Kilpatrick



**A**I continues to be something which I should ignore completely to retain my ethical position. At the same time it becomes clearer week by week that ignoring it completely won't make it go away, and others will embrace it enthusiastically in pursuit of business success. In the process they will harness 'content creator' functions which are nothing to do with creation, creativity, originality or innovation and merely produce 'content' to extract revenue.

The ethical problem is that nearly everything produced this way is shoplifted from the vast supermarket aisles of the net which exist to display everything and make it as easy as possible to find. If real supermarkets helped customers home in on the exact products they came to buy they would lose baskets full of other sales picked up while hunting!

This magazine takes part in shared royalty distribution handled for all UK publishers by the PLS, Publishers' Licensing Services. Their mission bullet points are 'Supporting Publishers, Maximising Revenue, Protecting Copyright'. Last month they moved a step further in co-operation with the AI giants – here's the introduction to an invitation we received.

*"PLS is inviting publishers to participate in a new collective licensing scheme for Generative AI. The licensing, alongside a secure online content repository, will enable AI companies to access and use published works legally in exchange for a licence fee, under clear and transparent usage guidelines.*

*"This initiative is designed to create a practical framework for licensing the use of published content in AI systems while ensuring publishers can share in the value created.*

*"Why opt in?"*

*"The scheme provides publishers with access to the emerging licensing market for AI and offers a practical, scalable response to the growing use of published works by AI developers.*

*"This initiative builds on our long-established voluntary collective licensing model, extending a trusted framework to address generative AI. It is designed to operate alongside direct agreements between publishers and AI companies, providing an additional pathway for licensing AI uses of content."*

You might assume that much of this concerns printed books and written words, but publishing now encompasses digital books, websites and of course a vast amount of photographic imagery. This invitation refers to Generative AI specifically. That means AI which is driven by prompts or commands to synthesise text, artwork, photography, video and music using elements taken from prior art. Such is the depth of information held or accessed by companies like Anthropic or OpenAI that the old 'infinite monkeys and typewriters' theorem no longer applies. They could write all of Shakespeare but for copyright reasons (yes, I know) they will turn out 'new' sonnets and plays.

The infinite monkeys of AI can also imitate photographs staggeringly well.

The ethical problem is whether to plod on knowing that from Google and Adobe upwards we don't need to give permission to the shoplifters of intellectual property. They will take it anyway. Publishers (including Icon) will opt in to the revenue scheme because there is no point in opting out unless publications are to be hidden where no net search (or reader) can ever find them. The word publish means the opposite of that.

This shared revenue model is limited and the future may see the AI behemoths paying a tax or levy to enlightened governments to fund universal basic income and further support genuine creative origination by writers, artists, actors, composers, musicians, photographers, film-makers *et al.*

Just be aware – you are now one monkey in an infinite future of recycling 'content'...

– David Kilpatrick

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# CAMERACRAFT

#70, Vol 11 No 2

MAY/JUNE 2026

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**Cameracraft** was published in print six times a year from March/April 2018 after dropping the f2 from its title, added after merging the original *Cameracraft* (2012-2015) with f2. Since May/June 2025 it has been published as a high resolution PDF edition for subscribers and magazine platforms, with a low resolution page-turn version available free. A small run of print copies is made, and subscribers are authorised to order digital printed copies (see page 17). Through previous titles *Freelance Photographer*, *Photon* and *PHOTOpro* it is the latest in a line of photographic magazines published from Kelso by David Kilpatrick since 1989.

**ISSN 2514-0167**

**BACK ISSUES:** because Maxwell Place is up for sale, most back issues have now been disposed of as they occupied a room. In future, though it takes more time than can be found now, a downloadable archive will be put on the website and print-on-demand copies enabled. .

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Back issues and searchable archive of free-to-read articles from many of Icon's specialist photographic titles.

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## Bags more choice from Fujifilm

**FUJIFILM** and German luxury leather goods manufacturer, Oberwerth have debuted limited-edition camera bags for “photographers, creatives, and travellers who value exceptional quality, timeless design, and authentic craftsmanship.”

Handcrafted in Germany each bag is designed to become a lifelong companion. Two exclusive special editions are available exclusively from FUJIFILM’s House of Photography in Covent Garden and online at Fujifilm’s online store.

The Fujifilm x Oberwerth Weekender Nelson M, top, costs £1049 in deep navy blue.

The Fujifilm x Oberwerth Momentum L, £699, messenger bag combines intelligent organisation with distinctive craftsmanship. The subtle historic original ‘Fuji’ logo embossed in the leather of both bags highlights the



shared photographic heritage of both brands.

## Arcade fun with Fujifilm instax SPOT



**instax SPOT™** is a new premium photobooth and print station built for high-footfall venues like cinemas, museums and amusement attractions, adding a hub where selfies can be taken, printed and shared. It is both an Augmented Reality photobooth and a wireless print station for smartphone photos.

Venue-specific borders, stickers and branded overlays can be added to shots taken by or transferred to it.

Built-in LED lighting gives for high-quality, photobooth-style shots which can have environmental backgrounds.

Visitors stopping at the SPOT can, print, and take home instant photos on Fujifilm’s instax™ film

For more information on both these stories visit [www.fujifilm.co.uk](http://www.fujifilm.co.uk)

## ISO 50 colour neg film from Candido

**CANDIDO 50** from Dupli (formerly Tetenal UK) is an extremely fine grain C41 film for daylight and studio flash or LED when maximum sharpness is needed with minimal grain. It’s available alongside 200 (Tungsten), 400 (Daylight) and 800 (Tungsten) at £15.49 per 135/36. From WEX, Analogue Wonderland, and more.



## Westcott covers the full flash range



**WESTCOTT**, now distributed in the UK by Lumesca who own The Flash Centre and handle many other brands, has launched the S18 Mini Flash, a compact non-TTL bounce flash which combines a tilting flash head, 19-step manual power control, and a built-in USB-C rechargeable battery into a package that weighs just 100 g and measures 2.4 x 2.1 x 0.9 inches. It comes with a set of colour filters and soft pouch and

is ideal for digital mirrorless with exposure determined by test shots. In the studio and for more heavy-duty location use, there is now a full range of very advanced monolights and camera top flash with trigger and controller.

See: [www.lumesca.com](http://www.lumesca.com)



## Samyang V-AF 35mm f1.9 FE 1.7X Anamorphic

See: [www.holdan.co.uk/brands/samyang](http://www.holdan.co.uk/brands/samyang)



**AT** the Photo Show we checked out Samyang’s ciné full frame series V-AF 35mm f1.9 (£498 but can be found for £350) fitted with their £750 V-AF 1.7X Anamorphic adaptor, which mounts to the front bayonet. It can be used even with their 24mm but did just cut into the ends of the extra widescreen panoramic view on the 35mm.



In March the National Exhibition Centre once again hosted the main photo show of the UK calendar – it's back to London for 2027. Our team, one Nikon Z7II and one Sony A7RV, show why it's worth making it to 'TPS' (TP&VS?)

# THE Photography & Video SHOW

Occupying only one hall now, the show is much quieter than it once was but there's more breathing space with wider aisles. Staff on the stands, like OM-Systems below, also had more time to meet visitors though this was on the less packed Monday preferred by professionals. 'Creator Con' talks and dealer stands like LCE did not mean long queues.



Practical solutions for visitors without necessary photographic experience of kit included portable studios with LED lighting for smartphone websales shots from newcomers to the show orangemonkie



Bags and tripods always attract interest, with many visitors prominently lugging their own bags into the show. ThinkTank and Peak Design are both now distributed by Transcontinenta, left. Lowepro and Gitzo are with Vivendum Media Distribution UK, formerly Vitec, above. Models posing at the show are naturally popular, and London model Alex Taylor added some style to Neewer's stand demonstrating their LED studio lighting, right.



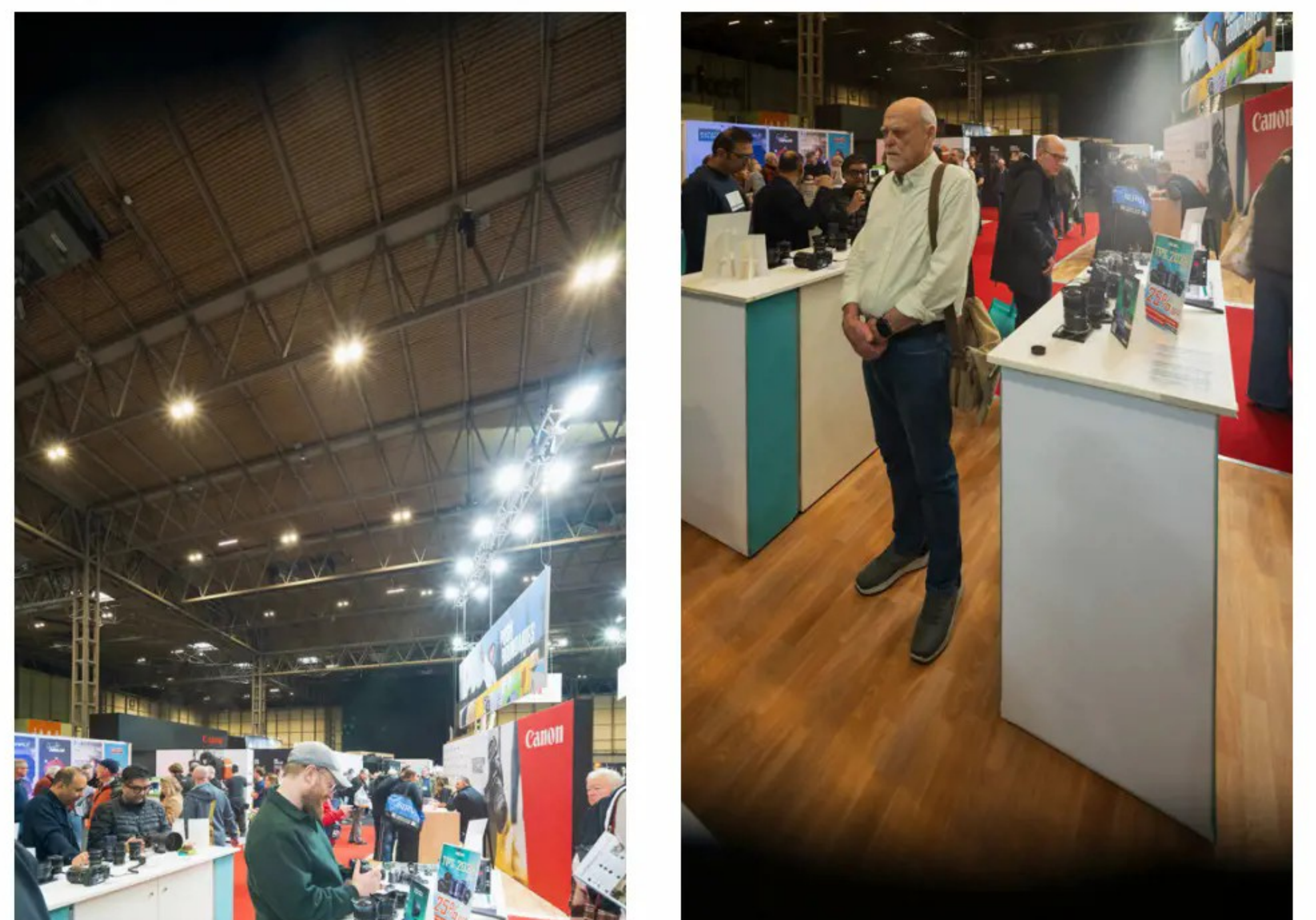
Alfie Cameras' debut model, the TYCH – arguably the most innovative of the new wave of half-frame film (or 'analogue') cameras that followed the Retro-Kodak Ektar H35. That turret-lensed miniature with auto exposure looks, and is, more advanced than most – and the new B O X X instant camera above promises to be similarly disruptive. A choice of three lenses on a classic wooden view-camera body meets an interesting step between darkroom and Polaroid's integral chemistry. What if the darkroom were in your camera? Shooting at low ISO speeds to cut-sheet paper, this is faster and more portable than the 6 ISO daylight photo paper ideas, taking a few minutes to get a finished shot. The Kickstarter campaign launched on 17 May 2026 - check out <https://alfiecameras.com/> for more info.



Left your white lens at home? Canon's loyal fanbase get to shoot over the heads of delegates at scenes dotted around the exhibition. You didn't need to carry one around the show after all! Far better, as one lady photographer well enough known in the pet portrayal world proved, to carry your own beautiful Bengal cat down the aisles...



The Antigravity drone caught our attention for the sci-fi VR goggles that make you look more "futuristic insect" rather than "just faceplanted into tupperware". The screen for viewers to share your flight is a nice touch – but the real innovation is blending Insta360 camera tech for an immersive full 360-degree flight experience captured in 8K video for flexible reframing and composition. The scope for art, commercial and even emergency service use is remarkable. Prices start around £1219, with an intuitive control system and 249g weight for easy legal compliance.



Laowa's stand offered a 25% discount – it was also a launchpad for the new full frame 17mm f4 Zero-D Tilt-Shift, two examples with extreme 'up' and 'down' shifts on the right. The shading was due to an incorrectly fitted hood.





TOM HILL

Is this what you wanted, to live in a house that is haunted, by the ghosts of you and me?



Tom Hill ARPS is a semi-retired photographer/copywriter living in the Scottish borders

The title comes from a Leonard Cohen song ('Is this what you wanted') from his 1974 studio album 'New skin for the old ceremony'. But let's forget Len the Barrel of Laughs for a minute. To inject a cheerful note, here's a question:

How did Darth Vader know what Luke Skywalker got for Christmas?

"It was simple, Luke" said Vader. "I felt your presence..."

That's as amusing as this edition's column gets I'm afraid. I'll try something more upbeat next time. I promise. But a recent bereavement of a close relative has me thinking about photographic *memento mori*.

When I worked (nay, attended) at Derby University's photography department, as a technician/demonstrator/dogsbody, from 1992 to 2000 I would take a keen interest in the various modules that students could choose to study.

It was an 'arty' course, very different indeed from the technically-grounded HND in Photography that I completed in Blackpool College from 1985 to 1987.

One of those modules on the Derby BA course was called 'human presence'. Students were tasked with photographing the world around them, with no human beings featured in their images, but the resulting photos had to speak volumes about what a person or bunch of people had impacted upon their environment.

### Is anybody there?

Whether it was a picture of an empty crumpled un-made bed, or perhaps even litter carelessly dropped somewhere otherwise beautiful, the point was to portray people, without including them in the image. Really photographing their 'trail' rather than their very selves. At that time, it made no sense to me, but looking at that concept later from a philosophical point of view, it's a great idea for a photographic project, because one really has to think hard about what to include (and exclude) from a photo trying to make a statement about the photographer's thoughts on humanity; perhaps a particular person, or a group of people.

So, when the University generously gave me a day off per week to study an MA in Photography at Leicester's De Montfort university, that time coincided with my grandmother having to be forcibly 'persuaded' to live in a



residential home for the elderly, as she could no longer look after herself. Putting plastic electric kettles on gas rings doesn't bode well for fire safety – you get the picture.

My father had gone off to live in Australia some 15 years previously (thanks a bunch dad) so, as my gran's closest living relative available, it fell to me to clear her house and put it on the market under power of attorney, so she could pay the care home fees. Her husband, my grandfather, had passed away some years previously.

To be brutally honest, I never liked the woman. She could suck all the joy out of a room within seconds, yet a sense of duty still made me feel obliged to do bits of shopping, taxi her around now and again, etc.

When the time finally came that my gran, Josephine (Josie to her remaining friends) was taken kicking and screaming to an old folks' residential home, I thought it would be an interesting side project to photograph the interior of her house, exactly as it was on the day she left it.

## Crossed curves

At the risk of becoming tedious, I've included a couple of technical notes for those who might find such things interesting. I used to be that way, but since digital capture came along, I just put my 'Blad in a cupboard somewhere, set my Canon DSLR to 'P for Professional' and let it do all the work.

The images featured here were all made on a Hasselblad 500C with either a standard 80mm lens, or a 50mm Distagon for wider shots of whole rooms.

I used C41 colour film stock; tungsten-balanced Fuji NPL, even though the interiors were lit by daylight from the windows. Consequently, I used an 85B gel filter to achieve a neutral colour balance. I



used NPL because most of the exposures, from incident readings taken on a Sekonic light meter, required several seconds plus reciprocity failure time (Google it kids!). If I'd used daylight film for exposures of that duration, it would almost certainly cause 'crossed curves' – and as I printed the negatives manually in the darkroom, achieving the desired result would have been tortuous.

## I second that emotion

Just to put the tin hat on things, together with having to manage my Gran's affairs and logistics, while studying for an MA, I was also going through the beginnings of an onerous divorce. My ex-wife and I were living at opposite ends of our large detached house but life was feeling tough at that time. Reactive depression, as my GP called it, crept in. I didn't recognise The Black Dog as the imposter that I know him to be now, but enough Prozac to send a grizzly bear loopy seemed to help a little.

In summary, I was going through a properly miserable time.

All this emotion was oozing out through the prints I produced for the project. The way I was feeling about my gran, my father for leaving me in the lurch practically and emotionally, and my yearning for all the ongoing crap just to end, became obvious in the work.

I produced a hand made quality book containing 10 prints, each 8" square on Fuji lustre EP2 paper. I whittled down the 70 images I'd printed to that final 10. Any photographer worth their salt knows how difficult the process of brutal editing can be. But I was determined to make the book punchy and mercifully brief.

## Larkin' around...

Just to compound the general mood, I hit upon the idea of putting lines from Philip Larkin poems, those that I thought to be apt for each image, as a caption. But each caption was covered by a half sheet of paper. The idea, as per the statement in the foreword, went something like this:

"The book is designed to be viewed either with or without text,

entirely dependent upon the wishes of the viewer. The captions are hidden by inserted half-pages, enabling the viewer to concentrate upon the images without the juxtaposition of verse if desired. A suggested strategy might be to look at the images page by page, keeping the text hidden. Then return to the beginning of the book once more, this time exposing the verse, thereby creating an image-text work. It might be interesting to consider how text affects the viewer's reaction to the images in the context of the author's intent."

One of the most poignant Larkin works that I used on the opening page of the book spoke volumes to me:

*Home is so sad. It stays as it was left,  
Shaped to the comfort of the last to go.  
As if to win them back. Instead, bereft  
Of anyone to please, it withers so,  
Having no heart to put aside the theft.*

*And turn again to what it started as,  
A joyous shot at how things ought to be,  
Long fallen wide. You can see how it was:  
Look at the pictures and the cutlery.  
The music in the piano stool. That vase.\**



Accordingly, I called the little book, and its associated project, *Home is so Sad*.

One particular image remains a favourite. It's a self portrait, which I coincidentally used on the cover of the book I published (a proper one that time) two years ago, entitled *The Cobbler's Children were the Worst Shod*. Top left in the set above.

That's another story, but it's sold out and I can't be arsed to go through all that marketing schlep all over again. It raised a few grand for the British Heart Foundation though, as my 46 years of ferocious drinking didn't do my ticker any favours. So I wanted to express my gratitude to a charity who got me through a difficult illness.

Anyway, the self portrait featured here was achieved by using a tripod and the Blad's self-timer, the shot framed onto my grandmother's dressing-table mirror. There's no *Photoshop* involved, it was 1999, but I used a neutral density filter in front of the lens, so I could obtain a six or seven second exposure.

After sitting on the bed for about a third of the duration of the open shutter, a couple of seconds, I simply sat up and moved out of shot until the rest of the scene received sufficient light to 'cook' the negative; thus producing the ghost image of myself you see here.

The whole trauma of my childhood relationships with my parents and my gran all came out during those few photography sessions around the house.

As I wandered through each empty room looking for someone to blame (thanks Bruce Springsteen) the Larkin poem below, which ironically my mother would often recite to me from memory, seemed to be the natural caption for my self-portrait:

*This Be The Verse*

*They f\*\*k you up, your mum and dad.  
They may not mean to, but they do.  
They fill you with the faults they had,  
And add some extra, just for you.*

*But they were f\*\*ked up in their turn  
By fools in old-style hats and coats,  
Who half the time were sippy-stern,  
And half at one another's throats.*

*Man hands on misery to man.  
It deepens like a coastal shelf.  
Get out as early as you can,  
And don't have any kids yourself.\*\**

Regarding those last two lines, I followed Mr Larkin's advice to the letter. I like children, but couldn't eat a whole one

I've learned over the years that the world definitely isn't ready for another version of me. And I would only have inflicted the same trauma on a child as that visited upon me by my own father.

Fortunately, I discovered in 1996, that I had the lowest sperm count ever recorded in Derbyshire Royal Infirmary's fertility clinic. What a happy accident.

My ex-wife at that time suggested that we try for IVF treatment (In Vitro Fertilisation) with donor sperm. Not being over-keen on the idea, I asked how much it might cost.


"About six thousand pounds..." she replied.

"WHAT?!" I exclaimed. "I could get a fully restored, showroom condition, 1975 Triumph Bonneville for that money!"

That's when the crockery started flying and the divorce proceedings commenced. The rest is history, but all recorded on the 22,000 odd photos on my various computer storage devices. Photo therapy is definitely a real thing.

Unfortunately, it's impossible to get a feel of how 'personal' the book was. It was a one off, its covers made of mount card, a spiral spine, and containing about 20 sheets of beautiful 250GSM cotton paper, which hasn't faded since I created it on April 25th, 1999. Just 27 years ago.

All the text was printed on to the paper by a computer printer, using American Typewriter font. I feel it really gives the captions some sort of extra gravitas, but I can't say why.


Anyway, there you have it, follow me for more photo therapy tips and relationship advice (!) from the most cheerful photographer in Scotland. Or maybe not. Next time, something more uplifting... 

*\*From Collected Poems by Philip Larkin.*

*Copyright © 1988, 2003 by the Estate of Philip Larkin.*

*\*\*Philip Larkin*

*"This Be the Verse"*

*Copyright 1971 © Estate of Philip Larkin* 

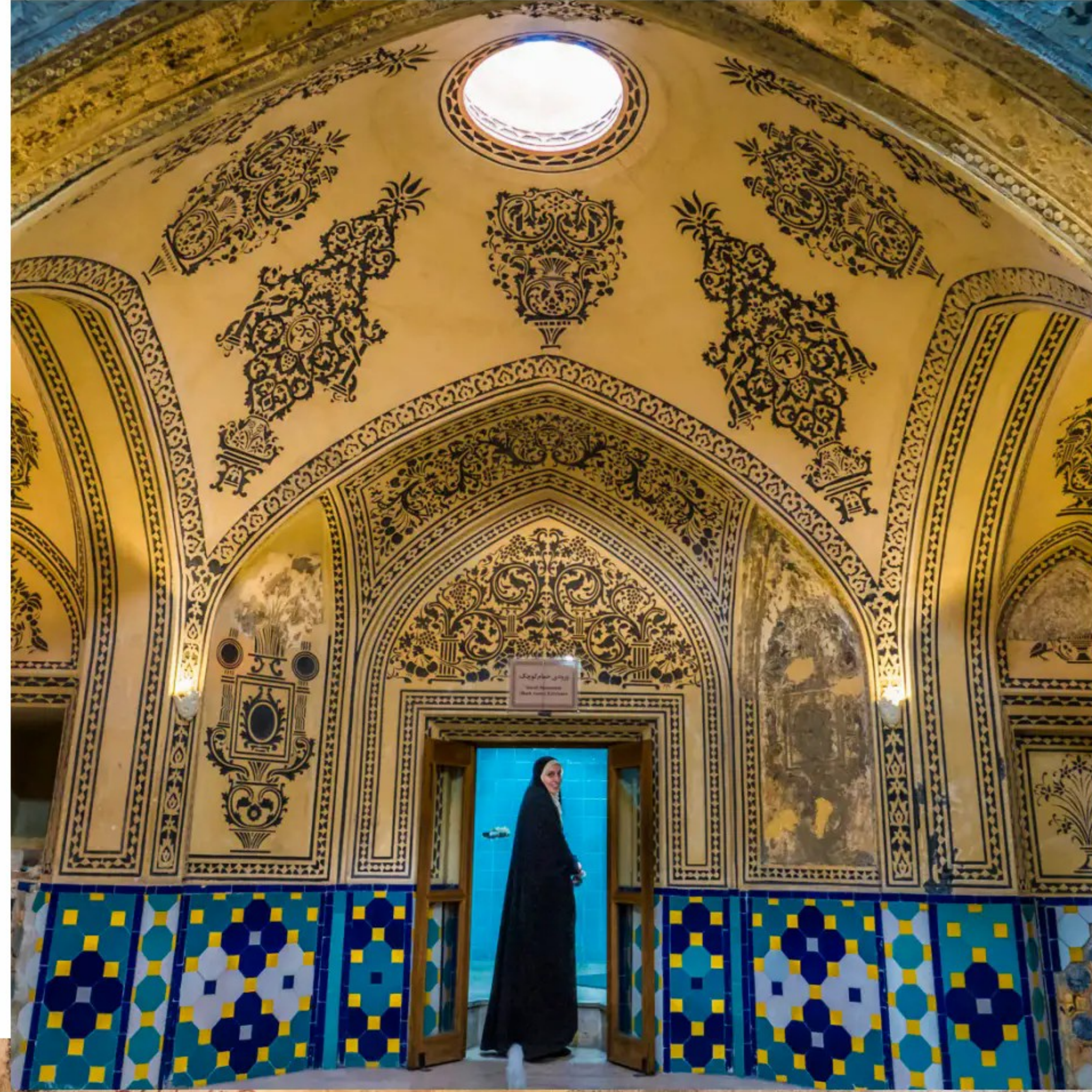
*You can read more of Tom's slightly swearsy (he does live in Galashiels, but is not the subject of any award-winning movie, as yet) blog at: <https://ciderfreezone.wordpress.com/>*

# Iran's true colours

Most people in the west only hear about Iran in negative terms – the country that's bankrolled Hamas, Hezbollah, and funded destabilizing wars with its neighbors. "The majority of the Iranian people I talked to don't like it either", says Nevada Wier. "The government of Iran IS malicious. The people are not; they have no choice but to live within the constraints of their current government. It's been my experience all over the world that the people don't want to get involved in conflict."

Nevada is a multiple award-winning photographer specializing in documenting the remote corners of the world and the cultures that inhabit them. Having worked with *National Geographic* for 30 years, she has built her impressive career on capturing the humanity of the people she meets. When the Iran war started, she decided to start sharing some of her favorite images

Nevada Wier travelled through Iran when the USA was not trusted but not at war. Her photographs capture the spirit of a country and a vibrant people just as keen to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.



from her three trips to Iran in 2017 and 2019 on social media. It was an effort to present another side of the country that the West never sees.

What is the takeaway that she hopes viewers will ponder when seeing these images? "Well, humanity, of course, is the underlying theme. They're just people like us, trying to stay alive in the world. And I don't like the phrase 'we're all alike' because we're not all alike. But we all have underlying themes: we work, we play. And Iran is a divided country just like the U.S. – half of the country, if not more than half, want a regime change and more freedom of expression. The women lament, 'I don't want to wear this head scarf!'"

She also wants to capture a sense of Iran's rich history, a goal especially important since the U.S. has damaged some of the historical UNESCO sites. "It is tragic what is happening in places like Isfahan.







Above, Hengam Island, Hormuz Strait – a Bandari woman. Top right – Isfahan, Iran. Musician playing in alcove of Si-o-she Pol ('33 Bridge') built in 16th century by an Armenian. No water in the Zayandeh River. Bottom right – a worker in the Hengam Island hematite mines, red with dust against the intense colour of the iron ore.

Previous spread – top left, Isfahan, Masjed\*-e Imam (formerly Masjed-e Shah). Bottom left, street art on Hormuz Island. Top right, Tehran, Imam Zadeh Saleh Shrine and Mosque. Bottom right, Shiraz, Masjed e-Nasir-al-Molk 'Pink Mosque' with light streaming through stained glass windows. Maria reading Koran. \*Masjed is Farsi for mosque.





*Above – Kerman. Princess Parmi inside Ganjali Kahan bathhouse (now a museum with wax figures).*

*Below – seen in a street in Yazd. Top right – Yazd. Young girls gazing at party dresses that can be worn at private events. “Which one do you like?” “We like all of them”, they replied in English. Bottom right – Kandovan, a Troglodyte village. Inside one of the cave homes carved into the hillside.*



And it's very sad to see that, because the history is so rich. Iran is gorgeous. The tile work and the mosques and the monuments and the waterfalls and the nature is stunning – from the mountains in the north to southern deserts”.

While she stops short of saying the people are happy, she compares them to people living in Myanmar or Cuba, where they make the best of living under tightly-regulated, repressive regimes. “They’re extremely hospitable.”

She was planning a trip in 2020 to venture into more remote areas in the North with the tribal people, but Covid got in the way. Traveling in Iran as an American requires that a guide always be with her – a stipulation not required of other nationalities.

### A photo-friendly country

Normally when traveling she considers it polite to intuit permission before photographing someone, and the same was true in Iran; although most people loved being recognized and photographed.

“I found Iran to be one of the most camera-friendly places I've ever been. I have never been in more selfies in my life. There's even a statue of a person with a selfie camera taking a photograph of the Tehran Monument. I am very comfortable photographing people in general. But Iran was especially easy.”

She works primarily with short lenses because she feels it's more honest. Using a mirrorless camera helps make a connection, since she can make eye contact and still be able to frame the shot.

“I study body language. I think language is, 70% nonverbal anyway, but I just accentuate that when I'm traveling.”

Despite that working aesthetic, she's not against a small percentage of candid images, it's fast and an honest moment.” She also leans heavily toward environmental portraits, showing the subject in the environment in which they thrive, telling the story in one shot.

“I believe that 90% of the world enjoys being photographed. It's up to me to find the way to synchronize with them. I'm looking for that one person or group to synchronize with.”

So, what makes for a compelling image? “From working early on with film I believed that everything mattered in the frame. I rarely crop an image and I never remove anything (even a wire). I still go by that creed.”





All photographs © Nevada Wier. See <http://www.nevadawier.com> – Instagram: nevadawier.





Above – on the ferry from Hengam Island to Hormuz Island in the Hormuz Strait. Local woman showing her henna hand art.

Top left – Tehran. Ahmad at his Monfared Shoe store, founded in the 1930s. He has kept the wooden shoe boxes from the 1960s.

Bottom left – Tabriz. The 'Beloved' shoe repair store.

Overleaf – a tourist enjoying the Valley of the Stars on Hengam Island.



## A career to admire

So how long has she been traveling the world and doing assignments like this? “A long time”, she responds. “I’m turning 74 soon. I’m actually traveling even more, and I can’t imagine that it’s ever going to end.”

“I’m self-taught, which is not necessarily admirable because the teacher doesn’t know anything.” She started her career working for Outward Bound as a rafting and climbing instructor. She ended up in Kathmandu in the late 70s and 80s running treks, and that’s where her passion for photography grew.

“I lived in Kathmandu during the halcyon days of blue skies and no traffic. It was wonderful living and working in in Nepal at that point. The long treks taught me a lot about approaching different cultures. I realized that what was at the bottom of the mountain was much more interesting than at the top.”

She set up a darkroom in the basement of the Outward Bound School, and soon started leading expeditions around China and Central Asia.

“I realized that I was living this very peripatetic life, and decided that this was meant to be. And I

would just send out proposals for articles that included my photography. I worked my way up – I photographed for books, worked for *National Geographic*, and many major magazines.” Her *National Geographic* work also appeared on their TV channel in several episodes.

She transitioned from color film to digital and never looked back. “Some of the best images happen in low light and at night and I don’t like to use a tripod unless absolutely necessary. As digital cameras progressed and gave us progressively higher ISOs and image stabilized lenses, I felt freer photographing at all times of the day and night.”

Most of that photojournalism work has disappeared today, as the magazines she worked for are mostly gone. “I feel lucky that I was able to be in that world even though it didn’t last as long I would have liked. However, I am still very busy with photography projects.”

“Busy” is an understatement. She started working for *National Geographic* in 1996 and continues to work for the Society, not necessarily the magazine. She just returned from giving a talk for National Geo in California. “Now I’m more involved with special projects, lectures, working with young

Explorers, and NG Expeditions. And, my work with NG is only part of my photo life. I have other personal photography projects, exhibits (*like an upcoming Infrared exhibit June 15 to August 1 at the Obscura Gallery in Santa Fe*) and so forth.” After that she’ll be leading a photo expedition with Lindblad to Iceland and Greenland, and then she’s off to South Africa, working on a project about the Sangomas, the traditional healers/shamans of the region.

She also has created a large body of infrared work over the decades, which she says is ironic because “I’m taking pictures of light you can’t see.” Starting with IR color film and graduating to digital cameras converted to only record near IR, she approaches the art of printing with the same veracity as she does in creating the image. “I had rarely made a print from a color transparency, and after using such beautiful black-and-white papers as Agfa Portriga Rapid and Brovira, I couldn’t bear to print my color images on the generic ‘matte or glossy’. But now, with digital, the world of color printing was in a renaissance, with new, stunning archival papers and inks, as well as portable color printers. I was out of the darkroom and into The

Grayroom (yes, my walls are 18% gray).”

She’s now working on a new travel and photography book called *A Nomadic Vision*, with an account of her evolution as a traveler and photographer. The book is divided into two parts. The first is 12 episodes/chapters written in the first-person about expeditions, travel, or assignments chronologically through different arcs in Nevada’s career. Each blends a discussion of travel issues with photographic insights. The second part is current images with accompanying text.

Just don’t ask her which she dislikes the most – processing images in a darkroom, or processing images on her computer. Clearly she’d much rather be capturing exceptional images in the remotest cultures in the world.

You can learn more about that book and see other examples of her travel photography at her website [www.NevadaWier.com](http://www.NevadaWier.com).

There’s also an outstanding video showing off her work and her philosophies about travel and cultural and the soul of an image: <https://tinyurl.com/frvrcydp>

– Gary Friedman

[www.friedmanarchives.com](http://www.friedmanarchives.com)



# How to order a printed copy of this magazine: Visit [www.mixam.co.uk](http://www.mixam.co.uk) – from £10 plus postage

If you download your PDF file from a link provided to you by Icon Publications Ltd, the file will have sufficient resolution to print a top quality copy of *Cameracraft* should you want to have this.

It's very important to pick exactly the right specification.

For example, just changing the paper weight in the UK – whether to lighter or heavier paper – bumps the cost up well above a basic (which has increased to £10). However at one point 170gsm paper was costing exactly the same as 130gsm. Selecting the wrong size or binding, or number of pages, or requiring rapid delivery can increase the cost or introduce problems.

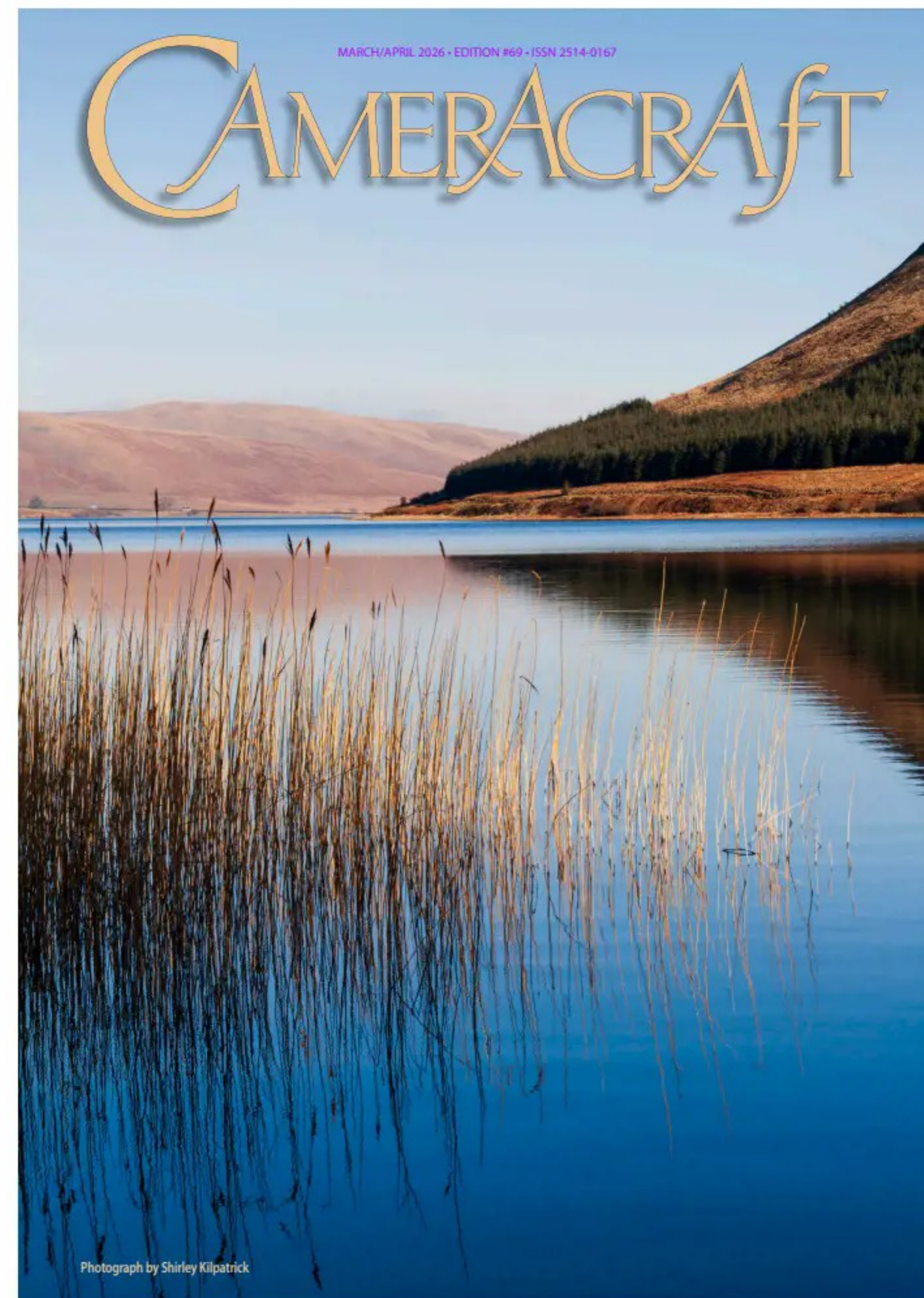
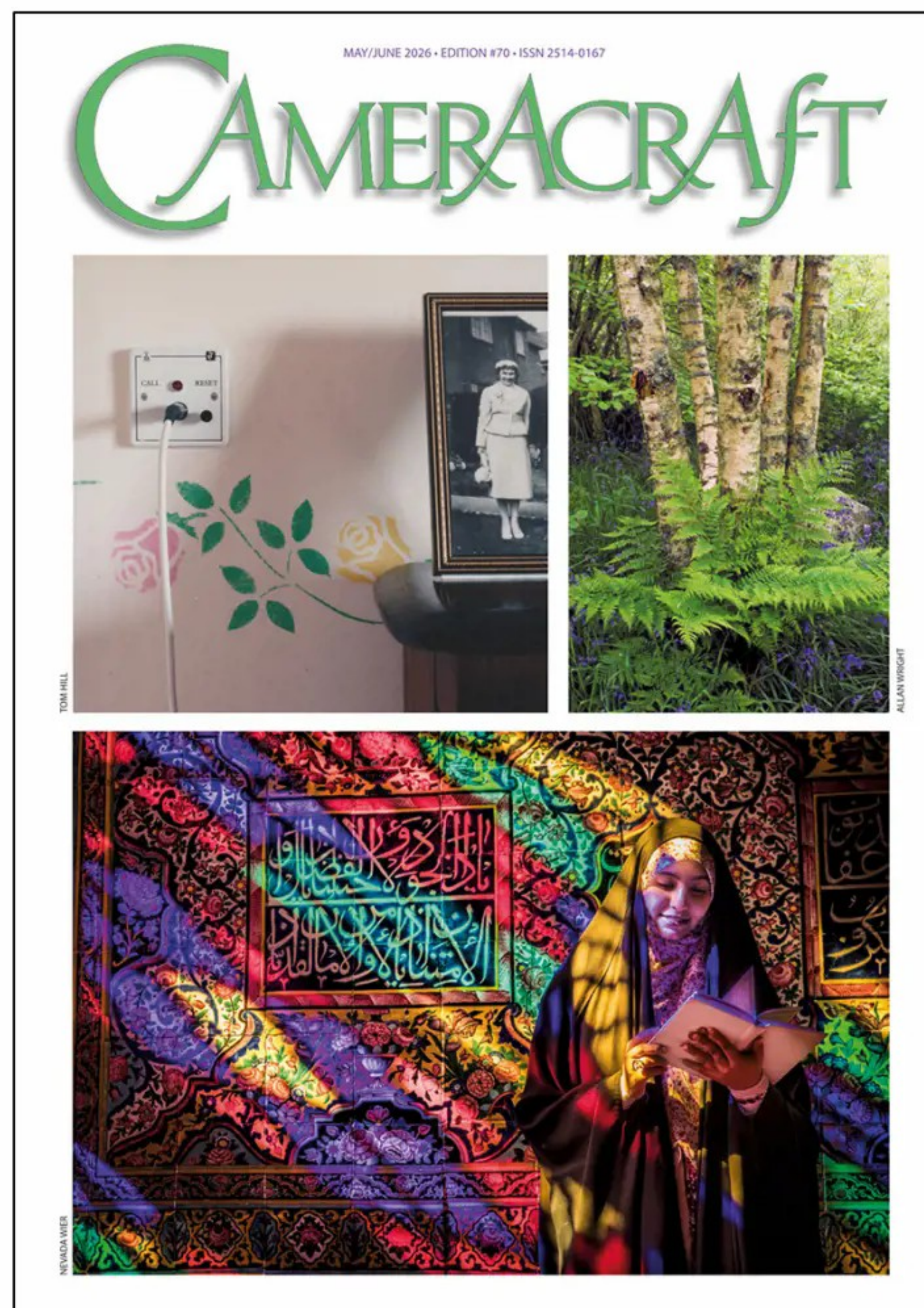
For *Cameracraft*, the correct choices are Magazine printing, Colour, Portrait orientation, A4 size, 130gsm Silk paper, stapled, 48 pages, no additional cover. The screen shot (right) shows this set up. It was made on April 29<sup>th</sup> last year and would, if a copy had been ordered then, have had a May 7<sup>th</sup> delivery date. The quality of print is identical to earlier printed editions.

Simply go to the UK or USA Mixam website, upload your high res digital PDF download and get a printed copy at any time.

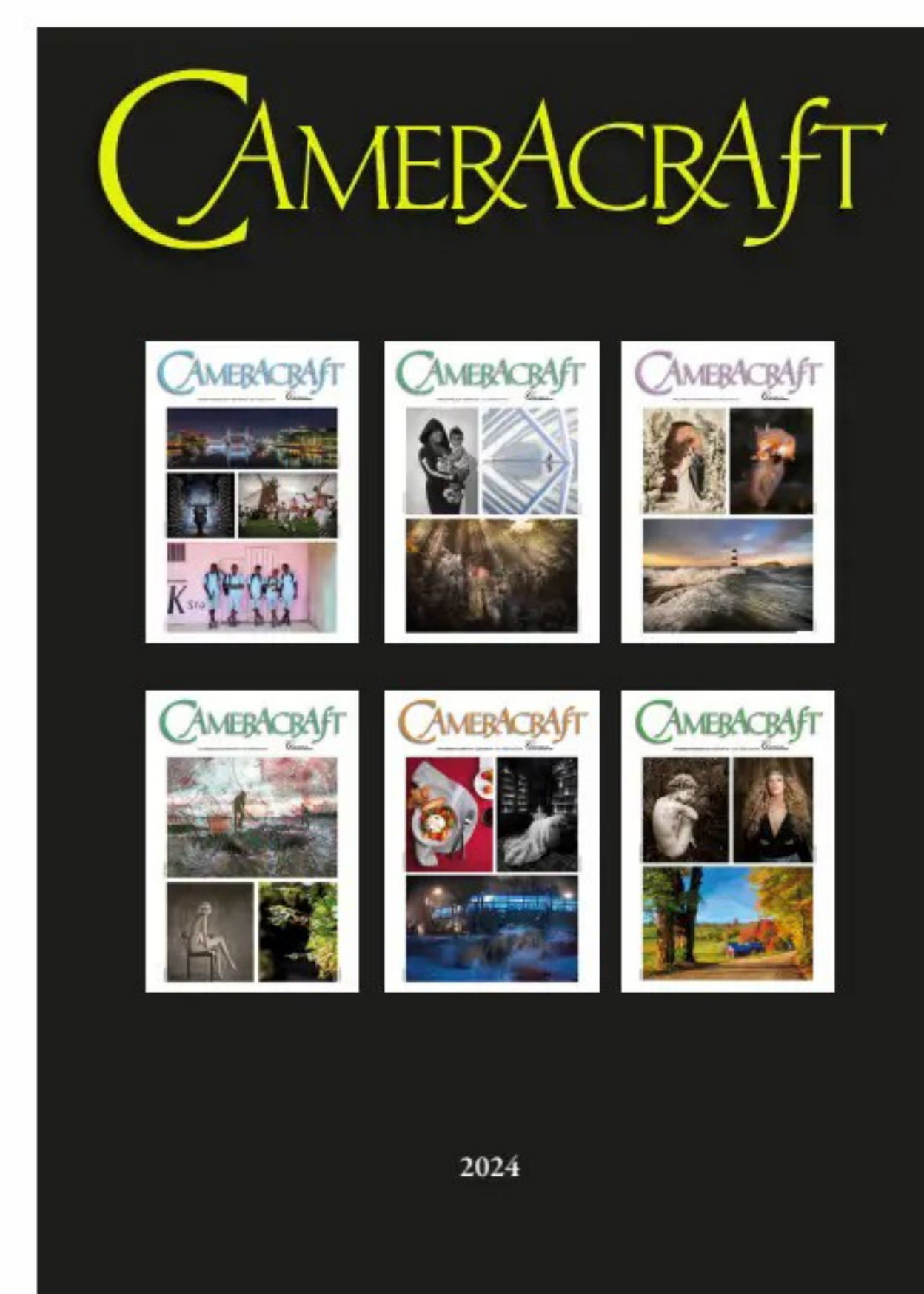
If you use the links on this page there's a small margin on the basic cost, which also applies to the annuals below, and helps fund *Cameracraft*.

## Go buy the book!

By far the best way to have printed copies of *Cameracraft* is to take all six issues from a year and make them into a book. We've done this for **2025**, **2024** and **2023**. Each has 288 pages on the 130gsm paper used for single editions, a high gloss laminated heavier cover, and the title and year on the spine. You



To order a printed copy of this issue, <https://bit.ly/CCNo70> For March/April 2026 – <https://bit.ly/CCNo69> Jan/Feb 2026, <https://bit.ly/CCNo68> Nov/Dec 2025, <https://bit.ly/CCNo67> Sept/Oct, <https://bit.ly/CCNo66> July/August 2025 click <https://bit.ly/CCNo65>; May/June 2025, <https://bit.ly/CCNo64>  
To order the complete 2025 issues 288-page volume – <https://bit.ly/CCAnnual2025>  
To order the 2024 volume – <https://bit.ly/46kN3th> For the 2023 volume – <https://bit.ly/4mBKdW7>



can order these 6-issue annuals using our **PrintLink** from Mixam UK., for around £35 plus post.

This is a perfect-bound gloss laminated paperback (cover above). We first had one of these made – at much greater expense in the early days of digital print on demand – for the *Cameracraft* first series issues, 2012-2015. It takes up a fraction of the bookshelf space used for binders and for our archives all the past editions will be reprinted in this form.

# TREES OF LIFE

Allan Wright shoots calendar pictures of subjects which are often-visited and familiar to buyers. This year, Allan posted a 'tree of the day'. It's become the basis for a plan to publish a book.

The way they hold space and the personalities they possess has always been a source of fascination for me. So, I guess this qualifies me as a "tree hugger" (no shame) in spirit if not necessarily always with physical encounter. In a moment of mild boredom, I recently had an impulse to start a "Tree of the Day" theme for my social media posts. I had recently posted up two or three tree images randomly with feedback that suggested it was a theme worth playing with. Subsequently I dug into my catalogue, opened a new folder and generated an inventory of tree shots that resonated with the tree-hugging spirit.

"For the love of Trees" is quite an open ended concept I guess with an expectation of stunning specimens to catch the eye but equally I find I choose ones with a dimension derived from their particular



*Seasons – a November oak at Kilquhanity, Galloway, above: winter at Woodhall Loch, Mossdale, Galloway. Allan is now based in Dumfries and Galloway, his favourite landscape.*



context. This might be section of dry stone dyke, a stormy sky backdrop, a relationship with animals, compelling textures, intriguing abstract designs, nature's graphic lyricism, shapes that jive with landscape topography, a story of survival and regeneration, awesome scale, striking harmonies with surroundings, dignity in death, blessed lighting, seasonal magic, incredible colour contrasts, and as expected with strong backlight, trees tree often reach an innately superlative presence.

There is a pacifying energy to be acquiesced to when we encounter the company of happy trees, be it the heart of the forest or out in a sparse rugged wilderness. I can't not see the magic in these places and feel lucky to sense a perfect oneness they all carry. My imagination also gets going when encountering non-native species. How did this one get here?, is it alien or benignly welcome, what is its impact on the immediate ecology? can I highlight its story with my lens. I find it fascinating how a tree can seem to define emotion terms of human sensibilities, loneliness, dominance, defiance, collective togetherness, demise, struggle, blossoming, abundance, adventurism, orderliness, residing comfortably amongst neighbours... I could go on.

It's interesting to reflect on how I have come to define my interest in shooting trees as almost recreational. I say this because most of my outdoor pursuit is devoted to keeping up with the demand for striking but familiar landscape subjects across most of Scotland to satisfy a demand for view calendars and books. In this regard I provide images for an extensive range of view calendars via my principle publisher/distributor Lomond Books Ltd under the brand name Lyrical Scotland.

Inevitably in my day-job work I am in the landscape and of course that's where, often enough, trees jump into view and demand attention. It was only when recently indulging this interest via the social media communication tool that I was alerted to a possible

*Bluebell time, young ferns and birch: a Fujichrome Velvia film shot from 1986. Trees as a subject go back through Allan's archives.*





*Jedderfield Woods, Peebles, Scottish Borders. Below, the first 'Tree of the Day' posted on social media in February, a Tweeddale springtime woodland.*

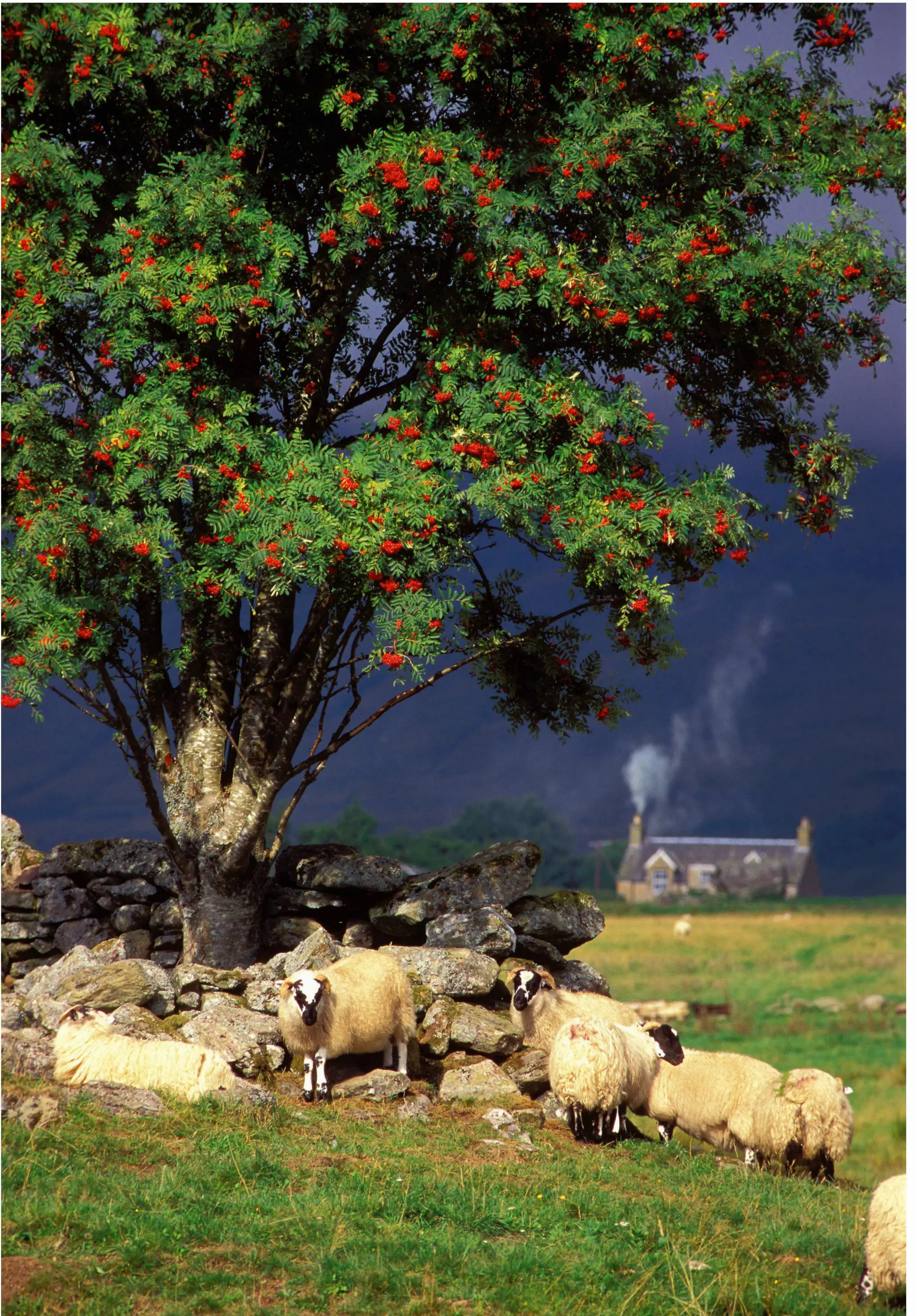




*Lone winter tree beside Loch Patrick.*

*Labrador and twin oaks at Parton in winter mist.*







*Left, a favourite Rowan above Loch Tay, with croft cottage and blackface sheep.  
Above and below, two from the haunting and impenetrable marsh willows of Carlingwark Loch.*



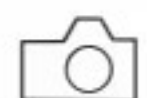




commercial direction this quiet obsession could lead to. Being asked by the editor of this esteemed photo magazine to describe my tree work has now played a role in focusing on how I might market this subject.

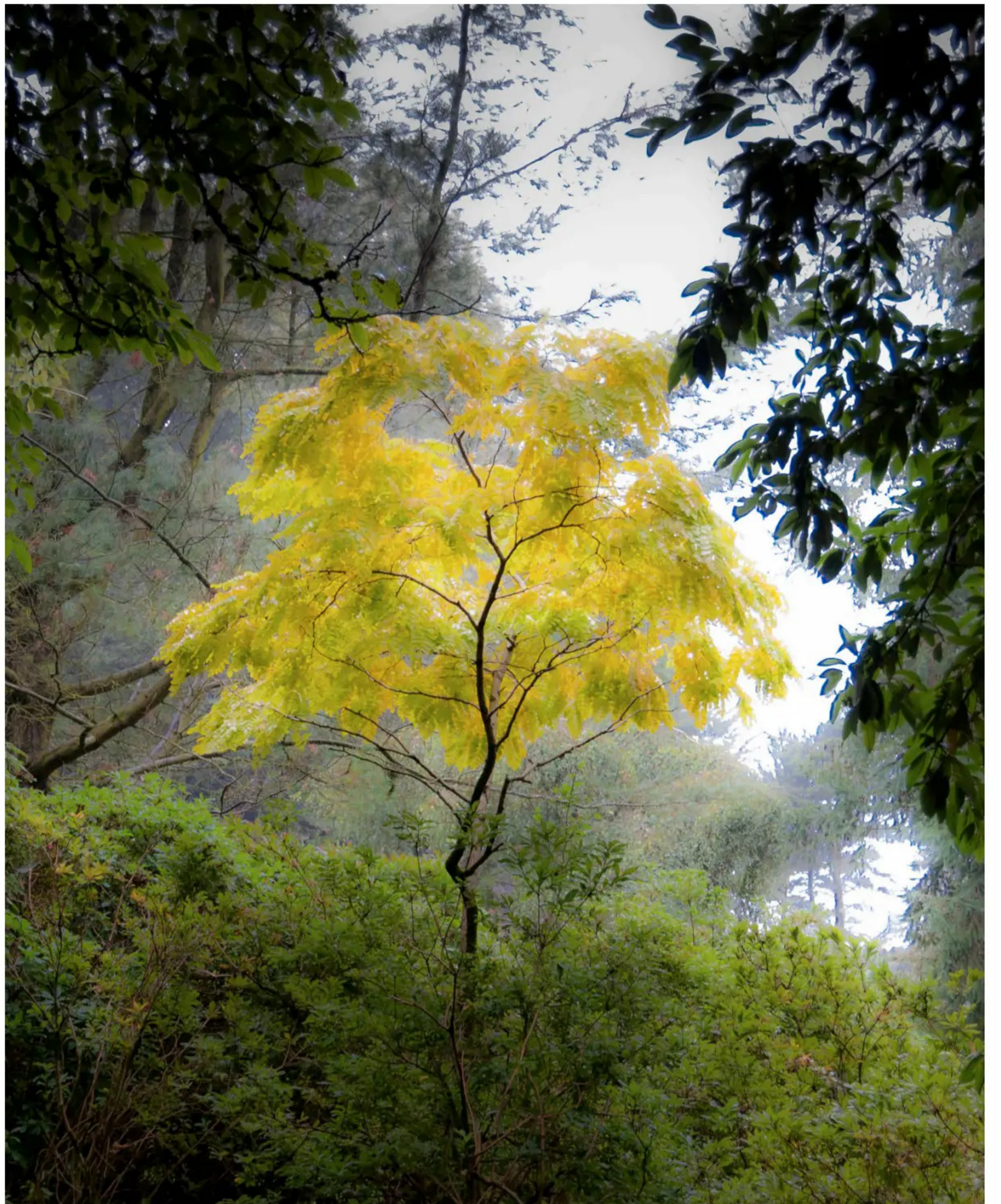
I have self-published quite a number of book titles over a 40 year career – last count was I think 27. However, “The Love of Trees” subject matter is not in the same genre as my visitor focussed landscape/cityscape work and so I am now actively exploring the marketability of such a title, we shall see. If I were to take the plunge and publish a tree edition I would look to engaging a specialist photobook marketing enterprise perhaps along the lines of the long established Scottish online bookstore like Beyond Words owned by Neil McIlwraith.

I am considering the possibility of engaging one or more third parties in a co-author role to provide on the one hand a botanical/ecological observation and also a poetic/lyricist response to each image. I am somewhat heartened by the success of a recent title I produced namely *Edinburgh* which was co-authored by the renowned Scots poet/writer/actress Gerda Stevenson.



*Left: a lone Scots Pine in Glenfalloch.*  
*Above: dead elm sunset with thistles at Knockvennie in the Urr Valley.*  
*Right: Acacia robinia in Threave Gardens, Castle Douglas.*

*Allan Wright's calendars and photographic books can be found at discerning outlets worldwide.*  
*Lomond Books publish his Lyrical Scotland calendars –*  
[www.lomondbooks.com/lyrical-regional-scottish-154](http://www.lomondbooks.com/lyrical-regional-scottish-154)  
*For his books, visit*  
[www.scottishbookstore.com/allan-wright-photography](http://www.scottishbookstore.com/allan-wright-photography)



# STILL STANDING!

I had always planned to be a journalist and because of my interest in that, I got involved in the school newspaper and photography. I had been keen on photography from a very early age. My first camera was a Zenith. In 1972, when only 13, I got an Olympus OM1.

I had a year between school and starting university, and I got offered a job at Martin Johnston, a leading Aberdeen studio. This was meant to be for a few months but I stayed there from 1977 to 1980, and never went to university. During that period, Martin Johnston were busy with weddings, portraits, and commercial photography including going offshore to the rigs.

In 1980, I set up on my own, taking over a premises from someone who had passed away, and kept the name of the business, which was Stag Photographics. After two years, I opened a new high street office, and kept the existing base as a processing lab. Ten years

**Neil Gordon of Aberdeenphoto.com reflects on a career soon to reach 50 years behind the camera. He's made it to the top in the industrial and commercial, hospitality, architectural and real estate fields – and for 2026 he's stepped up to Hasselblad medium format digital.**

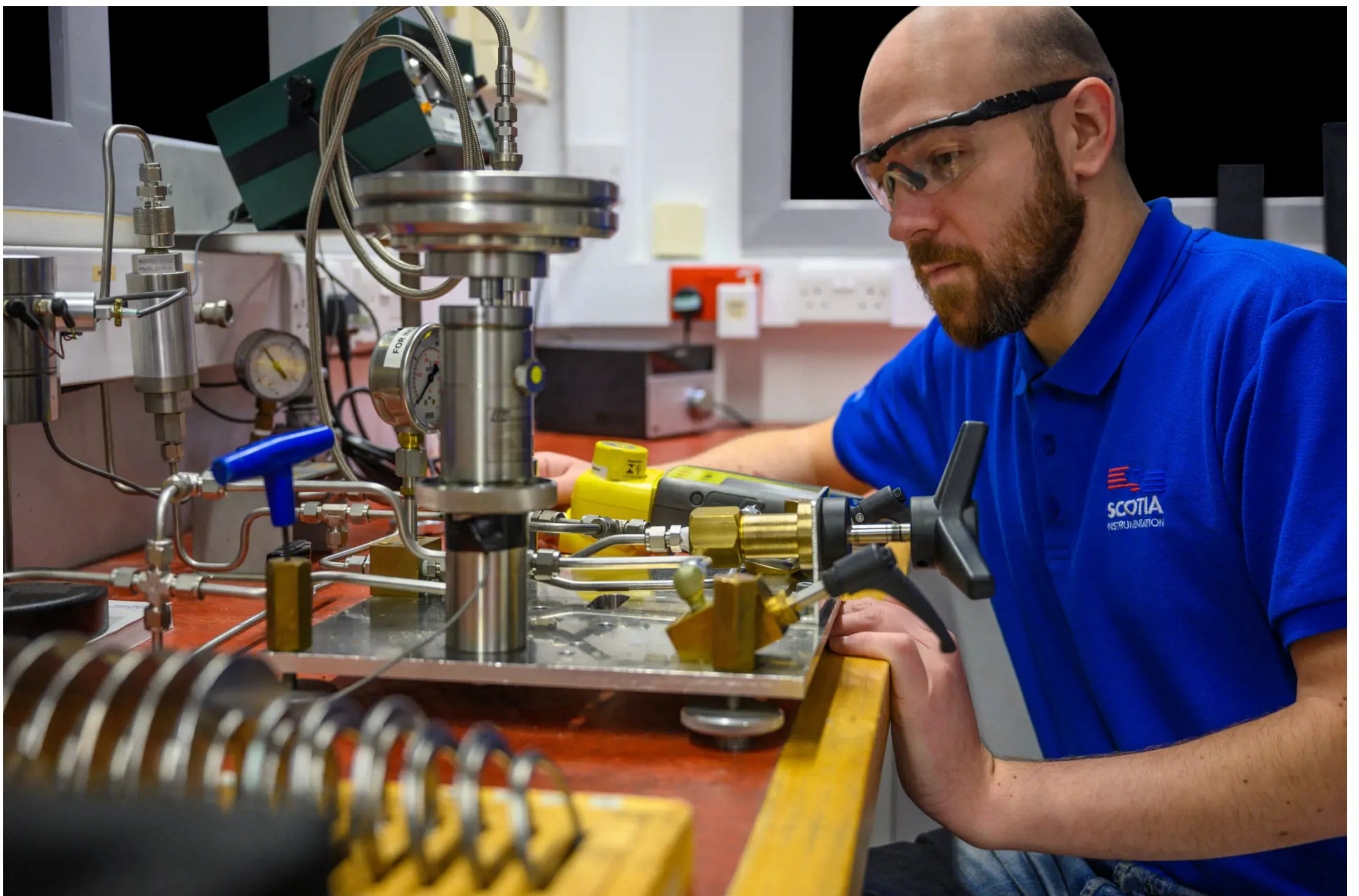


*The Hasselblad X2D II is ideally suited to the wide range of professional genres a GP commercial studio may be asked to cover, from industrial to people, architecture, technology and products, food and drink and more.*

later, I bought our main competition, which was Studio Morgan, a well respected photographic company in Aberdeen, and a few years after that, I purchased APS. At our peak, we had 34 staff and were photographing 15 weddings on a day and taking all the photographs back at night for guests to order.

Fast forward to major changes in photography and some personal circumstances, including a failed sale of part of the business, and I kept Aberdeen Photographic Services, which was to become Aberdeenphoto.com. We moved to our current studio in 2008. Weddings were still a large part of our business until the pandemic.

I have always been a commercial and property photographer, but during the pandemic, when there were no weddings or portraits, I did start to do more property photography and added services including drone, virtual tour, and floor plans. I don't do volume property



work; it's more the high-end residential and commercial property.

In 2022, I decided to stop photographing weddings. After 46 years and around 5,000 weddings, I decided to concentrate on commercial and property photography.

Today, we have a very small team of five. David, who used to work for me full-time, is now part-time is an excellent wedding photographer.

Ken has his own business but works regularly with me on events and commercial photography.

Sandra, my wife, is the portrait photographer and does families, pets, and newborns. She leaves the larger groups to me.

Lukas, who has been with us 22 years in June, is our full-time Photoshop and website design guru.

I now concentrate mainly on commercial photography and particularly property photography, and our services include:

- Commercial photography and videography
- PR and event coverage
- Headshots and brand imagery
- Specialist property photography
- Virtual tours (Matterport and 360)
- Drone photography and video
- Studio facilities with a large cove and a range of backdrops
- 360 product photography using our studio turntable
- In-house editing for both our own work and client images

When photography went digital, I was fortunate as I already had a keen interest in computers when it had little to do with the actual photographic process, but I was using them to run the business, particularly when I had the larger operation. Therefore, the transition to digital suited me as it combined my two passions. I've always been keen on technology and equipment.

My first digital cameras were from Kodak, and they were very low resolution and not much use for any quality work, but I enjoyed experimenting with them for press-style work. The first serious digital camera I had was Nikon D1, and I've stayed loyal with Nikon right through the transition to mirrorless, and now have an extensive Nikon outfit, including two Z9s, a Z7, and lenses from 10mm to 600mm.

Alongside my Nikon equipment, I have a range of Profoto lights. Last



Residential tour

Neil's property photography includes drone views able to show farm and estate settings well, outdoor and indoor room views. He uses the Matterport system to provide walk-through virtual reality on estate agent websites, and draft floor plans.



Commercial tour





year I added the Hasselblad X2D II with the 20-35, and 35-100 to my kit

In 2024, I was at The Photography & Video Show and picked up the Hasselblad X2D. I immediately fell in love with it, and was very keen to buy one. However, rumours were circulating that a new version was coming, so I decided to wait. As soon as it was launched in September 2025, I got it, as I had pre-ordered it.

Since starting using the Hasselblad in October, I have rarely used my Nikon unless it has been for video or where I've needed a lens that is not available for the Hasselblad. The quality of the images is





*While Neil's portfolio has been based on his Nikon photography including longer lens examples as above, the Hasselblad medium format has now almost entirely taken over.*

outstanding and although the resolution is overkill for most of the work, the colour quality is phenomenal and even lay people recognise this. I'm also surprised at how many people recognise the name Hasselblad or just that it looks different from regular DSLR or mirrorless cameras.

What I really like about it, apart from the quality of the images, is the build quality and incredible menu system which puts all the Japanese manufacturers to shame – the only other system that is on a par with it is Leica.

The Hasselblad is probably an indulgence, but if it adds to my passion and enjoyment, it is worth it. I have just acquired an immaculate 500C/M like I used when I started in 1977. I am looking forward to a trip down memory lane when I load a roll of film!

As I have Lukas to do the editing, I feel very fortunate that I spend most of my time taking photographs and dealing with clients, which is what I enjoy most. Although I am close to the end of my career, I still have as much passion for photography as I did when I started in 1977.

All being well, I will celebrate 50 years as a photographer in 2027, and I feel fortunate still to be doing something that I enjoy so much. It also gives me an excuse to indulge my technology and gadget addiction.

See:

[www.aberdeenphoto.com](http://www.aberdeenphoto.com)

For Hasselblad products:

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





Commercial assignments can be on location outdoors – communication and logistics skills vital as above on the new A9 Aberdeen bypass – in clients' premises like the Hill of Rubislaw below, or in the studio for product shots including 360° rotators. These QR codes open studio 'rotator' shots (ignore ads!).



# AI Stock Keywords – a big time-saver

One of the worst design features of Alamy's stock photography site is the absolute need to have more than 40 keywords and to select 10 of these as Supertags, as well as providing a Caption (Description) of up to 150 characters. You only get Optimised visibility with 50 keywords!

To tackle the need for this without spending many hours, it makes sense to use a tool like **aistockkeywords.com** – we might not approve of AI used to fake images, or write articles, but any time you have used something like **plantfinder.net** it's been AI in effect, it just wasn't called that at first. Your camera probably includes some pretty deep AI functions which can recognise a person or an animal, identify the head and the body, focus on the nearer of visible eyes if asked to, and then track the result round the frame adjusting focus as you shoot continuously.

Those same functions can also recognise many subjects and often identify them exactly. **aistockkeywords.com** – cost \$8 to keyword 5,000 files – may well be training itself at the same time as providing the service.

Because Alamy has such a specific need to have many keywords and also a caption or description before an image goes on sale (becomes visible in searches) and AI keyword tool which works could enable shoots to 'go live' quickly. It must work image by image, and recognise content visually, so that even within a set of shots there will be some variety and uniqueness in keywords and caption.

## Alamy fail and fix

Image metadata has for decades been aligned with the standards set by the **International Press Telecommunications Council**. These are the IPTC fields you will see in *Lightroom*, *Bridge* and many other cataloguing

programs such as *Neofinder* (highly recommended) or *ACDSee*. Alamy imports Description and Keywords from the *Legacy IPTC IIM* fields, not the *IPTC Core* fields. **aistockkeywords.com** creates .XMP text data which puts Description and Keywords (a.k.a Tags) in IPTC Core fields only. This data can be saved within the image file or as a .CSV spreadsheet to be submitted with uploaded batches.

*Bridge/LR* show the keywords in both Core and Legacy fields, but the Description only appears in Core. Alamy is stuck in the past looking for this in Legacy IPTC IIM. Without the Caption (the field name used for Description in IPTC), an image does not become visible in the stock library.

This can be fixed in Phase One *Media Pro* (discontinued) just by opening a batch of files and choosing 'Export Metadata to Files'. In *Bridge/LR* this is done by selecting the files and running *EXPORT to JPG* at unchanged size into a new folder, *embedding* the .XMP metadata. It's an extra step, copying each file and doubling the disk space used before you delete the original. *Media Pro* works more efficiently, but needs an old Intel based OS on (for me) a dedicated 2013 'frozen in time' Mac Mini and screen.

Using Adobe software means I can work on one machine where my JPEGs are stored. But life is still not perfect! Adobe programs let me keyword raw files, not just JPEGs, but this program can't. There's even more which AI could do if .XMP/IPTC fields allowed it – such as identifying the number of people in an image (Alamy has settings of None, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5+) and making better use of the filename (I realise many photographers do not use subject-based filenames) and GPS location data (again, I know many don't use this). The program does seem to use the

filename to keyword buildings, towns, flowers and plants and so on but then the next similar image and filename may be missing these keywords.

Example – it identifies 'sparrow' possibly from the filename "sparrows-birdbathfeb.jpg" and includes 'sparrow' as a keyword, but creates the caption/description "Several small brown birds splash and play in the cool water of a rustic stone birdbath, enjoying a refreshing moment outdoors" with no inclusion of 'sparrow'.

However after testing a few other keywording options such as the much-praised *Excire* and three plug-ins for *Neofinder* (one the AI engine from Apple *Photos*) nothing came close.

## Alamy redundancy

The screenshot on the left above the picture shows 45 keywords. That's because if you ask for 50, you'll fill up Alamy's need but may not have any of the best keywords in the list. Leaving space for five entered manually is useful. With 45 and a caption, uploaded images immediately go on sale, coded orange for poor Discoverability.

Selecting ten (or at least eight) keywords to star as 'Supertags' turns the rating green to good Discoverability. But if you top up the keywords to 50, as in the right-hand screenshot, the rating turns to 'Optimized'. It's a bit crazy that only the maximum 'points' should get this, but that's how Alamy was configured many years ago and it's baked into the software which handles tens of millions of image files.

Frankly, the need for 50 keywords can only greatly increase the proportion of false hits when searching for an image. Those with poor discoverability and just a dozen keywords still get found, perhaps because the keywords are specific to the image. The idea

that with optimised search rating this shot might perhaps get into a result for 'sunny day' or 'rock' is worrying! But Alamy beats Getty's limited controlled vocabulary any day – it actually allows relevant keywords enabling targeted searches.

But things are as they are, and thinking up 50 keywords for a few hundred files can take many hours possibly spread over weeks. This program enabled me to file with 'on sale' over 650 processed shots in under 20 minutes. This included an entire 2023 set of Tenerife (forgotten!) and almost 500 miscellaneous subjects from 2025.

Some of the AI was amazing – it only needs a small legible sign in the shot for a keyword right down to foreign accents to be generated. Place and street names, well-known buildings and objects, clothing and food all produce detailed captions and keyword sets. Unlike using *ChatGPT* to generate a set of keywords for a destination, which I did with Lisbon in 2024, every picture gets its own analysis and there's no half-relevant padding.

But this AI program did not, in the example shown, include the Latin name for the birds or the location. Nearly all my photographs have GPS location data, and this is not picked up on any more than the filename is.

## Submitting elsewhere

Faced with sales stagnation despite collection inflation, it makes sense to look at other outlets.

Getty, which includes iStock's various divisions, simply doesn't accept any images which can be found elsewhere – even on your website. They demand exclusivity. I have an entire set from Tenerife in 2025 which have not been sent anywhere, and with over 20 years of filing shots from the Canary Islands on Alamy, it makes sense to take a

**ON SALE** Discoverability

Mandatory Optional

Pseudonym David Kilpatrick (Default)

Caption 125/150  
Several small brown birds splash and play in the cool water of a rustic stone birdbath, enjoying a refreshing moment outdoors

Tags (keywords)  
Common 45/50 tags including 10/10 supertags

Add new tags

Reset  
Select all Copy selected Delete selected

- sparrow bird bathing birdbath
- water flock group small bird
- wildlife nature outdoors
- garden splash refreshing
- summer avian feathers
- drinking cleaning perching
- stone rock natural backyard
- ornamental cute charming
- domestic sparrow house sparrow
- common sparrow songbird
- small animal animal creature
- wild feeding drinking water
- cooling off sunny day daylight
- spring season fauna
- ornithology animal behavior

License type Royalty free (recommended)

Image type Photograph

**ON SALE, OPTIMIZED** Discoverability

Mandatory Optional

Pseudonym David Kilpatrick (Default)

Caption 125/150  
Several small brown birds splash and play in the cool water of a rustic stone birdbath, enjoying a refreshing moment outdoors

Tags (keywords)  
Common 50/50 tags including 10/10 supertags

Add new tags

Reset  
Select all Copy selected Delete selected

- February Scotland dunnock
- passeridae Passer domesticus
- sparrow bird bathing birdbath
- water flock group small bird
- wildlife nature outdoors
- garden splash refreshing
- summer avian feathers
- drinking cleaning perching
- stone rock natural backyard
- ornamental cute charming
- domestic sparrow house sparrow
- common sparrow songbird
- small animal animal creature
- wild feeding drinking water
- cooling off sunny day daylight
- spring season fauna
- ornithology animal behavior

License type Royalty free (recommended)

break and allocate these to Getty Adobe Stock, in contrast, will take non-exclusive files. First tests indicate that it's got AI analysis doing truly stupid things like thinking small silhouetted figures make a shot ineligible because there's no model release. At least Alamy will file the shot and make it clear it's not model released.

Setting 49 keywords is the maximum for Adobe Stock, which accepts only sRGB files when my entire stock archive is in Adobe RGB. However both *Bridge* and *Lightroom* have a 'Publish' pane which sends selected files either to your Adobe Portfolio or to Adobe Stock – and it uses the correct keyword and description fields. This so far seems to be an extremely fast process and if your files are normally Adobe RGB they are converted to sRGB as required.

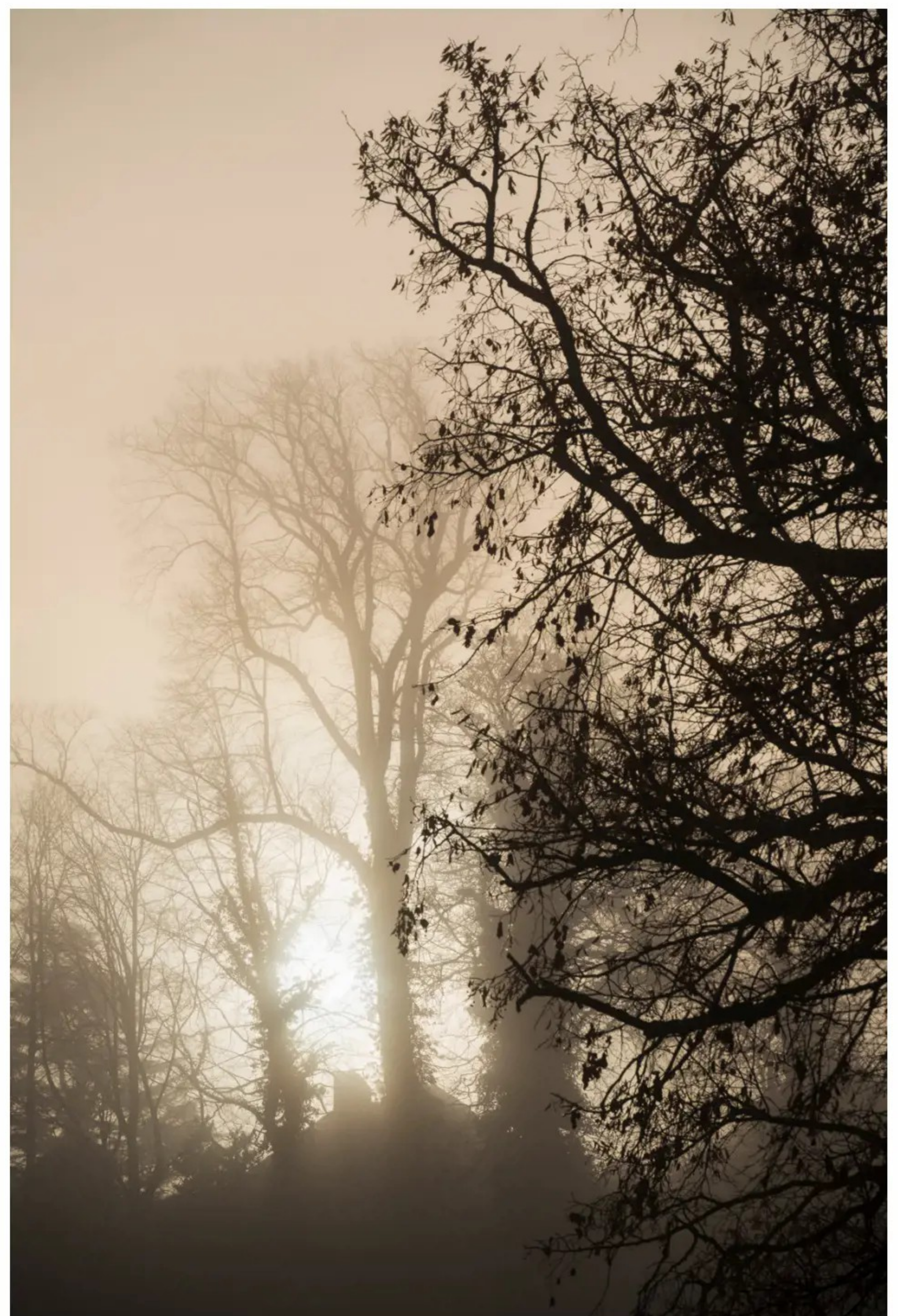
I'll report back on how Getty and Adobe do on acceptance/rejection of future files, and if they produce any revenue.

– David Kilpatrick

See: [aistockkeywords.com](http://aistockkeywords.com)



The shot with the AI keyword set (left) and added vital keywords not sourced by AI (right). Below, Adobe rejection for no model release – recognisable people? Really? Right, Adobe rejection for 'already have similar images'. Aye...



# LENSES

## Laowa 6mm f2 C-Dreamer AE A quality 12mm (122°) equivalent for MicroFourThirds outfits

The difference between a 7.5mm lens and a 6mm lens may seem to be so minimal they both do more or less the same job. On MicroFourThirds, 17.3 x 13mm sensor format, it's roughly the same as that between 15mm and 12mm. Anyone who used these focal lengths on full frame will confirm that it's significant.

Laowa may still have ads out there claiming their 2017-launched 7.5mm f2 as the widest lens for the format but since January 2023 they've offered a 6mm f2. In the electronically coupled versions which followed on the heels of purely manual ones, the 7.5mm is called C-Dreamer while the 6mm is a C&D-Dreamer. Apparently C means compact and D is the code for Zero distortion.

The AE versions with their chip and contact array only cost around £50 more than the manual ones which may be preferred for ciné – special ciné models are also made

with T=2.1 maximum aperture designation. For this £50 you get more than significant benefits. The 7.5mm raw file seen without the profile applied has significant barrelling – the 6mm is better until the extremes of the field when pincushion takes over. The profiles are not auto loaded in *Photoshop* or *Lightroom*, but when Laowa is chosen as the make the correct focal length is picked. Both are identified as C&D-Dreamer. Applying the profiles makes both almost distortion free, but the vignetting with the 6mm is only partially eliminated.

For in-camera JPEGs the profiles seem to work a little better thanks to the cameras (OM-5 and OM-1 checked) using the data. The aperture is set on the camera, and recorded in EXIF. The focal length is supplied to the sensor-based stabilisation of OM-Systems and Panasonic MFT bodies, though with such wide lenses accurate shake

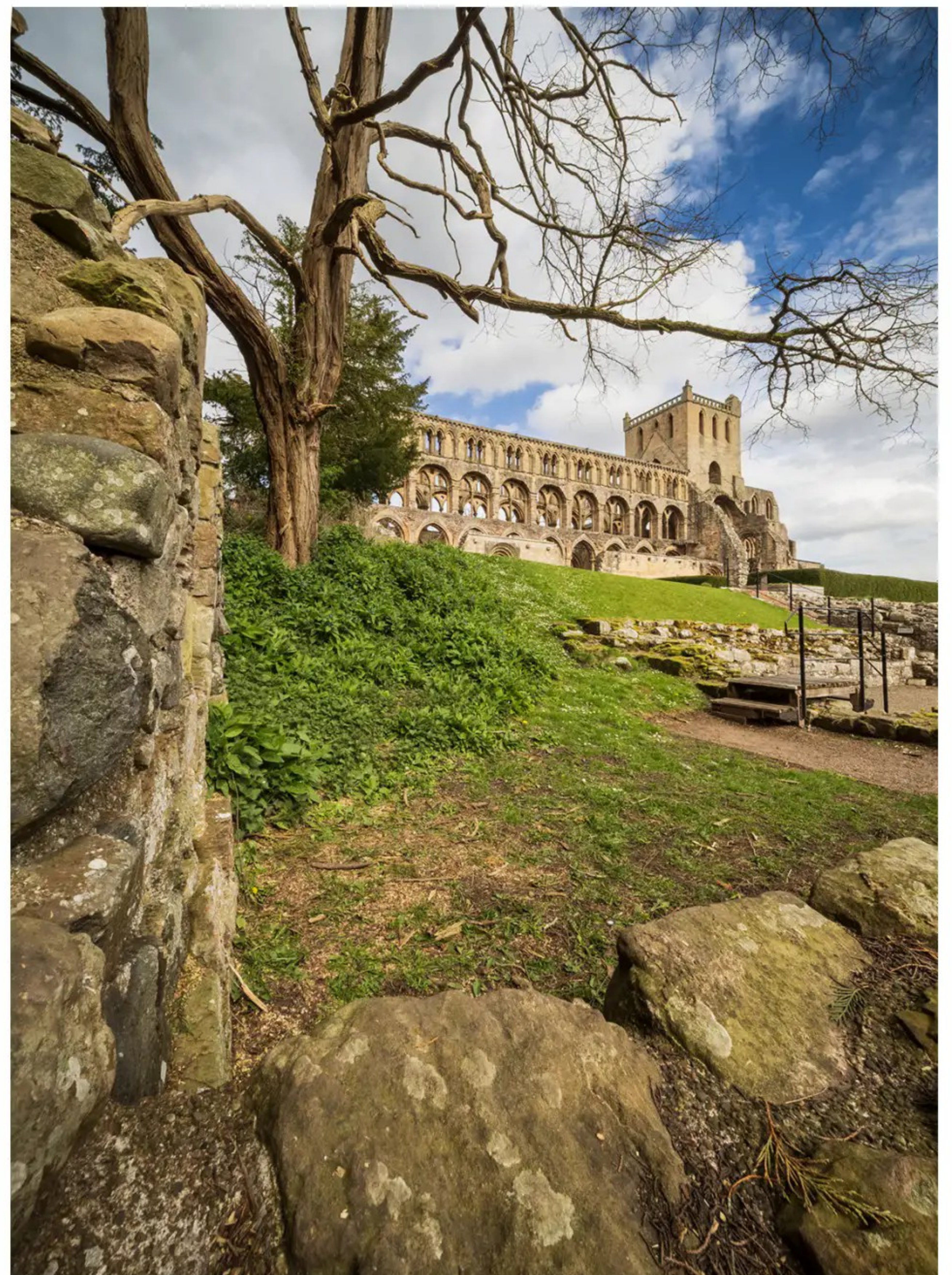


The 6mm is on the right next to the 7.5mm which we reviewed in 2023. Below, with lens hood reversed, it's not as super-pocketable but its 58mm filter thread is OM standard and a Hoya Revo polariser does not clip the image corners.

reduction can only ever happen in the centre of the frame. The corners and ends of it will not be very sharp anyway at f2 – both lenses have good resolution on axis, but need to be at f8 to remove softness at outside a crop to 5:4, and f11 for good corners. The 7.5mm focuses down to 12cm and even wide open retains fairly clean blur transitions to



The OM-5 used for these studies of Jedburgh Abbey, with camera positions constrained by barriers and closed-off areas, has an accurate enough level gauge to require minimal adjustment from raw capture. Rather than angle the camera and make corrections, both these shots only use cropping plus small amounts of rotation to optimise. The right hand shot was taken at f9 with sufficient depth of field to cover from the foreground walls – just a few centimetres away – to the distance. The skies were darkened in raw conversion – OM-1 MkII offers in-camera graduated ND 'filters'.





the outer field, while the 6mm focusing to 9cm looks wild.

Despite  $f2$  and the extreme angles being ideal for astro wide night sky shots, there's really no way either lens makes make the grade as only on-axis stars would render cleanly. Both lenses resist flare well and have 5-blade irises (the manual versions have 7 along with slightly heavier build). These can produce the expected ten-point sunstars.

The other big benefit of getting the chipped AE lenses is that the very smooth manual focus (infinity on the right hand side) invokes magnified MF assist in the EVF or on the rear screen. With the OM-5's small EVF this is vital. The OM-1/MkII's much larger EVF view is almost good enough, with the benefit of focusing being at  $f2$ , not to need it. The OM-5 gives a slightly cleaner magnified view – the 5.76 million dot OLED of the OM-1 models, like Sony's implementation, can look pixellated in low light. It's better when set to 3X or 5X, not 7X, 10X or 14X.

The only danger in sight when using such a short focal length manual lens is that you can see such a sharp overall image you forget it's



*Above, the original tilted and steeply converging view of the abbey, with the main reproduction processed in Adobe Camera Raw with perspective adjustment at Enhanced Resolution to give a 20MP image from a 5MP crop.*

not AF. Focusing and viewing is always at  $f2$  so if it's been left focused very close you'll spot it – and if you touch the focusing ring instinctively, a slight nudge will raise the magnified view. But if you have focused on around 2-3m and don't touch the lens, you can miss the error. It will show as a loss of detail despite the depth of field, unless working at  $f11$  to  $f16$ .

As to whether the Laowa 6mm is good enough, if you use OM High

Resolution multishot modes it's sharp even at 80MP around the  $f5.6$  to  $f8$  needed to balance diffraction against corrections. Anything wider than  $f4$  doesn't make the grade. But – this is a  $122^\circ$  angle lens! In the past any lens over a  $90^\circ$  angle was intended to be used well stopped down. On MFT,  $f11$  counts as that – similar to  $f22$  on full frame. Used with know-how this lens will deliver high resolution architectural shots to rival medium format. Its reserve

of detail also gives scope for converging vertical corrections from raw, beyond the built-in JPEG function of specific OM bodies.

The jump between the 12mm end of popular OM-Systems zooms (12-40mm, 12-45mm, 12-100mm and 12-200mm) and the 6mm is considerable. If you have a 24-70mm in a full frame kit, would you be happy with a 12mm as your only wider angle? The 7.5mm pairs with this as a 15mm equivalent so some would want both, or perhaps a 9-18mm OM zoom. If your reason for using OM-Systems to begin with is for light weight and compact packing with travelling or hiking, the lenses weigh 170g and 198g. With the 7.5mm, I have been carrying a step-up ring for 58mm filters and often leaving it on the lens. The 6mm does not need this, and when fitted it has made the 7.5mm just the same size. The Zero-D distortion of the 6mm does beat the 7.5mm's nearly-zero, so it's replacing the 7.5mm in my kit. The 6mm costs £400-£540 depending on import and VAT status.

– David Kilpatrick

See: <https://venuslens.net>



# MICROFOURTHIRDS

## How does the MFT format hold up?

The preceding article deals with one specific lens which extends the scope of the MicroFourThirds system, not entirely exclusive to OM-Systems as Panasonic also has an extensive camera and lens line-up. Their Lumix system brings in Leica as an optical partner, alongside Sigma, Tamron and a growing cadre of Chinese lens, drone and phone makers signing up to the 2008 innovation every year.

For most photographers now wedded to full 35mm format sensors, larger medium format digital – and many finding APS-C still covers all their needs – the benefits of MFT are outweighed by the resolution limit. It's been stuck at 20 megapixels for years. Despite the practicality of this for large screens and printed matter double page spread like this, it's an image size which fails to appeal when 45,

Baby rabbit by evening light – the 'basic' 75-300mm f4.5-6.7 M. Zuiko II at 300mm wide open, around the closest focus of 90cm, shot at ISO 6400, with +0.3 EV correction from the raw file. Adobe AI noise reduction works well though old-style luminance NR can suffice. The duck? That's 20fps so 10 wingbeats per second!



60, or 100 megapixels may be expected of professionals. Computational photography has changed much in MFT recently. Where multishot sensor shift based higher resolution once meant living with a vast folder of raw files needing a tedious merge stage on a computer platform, the 16 captures needed can now be processed in-camera with the latest OM-Systems models to produce just one high res raw (or JPEG) and a backup standard shot variant. It's become so capable at aligning image detail that even hand-held shots of static subjects yield 50MP and with the help of a tripod, 80MP (current OM models such as the OM-5, OM-3 and OM-1 in all generations).

What can not be overcome is the physical and optical limits of a <math>3.5\mu\text{m}</math> pixel pitch – roughly 1/300<sup>th</sup> of a millimetre. It's not as microscopic as smartphone sensors but it's quarter of the light receiving area of top low light choices like Canon's original 20 megapixel full frame 6D. It is much closer to the sensel well size of the Sony 61MP full frame sensor. If full framers ever

advance (?) to being 80MP the dynamic range and noise level playing field will be even.

The baby rabbit 20MP capture was processed using the latest *Photoshop Camera Raw*, with its AI noise reduction that does not create a new .DNG but processes the raw in a different way. It's not unlike Topaz NR and Adobe has a link to Topaz – it's found in the Filters list now with *AI Denoise* and *AI Sharpen* (used on this as well), both defaulting to Topaz as a 'partner'.

While such tools so help MFT's 13 x 17.5mm sensor compete, Adobe's own 'Enhance Resolution' which can work well on vintage digital raws does not agree with current OM-System .ORF – textures can end up wiggly and resembling old fractal upscalers.

These examples are taken on the OM-1 MkI, acquired in place of OM-5 because excellent examples can be found for a third of the cost of a new MkII and it's essentially the same camera, sensor, large clear OLED EVF and almost all CPU functions. The mallard coming in to land used ProCapture with active continuous AF and AE, not the fastest variation but even with the consumer level 75-300mm MkII the MSC autofocus (Movie and Still Capture) found the target within two pre-captured frames and held it until the duck passed behind some

bushes. These are 2400 x 1800 pixel crops and could be used full page width – 1/1000s hasn't fully frozen wingtip motion, the full  $f6.7$  aperture at 300mm is perfectly sharp, and the exposure didn't budge from needing ISO 200.

It is very easy to catch sharp autofocused shots on the OM-System. Panasonic's performance is slightly different, and using one of the attractively specified and priced Lumix lenses on OM loses some functions like ProCapture and its storage of a set of frames from before shutter pressure. For the duck, the default 20fps sequence speed was set with 10 pre-shutter release frames and a maximum of 50 frames if the shutter is held down.

The M.Zuiko lens system is very strong at the tele end with fast top quality options reaching the equivalent angle of view of 800mm or 1200mm full framers. It's not been as well served for wides, and the physical dimensions of the format and lens mount, with its 19.5mm register, limit things like shift lenses while very much favouring macro.

What stands out is that M.Zuiko lenses are almost all amongst the best designed and manufactured today. The Pro lenses (which enable maximum functions and performance) include very fast primes at  $f1.2$ , the standard range has alternative good  $f1.8$ s, and there are past models at  $f2.8$  taking the 17mm focal length as one example. Choice even exists with the standard Pro zoom – either 12-40mm  $f2.8$ , or 12-45mm  $f4$  with a weight saving and the benefit of closer focusing.

A complete OM-Systems kit can be carried easily and unobtrusively. At *Cameracraft* the current bag – a very small Vanguard Sydney II shoulder courier type – holds the OM-1 body, 12-45mm  $f4$ , 75-300mm II, 60mm  $f2.8$  Macro and Laowa 6mm  $f2$  with a 58mm polariser shared by most lenses, two spare batteries, a tiny FL-LM3 bounce flashgun and a pair of extension tubes. It weighs 2,670g to cover the equivalent of 12-600mm.

However, the OM-1 is a substantial full-sized mirrorless body. Our Sony A7RV with Sigma 20-200mm and Viltrox 14mm  $f4$ , in an identical bag with similar accessories (no macro, tubes, or flash) comes in at 400g less. The OM definitely wins for battery life, days rather than hours, and stabilisation for subjects like hand-held waterfalls at 1 to 2 seconds.

The Sony gives 61 megapixels and is part of a system where low-light friendly 12, 24, and 33MP sensors can be found in other bodies. The MicroFourThirds system has no such choices – it's been 20MP since 2015.

And this may be the one factor reducing its appeal.



# LENSES

## Sigma 35mm f1.4 DG DN II Updated design maintains Sigma's lead with this substantial fast all-rounder ART series wide

As one of the last remaining stalwartly Japanese lens brands, producing everything in their Aizu plant, Sigma faces competition from all angles but manages to win. Costs are controlled without sending any part of manufacture to China, Vietnam or elsewhere.

Some lenses you'll find labelled as Japanese-made, including rival Tamron as of last year, are indeed designed and largely made in Japanese plants but may either be assembled abroad or use components and sub-assemblies. This is nothing new as it's exactly how the German lens industry functioned 100 years ago, and how Japanese camera and lens makers did 75 years ago with a further burst of intercontinental collaboration 50 years ago.

The only great difference now is that China – home to dozens of innovative small shop makers across optics, electronics and mechanical build – is becoming a home to respected home-grown brands even faster than Japan did in the 1950s.

And, against this tidal wave, you'll find Sigma even more than the big camera brands maintaining and enhancing Japanese quality. Check your Nikon, Canon, Sony and even Fujifilm gear. It may say Malaysia or the Philippines or Thailand in tiny print. Not that there's anything wrong with this. We still note that Fujifilm's GFX medium format system is exclusively Japanese-made, but Sony's G-Master premium lens series is made in Thailand. Sigma

products, whether cameras or lenses, are entirely produced in Japan including the vital quality control which (in this writer's experience) has proved the Achilles heel of much 'satellite factory overseas' top camera brand glass.

Two riders to this: in the last five years or so, I've found Chinese own brands such as Viltrox and Laowa have improved QC greatly. And the most inconsistent Sony G lens we've ever tested several examples of, the 90mm f2.8 G Macro, is one of the few they produce in Japan.

What we have not seen recently is a bad Sigma. For any veteran photographic commentator there's a twist in that. In the 1970s when Sigma pioneered zooms, macro and versatile wide-angles missing from 'marque' line-ups their big failing was centring, collimation and QC. Excellent designs were let down by assembling to a price and pushing the limits of precision right up to the early 2000s.

The digital SLR and mirrorless revolution changed that as the company transformed into one led by the demands of QC.

And? The new 35mm f1.4 DG DN II is the outcome of this. It's a well designed and finely made lens able to match or better premium range marque equivalents. Compared to Sony's highly-rated 35mm f1.4 G-Master, it's priced around 60% of VAT-inclusive UK retail, at £849. Cashbacks and other promotions can change this.

The main points of this comparison include almost identical size and weight – 3mm lens in diameter at 73mm, same



96mm length, 1g heavier at 525g. While Sigma improved the minimum focus distance by 2cm over their previous 15mm longer and 120g heavier DN DG ART model A021, they did not improve on the 1:5.4X close-up scale. This is down to a change in internal focusing to reduce focus breathing when shooting video, the view remaining more constant when focus distance changes mid-take.

That 15mm extra length on the 2021 model was down to it being an adapted SLR register design. Mark II is designed for the shorter mirrorless register of E and L mount bodies.

The Sony achieves 1:3.9 scale at a 3cm closer distance only with manual focus, a frustrating feature. Sigma has taken the right decision not to have different AF and MF close focus limits. Movie shooters who only use MF may disagree.

It's worth looking at some physical aspects of the Sigma.

### In use

An immediate impression from unboxing and fitting its hood for the photograph below is that the tactile-feel rear section of lens hood collected dust and fingermarks very readily! The release button must be pressed to remove the hood. There is no need to touch it when fitting, whether normally or in reverse for storage, and the clip-in lens cap is exactly the same diameter as the filter rim so the hood can be removed or replaced with the cap fitted.

The right hand side lock switch can either lock the aperture ring at A (for control from the camera body in Auto, A or P modes) or lock A out so there's no risk of overshooting f16 and setting A by



The packaging, top, is eco-friendly without being the most basic folded brown card box of Contemporary series Sigma lenses. Left, a well-shaped near circular 11 blade iris, focus mode and aperture declick controls with function button between. Above, very clear semi-serif font on the scale seems to be printed not engraved – with aperture lock and second function button above.





An AF full  $f1.4$  shot, and though Animal Eye AF might have focused on the pupil/iris not the fur, there's just enough sharpness in ears, nose and whiskers. Series of shots below: top at  $f1.4$ , next at  $f2.8$ , bottom at  $f11$ . A small part of a full frame showing entire tombstone. Some CA is visible, it's not an apochromatic lens, and  $f2.8$  avoids the defocused slightly coloured bokeh of the branches.



mistake. The aperture scale is in third stop steps with just right resistance, and when the Click is turned off, the iris appears to operate as smoothly as a vintage multi-blade manual one. Sony's aperture setting can often go in small jumps rather than smoothly, and occasionally this is observed on the Sigma with fast or uneven operation of the de-clicked ring. However most of the time it's about as close to a smooth continuous change as any electro-mechanical design can be expected to be.

It's intriguing to observe the gradual change in depth of field through the EVF without visible jumps or steps. Sigma is competing in this respect with Sony G-Master optics and doing it well.

The two rubber-feel function buttons on the top and on the left side are well placed but became tacky with repeated use even in the few weeks of the test period.

When off the camera and unpowered, the internal focusing group can move freely on the lens axis and clonk if the lens is turned over, which may disturb some users. AF from dual HLA (High Response Linear Actuator) linear motors is extremely fast though there may be a slight lateral displacement of the image. Manual focus is smooth via a well damped fly-by-wire barrel. In this mode the focusing group does not shift laterally at all. The magnified focus (EVF or rear screen) is rapidly



invoked by manual focusing but it's not twitchy – it needs definite slight rotation, where some implementations of this on Sony have tended to kick the finder into magnified mode just because the focus ring is touched slightly when supporting the lens.

The design retains the 67mm filter size very common in this class, as with the Sony GM, and has no lens stabilisation which again is a standard thing with very fast lenses. The sensor stabilisation of current bodies is more than enough with a moderate wide-angle, it's only once you go past 200mm (or venture into the complexities of IS with macro lenses) that optical stabilisation is highly preferable. Some will prefer a stabilised lens for video regardless of focal length – their choices are restricted to Sony zooms of 24-105mm and 28-135mm with limited maximum apertures. As for Sigma, they dropped putting their OS into such lenses for the entire mirrorless range. There remain only a 24-70mm  $f2.8$  and a 24-105mm  $f4$  OS in DSLR mounts.

As for performance, the DG DN II is exemplary. It's hard to show just how exceptional its full aperture resolution is through the pages of *Cameracraft* whether PDF or printed out. Exploring on-screen many captures taken at apertures generally wider than  $f11$  (to avoid any hint of diffraction softening) it's clear that you do not need to



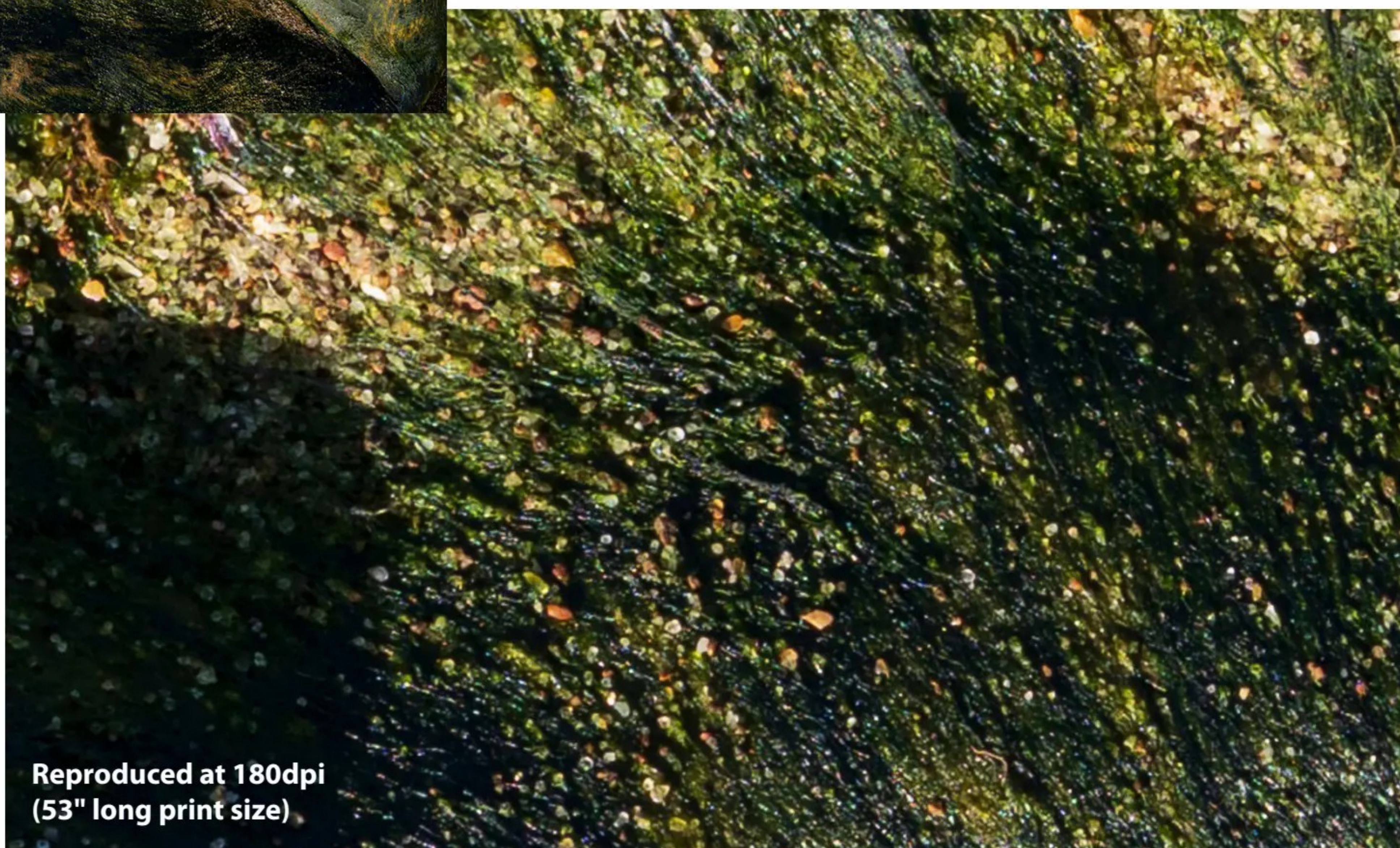
Left: the 35mm  $f1.4$  offers great control over depth of field with the ability to stop down to  $f16$ , though why very few modern lenses go down to  $f22$  is a mystery, as this would have made a significant difference to the last shot. Note some complex bokeh at  $f1.4$  in the upper right, from defocused grasses. Below, on the football-plus-Nike themed Adobe stand at The Photography & Video Show, wide open left,  $f16$  right.





stop this lens down just to get things sharper. There is the usual hint of improvement with every third-stop step of the aperture ring between  $f1.4$  and  $f2$  but you will not see this in a print whether at 300dpi for close viewing or 240dpi for a wall print.

On this page, we've broken the rules and enlarged a section of the closer image above, taken at  $f9$ , so it's reproduced at 180dpi. That's below the lower limit for a properly sharp PDF or printed page. The individual crystal grains of sand on the hair-fine rock algae can be studied by shape and colour while



the more distant composition (also at  $f9$ ) above shows that lens has a very slight barrel distortion. This is only because there is not yet an Adobe update for its profile. A quick check against the 2012 (DSLR) and 2021 (mirrorless) 35mm  $f1.4$  models shows distortion is greatly reduced and even with no profile found it's nearly perfect.

A mere +3 de-barrelling fixes the horizon perfectly, and this will hardly ever be needed. As for coatings providing flare control, water and dust resistance it's again excellent. It's not made for Nikon Z or Canon R and that is their loss.

– David Kilpatrick



[www.sigmauk.com](http://www.sigmauk.com)



# VINTAGE FILM

## Wolfen 100NP – ORWO keeps on! Slightly outdated but at £25 for 10 x 36exp... a Photo Show deal

To look at the page on the left it's hard to believe it's shot on ISO 100 film. The crisp and prominent grain looks more like 3200. It's from one of the first two rolls of FilmoTec Wolfen 100NP, expiry in 2024, from a pack bought in the analogue zone at The Photography Show. You can easily pay £10 for a single roll of BW 35mm now and for me, £2.50 a roll feels much better.

The film is broadly based on an old ORWO emulsion, possibly NP20 or NP22 as there was no ISO 100 which would have been NP21. These East German and successor films were never fine grained unless you went to the sub-20 ASA level like NP15, competing with EFKE KB14 from Fotochemika Zagreb, which inherited ADOX production lines and moved them from Germany to Croatia.

The Wolfen-based film industry never moved location, its lines survived and in recent years independent emulsion formulae from companies like FilmoTec have been produced as batches on the former ORWO lines. NP100 is not the first of this speed, as an earlier batch has been made without an anti-halation layer. This is considered a benefit by ageing hipster photographers looking for a vintage 'glow', alongside a younger generation of newbies.

There's a big issue with film lacking an anti-halo layer between the emulsion and the base. Any pressure plate with anti-suction dimples can produce a pattern from these on the neg. Back when few films had anti-halation layers, pressure plates were smoothly machined or polished. The downside was that they tended to cling to the film and scratch it. That's why the patterns of indents appeared, after all currently films had anti-halation – a feature users of the original Kodak High Speed Infrared deeply regretted. That film had no anti-halo layer, and the combination of huge grain and the glow round highlights became a signature look.

This is probably what FilmoTec were replicating, without the IR

sensitivity, in the alternative film which is still sold. NP100 is in contrast a modern type of film on an Estar base though more like Plus-X or original FP4 than later T-Max or Delta 100. I have negatives from the late 1960s still available to examine and the grain is rarely as prominent. The developer used was ADOX FX-39II, similar to Paterson FX-39 which Derek Watkins wrote up in depth for Icon's magazine *Photon* in June/July 1994 – <https://www.iconpublications.com/photon/darkroom/fx39.html>

The reproduction on the left is from a macro bellows A7RV 'scan' of the neg, with some digital shading to burn in a touch at the corners. To get better idea of performance, I made a 7 x 9.5" print, with slightly lower contrast using G3.5 filtered Multigrade II. Despite the impeccable illumination of the vintage Valoy II enlarger, making such a small print meant dodging and burning would

have been difficult. The corners and right hand side would need burning-in slightly – you can see a straight print on the next page. The grain is less visible when printed despite being sharply focused through a 50mm f4 EL Nikkor, but somehow does not work as well as the distinctive grain on the digital copy from the negative. Scratches on the film are also more visible in the darkroom print. Normally a scan or copy shows these when an enlarger print does not.

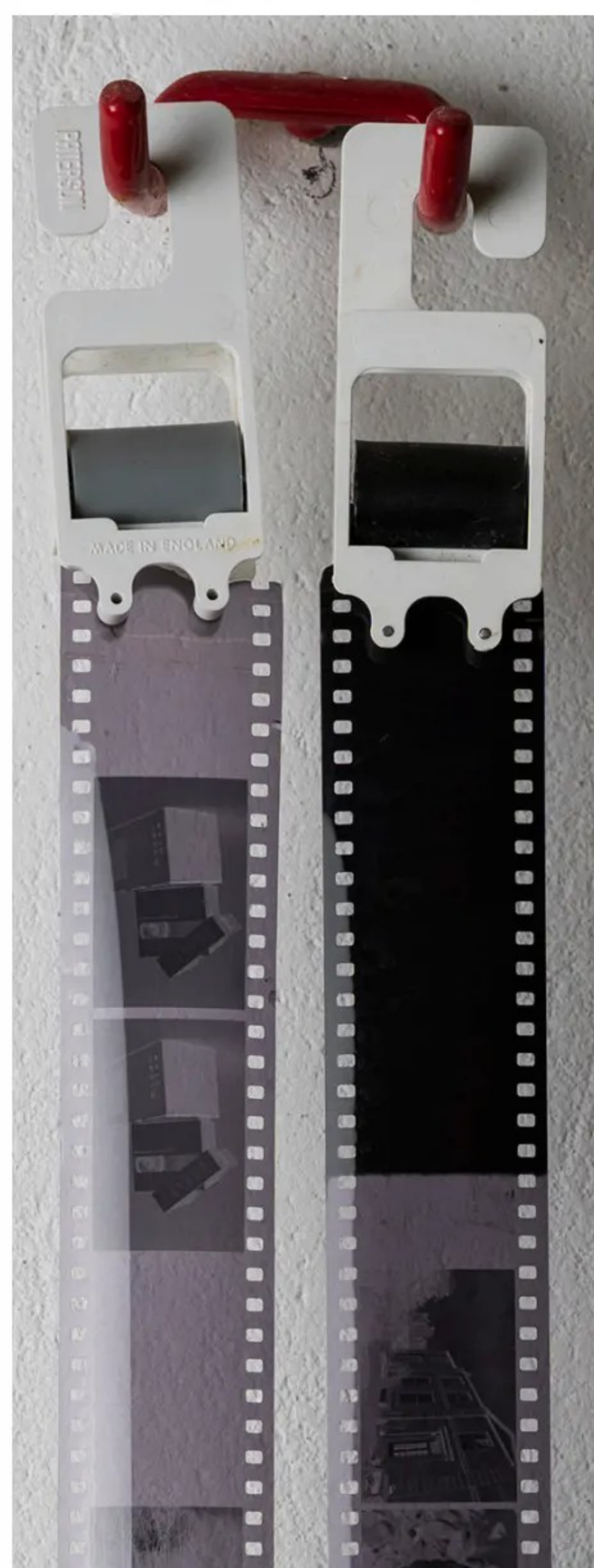
The interior of the 1980 (final production) Minolta SRT100X used with MD Rokkor 50mm f2 at f8 shows no reason for scratches in the film wind direction and not all negatives have identical ones. It's a very controlled lever wind, and I am careful not to rewind or pull film from the cassette quickly. I have to suspect dust/grit in the cassette, and the slightly different actual length of the 35 exposure rolls indicates that the spooling of these custom-order emulsion



batches involves more handling than films from the major brands.

The combination of this film with FX-39II has a distinct Neofin/Beutler look with high sharpness and edge effects similar to using a wide radius unsharp mask or 'Clarity' in *Photoshop*.

To do the film justice I should also try it using a true fine-grain solvent developer, Xtol or Perceptol. It's never going to be FP4 Plus, and past its expiry date has a touch higher fog level but no significant loss of speed. Messages in this: first, brands like Wolfen are fine to try but don't expect results



A decent d-Max and moderate base fog. Right: on Sigma 24mm macro with orange filter.





A G3.5 Multigrade II print on 7 x 9.5" paper has more subtle shadow gradation but a more uneven look, less distinctive grain, and more tendency to show fine scratches on the negative.

similar to premium films like T-Max 100 or Delta 100; second, BW film close to expiry date is likely to be good, as many already know. Third, go to photo shows and watch for special deals!  
- DK



Below: with 24mm and 4X orange filter, top two, and with 50mm, no filter, bottom.



# Cameracraft Crossword

## by Phoebus

Well, those picture clues in the last issue worked but they are really hard to follow...

This time we're a Neo-Cryptic tech/art/photography/entertainment theme.

Use this link for crossword solutions - <https://bit.ly/3N0R0fw>

### Across Clues:

7AC & 6DN: An aircraft perpendicular to the axis of a lens? (5,5).

8: Policeman painter (9).

10: What Idris and Napoleon have in common? (4).

11: Jools's show is a lot of fun for child minder having taken ecstasy (10).

12: Unusual sizes and proportions, perhaps? (3,10).

15: The widest aperture available on any given lens (7).

16: Evidence of pencil drawing is vague (7).

18: Channel 4 TV show from 1992 was like thrusting a knife around in the shadows... (4,2,3,4)

21: O! scour mint frantically for an association of companies (10).

24: A setting on one's camera or the very beginnings of a tulip (4)

25: Store of water for Quentin's ultra-violent dogs (9)

26: Capri, small island where white light is separated into a spectrum of colours (5)

2: Tripod head supporting kitchen utensil while leaning over (3,3,4).

3: Pleasant smelling continental venue for biennial photographic trade fair (7).

4: \*\*\*\*\* The Gaul? No, very close, but it's above the number 8 on your qwerty keyboard! (8)

5: Space agency not applicable above South Africa. (4).

6: See 7AC.

9: Digit above disorganised bus driver, missing final, but finding miniature portable data storage device. (5,3,5).

13: Toned awkwardly, but definitely recorded officially (5).

14: Not a long lineup of candidates... (9).

17D & 24D Set fire when at home, while adding extra exposure to an area of photographic paper under the enlarger (4,2).

19: Initially, He Didn't Manually Interfere with TV cable (4).

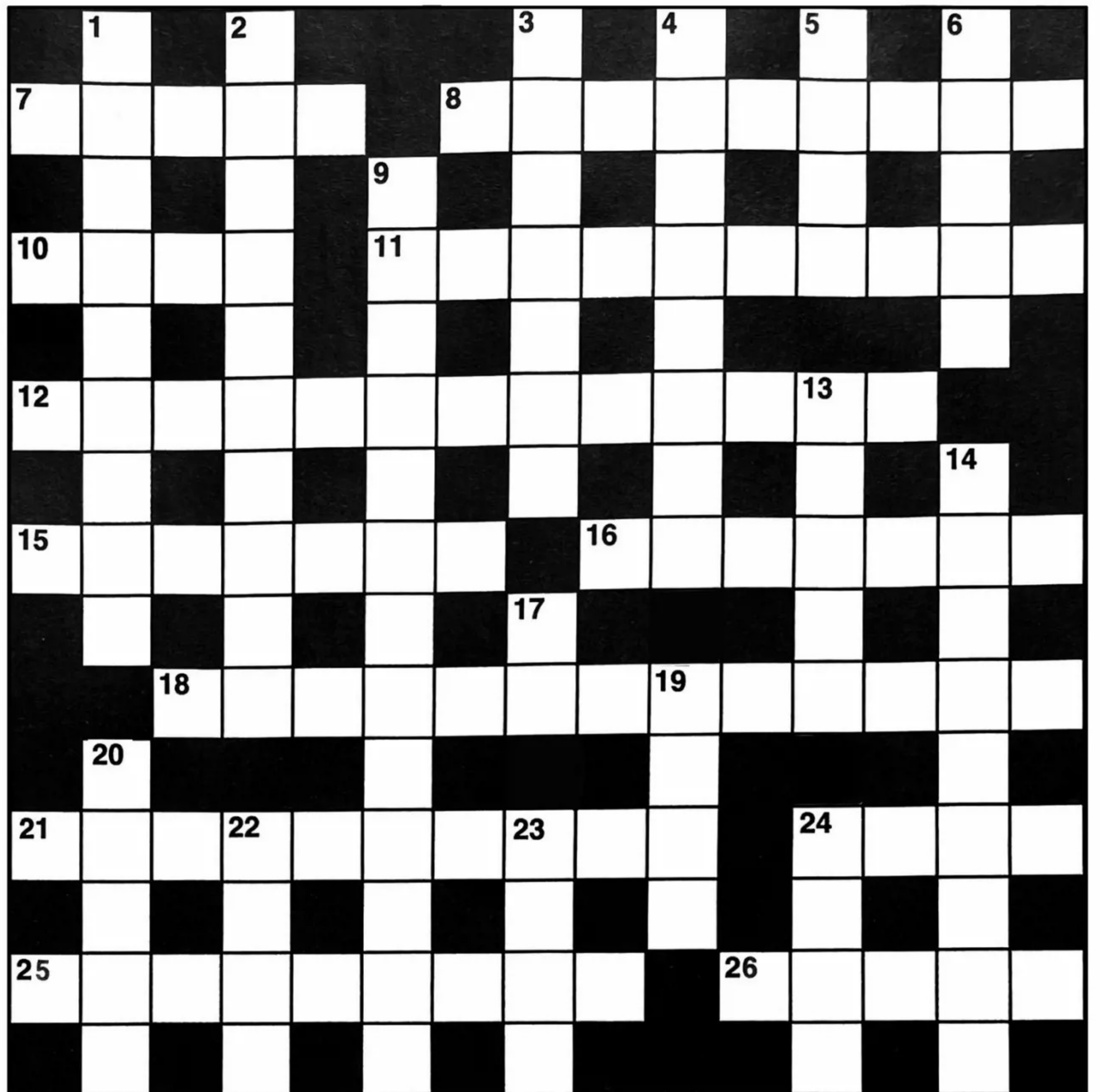
20: Sounds like a bunch of flowers, but actually it's the aesthetic quality of the blur produced in the out-of-focus parts of an image.

22: Apply a vertical or horizontal slant in Photoshop, very useful when working on a picture of south London botanical gardens (4).

23 Woman restricting the amount of light entering her camera (4).

### Down Clues:

1: Colonial Doctor confused by Frederick Scott Archer's wet plate photographic process from the mid 1800s (9)





*This shot was taken visiting Lisbon with the Fujifilm X100VI. It's a camera uniquely well suited to reportage and 'decisive moment' timing thanks to its hair-trigger response and hybrid optical/EVF viewfinder. Referencing back to page 34, with 237 shots filed with Alamy from this trip, not a single use has been licensed in two years – ChatGPT was used to populate keywords but shot-specific ones were always added. The black and white version is not from the BW JPEG created alongside the .RAF raw, in order to have a BW EVF and rear screen view when shooting. It's processed from raw with detailed local adjustments, especially to the bubbles, and a red filter profile (central boy's cheeks and the bubble man's shirt show its effect).*



# CAMERACRAFT REARVIEW

For this back cover we're chosen two from a set of fine pictures by one of our past professional profile subjects, advertising photographer Giles Christopher. Giles is best known for his furniture and room sets, food and drink but also for misty early morning walks with camera in London's Bushy Park. You can find him on Instagram as [prophoto.giles](https://www.instagram.com/prophoto.giles) and [wildphoto.giles](https://www.instagram.com/wildphoto.giles), and see his great commercial work at <https://www.gileschristopher.co.uk/>



"We stayed for an April weekend with good friends in Devizes and made it out to the Caen Hill Lock Flight – 29 of them along this stretch of canal . It was absolutely worth an early alarm. A 5 a.m. start and a four-mile walk led me into one of those perfect mornings: long shadows stretching across the landscape, soft silhouettes, and that quiet, almost cinematic backlight I love to photograph. Sleepy, yes... but mornings like this are why you get out. Perfect conditions!"

