

2022-2023 SEASON >>>

Roger's report

The review

Meet the members

Competition news

Federation & FIAP news



"Otter on the rocks" – David Hunt

Issue #29
Mar 23

A Monthly Insight into the activities of Stroud Camera Club

STROUD CAMERA CLUB



Contacts >>>

Welcome to Stroud Camera Club

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter. If you want any help with matters relating to the club, or your photography in general, we are here to help.

Chairman: Roger Matthews

Secretary: Trish Bloodworth

Treasurer: Leslie Holmes

Competitions: Richard Atkinson

Publicity: René Cason

Programme: Ali Garrett

For more information, including contact emails for all the committee please go to www.stroudcameraclub.co.uk



"Ancient and Modern" – Chris Organ

AND FINALLY – REMEMBER

Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity!

Roger's Report

I love technology - it allows me to do things that would not have been possible in the past, or could only be achieved with more effort, skill or resources, all of which are in limited supply. It perhaps explains why I love to explore drone and iPhone photography and have more apps for post-processing than is truly necessary. It was therefore no surprise that a recent discussion on the WCPF Facebook site regarding the permissibility of artificial intelligence (AI) in photography caught my attention. There is no doubt that AI is a hot topic, not just in photography but across many areas where it is becoming increasingly mainstream. Only this week, Elon Musk (a technophile if ever there was one) warned that "out of control" development of AI could "pose profound risks to society and humanity". Frightening stuff!

AI has come a long way in the past few years. ChatGPT is an AI Chatbot that uses machine learning to allow users to generate an essay or other written answer to almost anything you ask it, such that it now threatens the integrity of exam assignments completed at home. So, what of its use in photography - does it stifle or enhance creativity? Does it undermine photographic skills? Should there be limits on AI in photographic competitions where all the work in an image must be the work of the photographer? There is little doubt that AI-generated images fall outwith the latter requirement, but how can this be policed? We have already seen an AI-generated image win an Australian photography competition and I have no doubt that AI-generated elements have been incorporated in compositions in many other competitions. Notwithstanding the clear infringement of extant competition rules with generated imagery, AI also

makes it considerably easier to incorporate 3rd party imagery into compositions (textures, sky replacement etc) - again these are clearly outside the rules for competition images. AI photo-processing is more of a grey area - with one click of a button, the technology can now analyse a scene and make adjustments based on how those scenes 'should look' based on many thousands of images that the software uses as a reference. AI can recover faces, remove blemishes, adjust lighting angles, enhance resolution, remove unwanted elements etc - are these techniques just making our jobs easier and levelling the playing field, or are they taking away our own creativity and de-skilling the art of photography? AI is also used in-camera to set exposure parameters based on the scene and to achieve autofocus and subject tracking - these come at a cost (albeit falling), but arguably take away an element of skill that was needed in the past. Should the photographer with the deepest pockets and the latest gear have an advantage over those who are unable to invest in the latest equipment and software? I have no answers, but hope we can still develop our photographic skills as artists and use AI to enhance our creativity rather than let technology dumb-down our art. I have no doubt that the photographic pioneers of old would be no less enthusiastic than me in embracing technology had it been around in their day. Upon seeing the first daguerreotype around 1840, the French painter Paul Delaroche famously declared: "From today, painting is dead". Disruptive technology is not new.

The review >>>

“Out of the Dark” – Simon Caplan LRPS

Simon’s return visit to SCC, this time as a speaker rather than a judge was very welcome. His title “Out of the Dark” was carefully explained when he took us on an adventure into the depths of his garage! His annotated photograph of the “studio” space in his garage caused a good amount of hilarity, with the key ingredient appearing to be beer storage! The photography did not disappoint, with Simon showing us how he crafts his images using a simple torch. The skill he has putting together his beautiful still life imagery was in evidence, and no surprise that it takes him several hours to set up. Key, as he told us, being to get the composition right with colours, tones and leading lines, even from such innocuous items as the notch in the wood shelf. Taking influence from the Dutch masters but also contemporary artists and photographers, Simon carefully builds his set and once happy takes about 5 images on his trusty Canon 5D mk11 before moving into Photoshop to refine the images. It was wonderful to also have many of Simon’s prints on display on the evening to enjoy at our leisure during the break.

A very interesting article about Simon and his work appeared in the RPS magazine and can be downloaded at https://amazon.clikpic.com/simoncapan/clik_media/DIGIT_article.pdf

Member Audio Visual Night

Congratulations to those members who created their stunning AV/Photofilm presentations to share with members and thank you to Scott Antony for preparing the evening for us to enjoy.

They commenced with Scott’s own “If ever you’re feeling lost” with beautiful imagery of the Yorkshire Dales and not to forget the many sheep! Ian Peter’s “Antelope Canyon” was a myriad of reds of all shades as he led us through the slot canyons of Arizona. Keeping to the travel theme, Barry Watkins showed us around Myanmar from the beauty of the temples to the serenity of the fisherfolk. Jill Parker gave us an insight into the origins of voodoo with her trip around Benin, Togo and Ghana – a blaze of colour and mystery in her “Voodoo Journey”.

Closer to home we took a wander amongst the trees in Jenny Bircher’s reminiscence about “Trees I grew up with” around Stroud. Paul Edwards was also more local, using Slimbridge as his muse to simply look at creativeness in “Playing”. Ian’s second offering “River Life on the Frome” set beautifully to Claude Debussy’s Clair de Lune was a meander along the river. A more challenging walk was Roger Matthews “A walk in the Hebrides” accompanied by sound effects plus Izzy the dog!

Scott’s passion for the medium of AV shone through in his reworked version of “Blake’s Jerusalem – A Personal Rendition” rounding off an excellent first half.

After the break, we were treated to several high calibre guest film-makers who are part of an online community of which Scott is a member.



“Storm warning”
Kerrin Malone

Facebook

Why don’t you view some of the member images on our Facebook Group?

If you are not yet a member, simply click the link within Facebook and answer 3 very simple questions.

Upload your image to the group – ideally for an image post use 2048px on the long side (either height or width) to get the best resolution for anyone viewing.

Please “like” and “comment” on members’ posts.

For more information go to

<https://facebook.com/stroudcameraclub>

Members’ Night >>>

Chairman’s Challenge

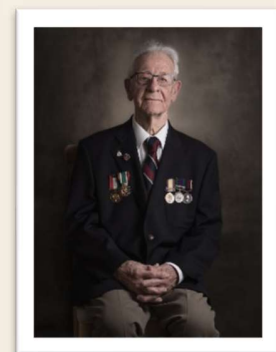
Roger set another inspiring challenge, literally asking members to choose an artist, photographer or recent speaker whom they had been inspired by and submitting to him 3 images.

A superb evening was then hosted by Roger, with him having researched the “inspiration” and being able to constructively discuss how close (or not) the member had come to emulating their inspiration.

There was a wide range of styles selected, although there were quite a number who used Lisa Rendell’s “Dare to be different” evening so that they were able to get very creative with their offering. Bill Ward also inspired several members with his ICM, but other members were more individual in their selections, Geoff Perret, who ended up as Roger’s winner for the panel selected Stan Farrow, and also Alexey Titarenko – it must be said that he executed both in tremendous style and not many would contest Roger’s choice for the winning panel; with Annie Blick and Trish Bloodworth as his other shortlisted choices.

The choice of individual image was harder to call, with so many options available. Roger ended with a shortlist of six, and selected Annie’s Pep Ventosa inspired rendition of the “Knife Angel” on display recently at Gloucester Cathedral as his overall winner.

As is customary, Roger also joined in the fun himself and entered his three images. His Glyn Dewis inspired “Veteran” which took not only excellent photographic skills, but also persuasion skills was definitely “on topic”. His Father-in-Law must surely be very happy with this result.



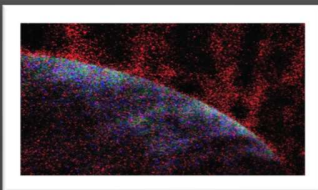
“Veteran” – Roger Matthews

Geoff Perrett's winning panel for Chairman's Challenge



Geoff's images were inspired by Stan Farrow (one of our speakers on Zoom) and also photographer Alexey Titarenko – final image

Roger's shortlisted best images for Chairman's Challenge



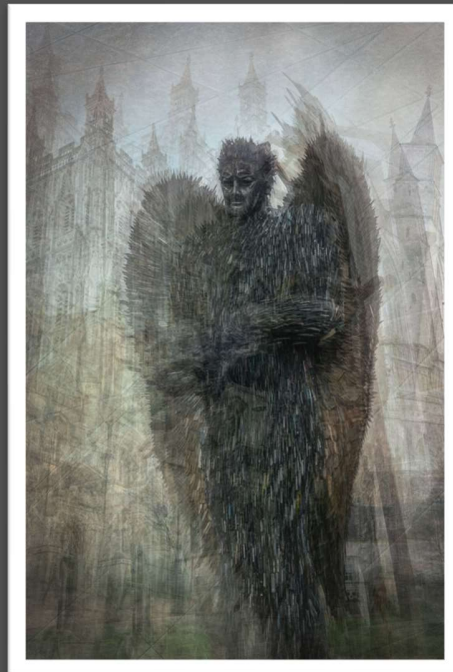
Glyn Heskins inspired by Jackson Pollock –
"View from the international Space Station"



Scott Antony inspired by
Caneletto – "Grand Canal"



Trish Bloodworth – inspired by Anne
Geddes – "Flowerpot baby"



WINNING IMAGE
Annie Blick inspired by Pep Ventosa
"One Hundred Thousand Knives"

This image also won the "Hundred
Heroines" competition in
Gloucestershire.



Leslie Holmes – inspired by Paul
Goldstein – "The hunt"

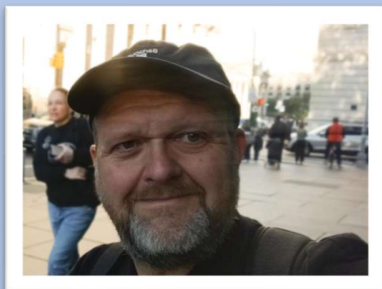


Mark Halling – inspired by Bill
Ward – "Rock in Kernow"

Meet the member – Mick West

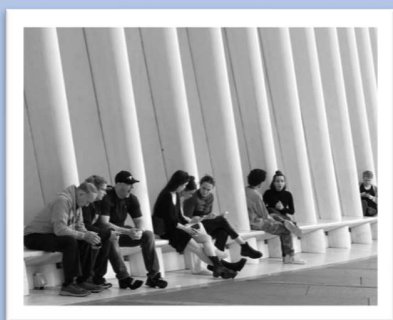
I grew up the small Fenland town of Boston, probably the flattest place in the country, arriving in Stroud some 18 years ago after time in Liverpool and Hull, and now just about able to do a hill-start. My wife George hails from these parts, and we have a couple of teenage kids, and slightly unhinged fox red Labrador.

I used to be a proper scientist (Microbiologist) but have spent most of my working life in technical roles in the food industry. My current responsibilities have a global reach, and it is a privilege to regularly speak with people from all over the world, and a pleasure to travel to meet them, often in locations off the beaten track. I always try to do some photography wherever I am, even if I only have a couple of hours in a cold dark city, or my phone in an airport terminal.



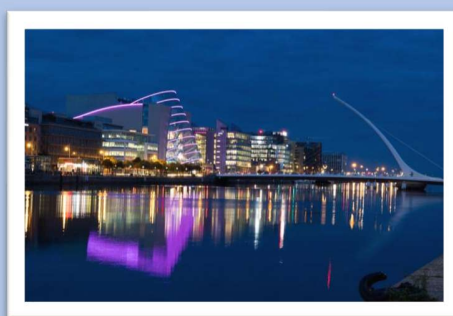
printed in my DIY home darkroom. All of it using a second hand T70 I picked up in a charity shop.

After a long pause on 'serious' photography I joined Stroud Camera club during lockdown. This is something I had been meaning to do for several years, and I now see I should have done it sooner because it is a fantastic club! I invested in a Canon R6 18 months ago, and I continue to be impressed with its results, or discovery of a new feature.



My first camera was an awful thing - a Boots branded 'disk' camera that had easy loading but tiny negatives. The 1st proper camera that I used was my Dad's Canon T70 - he'd treated himself to something that was state of the art back then, and taught me how to use it. My first shoot was climbing up Boston Stump (one of the tallest medieval towers in the country) and taking shots across the flat landscape out to the Wash.

I took a formal photography course during my time in Hull, and then continued to meet up with them to take photographs. A competition was organised each year in a school hall, prints only. I thoroughly enjoyed photography at this time, shooting colour Velvia slides, and Ilford black and white negatives, which I developed and



At the moment I am most interested in trying to author images that say something or capture the sense and feel of the of place I am in, or a moment of time occurring there. This can mean capturing impactful and engaging images, rather than something instantly easy on the eye. I am currently exploring street and looking forward to a course in Liverpool that teaches 'street craft'. But I love all genres, and will happily spend an evening down the bowls club looking at all the fabulous images that the people of this fantastic club share.

Question corner>>>

Q: When/what is the Photoshop Virtual Summit?

This event is all about being creative with Photoshop with topics such as creating realistic composites and improve your skill in essential techniques such as selecting, masking, creative uses of brushes, image manipulation, fantasy images, textures, painterly effects and so on ...

A: It's completely FREE TO WATCH with over 36 hours of Photoshop Training from 19 Instructors including people such as Glyn Dewis, former Disney Animator Aaron Blaise, Hollywood Movie Poster compositor Lisa Carney, Brooke Shaden, Bert Monroy and more ...

Register here: https://www.pscreativitysummit.com/HomePage?r_done=1

Federation News

WCPF Knightshayes Trophy view the winning entries at <https://www.thewcpf.com/kightshayes-trophy-winners-2023>

Judging seminar and other events organized by the WCPF can be found on their website: <https://www.thewcpf.com/the-wcpf-diary>

The Member Exhibition was judged this month, and the accepted images are available to view online at: <https://photoexhib.com/wcpfex/results-2023/results.htm>

Back 2 Basics

March saw eager members armed with baking trays, old photos, sheets of ancient paper and their cameras convene for a workshop about creating and using textures in their photography.

Great fun was had photographing the various textures and combining them in camera - who'd have thought that the red velvet chairs at the Bowls Club would be ideal for imagery, and when combined with an old baking tray. Gerry Chance had been inspired enough to raid the samples at B&Q and was armed with several sheets of wallpaper with delightful texturing.

A run through of types of ideas for textures, which was pretty much anything and everything and then a demonstration of how to use the textures in Photoshop or other editing programmes which use layers.

A constant reminder that a texture is there to enhance the image, and add something to it, rather than just detract from the image. In particular Trish emphasised how the opacity (and sometimes the fill) sliders should generally be reduced significantly. A final image showing how textures can also be used to recover blown highlights brought the session to an end.

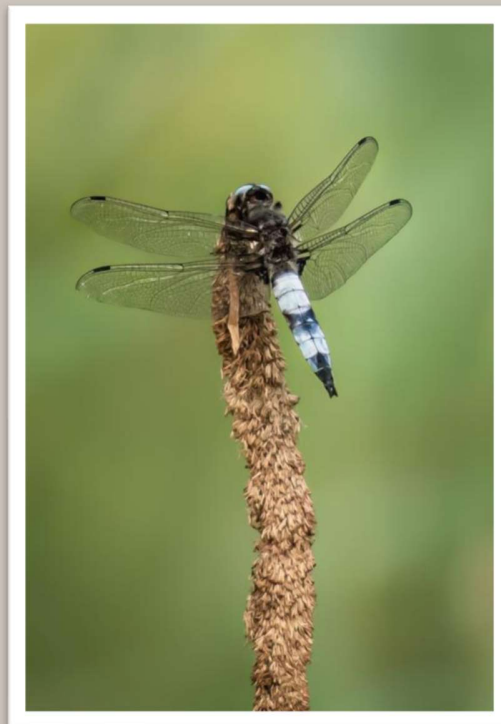
Send any Back 2 Basics ideas to: secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk

MONO – winning digital



“Dramatic sky on Iona” – René Cason

Nature – winning digital



“Male scarce chaser” – Roger Matthews

“What is my why?” – Matt Kloskowski

2023 competitive thoughts...

The way the schedule has fallen this season meant there were 2 competitions in March. First up was the mono competition which saw a late finish with 25 prints, and over 60 digital images to be assessed. Later in the month, the nature competition drew out our avid, and talented nature photographers, with some high scores in evidence.

Competition No 5 - Monochrome - Judge, Martin Cooper

Prints

Judge's choice – Richard Atkinson – “At the end of the day”

Digital

Judge's choice – René Cason – “Dramatic Sky on Iona”

Richard Atkinson – “Noble profile” also scored 20

In addition to the above:

Scores of 19– Prints

Roger Matthews x 2

Scores of 19 – Digital

Trish Bloodworth

Francis Mridha

Competition No 6 - Nature - Judge, Ralph Snook ARPS, EFIAP/b, DPAGB

Prints

Judge's choice – Leslie Holmes – “On the move”

Digital

Judge's choice – Roger Matthews – “Male Scarce Chaser”

In addition to the above:

Scores of 20 – Prints

René Cason

Scores of 20 – Digital

René Cason

Roger Matthews

Don't forget you can view all the entered images on our website, and if you are logged in using your member log in you can also leave comments should you wish



“Noble profile” – Richard Atkinson

coming up >>>

April 2023

Thu 6th April 2023 – Members' Night - Small Group Critique Session

Thu 13th April 2023 – The AGM (free!)

Tue 18th April 2023 – Back to Basics

Thu 20th April 2023 – Image of the Year

Fri 21st April 2023 – Set up of Member

Exhibition at Stroud Brewery (runs for a week)

Thu 27th April 2023 – Member night – phone, tablet, drone images

Next Competition

IMAGE OF THE YEAR

deadline and print hand-in

Thurs 6th April 2023

INTERNATIONAL SALON NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS to the following members who have had acceptances into International or National (BPE) Photographic Salons/Exhibitions!

René Cason – including RPS Nature Group acceptance

Trish Bloodworth – Greek circuit & WCPF Member exhibition

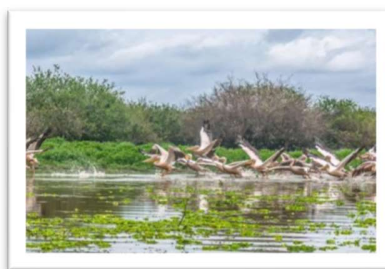
Roger Matthews – WCPF Member exhibition

CONGRATULATIONS

Do ask if you want any details about Salons – in particular with Cheltenham Salon coming up with a closing date of 9th April.

Please send details of your acceptances or other external “wins” to secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk

Apologies if you are missed here – please let me know so you can be added next time.



“Great White Pelicans Go Fishing”
– Ian Peters

UPLOAD YOUR IMAGES – to your gallery and our Facebook Group

MONO – winning print



“At the end of the day” – Richard Atkinson

Nature – winning print



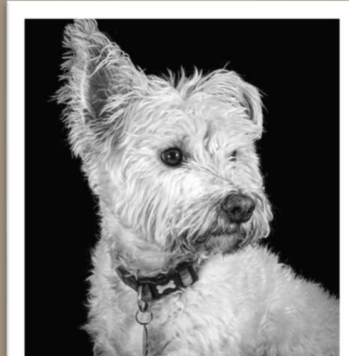
“On the move” – Leslie Holmes

“The eye should learn to listen before it looks” — Robert Frank

Scores of 19 from our mono competitions



"Skye Bridge" – Francis Mridha



*"Keeping an eye on you"
Trish Bloodworth*



"Caldey Island" – Roger Matthews



*"Museum of the future" – Roger
Matthews*

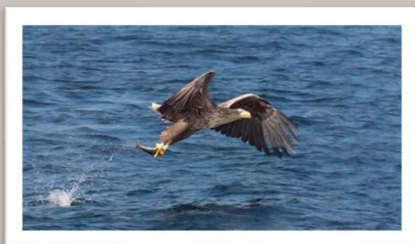
Scores of 20 or 19 from our nature competition



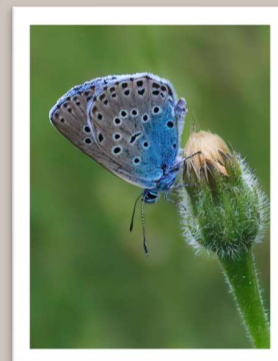
"Common Blue" – René Cason



"Impala in a downpour" – Leslie Holmes



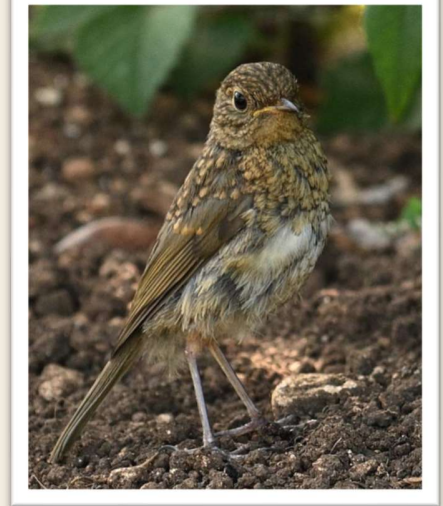
"White tailed eagle" – René Cason



"Large Blue" – Roger Matthews

DPIC Selector's Ribbon presentation

Last month's newsletter reported on our success at the Annual WCPF DPIC competition and Trish Bloodworth's Selector's Ribbon for her image: 'Faithful Friends'. As Trish was unable to attend the WCPF AGM where the awards were presented, Ralph Snook took the opportunity to present her award immediately prior to judging this year's nature competition. Congratulations to Trish on very well-deserved recognition for her award winning image – *Roger*.



"Young robin" – David Hamilton



"Snowdrops" – Gerry Chance



"Roosting Chalkhill Blue" – Richard Sellwood



STROUD CAMERA CLUB

ARE PROUD TO PRESENT

THE SPRING 2023 MEMBERS' EXHIBITION

AT THE

STROUD BREWERY

UNIT B2 KINGFISHER BUSINESS PARK,
LONDON ROAD, THRUPP, STROUD GL5 2BY

BETWEEN

22ND AND 29TH APRIL 2023

FREE ADMISSION

More from the Mono Competition



"Paul's Rococo Past Times models" – Ian Peters



"Anchorage" – Derrick Whitmore



"Cala Lillies" – Geoff Perrett

More from the nature competition



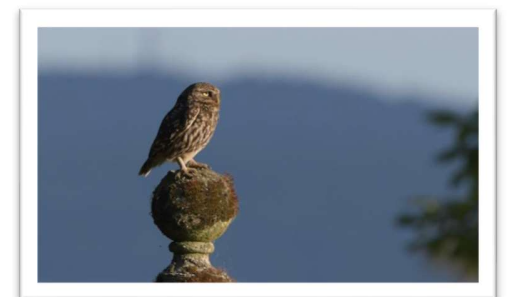
"Nesting heron" – Mark Halling



"One taken" – Trevor Blundell



"Motherhood" – Jill Parker



"The sentinel" – Allan Jeffcutt