



Tuscany Lighting Logbook

www.jaguarps.co.uk

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Jaguar Photographic Society

Website: www.jaguarps.co.uk
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Facebook: Jaguar Photographic Society

Meetings: Weds evenings from 20:00hrs
Jaguar Social Club, Chorley Way, Coventry

Cover Image: Allan Stewart
A Santa steam train leaving Foley Park tunnel on the Severn Valley Railway, December 2010

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COMMENT

Welcome to the third newsletter and our Winter edition. As the seasons change so do the opportunities for images. Sunrises become available at a much more sociable hour and the opportunities for low light images become more prevalent.

Next year will see some changes in the Society, most notably in our meeting location. Once we have all the dates and options sorted rest assured that we will let you all know.

The take up for the trip to the Farne Isles and Northumbria next year has been fantastic and there will be a total of 18 of us enjoying the sights and experiences of the birdlife and stunning scenery.

There are still a number of free evenings towards the end of the season. If you have a topic you'd like to see covered or indeed you'd like to give a talk one evening please let Scott know.

Finally as Christmas is fast approaching take time to enjoy the festive period and I hope that Santa brings you any kit you're longing for. On behalf of the committee I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Best wishes,

Scott

Secretary

DIARY DATES

December

5th Annual Awards Evening & Lecture
12th Merit 1
19th Xmas Meal – Wing Wah, Coventry
26th No Meeting – Christmas Break

Xmas visit for Low Light Photography – Venue TBC

January

2nd Lecturette Run Through for Herberts
9th Portrait Technique (Head Shots)
16th Mercia Group – Jaguar hosting
 Irene Froy – “Dawn to Dusk”
23rd Photoshop – Post Processing Head Shots
30th Print League (at Jaguar Vs Courtaulds;
 Herberts Judging)

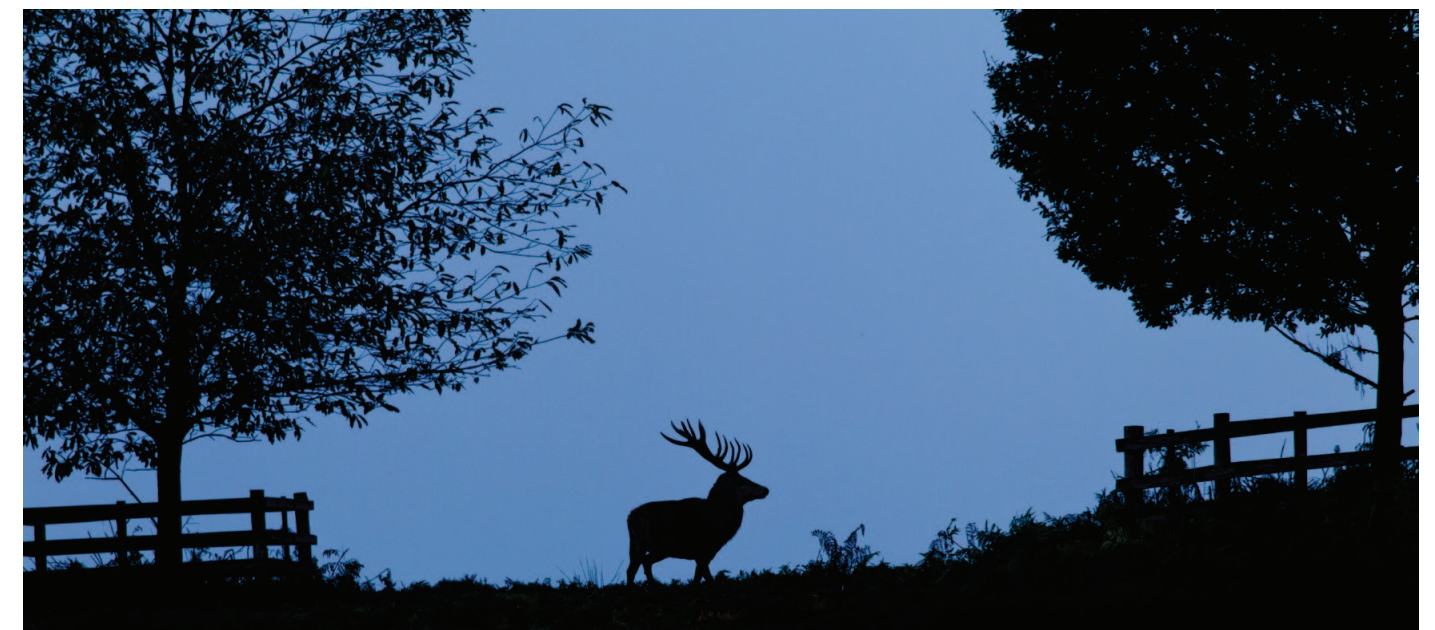
TBC – Birmingham Photowalk – Brindley Place

February

6th Merit 2
13th JLR Panel – JUDGE TBC
20th Mercia Group - Grange PS
David Peters – “A day in the life”
27th JPS to visit Alfred Herberts for Lecturettes

March

6th Merit 3
13th Bring and Buy Sale (Bring any kit you no longer need and sell it)
20th Mercia Group – Alfred Herberts PS
Laurence Jones – “Kids Naturally Photography”
27th Print layouts and mounting



TRIPS

December

A low light trip over the Christmas Break.

January

A photowalk in Birmingham

June - 2013

7-9th Northumbrian Coastal Trip
A weekend trip at the peak of the Puffin season and some fantastic coastline in a breath-taking corner of the country.

Look out for more details on our meeting nights or via the weekly email.

If you have an idea for a trip or would like to arrange one for us please speak to Scott as we'd be pleased to hear your ideas.

FRESH FRAME

Tony Cartwright



SEIZE A CHALLENGE

I often feel quite despondent when the British weather is so grey and overcast, producing dull and lifeless lighting. I yearn for the Mediterranean evening light, over exciting vistas with memories of exciting holidays. But I am convinced there is a way of using our typical conditions to advantage, and show off the British landscape and architectural beauty to its justifiable magnificence. Sometimes I need a push however to go out and try!

Earlier this year, the organisation I am involved with in Leamington (Leamington Studio Artists & Gallery 150) was commissioned by the Leamington Society to host an exhibition in celebration of the completion of their latest restoration project - the Linden Arches (<http://www.gallery150.co.uk/reborn.html>). These are a series of wrought iron arches, lighting the walk around the gardens down by the river opposite the Pump Rooms.

As part of the show, we decided to produce eight panoramic panels, each by a different member photographer, and showing each of the arches with its links with the town. Each panel would also include several images showing the renovation process.

For me this presented several challenges, notwithstanding the rotten weather we were having at the time.

First of all I had never produced a picture that large before - over 1.5m wide. Secondly, I have an inbuilt aversion to extreme picture shapes, and these were 3 by 1 landscape for an essentially vertical subject! However, after a number of recces I started to see

several pictures in my mind and decided to use a tripod, take multiple images and stitch them together later in Photoshop.

The image below would never win a competition, but went down very well in the exhibition, hung on a dark grey wall, and I ended up being quite pleased with it. What I hope you cannot see is the enormous amount of cloning I had to do to get rid of all the

superfluous clutter that nowadays seems to ruin all our towns - traffic lights, road signs, security cameras, workmen's fencing and all the rest!

But my favourite is the one above. One of the other photographers had to drop out so I filled in with a second picture. I like it because of the shapes, and the colouring coming through the Linden trees themselves. I took it with a 200mm lens to get the arches to overlap each other nicely, then a little bit of work in Photoshop to highlight the crowns and globes a bit, and presto. This one ended up in prime position in the gallery, dead ahead when you walk in and nicely lit against a grey wall. I actually sold one of these with the inset pictures removed - a customer of taste!

For me, this was a great exercise, and I ended up with some other very pleasing shots of Leamington, which I will show at some time. The moral of the story set yourself a goal, and work your way through whatever difficulties present themselves. It may not always create an award winner, but you will learn a lot and it can be really satisfying.



DIGITAL DARKROOM

Scott Wiggins

Selective Sharpening

Sometimes when printing an image, we would prefer that the subject is sharp but the rest of the image is left in a softer format. This may be because sharpening an area of the subject will draw more focus to it or equally it may be a useful technique to balance an image; for example a family portrait where you just quite don't have enough depth of field.

In the deer image shown from our recent Bradgate Park trip, I wanted the deer to pop a little more from the background.

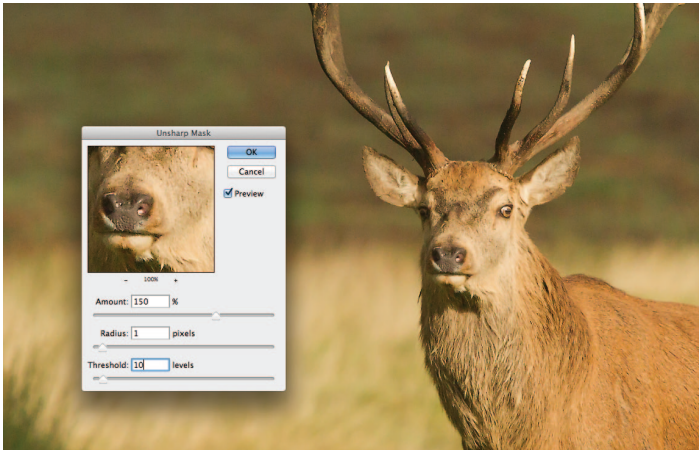
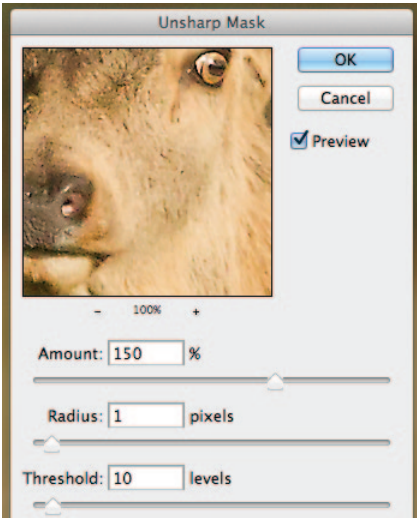
Having corrected the colour density I duplicated the image by selecting the background layer and pressing CTRL-J to create a copy.

Un-sharp mask is the sharpening tool of choice in this application (FILTER-SHARPEN-UNSHARP MASK) and I chose settings of 150, 1, 10 to sharpen the deer with.

Now by using a layer mask, I can hide the sharpening effect on the layer and by painting with white on a black mask I can bring back the sharpening to the areas I wish to.

Should you wish to add a little sharpening on one part of the image and more to another then either adjust the opacity of the brush so you are putting less paint down or paint on the mask with a shade of grey. Using grey will give you a consistent result that avoids the build up of the paint, which is what would happen if you keep painting with a reduced opacity.

Works in: Photoshop
Difficulty: **
Time to complete: *



The finished image selectively sharpened.

Elements Work Around

The easiest way to make this work in Elements is to duplicate the layer and sharpen it.

Now click on the sharpened layer and add a levels adjustment layer. Drag the adjustment layer below the sharpened one and then holding the ALT key between the two layers and click. This clips the sharpened image to the adjustment layer. Effectively you're borrowing the adjustment mask to paint on now and you can follow the steps on the alternate page.

Un-Sharp Mask Settings

As with any tool, you can struggle to know what are some default settings to get the best out of it.

Scott Kelby recommends the following settings for the Unsharp Mask working from top to bottom of the sliders:

General Sharpening: 85, 1, 4
Heavy Sharpening: 95, 1.5, 4
Portraits (Whole image): 75, 2, 3
Fur, Flowers and Feather 150, 1, 10

As with any tool experiment with the settings. If you're starting to see halos or funky colours appear then you've gone too far.

ON LOCATION

Words & Images: Matt Garside

Tuscan Street Photography

Atmosphere, courage and spontaneity; three key things that make street photography one of the most challenging photographic activities that I've tried in recent years. Luckily, in a recent trip to Siena, I made my first foray into this strange new world.

Siena is a very picturesque city, with plenty to photograph aside from people. I therefore, took a few shots of stationary items (some in full sunlight and others in the shadows) to help work out my camera settings. As I walked towards the main public space in the historic centre of Siena, the Piazza del Campo, opportunities began to present themselves; ranging from people on motorbikes to small groups of shoppers.

However, once in the Piazza del Campo, I was spoilt for choice; couples, small groups of men and women, individuals who really stood out, etc... This, together with the historic backdrop of the main square, well and truly ticked the atmosphere box.

In terms of camera setting, in strong sunlight (which covered most of the day) I used ISO100 combined with wide lens apertures to help separate subjects from the busy background. However, in the shade or to capture people walking by, I

increased to ISO400, a level at which my Canon 40D can operate with little noticeable noise. Occasionally, I used ISO800 to help boost the shutter speed, although this increased the chance of getting noise on my 40D, so was used sparingly.

I found courage to be the most challenging aspect of street photography; the courage to aim my camera at the unsuspecting Italian public and take pictures. It turns out that the majority of the Italian public find having their photographs taken much more acceptable than here in the UK; as the day went on, my confidence increased to a point where I sought out more unusual shots.

I initially started with a relatively short telephoto lens (Canon 18-135 mm), although I soon found that I needed to get quite close to get the photos I wanted - so nine times out of ten the final piece of the puzzle, spontaneity, was lost.

Swapping to my Canon 100-400 mm lens proved to be a good move, as it allowed me to keep my distance (so less "in your face"), spend less time walking around the Piazza and more time to catch more spontaneous shots. All in all, street photography had its unique challenges, but if it wasn't difficult, it wouldn't be worth doing. Perhaps opportunities await you just around the corner...



40D, ISO 400, Canon 100-400, AV, 400 mm, F5.6, 1/1600th



40D, ISO 400, Canon 100-400, AV, 100 mm, F5.6, 1/1600th

40D, ISO 800, Canon 18-135, 64 mm, AV, F5.6, 1/400th



Tip: Isolating your subjects is a great way to remove distractions from the image when doing street photography. Sometimes we can't make an image that tells a story so we need to simplify the frame to provide the emphasis we need. Vignettes or selective burning can also help to draw the eye to the main emphasis of the frame.

Above: Canon 40D, ISO 400, Canon 18-135, 130 mm, AV, F5.6, 1/100th

Right: Canon 40D, ISO 400, Canon 100-400, 400 mm, AV, F5.6, 1/320th



THE FESTIVE CAMERA BAG

For the Portrait Photographer **50mm f1.8 lens**

This prime lens is available for most makes of camera and if not Sigma likely make one that will fit your lens mount. Brilliant for portraits with its bokeh and shallow depth of field. On a crop sensor camera this gives you an 80mm lens which is an ideal portrait length for head shots.



TTL Cord (Various Makes)

The first thing to make small flash good is to get it off the camera and firing in from a different direction. You need to be able to fire the flash remotely and the cheapest way to do this is with an off camera cord.

Lastolite Ezy-Shoe Hotbox Kit

Whilst umbrellas are one of the cheapest forms of lighting modifier, these softboxes from Lastolite give a great light with good fall off.

For the Landscape Photographer **Hot Shoe Spirit Level**

A useful little accessory for keeping horizons level or buildings straight when photographing landscapes and architecture.

Circular Polariser

Probably the most useful filter you can own. Hoya make excellent circular polarisers for digital cameras. You'll want a linear polariser for film cameras.

Hi-Tech Graduated Filters

Not quite as good as the Lee Filters but not as expensive either. Certainly good for those of you who want some grads for occasional use but without wishing to spend hundreds of pounds on a full kit.



For the Wildlife/Nature Photographer **Kenko Extension Tubes**

Great for enabling lenses to focus closer than their minimum focussing distance. Kenko have the electrical connections to enable them to still meter correctly.

Remote Shutter Cable

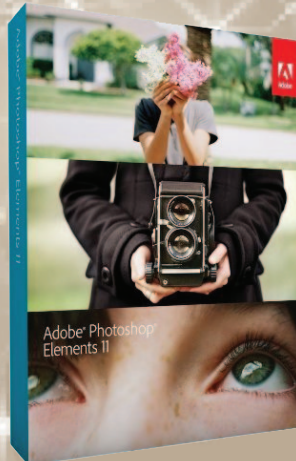
These allow you to minimise camera shake by removing the physical press of the shutter button on the camera.

Benro GH-1 Gimbal Head

Not a cheap investment but these gimbal heads allow you to smoothly pan long telephoto lenses.

For the Post Processor **Photoshop Elements 11**

You're likely to want Photoshop at some point and chances are you don't need the full version so this is a great stripped down package with the essentials most photographers need.



Nik Silver Efex Pro 2

In my opinion the best black and white conversion plug in for Photoshop. You see the conversions almost immediately and you can also do localised adjustments.



Colour-Munki

You need to make sure that the colours on your screen match those that your camera sees and also the printer to the screen so this calibrator is an all in one package to do that.

For the Home Printer

Epson R3000

An A3+ printer that combines both the Photo black and the Matt Black in the same print head so swapping from one type of black to another is no longer required.

Permajet Fibre Based Distinction

If you need some paper for special prints, then do consider this paper by Permajet. Brilliant for both B&W and colour prints equally and providing you use quality inks then you will have an archival quality print.

Longridge Mount Cutter

A great system of mount cutters from Logan to enable you to repeatedly and accurately cut mounts. This will enable you to easily cut 20x16 mounts from A1 sized mountboard.



For Those in Need of Gear

ThinkTank Airport Ultralight

A lightly padded but fully functional backpack. Despite fitting into pretty much all airline carry on requirements this pack holds a lot of gear. Certainly enough for a landscape kit.

Sandisk Memory Cards

Quality memory cards are a must, you won't be disappointed by any of the Sandisk cards. If you need to shoot rapid bursts of images or video then do consider UDMA cards.

Manfrotto 055CX Tripod

An all round tripod that will hold a reasonable load on the head and being carbon fibre is light enough to carry in the field.



Camera Care Kit

Bulb Blower

A simple blower bulb will help you to blow particles off lenses, blow dust from your sensor and anywhere else it shouldn't be.

Lens Pen Kleaning Cloth

A larger sized cloth suitable for cleaning lenses with out in the field or back at home. Whilst the white colour does show the muck, at least you know it's been removed.

Visible Dust Pre Moistened Swabs

If you don't want to buy a sensor brush and a full pack of swabs and solution seems a bit pricy, then consider buying these small packs of swabs and travel sized bottle of fluid. Available for most sizes of sensor and suitable for travel purposes too.



LIGHTING LOGBOOK

Words & Images: Scott Wiggins

1: Edgy Character Lighting

I've been photographing a lot of quick portraits for the Coventry Blaze to go into their magazine. These for the most part mean having to work quickly as the players only have a few minutes available at the end of a game. I typically receive a sample image of the sort of look the designer is after and then it's up to me to make it happen.

This image of winger Dustin Cameron was taken quickly, I had literally one minute to get the shot and subtly adjust the lighting over 4 frames.

We wanted a black backdrop so the magazine text would show up. While there was a black curtain available the surrounding walls were all pale grey so might reflect light back into the frame.

Using the instant black backdrop that Glyn Dewis taught me I set the camera up in Manual mode to ISO320, 1/250th sec and f10.

This kept the quality of the file high, giving me nearly the maximum sync speed of the camera and therefore no ambient light in the frame. The

aperture of f10 meant the image would be sharp from front to back.

I used one Canon speedlight flash in manual mode at 1/8 power inside a Lastolite pop-up softbox. This softbox was turned 90 degrees so that it filled the profile of the face a little better, a tip I picked up from James Schmelzer.

Using the flash in manual mode meant that the results would be repeatable and the flash exposure wouldn't waver which it might do with TTL. Simply put I used a small flash in the same way a studio flash would be used.

Personally I'd have liked to move the light just a little more to fill in the nearer cheek and add a hairlight for separation but that's the look I was tasked to get.

1D Mk IV, 24-105 f4 at 84mm



LAST GLANCE



"Matterhorn"

Armed with my 5 day pass for the funiculars and cable-cars around Zermatt I set out to capture the reflection of the Matterhorn in the Stellisee, framed by two glacial deposit boulders. I didn't realise that the cable-car I needed to get there was not operating as it was being serviced prior to the ski season. I walked up the mountain to the lake but was too late in the day, the wind had picked up rippling the water and the sun had moved putting the boulders in shadow. This photo reminds me of how unseasonably hot it was, the 400m in height I had to climb and the stunning scenery. No photo can ever do it justice.

Matthew Stratford

Sony A700, Carl Zeiss 16-80 f3.5-5.6 lens, Aperture Priority, 1/80s, f11.0, ISO 100.

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