

NORWICH & DISTRICT PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY
Affiliated to the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain
Through the East Anglian Federation of Photographic Societies

FOCUS

The Norwich & District Photographic Society Newsletter: December 2007

Through the Lens Notes from the Chairman



Early on when joining the Society I felt I ought to help out in some way and thought that putting myself forward as a Committee Member would be a good start. I did nothing about this during my first year, but during my second year mentioned it to the, then, Vice Chairman, Mark Hickson, who welcomed the idea.

I arranged for the usual Proposer and Seconder and awaited the AGM.

Nearer to this time Mark asked if I would consider taking on the post as Vice Chairman to him when he took over as Chair. My immediate answer was an emphatic NO! The thought of standing up in front of 40/50 people was not something I could do (I'm a very nervous person). Overnight however I thought I really should do something different in my life, get out of my comfort zone so to speak. So without thinking it through further I contacted Mark and changed my answer to yes.

Oh, dear, I then thought it through – way too late! I realised I would automatically become Chairman after two years. What to do? Well, I thought there were two years to do the duties and occasionally I could present something, thus getting used to the job.

OK, I was now a little settled but still had a nervous time standing up at meetings, if only for a few minutes. 'I've got time to get over this feeling' I thought.

Wrong!

At dinner one evening a little while later with Helen Williams, Mark Hickson and Mark Cotter, Helen mentioned that she and Mark H were moving away to Hartlepool. My reaction? Did I think to say 'Good luck', 'I'll miss you both' or anything on those lines? No, my first thought was – Oh dear, that means I'm Chairman after only a few

months as Vice-chair!

This is not the reaction that I mentioned though, but I'm sure the horror of the situation could be read on my face as all three of them stared at me intently. Thankfully the food was there and I could dig into that and try not to worry too much.

To give me time to get my mind straight I talked Mark H into running the few evenings left before their departure and just handing over to close his last meeting. OK, this was it. I had been running this presentation through my mind for a few weeks now but I still could not concentrate that well. At least I could get a laugh from the members by letting them know I could not attend the following meeting, thus putting off the fateful day.

I now feel OK, sort of, fronting the meetings but hope I can give my Vice Chairman a better run up to the job.

PS: I have since made up to Mark H and Helen by wishing them well in Hartlepool!

Reg Belcher

New Committee Members

Hopefully, you will have realised that we have filled a number of the vacancies on the Committee.

Angie Adams joins as the Public Relations Officer and has already had an impact by securing sponsorship for POTY from Jessops central office. Great news for the competition. Look out for information in the newspapers which has become Angie's main target.

Paul Hurst has stepped into the Vice-Chairman's shoes. Paul is hoping for a full term as Vice-Chair without being catapulted into the hot seat like Reg.

Gary Martin has agreed to be Exhibition Secretary. (I seem to remember this appointment being met with a round of applause at a Tuesday meeting: I wonder why?) This safe guards exhibitions and the Cathedral dates are already in everyone's diaries.

Norman Tottle steps into the shoes vacated by Ben Loudon as the projectionist. A key role, for without one, we would never be sure of whether the equipment was there.

So, it's a big welcome to all the new Committee members. Long may they serve.

Visit the web-site
www.ndps.co.uk

From Photo to Painting

by Angie Adams

Transforming a digital image using Photoshop filters may not appeal to the purists amongst us, however, five minutes spent 'tweaking' in PS can produce some stunning effects. Not only can painterly images be fun to produce, but they can prove lucrative too!

Let's get started...

First and foremost carry out all the adjustments you usually make to your image in PS.

Make a duplicate layer in the layers palette by dragging and dropping the background layer over the 'new layer icon'. Name this layer 'copy'

Now click Filter>Blur>Smart Blur and input the following settings: Quality: High - Mode: Edge Only - Radius: 3.0 & Threshold: 25.0 and click OK.

On the same layer click: Image>Adjustment>Invert.

Still on the copy layer click: Layer Options on the layers palette and select: Soft Light.

Now reduce the opacity of the layer to



around 80%.

Return to your original layer (background layer) and increase the saturation using: Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation in the following colours: Yellow, Red, Green & Blue. Note: the amount you give must be down to personal preference as this differs from picture to picture. Click on 'master' and change each colour individually.

Now still on your original layer click on: Filter>Artistic>Fresco and click OK.

If this effect is a little too strong for

your liking, immediately click on: Edit>Fade and reduce the effect by around 50% - or to a percentage you are happy with. If you wish to reduce the effect you must do it straight after applying the Fresco effect.

Flatten your layers and sharpen the image if you think it needs it. You can also increase the saturation again at this stage to produce a more in-your-face effect.

Extra bits:

This effect seems to work particularly well on images that include buildings. Changing the border of the image by either erasing areas, vignetting etc., can add a more painterly feel too.

Be careful when increasing blue tones in the hue/saturation palette, as anything over 10 can look odd or bleed slightly when printed

Have a play with other filters, they may be more to your liking.

Enjoy!

www.ndps.co.uk

When was the last time you visited?

There have been a number of changes and updates to the website over the past few months, so you really should put in a visit to the Society's website to have a look.

Picture galleries have been updated and some new ones have been added. If you are wanting to update yours (and I know I want to update mine), pass a CD of images to Reg. If you are unsure of the size requirements etc., I suggest giving Reg the images and he will resize for you if you feel that you do not have the expertise yourself.

The website is also the place to read the latest documents produced by the Society (like the minutes of the previous meetings and the AGM). Your new(ish) secretary is keen to do as much digitally as possible. If you would like a printed, old fashioned copy, let the secretary know.

Now, are you an on-line shopper? If you do, please visit and use the sites that have links via the front page of the site: we get a little bit of money each time you buy.

Don't forget that the Calendar will be the place to receive updates to the programme and, when bad weather strikes, any cancellation announcements will be made via the Calendar. Do, please, get in the habit of using it.

The Forum is alive and active. Remember that Helen produced a card that showed you how to do everything. Do get involved with the Forum. Lots of you are registered but never seem to post anything. It's a great resource that lets us keep in touch and debate and share. Most of the Society is on-line, please join the debate. So, between meetings, see you in cyberspace?

Response to “an Elderly Photographer”

Or ‘Why Digital is Proper Photography’

I came to photography through the digital route because I was editing a school magazine and needed to include pictures. So, as a digital photographer I have moved from using digital all of the time to using film for picture taking that is not directly linked to my work. In the last issue of *Focus*, David Jennings wrote about trying this “new fangled way of taking photographs” and declared that it was not “proper photography”. Well, I beg to differ.



There seems to be a school of thought that suggests that because it is easy to correct mistakes, change things or use images for more artistic ends, that this negates digital photography. Well, let's look at the ‘old fashioned’ way to take a picture. Some of the early examples in Anne Miles’ excellent talk last season show that it is perfectly possible to create a photomontage (or add a seagull) using film: it just takes a lot more time to do it. However, it's the suggestion that digital photography is cheating that I don't understand. Know anything about the Cottingly Fairies? All done on film, I believe.

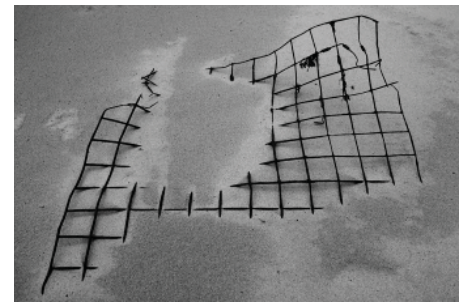
David asks “whatever happened to freezing a moment in time never to be repeated as with chemically processed prints?” Doesn't pressing the shutter on a digital camera freeze that moment in time? I think it does. I'm also prompted to ask: how long is “a moment in time”? How does this sit with the ideas of time-lapse photography or those dreadful milky-white seas or the hours necessary to cap-

ture star trails? As to the repetition of the moment, while it is true that the exact moment the shutter is pressed can not be recreated (and we can not step into the same river twice), there are probably very real tripod holes at all the most picture-esque places in the British Isles: all of which are recreating the moment, albeit imprecisely.

But it's this “chemically processed print” bit that I can't quite understand. While the darkroom printer will produce a unique print, this is because s/he can not produce two prints the same, even if s/he wanted. Obviously, this either makes the photograph more special, or unique, a master printer can produce a number of prints that are virtually identical to each other: not entirely unique. The ability to perfect a print on screen and then press Print and watch half a dozen images that are identical roll off the printer is clearly progress. I can produce a perfect print every single time: no trial and error, no waste and no time in the dark. “Who cares? I hear you cry as long as the print is OK.” I think you will find that this has been said for one hundred and fifty-odd years.



Perhaps it's the ease with which a digital photographer can create and craft that rankles with photographers of the dark-age. With Lightroom and Photoshop, a well lit study, a cup of coffee next to me (or wine, for that matter) and a comfortable chair, I can produce images that knockout the viewer (along with the mediocre that every photographer produces a lot of). So, I can adjust the tonal range, contrast, remove little blemishes, crop the im-



age, dodge and burn, sharpen the image and adjust the colour balance to name but seven things. All of these things are done in the darkroom. How is it that I am cheating and the darkroom process isn't cheating? Is it just sour grapes that I have a bit more comfort, can save my work and come back to it after *Corrie* or *Eastenders*? Of course, Photoshop gives me more scope to be creative in a digital-arts kind of way and depart from the photograph but most photographers play with the filters for a while and then go off them all very quickly. (Which, having seen ‘creative’ work is just as well.)

The one area in which film seems to have the upper hand is in the issue of authenticity. Because it is easier to manipulate a collection of zeros and ones, a definitive version of what the camera caught is more elusive: witness the resignation of a Reuters photographer who exaggerated the impact of an Israeli bombing mission on the West Bank earlier this year. Film does give us a negative that it is very hard to fiddle with. However, as the Cottingly Fairies demonstrate, a negative is not proof positive (or negative for that matter).

Finally, programs like ProShow Gold or Pictures to Exe make the process of producing a slideshow very easy and are great fun. A progress that has its roots in the old AV methods and then adds something new. Just don't forget that five minutes is the optimum length of a slideshow. Please don't “bore the pants off” [us] during the 2007-8 season.”

Is it proper photography? Yes, but not as you know it.

Mark Cotter

Join the Forum.
Join the debate

www.ndps.co.uk/forum

Studio Group

The Society organises studio photography evenings from time to time. We hope to make these more regular events if the demand is there. Sessions last two hours and cost between £10 and £20 each depending on the model and venue. Numbers are limited to eight photographers for any event (this is to ensure that photographers have enough access to the lights etc.). These events are open to all members of the Society, whatever their level of experience. Forthcoming sessions being planned include portraiture (male and female), figure, fashion and glamour photography.

For more information, do please talk to me.

Brian Ebbage

Pictures on this page are by Brian.



Photoshop Tips

with Ian McIntosh

Don't be daunted by the large number of keyboard shortcuts. If you pick up one each time you use Photoshop, you will speed up your work. The keystrokes for the Tools are probably the easiest to start with as they are often the initial letter. e.g.

B = Brush
S = Stamp / Clone
Z = zoom
T = Text

Some are slightly less obvious e.g.

I = Eye dropper (Colour sampler)
V = moVe tool

Most users know the Ctrl + Z for UNDO. (Cmd + Z for Mac)

Depending on your system and Ps version, the drop-down menus also give the keystrokes e.g.

Ctrl + A (⌘ + A) = Select All
Ctrl + D (⌘ + D) = Deselect All

(In fact there are lots of short cuts that are similar in all programs. Have a look as it makes using a computer faster.

Noticeboard

3 WAY BATTLE WITH N NORFOLK AND DEREHAM

A comfortable win for NDPS (133 pts) with N Norfolk on 129.5 pts and Dereham on 122. The evening was well judged by Brian Collins and two NDPS pictures were awarded top marks: In Concert by Dave Jordan (slide) and Dom S. Blasius by Jim Massy (print). Well done to both of them.

CONGRATUALIONS

Paul Hurst (our vice-chair) has gained his LRPS for a panel of ten prints. Most of the images were architectural and Paul has promised to show the panel in the new year.

PAGB EXHIBITION SUCCESSES

Three slides from NDPS members were accepted for the Photo-Alliance of Great Britain exhibition: two from Jon Martin (Gentoo penguin landing on a beach and Gentoo Colony) and one from Joan Jordan (Ghosts). Well done to the pair of them. By the way, only sixteen slides from EAF clubs were accepted.

FURTHER DEMISE OF SLIDES

From 2009, the EAF Championship for Slides will change to Digital Projected Images. Due to the decline in slides, most clubs are now using many slides made from digital files. I have no doubt that this is the way forward for most competitions in the next few years. Slides to be used for competition will have to be scanned into a digital form. Another result of the digital revolution!

Brian

ANNUAL EXHIBITION & SLIDES

You may remember that this raised recently in *Focus*. It seems that we will be dropping to using one of the slide cases for the 2008 Cathedral Exhibition.

FINALLY, ITEMS FOR FOCUS

If you have an idea for an article in *Focus*, please let me know. Want to write something but don't know what? Please talk to me. I'd like a wider variety of material if possible. Thanks to those who have contributed to this issue.

EXIF Data

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