



PHOTOTRAIN

PHOTOGRAPHY
MAGAZINE



Keeping you on track on your photography journey



Camera Meltdown

**Get Creative
Get Inspired
Get
Phototrained !**

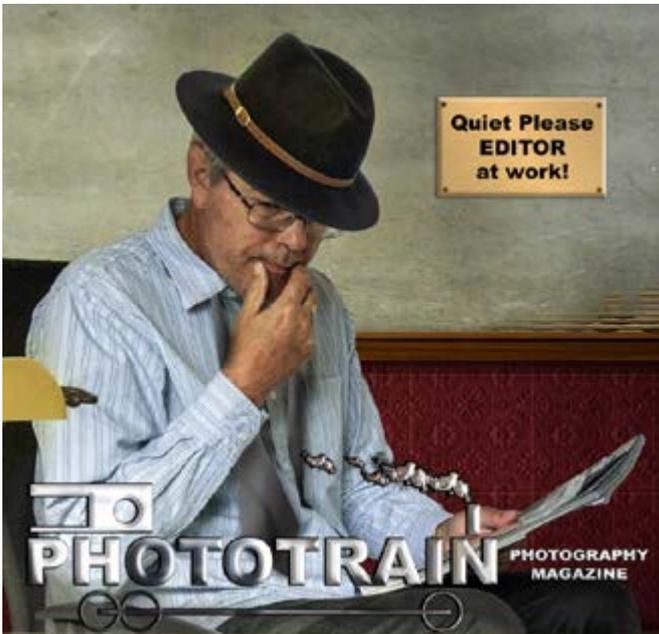
In the first issue we have some great features including:

VIDEO TUTORIALS In Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop from Kenneth Fisher and Les Arnott

INTERVIEWS Eastern Wonders Singapore's Pat Law and Philippines Ming Rae Orden
From the Isle of Wight bird photographer Peter Christian

PLUS MUCH MORE!

Cover design: Les Arnott



EDITORS WELCOME

I'm so excited to share with you our first issue of the Phototrain Photography Magazine, a free online magazine that is also available as a PDF download from our website.

We are totally dedicated to bring you the very best we can and our team grows with knowledgeable and experienced photographers giving great tutorials and reports in camera use, post production, composition, testing out software and plug-ins plus interviews with some the best and upcoming photographers.

Being a reader myself of many magazines on the market I got the feeling that very few gave little for their cost except page after page of advertisements with very little content wise. This gave me the inspiration to create something that would eradicate this and create good down to earth content with the least distractions we want to give you the reader as much useful and interesting content as possible at a zero cost or profit.

We really hope and feel confident we will win you over to becoming a regular reader of our magazine.

We would also love to see people out there contributing to our magazine content too. We are always on the look out for people to interview and to promote their work to the rest of the world. If you feel you have great work you would like to share with us then please contact me at the email address on the Useful Links on the right.

Like to be competitive? See how you fare in our weekly Phototrain Photography Competition that we hold on Facebook where the winners get a feature in the magazine, plus get a place on our website winners gallery together with two weekly runners up. Find the link below with our other useful links.

Two lots of people I have to thank before I end my rambling! First my dedicated team for the work they have put into this magazine. We are all unpaid we simply do it for the love of photography, art, teaching and being creative. Kenneth Fisher, Sarah Walters, Graham Orgill, my wife Sally and new arrival to the team Monica Doshi I thank you all for your dedication!

Secondly I'd like to thank our featured photographers Pat Law, Ming Rae Orden, Peter Christian and Scott Latham for agreeing to take part in our first edition.

Les Arnott
Editor

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USEFUL LINKS

Phototrain Website
www.phototrain.co.uk

Phototrain Competition Winners Gallery
www.phototrain.co.uk/blog/

Phototrain Facebook Photography Competition
(You must have a Facebook account to participate)
www.facebook.com/groups/735309709952413/

Magazine PDF Downloads
www.phototrain.co.uk/downloads.html

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WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION



..... **LETS GET ON TRACK!**

Pat Law

Interview by
Les Arnott

"I have a drive to create and a passion to show the world through my eyes. I seek to capture the extraordinary and the unique. I love to shoot landscapes, streets, events and people, capturing beautiful moments in people's lives"



Pat Law comes from Singapore and is a passionate part time professional photographer whose dream is to experience the world and venture more into travel photography. Pat's employment in the business world is working as a full-time hair stylist, yet another area of his creativity.

I first bumped into Pat's photography some years ago whilst browsing on Facebook and straight away after just a glance at one of his photos really enticed me to explore and delve deeper into his library of work. His night lit cityscapes of Singapore are totally amazing pieces of photography showing his eye for both colour and composition. He also prevails as an excellent portrait photographer photographing people in their environment sometimes capturing happiness, and sometimes hardships which at times can be harsh in the areas he visits as shown in his image "Sunset at Nusa Penida Beach" on the next page showing an old woman hard at work. Here is what Pat said about the photo in his own words.

"I noticed this old lady while we were scouting the area as part of our daily routine. She had been collecting seaweed in the sea for many hours daily. It was heartbreaking to see that but it was also heart warming. This photo displays her perseverance and strength of character. Let this be a reminder for us to never give up in life. Life can be tough and challenging sometimes but do fight for a better day."

For his main photography work Pat uses a Nikon D800 DSLR Camera with 14-24mm, 28-70mm, 70-200mm lenses. When travelling light he works with a Sony A7R 16-35mm, 85mm, 28-70mm & vintage lenses.

I would like to thank Pat for giving me the time to interview him and to share his remarkable work with our readers and hopefully the interview will promote his work to those not aware of it as Pat certainly deserves a world audience.



Above: Sunset at Nusa Penida Beach. A wonderful example of his image processing © Pat Law

Below: Sanur Sunrise. A perfect example of the rule of thirds © Pat Law





Above: An example of Pat's wonderful creativity in this beautiful serene shot © Pat Law

Below: Marina Bay Waterfront Skyline Sunset © Pat Law



LIGHTROOM TUTORIAL VIDEOS

With Kenneth Fisher

Ken Fisher's Phototrain Lightroom Series



Welcome to my Lightroom videos for Phototrain the magazine to keep you on track to learning new photography and editing skills.

In this months magazine I'll be showing you the beginnings of using Adobe Lightroom to understand just exactly what it's used for and then show you step by step how to use the program starting with creating catalogues in Lightroom so you fully understand how to get the very best out of the software and building you up month by month to becoming a Lightroom Ninja!



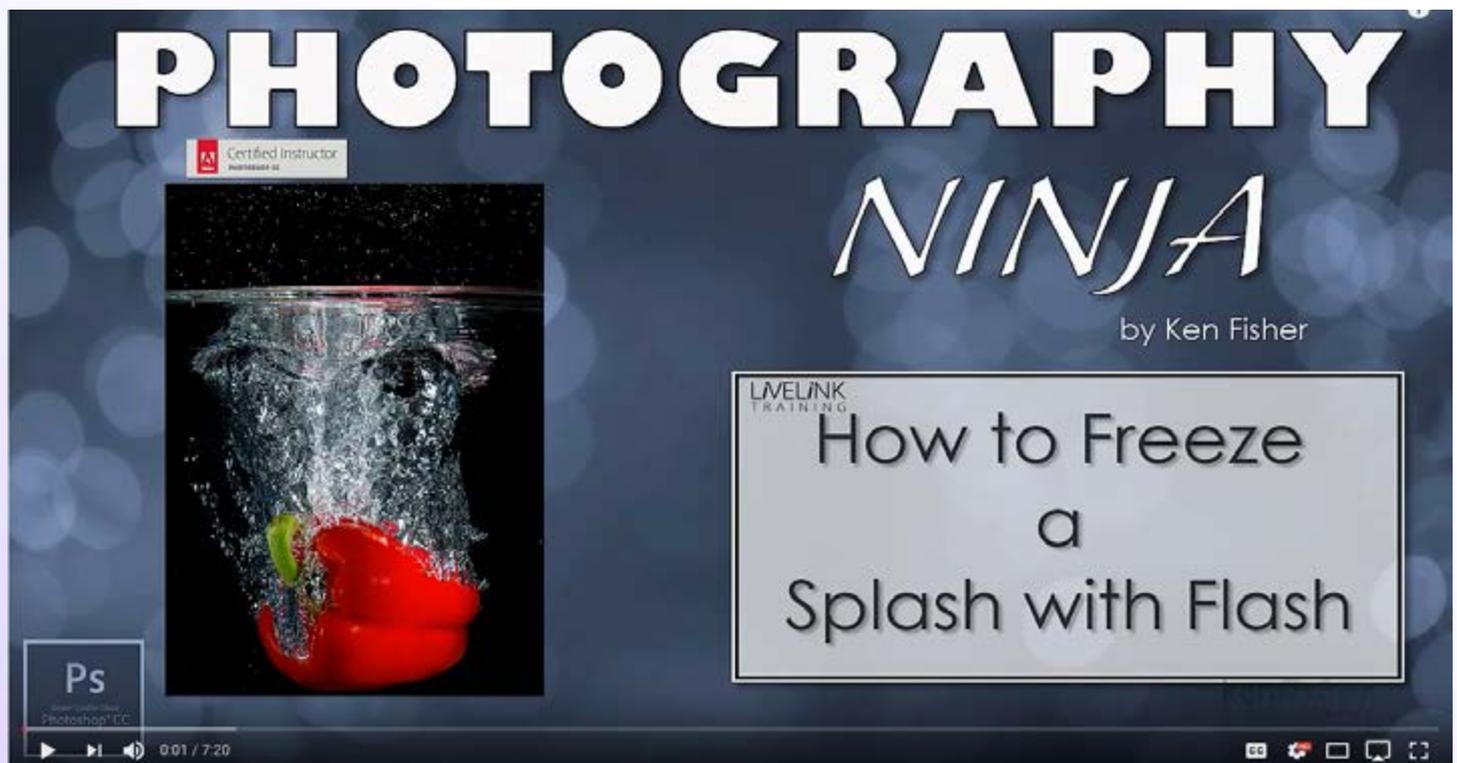
Getting Started With Lightroom

Aimed at the beginner I explain just exactly what Lightroom is for, what it does and how it works. See how it is such a good base for cataloguing your photography collection, its space saving editing techniques and how it can interact with it's partner Adobe Photoshop. Remember to click to view full screen to get the best quality.



Making a New Catalogue

In the first Video we looked at what Lightroom really is and where it fits in the Adobe Editing Software Jigsaw. In this video let us start our journey of discovery and delve into a super important subject, Catalogues. How do we make them, and how can we use them? Understanding catalogues will take you a tad, or maybe two tads closer to becoming a Lightroom Ninja.



Aimed at the advanced photographer in this video I go through my settings and procedure for freezing the motion of a water splash using flash photography.

[Click the video above to view](#)

Below: Some images using the same technique with a glass of water.



GETTING CREATIVE WITH PHOTOSHOP

With Les Arnott

I worked full-time for 13 years teaching Photography and Photoshop courses where I delivered and created software tutorials. I won a BT National Award for the longest retention of students in e-learning using my methods of teaching. Hopefully you will stay with me too!

My Getting Creative with Photoshop series dives into the software using project based tutorials that are easy to follow and will improve your knowledge of using Photoshop. I will vary levels for all users to plunge into the program and get your hands dirty. Remember to follow the videos carefully and when you follow step by step it's amazing what you will pick up and learn really quickly!

Let's jump straight into the first lesson. Click the video below to begin.



Create A Classic Soft Background Effect

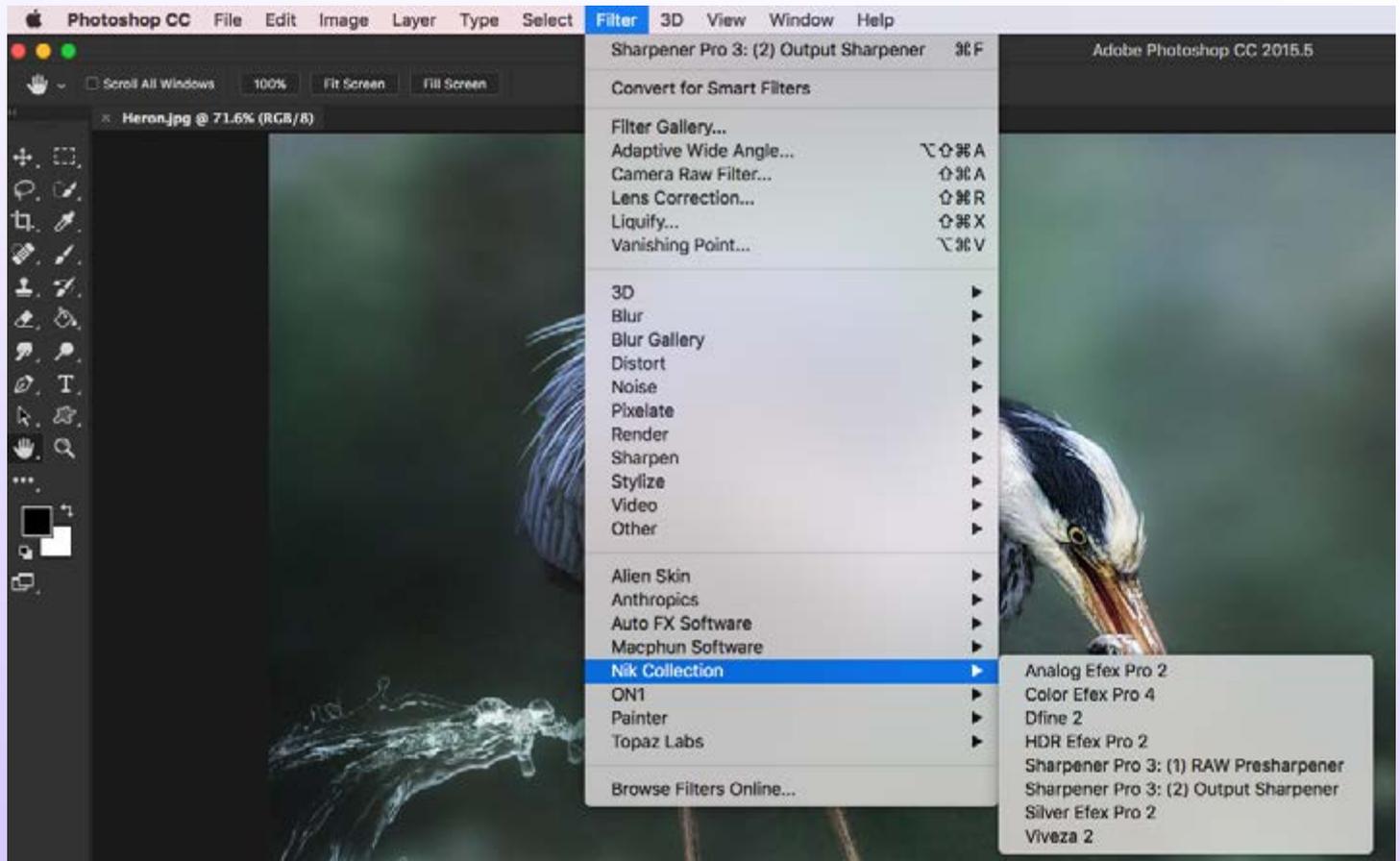
Aimed at the intermediate user Les explains how to create a classic soft focus effect to apply to the edges of your subject that will really make your animal, pets or people portraits shine. Although it's labelled as an intermediate level it really is easy to follow for those with just the basic levels of knowledge too! Give it a try and see what you come up with!

Below: The effect applied to a dog portrait.



Learn to use a great Photoshop plug-in filter collection that you can get for free! With Les Arnott

Just in case you are not familiar with the word Plug-in lets start by quickly explaining that it is a piece of 3rd party software that can be run inside Photoshop by launching it within the program without having to close down. In the majority of cases they apply some kind of effect to an image layer and are run from the Filters section on the menu bar of Photoshop. There are many different ones but one that is really cool, and even better totally free is the Google Nik Collection which gives you a range of stunning filters considering. So what we aim to do is to show you how to use one of these and the different ways that it can be applied to your photo.



Having downloaded and installed the software then open Photoshop and open your image. You then access the plug-in by clicking Filter on the menu bar, followed by Nik Collection. Doing this you will then see the list of installed Nik plug-ins you can use. View the video below to see how to use the plug-in module within Adobe Photoshop.



Click the video left to view

Focus on the photographer

Ming Rae Orden is from Manila in the Philippines for whom I have a great respect for. Her work involves simply not photographing a subject but to take it that step further working the camera work alongside with Photoshop she captures not just the picture in front of her, but also to visualise an image in her mind then magically integrate the two into her final post productions.

Despite her tremendous skill Ming keeps her artistic talents as a hobby working as an amateur. "I only post on my Facebook page, and in several photography sites." Ming remarks.

Ming Rae Orden

Interview by
Les Arnott



I asked Ming in what areas of photography she works in? "I indulge in multiple genres of photography, although I first fell in love with landscape photography. It is what inspired me to purchase my first DSLR three years ago, the entry level Nikon D5100. From doing landscape, I experimented with street photography, and then I indulged in portrait and conceptual portrait photography. I indulge in all these genres whenever I can."

Being so artistically minded I asked what inspires her work? "It is the pure pleasure and satisfaction of creating an image that reflects my personal vision that inspires me to photograph. I don't shoot to document, nor do I shoot and share my images SOOC (straight out of the camera). I work on every image I put out. I create it. There are those who scorn the use of Photoshop. I am of the school that embraces it. Photoshop is a significant part of my images. Every image I show is an interpretation and reworking of a raw shot, a reflection of my own vision. The hours of work and introspection that I put into a single image is for me always cathartic, a form of cleansing in a way. It is this purging

ritual that inspires me to keep on shooting and creating. I have no lofty goals. I am quite happy for the nonce indulging in photography as a hobby. But what I do hope to be able to do in the future is mount a major production for a conceptual portrait series. I am deeply fascinated with conceptual photography, and I love, love, love, the works of Brooke Shaden, Ms. Aniela, and several others who have mastered this genre.

I hope at some point to achieve a deeper understanding of conceptual photography. I love the rich imagery and the poetry these images evoke. But conceptual images demand a deeper level of creativity and a deeper command of technique, things I have yet to achieve, if at all.”

I personally think Ming is well on the way to fulfilling that dream! I then asked her If she had the access to anyone person, area or subject that you would really love to photograph what would it be?



“I would love to do a fine art series on an aging ballerina. I think every image from such a series would be pure poetry.” Ming replied.

Ming’s most recent work with the camera have focused on portraiture, but not of the conceptual genre. I asked her about the equipment she uses. “I use a Nikon D7100 for all my shoots. I still use my D5100, my very first DSLR, but only as a back-up camera. With respect to lenses, for portraits, it’s my Nikkor 85 mm or nothing. For landscape, I use a Tokina wide angle lens. These are the two lenses I most often shoot with. I have the Nikkor 50 mm and 50-330 mm, but I don’t use them as often. I have not felt the need to go full frame because I get satisfactory outputs from my D7100 coupled with my lenses of choice. I might still, though, be tempted to buy a full frame camera one of these days.”

Now having learnt a little about her lets finish off by admiring a beautiful collection of her work.





mrae orden







Ming relaxing with her husband Bong

I would like to thank Ming for agreeing for me to interview her and for supplying her selection of photos for Phototrain.

I'm sure that was a pleasure for all to view just a few of the great images. If you wish to see more of Ming's images then use the links below:

[Ming Rae Orden on Facebook](#)

You will require an FB Account

[Ming Rae Orden on Instagram](#)

Would you like to be featured in
the Magazine?
Send 1 sample image of your
work and details to us by email

[Contact us](#)



GET CREATIVE WITH WIDE-ANGLE CHECK YOUR POV!

By Les Arnott

You are really not a photographer if you don't use those DOFs and POVs in every sentence. Therefore I thought I would throw one in straight away in the title and get my claim to fame!

OK now I've proved myself to be worthy lets explain to all what I mean from the expression POV for those lesser mortals (I googled it). POV is Position Of View or in plain language getting down low, high or remaining on the level. When using a wide-angle lens especially its amazing what a difference a slight shift of height, angle or combination of the two can make. As an example placing your camera flat on the floor and keeping the camera level try taking a shot, then tilt the camera very slightly upwards, then a bit more taking a shot every time. Study the results and you'll be amazed at what you can get from that one floor POV and a slight tilt of angle. The same applies when working from a high POV tilt the lens and use the same procedure from a low tilt to a high tilt of angle. Using this simple approach will give you an amazing variation and creativeness to your work and yet amazingly you can do it all standing in exactly the same place.

Low POV especially can give you really dramatic shots making the whole scene large like you are a tiny insect looking up at the world. The smaller the wide-angle lens is in its focal length then the more the effect is applied to your image. Besides just landscapes portraits of animals, pets and kiddies can all look much more dramatic when working low down, you instantly make them look more powerful. Moving up to working on their eye-level gives a more natural look creating a togetherness with the photographer and less distortion whilst using a high POV can have the effect of making something look demeaning, small or frightened. The wide-angle lens with its distortion of perspective when working close can really create some dramatic effects, each one changing with a slight twist of angle and change of POV experiment with using the technique and you will score dividends. It amazes me at times when a photographer gets into a situation where they have a fantastic view in front of them and they just stand there camera to head and take a couple of snaps without moving. Myself I'm standing tiptoe, kneeling, lying on my belly and taking every possible angle I can, plus I take 20 shots or more. Never miss the opportunity when you have that magic view in front of you. One issue with a wide-angle lens is everything is thrown way back into the distance so think careful-



“Two images took exactly from the same spot but as you can see two totally different feels between the portrait orientation, on the left and high positional angle of view, and the other in a landscape orientation in the image above. See how something so simple can give you such a different feel. Think carefully and experiment with your angles, tilt and height when selecting your POV for your composition.”

ly about adding some foreground interest as it puts much more impact into your image. See how I used the leaves on the floor to add that dimension to the image when using the low POV it's a prime example of adding foreground interest.

Take a look now at the image on the right. This photo gives a high impact with the low POV and the close proximity of the subject also keeping a level angle with the mushroom brings the trees and river to appear into the frame without causing distortion like it would if we tilted the camera other than being level with the subject. This gives the image more of a landscape effect rather than just a plain looking close-up of a mushroom which makes for a much nicer overall image.



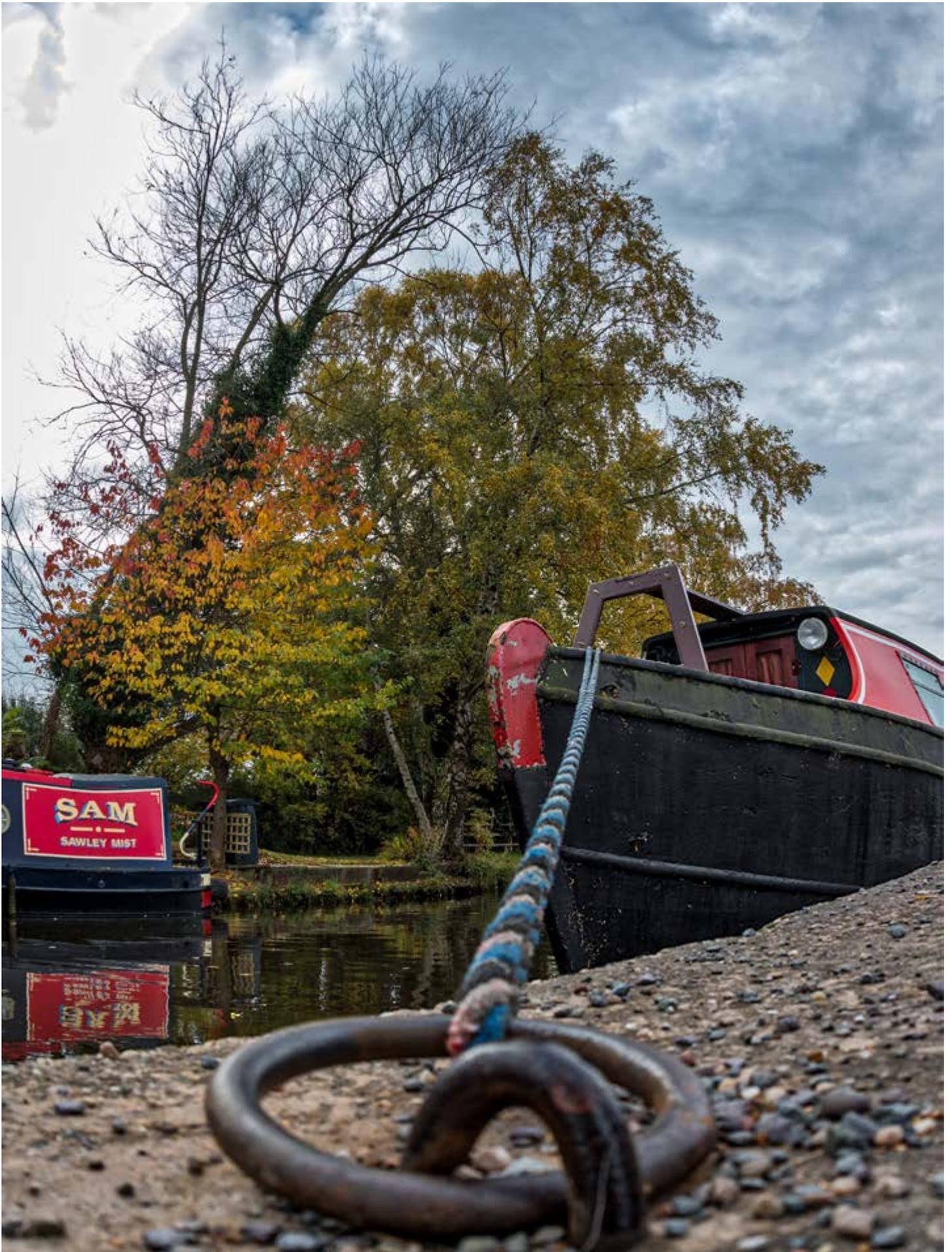
At this stage lets bring in the word DOF. Depth Of Field is another one of those must say words to be a photographer (yes I'm smiling!). The amount of focus depth you have in your image is vitally important when working up close whilst trying to maintain focus to show the background too. The nice thing about a wide-angle lens is the shorter the focal length of the lens the greater the depth of field so therefore it's easier to get that overall focus. However using the aperture setting on your camera will control exactly how much the depth of field is. A very wide aperture of F2.8 for example will give you the least depth of field in focus than shooting at F22 which will bring everything more or less from front to back into focus. So I hear you say I always set my camera to F22? Far from the truth as although it's often a favourite of the landscape photographer to shoot at such small apertures as F22 you can get fantastic results by learning how to use the cameras aperture setting to get exactly the DOF you want. Looking at the mushroom image look at the trees in the background. You will see that the background is slightly out of focus and that I achieved by using a wider aperture, around F6 in this case with the focus point on the mushroom. If I had focused on the trees in the background then I would have the reverse effect with the trees sharp and the mushroom would appear much softer. Focusing on the foreground subject and using that depth of field using the aperture setting creatively pulls the viewers focus to the subject matter which makes for a more pleasing photo all round.

Now let us take a look at this example of a building which was took with the camera mounted quite high on the tripod with a ND filer attached to the lens, which to explain in plain English is like putting a very dark pair of sunglasses on your lens to restrict the light hitting the sensor of the camera. Why do this? In this case I simply to give the clouds in the shot that streak of movement to create some drama so restricting the light meant that I required a long exposure time of 30 seconds to capture the movement of the cloud across the sky. With the camera mounted high I obviously wanted to frame not just the building but a large area of the sky to capture the movement so using a ball head on the tripod I tilted the camera slightly upwards. This then creates the effect of the building being more imposing and powerful to look at with



the perspective of the building going outwards as you look up the building.

Try out these techniques yourself and see what you can achieve.



RUSHEGURA

By Scott Latham

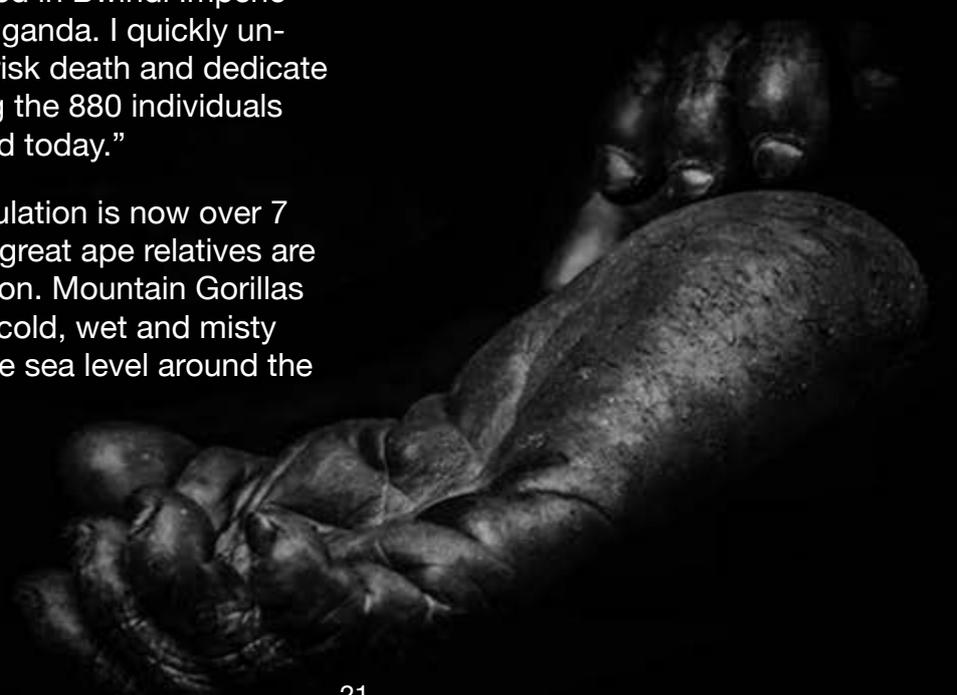


“Monday 14th March 2016, news broke that three of Virunga’s rangers had been killed at the hands of poachers, whilst protecting the world largest primate, the Mountain Gorilla. A fourth ranger had been killed a few weeks earlier in a firefight in the Democratic Republic of Congo region.

Just a week earlier I was in the area working on a project documenting the life of the Rushegura Group based in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda. I quickly understood why people risk death and dedicate their lives to protecting the 880 individuals that remain in the world today.”

The world human population is now over 7 billion, yet our closest great ape relatives are on the brink of extinction. Mountain Gorillas are confined to a tiny, cold, wet and misty area, 10,000 feet above sea level around the

Ugandan, Rwandan and Democratic Republic of Congo borders. They live alongside some of the highest human population densities with the lowest adult life spans and standards of living in the world. Ultimately, human poverty and civil unrest is their greatest threat. Mountain gorillas face habitat loss from de-forestation as farming of land is expanded. Poacher’s snares set for other animals such as antelopes, diseases transmitted



by humans, and poaching for the gorilla infant trade are all still major threats to gorilla populations.

Coming face to face for the first time with a Mountain Gorilla is an experience like no other. The glare of a Silverback is enough to send shivers down your spine, but in a weird, comforting and loving way. He has a huge task; probably the hardest in nature, to protect, guide and grow his family, against the dangerous elements of the mountains and poachers who want nothing more than trophies for a sick and vile crime.



When American zoologist, primatologist and anthropologist Dian Fossey started her 18 year extensive study of Mountain Gorilla groups, world populations were as low as 270 animals and the rest is history. Although numbers have increased to near 800 since her murder, the Mountain Gorilla is still very much an endangered species.





As I sat out on the balcony of the Buhoma Community rest camp, the view across the valley is a wall of trees and jungle foliage, the sunbirds dancing around the flowers and chimpanzees calling in the distance. We arrived at the camp, specifically chosen due to it's funds returning directly back into the local community, the day before our first treks. The 321 km² forest of Bwindi is home to around 340 Mountain Gorillas, roughly half of the world population.”

I'd like to thank Scott Latham a good photography friend of mine for letting us use some of his text and images from his book exclusively for our magazine.

If you would like to continue his story then you can purchase the book from his website here:

<http://scottlatham.co.uk/books>

If you would like to see the Mountain Gorillas first hand or embark on another photography workshop then check out what Scott has on offer here:

<http://wildexposures.co.uk>

Les Arnott - Editor





More images from
Scott Latham's book
Rushegura



Woodland Photography – Seeing the Wood and the Trees

by Sarah Walters

I am fortunate enough to own, with my husband, a 20 acre/8.5 hectare plot of woodland (Alvecote Wood in North Warwickshire, England), which we manage for wildlife. Not surprisingly I have taken a lot of photos here and in other woodlands, and hope to pass on some tips on how to photograph trees, woods and forests. This article is divided into three sections

1. Technical Tips
2. Basic Composition
3. The Artist's Eye

As with all photography, getting a really good image is a fusion of all three – seeing the image, composing the image and having the technical ability to make the image that you saw in your mind's eye come to life. The artist's eye and compositional skills are what I call “taking the right image”, and the technical skills are what I call “taking the image right”.

Technical Skills for Woodland Photography

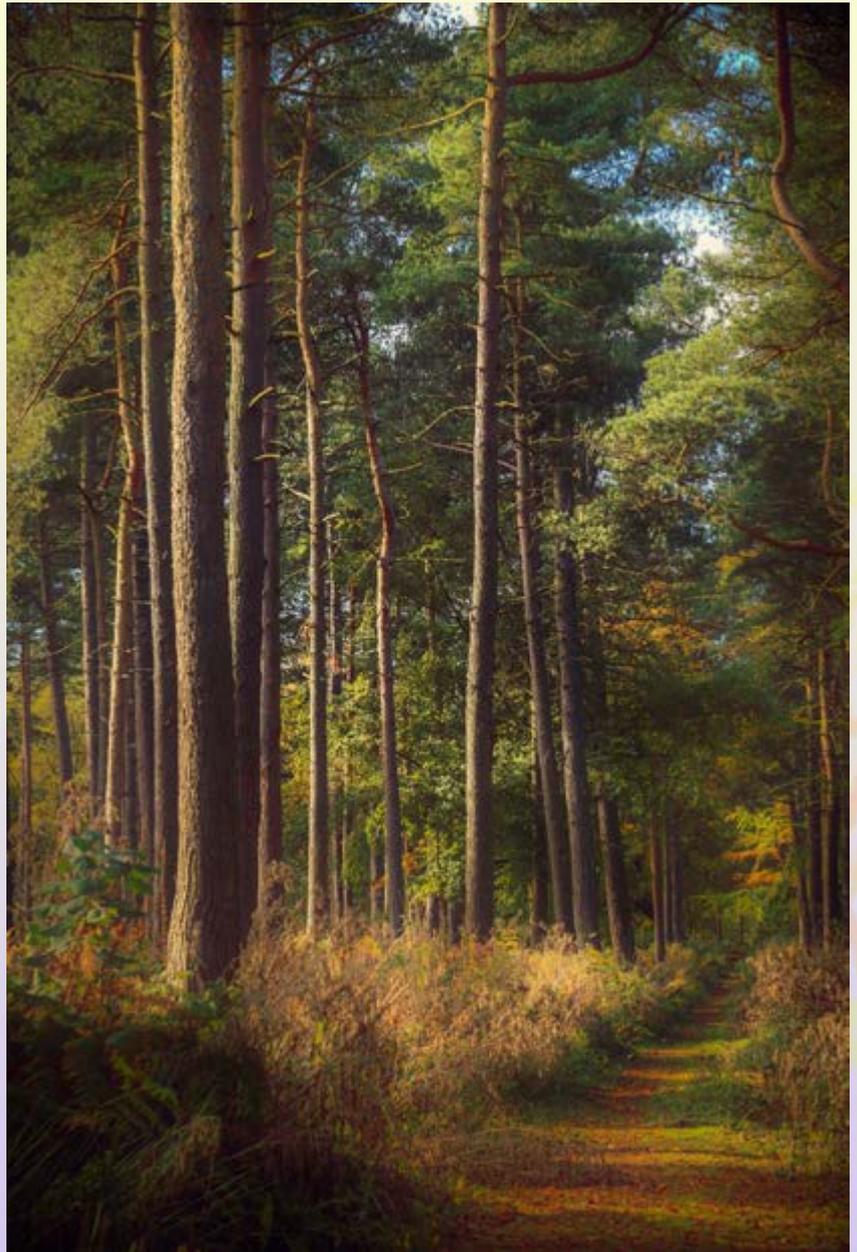
Woods and trees pose interesting challenges for the photographer. There is something deep and primeval about trees and forests that makes an emotional connection within. The skill is working out how to bring out that emotional connection to show viewers what you were feeling when you took the picture.

Modern cameras are extremely good on their intelligent auto settings, but in the case of woodlands, where there are particular challenges, this often leads to disappointment, because the camera can't know what was actually catching your eye – so it will do an average job, which often isn't what you wanted.

The light conditions in woodlands are also very challenging – very bright highlights and very dark shadows, a lot of contrast, and overall a pretty dark setting, even on bright summer days. Light conditions are often varying minute by minute as the weather changes, and as you walk from darker to lighter areas.

The following are some helpful technical tips that might improve your images of trees and woodland. Get your camera off intelligent Auto/Program mode!

Woods and woodlands are an area where auto does not work because of the challenging conditions.



Hopwas Woods, Staffordshire: Canon EOS 5D Mark 3, 24-105 lens at 105mm, 1/100 at f6.3 and ISO100. Took in Aperture Priority (AV) mode with EV -1 compensation.

Taking your camera off the auto mode will give you a lot more control over your exposure and other settings on the camera and allow you to dictate the image that your camera takes, rather than the other way round.

For woodland photography, I don't usually use full manual settings. The reason behind this is that light conditions vary so frequently, that what is right one minute can become wrong the next, as you walk around or as the sun moves around, or as clouds come over the sun. For this reason I usually use the Aperture-priority mode on my camera. This allows you to set the aperture and control depth of field (important in woodland shots), whilst allowing the overall exposure level to move up and down as the light changes. Almost all cameras have this mode; even mobile phones allow you to set aperture. The exposure will then be determined by the changes the camera makes in both shutter speed and ISO setting, if you leave the latter on auto.



Twisty Tree at Alvecote Wood: Olympus OMD EM-1 with 12-40 lens at 15mm (30mm full-frame equivalent). 1/20 at f5.6 ISO 320 EV 0.

Use exposure compensation

A camera in any of its automatic exposure modes – aperture priority, shutter speed priority, programmed auto – will try and give you an exposure that keeps some detail in both shadows and highlights. It is trying to produce an even histogram (see below). The problem is that the camera doesn't have the same dynamic range as the human eye, or rather the human brain. It doesn't work in the same way.

When we are looking at things in the woods, our eye doesn't take a large picture covering the whole "frame" that we are looking at. Instead it darts around capturing information from a wide variety of individual points within the woods, and the brain stitches that image together and adds the missing

pieces. In fact a lot of what we see is interpolated by the brain, which is why when two people look at a single scene, they will see different things. So our eyes don't take a photograph. When we do finally take a photograph, it often looks very different from what we thought we saw.

A camera can't do the same thing as the eye (although see HDR below). So we have to make a choice and tell the camera what bit of the image is the most important. What is it that we are actually interested in. Is it the texture of the bark? Or are we really looking at the tree trunks as dark silhouettes, and concentrating instead on the patterns of light and colour on the leaves and forest floor? Do we feel overall that the image should be light and ethereal or dark and brooding? This will influence how we adjust exposure.

Then how do you adjust exposure? I find the most important button on the camera after the shutter button is the exposure compensation button or dial. Most cameras have a button with +/- on it, or a dial that can be set to adjust exposure. What this does is adjust the overall level of exposure up a bit or down a bit, but still allows the exposure to vary automatically as light conditions change – you are just saying that you'd like it all to be a bit lighter or a bit darker than the camera thinks it should be.

Try this exercise: go out and find a nice woodland view, then take a series of photos, all of the same view. Start with one with your exposure compensation set to 0. Then go down in a series of 1/3 EV or stops, maybe as low as -2 EV. Then go back to 0 and go up in a series of 1/3 EV or stops, as high as +2. You might be surprised which image you prefer, which image actually represents what you are looking at. I tend to find that the image I like is an under-exposed one, usually - 0.67 or 1.0 EV – but when it is foggy this might change to +0.67 or +1 EV in order to capture the ethereal quality of the light.

Look at your images and histogram

It might seem obvious, but you won't improve things unless you look at your images straight away. This gives you the opportunity to take another one if you don't like what you are seeing. The Mark One Eyeball is a good way of looking at your image, because it gives you an immediate feeling of whether it is right or wrong. However it is often useful to look at the histogram too. You should be able to bring this up in your viewfinder or screen using the "info" or "disp(lay)" button on your camera. Press it several times and you will eventually see a graph. What it will tell you in particular is whether there are any parts of your image that are either pure black or pure white – the left and right hand side of the histogram respectively. This is important, because even if you shoot in RAW, you will not be able to retrieve later any data that is not there. If it is black it will stay black, and if it is white it will stay white. If you don't mind things being black or white, or if things truly are black or white, then fair enough. But it gives you an idea of whether you have adjusted your exposure sufficiently to see the detail in either the shadows or highlights (often you can't have both in a single frame).

The histogram is also useful in very bright light when you really can't see well enough on your camera screen, and likewise in very dark woods, when what might seem bright enough at the time looks dull and dingy when you get it home and put it on the computer.

So get used to adjusting your exposure, looking and checking, and taking it again to get exactly what you want.

Consider using HDR

HDR or High Dynamic Range is the camera's attempt to replicate what the human eye and brain do, albeit in quite a crude way. HDR images are composites made up from several images, taking the correctly-exposed bit of each one and stitching them together. This is usually done with post-processing software, but some cameras can do it automatically, producing a JPEG from three, five, seven or more RAW images, which can also be saved for future editing. Lots of mobile phones have HDR settings too.

HDR can be helpful in woodlands where there is a lot of contrast, or where you feel a single image can't capture the feelings you are experiencing. There are a lot of software options for HDR, and some HDR software can produce the effect from a single RAW image, provided you haven't let either the highlights get too white or the shadows get too black. Adobe Lightroom, Adobe Photoshop, Aurora HDR, Photomatix Pro and other software options can allow you to control the way in which the images are merged together.

The problem with HDR is that you need to take three or more images to make it work well – and this doesn't work with a moving subject. Trees are often moving in the wind, and this leads to ghosting on the final image. You may also need to use a tripod or monopod at least to get the images properly lined-up. It is an option to consider, but isn't always the solution to high contrast situations within woodlands for these reasons. However if you think it might produce what you are looking for, it is always worth capturing the bracketed exposures to work on later.

Control depth of field

Woods and woodlands are landscapes, so you need to use a small aperture (high f-stop number) to get a big depth of field, right? Well, not necessarily. Woods often have a very soft appearance. With our eyes we don't actually look at the detail in a leaf 50 metres away (at least not with my eyes!), but a modern SLR or compact system camera will be able to do that. It is worth experimenting with lower depth of field, concentrating the focus on the place to which your eye is naturally drawn – and this is almost never the far distance, or infinity. Usually we are interested in things much closer, around 10-15 metres. Sometimes it is nice to concentrate on the foreground and have a blurred background.



Alvecote Wood in winter. Canon EOS 5D Mark 3, 24-105mm lens at 65mm, 1/160 f8 ISO100 EV -1/3

A lot of landscape photographers would disagree with me, but I like to photograph woods at between f5.0 and f7.1 on my Olympus half-frame, or f5.6 and f8.0 on my full-frame Canon. This allows me to selectively focus on the things I want, and allow other things to become blurred, which is exactly what happens with our eyes. That is not to say you should always be on these settings –

sometimes I go as low as f2.8 or as high as f22.

White balance settings

If you shoot in RAW you have more latitude to adjust white balance in post processing, but it is nice to get it more or less right in your previews on the camera and in Lightroom (or whatever else you use for editing). Adjusting the white balance will help with this.

You are rarely in full sun, and auto white balance nearly always gives a colder feel to the light than you experience in reality. Therefore it is helpful to set your white balance to “shade” or “cloudy” in order to get some warmth into the image.

If it is a touch wrong, you can always adjust it manually up or down a bit in temperature on your camera, but I find “shade” usually does the trick.

ISO settings

ISO in a woodland can be an issue. Woodlands are dark, even in the summer, because of all the leaves creating shade. In the winter they are dark because it is pretty dark to begin with, and there are a lot of shadows created by the branches and tree trunks.

If you are setting your aperture manually, the camera then has only two options to get the right exposure – shutter speed and ISO. If you also fix ISO at a low level to capture a lot of detail, then you may find the shutter speed gets too low to hand-hold, and you then either have camera shake to contend with, or a lot of wind movement will make the leaves seem blurred. You can get around the camera shake with a tripod or monopod (or sometimes with image stabilisation), but you can't get around the latter. You will need a reasonable shutter speed when the leaves are moving in the wind – say 1/125 or more – otherwise they will be blurred. This may not matter, but it may be a problem. Some cameras function better at high ISO/high sensitivity levels than others – in general, full-frame cameras handle noise better than cropped-sensor, half-frame or whatever.

Noise will reduce the sharpness and clarity of detail in your final image – you may find details are blurred and that there are a lot of spurious pixels of odd colours in your image too.

In general, I use auto ISO but limit the highest value it can take. You can usually set a high limit for auto ISO using the menu system on your camera. On my Olympus, it doesn't handle noise well, so I limit to 1600, on the Canon to 6400. The camera will try and set the lowest ISO compatible with a hand-held shutter speed for the focal length of the lens you are using, so most of the time on a decent day, it will set a low ISO. Even on a dark day, using a small sensor, you can get a good amount of detail, without too much noise, provided it isn't actually night or dusk, or extremely gloomy.

Edit your photographs

You have now done a lot of hard work to get an image that reflects what you were seeing, more or less. Letting the camera process it and turn it into a JPEG is the digital equivalent of sending your film to Boots (other film processors are available) and letting them apply an average algorithm to your carefully thought out negative, then produce a set of average prints. You've got a great digital negative on your camera, so now make the most of it – be like the people who used a darkroom themselves, rather than sending the holiday snaps to Boots! Using Lightroom or Photoshop or Aperture or any other photo editing software is not cheating – it is doing what the camera does anyway, just doing it your way. It is a bit easier than using a darkroom, and doesn't involve putting black plastic around the bathroom window and door, and having the rest of the family complaining they can't get a shower (been there, done that), but does much the same sort of thing.

I can't possibly cover editing woodland images here, but there is plenty of good advice on Phototrain on how to edit images. My workflow is as follows:

- a) Import ALL images into Lightroom (this is important – ones you think weren't keepers may turn out to be surprisingly good on second viewing). Import into the library on your computer and immediately back up.
- b) Whizz through and create a collection from your shoot to process by selecting the

images that you like best. It is worth checking that they are sharp by viewing at 100%, although some images that aren't sharp can still look fantastic, so don't reject them out of hand. I add keywords at this point.

- c) Do initial adjustment in Lightroom – either manually or by applying a preset which is closest to the effect I wanted to get, and then adjusting that preset.
- d) Do final editing in an external editor such as Photoshop, Topaz Labs Collection or Nik Collection or Corel Photo Pro, or whatever I choose.
- e) Export edited images to a new folder with suitable names so I can remember what they are – I have folders by location and then by date and then by subject e.g. alvecotewood/october2016/foggy-morning.
- f) Share them.

Author: Sarah Walters

I'm a retired doctor and I've been keen on photography all my life, in particular butterflies, dragonflies, insects and all aspects of nature photography. I now own and manage a Woodland for wildlife and community groups. I studied a professional photography course after retirement, and now enjoy photographing our own beautiful woods, as well as teaching photography to local people through workshops.



See more about Sarah's privately owned woodland on the web site and Facebook Page. See the events they run and the continuing progress of Alvecote Wood in North Warwickshire, England.

<http://www.alvecotewood.co.uk>

<https://www.facebook.com/AlvecoteWood/>

Peter Christian

Focus on the photographer

Interview by
Les Arnott

I spend many hours viewing peoples images online from top professionals through to amateur and hobbyists. It amazes me the talent out there that some have and it is a fact that many don't get the recognition they deserve. It's for this reason that really gave me the idea of checking through all levels of experience and to include some of those such people to interview.

A person that recently caught my eye was a passionate hobbyist bird photographer by the name of Peter Christian a Manx who was born, bred and lives on the Isle of Man. The particular image that caught my eye was the striking image of a Bee eater which is a stunning looking bird that Peter had posted a photo of in a Facebook photography group. The image was a perfect example of clarity and eye-catching impact so I decided to check out his Facebook wall and was really impressed with other images he had posted there which led me to ask about his work and equipment.

Peter's interest in photography stems from his inspiration of the love of nature.

"I strive to capture the best possible images that the conditions and my equipment allow. An ambition would be to spend some time in locations such as the Cairngorms or Mull. Highlights of my hobby to date would have to be photographing Bee eaters in Rheinland Pfaltz, Germany.

I'd relish the opportunity to photograph White-tailed Sea Eagles in the Western isles of Scotland. Or the Isle of Man if they ever come back!

At present I don't have a project. I've been busy moving house. I just like to get out and make the most of what I can find locally. A very late Arctic Tern was my most recent set of any note.

My main birding lens is a Nikon 500mm F4, but I also have a Sigma 150-500mm zoom. Bodies are Nikon D7200/ D7100.

I love the 500 prime lens for image quality although it's rather heavy! For me it's OK for hand-holding though. There is a newer lighter version but it's seriously expensive.

The crop sensor camera bodies appear well suited to my needs, Nikon have recently released a pro grade crop sensor body in the form of the D500 but I haven't tried one yet, but by all accounts it's a beauty."

I think Peters work is an inspiration to all and we are really happy to show some of his selected favourites in the magazine.



Peter Christian

European Bee eater took at
Rheinland Pfaltz, Germany



**“This was the image of Peter’s
that really caught my eye and
made me research into his
other work”**

Les Arnott



Peter Christian

A Great Northern Diver “decimating crabs” in Debyhaven Bay, Isle of Man





Peter Christian

(Top) Juvenile Peregrine Falcons, Isle of man. Taken with a Sigma 150-500mm zoom & Nikon D7100

(Bottom) Kestrel up close. A wild bird photographed at Langness, Isle of Man



The Phototrain Competition Winners

Judged by Graham Orgill

The Photography Competition is a weekly event that takes place on Facebook under the name of “The Phototrain Photography Competition”. If you are not signed up to Facebook at the moment here is a great excuse to do so. The group is a great place for a passionate photographer wishing to compete against others from around the globe. The high standard grows weekly as more people enrol into the group, we are witnessing great images in all forms of subjects. Our competition Judge is Graham Orgill who is a keen amateur photographer having been active in camera clubs for more than 20 years providing input into photographic, practical and tutorial events. He has travelled extensively during his career with his photography contributing to technical reports, audits and provided images for company promotional and training literature.



Here are Graham’s Winners for this issue.

Week 1 Winner - 24th October 2016
Andy Marlow



Judges Comment: “A great composition well exposed with lovely recession. Very atmospheric with an ethereal feel to the light. Just a great shot well done Andy”

Andy's comment: I created the image for the competition, I don't usually enter competitions but I thought that I would like to make an effort and take part and so the image was born.

Basically the picture was two images composited together which is something I don't usually do either but I am going to try this technique more often in future when the opportunity arises.

The background photo I captured one very misty morning in Essington where I live, I think the mist was part caused by atmospheric pollution as sub Saharan dust particles had been blown across. So I suppose it was more like smog. But don't hold me to that!

The image was taken on a Nikon d90 with a 50mm f1.8 prime lens at ISO 400, f11, 1/160 hand-held.

The second component in the picture, the stag was captured very recently he is a local stag. The picture was captured very early in the morning with the main issue being low light and balancing an exposure that I could get acceptable sharpness without having to use too high an ISO. For that shot the camera a Nikon d7200 with a 200- 500mm f5.6 lens was supported in the v of a tree trunk as I as travelling as light as possible. The exposure was made at ISO 6400, f5.6 and 1/250 sec, focal length 500mm. Fortunately the lens has image stabilisation so I got away with it.

Initial adjustments were made as usual in Lightroom before being put together in Photoshop, just a copy and paste and a little bit of toning to bring them together.

Week 2 Winner - 31st October 2016
Nigel Smith



Judges Comment: "A fantastic capture of a Kingfisher, emerging with its catch. Superb quality, great composition, good choice of shutter speed and aperture. Freezing the action and creating an out of focus unobtrusive and complimentary background. Well done Nigel.

Nigel's Comment: The shot was taken In Scotland Dumfries to be exact. It was whilst on a spring tour that Scott Latham from Wild Exposures had arranged. I had been in the hide from early morning waiting for the kingfisher to show it had been extremely slow all morning. as it was so quite we had an offer to be taken to go looking for adders but I wanted to stay as I really wanted to get the chance to get some shots of the kingfisher diving. Well my patients and determination paid off and I was rewarded by three consecutive dives. My equipment was a Canon 1Dx, Canon 70-200 2.8 Lens, resting on a bean bag With the camera pre focused at a length of 175mm on where I was hoping the kingfisher would emerge from. Settings we AV mode shutter speed set to 1/2000 of a second and fast continuous and spot metering.

Week 3 - 7th November 2016 Winner
Mary Poulton

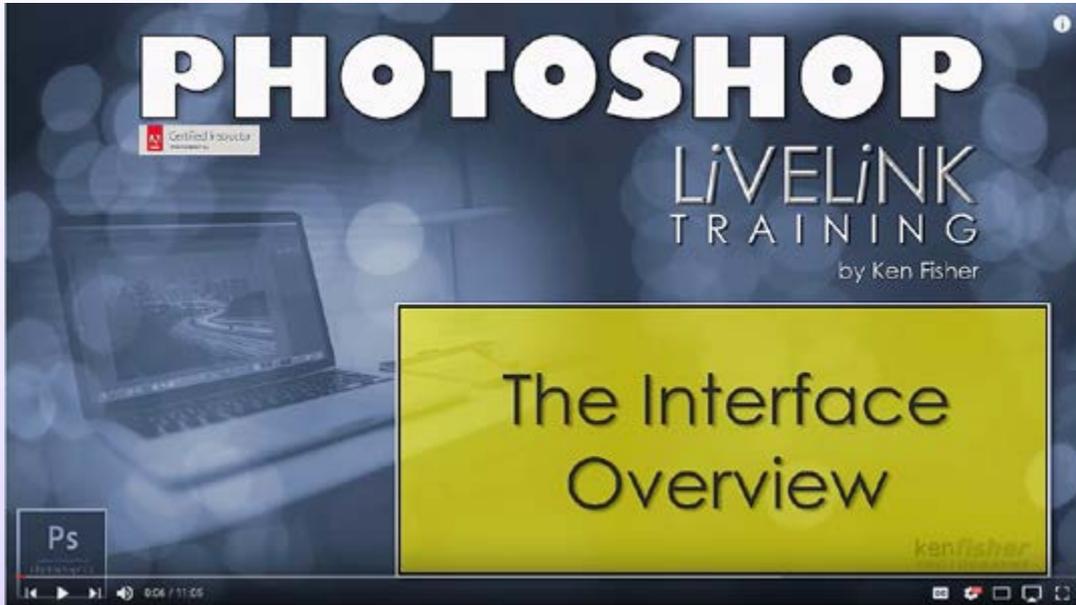


Judges Comment: A great Cityscape, fantastic point of view nicely composed, capturing the sun's rays over the city skyline. Well exposed giving great detail and a good control and use of the colour palette. A great shot Mary.

Mary's Comment: We went as a group on a 'team building' afternoon from work (I am a receptionist in a medical centre on a military camp, Northwood HQ) to the Sky Gardens, a wonderful viewing place...It's like a massive conservatory with plants and a cafe and a viewing deck outside. This is on the top of the Walkie Talkie building in the City of London the view was stunning and that day the clouds were brewing despite there being blue skies and sunshine at times. I used a Nikon D5300 with the kit lens 18-55. The setting were as follows Focal length 18, F11, S 1/500, hand-held, there was a glass barrier in the way so the reflections were a bit awkward. I put image through Light Room to bring the image alive.

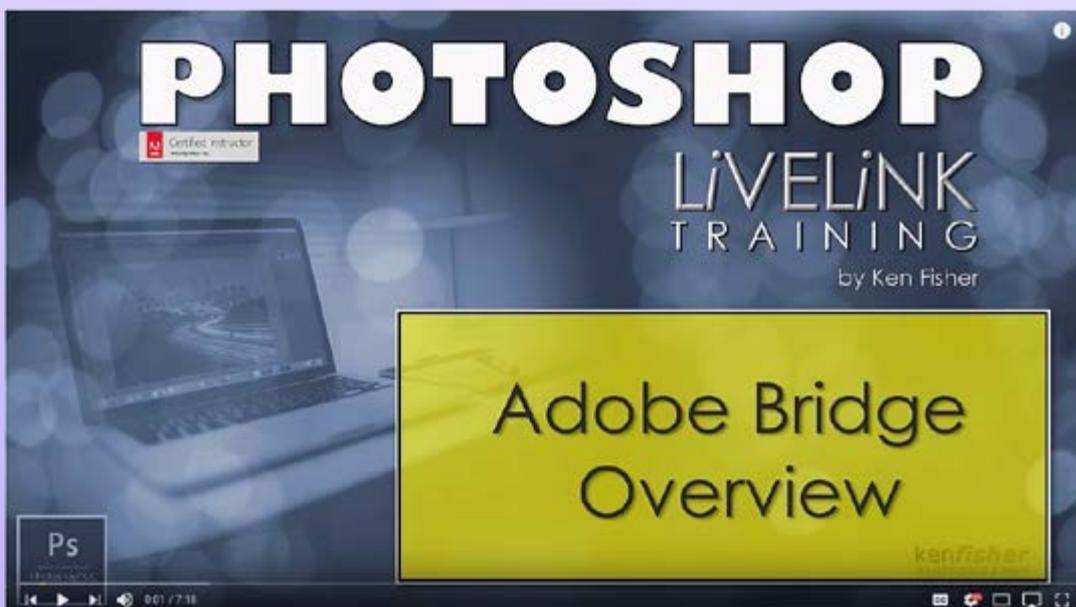
PHOTOSHOP CC 2017 BEGINNERS TUTORIALS With Kenneth Fisher

Aimed at the beginner Ken's series of videos will guide you through understanding Photoshop step by step. Every issue of Phototrain will continue the series to progress you through the ins and outs of required knowledge to make your images shine. Click the video below to get on track with Phototrain.



Video One The Interface Overview

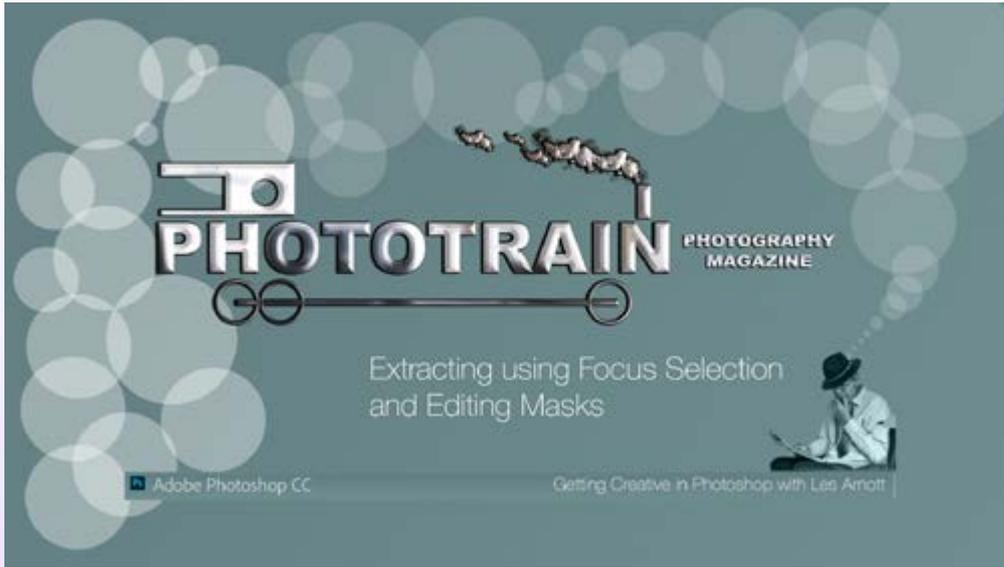
Ken show you how to navigate your way around the Tool bar, Menu bar, palettes and dialog boxes within the program so you'll be zooming around the program in no time at all he may need to tell you about the Zoom tool first mind?



Video Two Adobe Bridge Overview

Ken explains how to use Bridge to navigate and organise your images easily plus how to customise the interface to suit your own workflow with Photoshops companion Digital Assets Manager.

Getting Creative Extracting Using Focus Selection With Les Arnott



Another dive into Photoshop and wet your feet video from Les. Learn to make a selection using the Focus Selection facility plus learn to edit, neaten your masks and apply filter effects to specific areas of a picture. Add layers and paint a new background to create an artistic look to an image of an owl. Lots of skills to learn for the Intermediate to Advanced learner in this project.

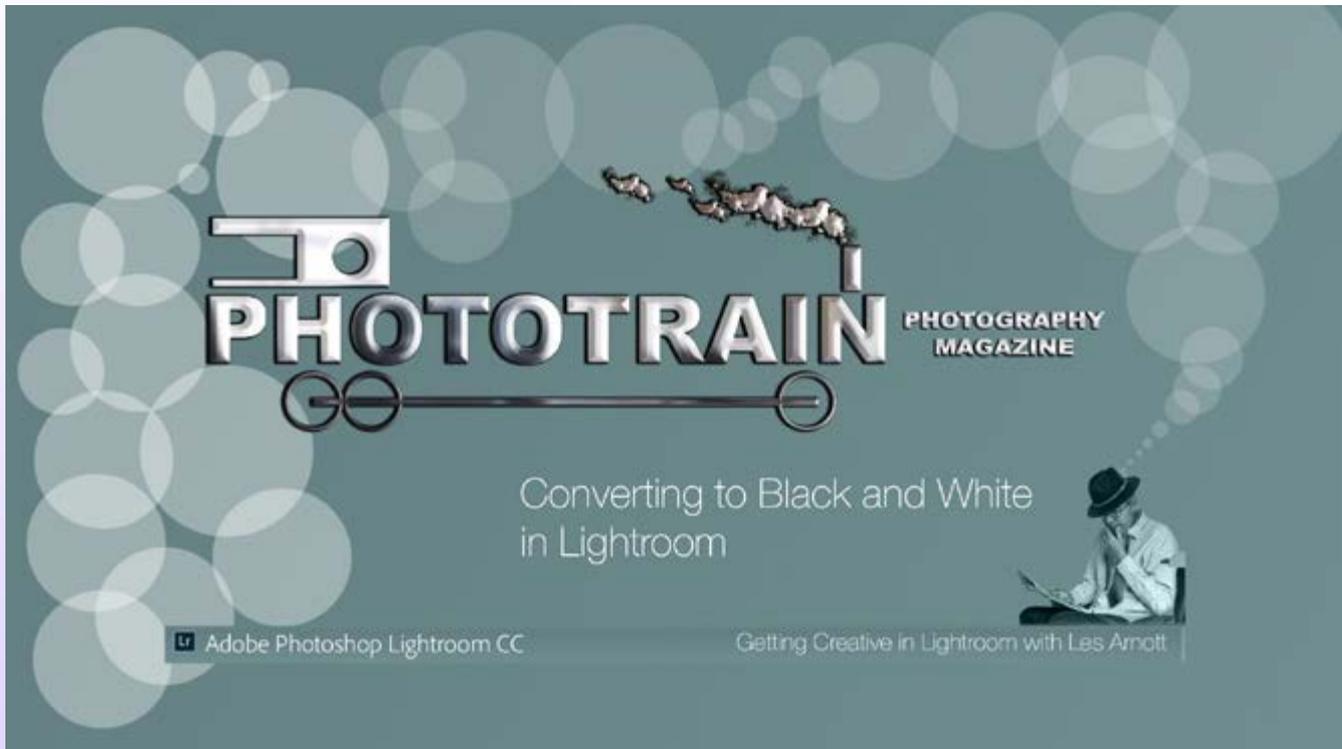
Click the Video above to play. See how the image below is turned into something more artistic. Part of the learning involves using the Nik Collection filters. These can be downloaded for free just refer back to page 10 in the magazine to see how. The picture of the owl can be downloaded from the Phototrains web site for you to practise the techniques from the link by right clicking the image and selecting download image from the short-cut menu that appears <http://www.phototrains.co.uk/460a9501.jpg>



Copyright of image Les Arnott please only use for practising the tutorial.

Getting Creative with Black & White Conversions With Les Arnott

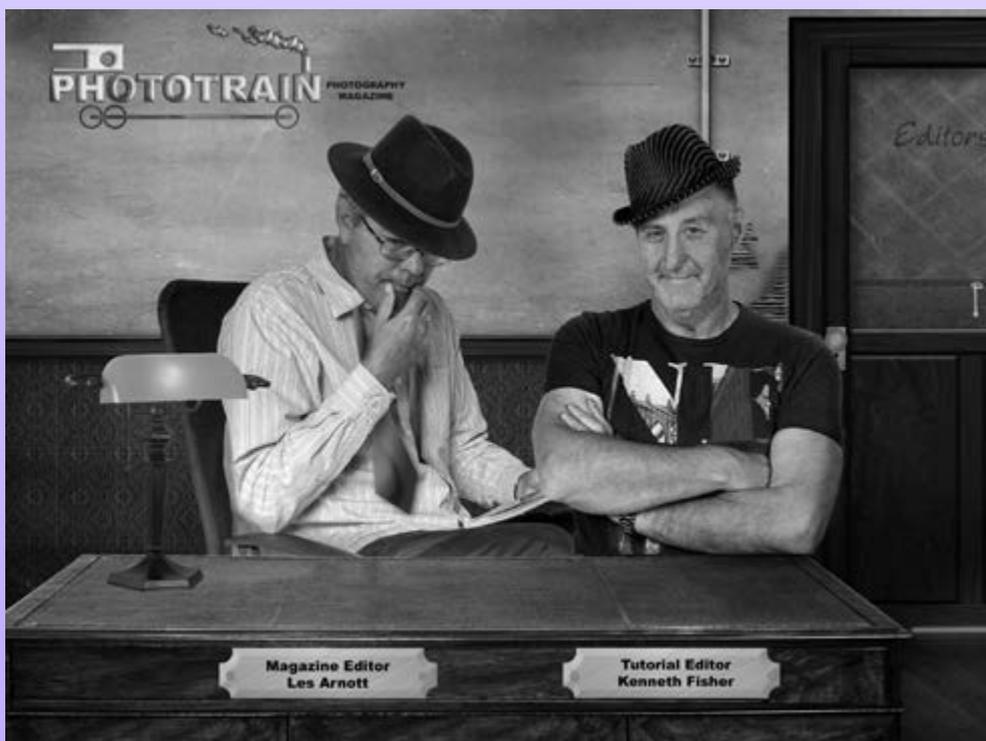
See how you can enhance your images when converting to Black & white in Lightroom. Using Colour filters and pre-sets you will learn to get the best from your software to get stunning Black & White images.



This is our final video for this issue I really hope you have enjoyed following them as much as Kenneth Fisher and myself have enjoyed creating them. We hope have learnt from viewing them.

Is there something you would like to see in the future tutorial wise? If so then tell us and we will try to include them in future issues of the magazine just send your suggestions to:

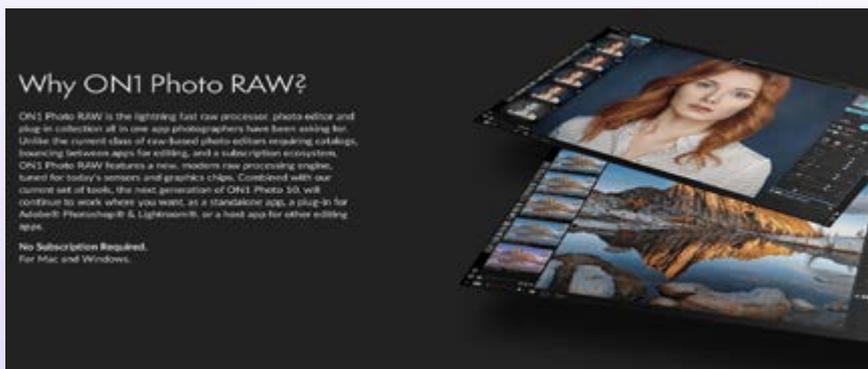
editor@phototrains.co.uk



In the next issue

In the next issue we will be bringing in some new video material as well as a continuation of the current series of Kenneth Fishers Lightroom and Photoshop for Beginners courses and My Get Creative videos Photoshop/Lightroom series of videos.

I hope and looking forward to (fingers crossed) that I will be able to review the new software from ON1 that is exciting a lot of photographers, including myself on what could be a big contender for Adobe Camera RAW? Will ON1 deliver the goods? ON1 Photo RAW is a program that integrates all from RAW conversion to applying filters, cataloguing images, applying enhancements and effects without having to leave the program itself to do so plus it can be accessed as a plug-in feature within Adobe products. Looks like a whole new tutorial feature could be on the way if so! Click the image below if you want to take a look at the soon to be released software.



I will be talking about Macro Photography, not just normal macro but **eXtReMe** macro where I will be showing you how to get past the 1 to 1 magnification zone and producing images like this.



More Winners from the Phototrain Photography Competition we host on Facebook. We are getting some wonderful entries why not join in the fun here: [PHOTOTRAIN PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION](#)



We'll be back