



# MOLD IN FOCUS

The Newsletter of Mold Camera Club

Volume 2, Issue 7 – February 2011

Editors: Chris Noble & Ang Jones

Back Issues of Mold in Focus can be obtained at <http://moldcameraclub.org.uk/page23.html#backcopies>

## COMPETITIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

In my Editorial this month, I thought I would take a look at where the club is going with Competitive Photography. As you will no doubt be aware, we are faced with an increasing number of entries for our regular competitions. Enough so, that in one competition we have had to reduce the number of DPI entries to two per member. We've also had to plan ahead and will now be holding our end of year competition over two nights, one for prints and the other for DPI. I'm also expecting a debate to take place as to the way forward for next season. If overall entries continue to grow we will have to look at a reduction in the number each member can enter.

In addition to the main competitions we have seen the rise in the number of fun challenges both through the newsletter and on the forum. If you haven't taken part in a Forum Challenge yet then you don't know what you are missing. They have been great fun so far and do bring out the creative nature of people. The next one is scheduled for 2nd February.

Page 4 of this month's issue brings news of yet another photography competition! Thanks to the Beaufort Park Hotel we can bring you a competition with an excellent prize to be won. You have two months to get out and get your entries together.

And finally, getting away from individual competitions we do have the two-leg Mix & Match Battle (Go One Better) against Hawarden to come soon and it won't be long after that until we host the annual Interclub DPI Competition.

So competitive photography is alive and well at Mold and as we have seen it certainly brings out the best in our members. Good luck with all your entries.

Chris (Editor In Chief)

## Club Calendar (\*\*Hand In Nights)

### February

- 7<sup>th</sup> \*\* Mix & Match Battle with Hawarden (At Mold)
- 14<sup>th</sup> **COMPETITION 5 – OPEN**
- 21<sup>st</sup> **Lecture 7 – Andy Campbell (On One Software)**
- 28<sup>th</sup> \*\* AV COMPETITION

### March

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mix & Match Battle (At Hawarden)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Mold Interclub DPI Battle
- 14<sup>th</sup> **COMPETITION 6 - LANDMARKS**
- 21<sup>st</sup> **Lecture 6 – Ray Fitchett (Sigma)**
- 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> **Mold Spring Clean** (Details in March Issue)
- 28<sup>th</sup> \*\* Practical Night – To Be Confirmed

## **FAVOURITE PHOTOGRAPHER – DAVID ALLEN**

When Chris asked me to lead off on this topic I thought I don't have a favourite photographer. I tend to be one of those people who find that their favourite happens to be the one whose work they are enjoying at the moment. I do think though, that there have been a sequence of photographers who have influenced, inspired and moved me over the years. In addition there are painters whose work acts as an inspiration. You probably know by now that I love complexity, and business, and life, and the ordinary in my pictures. I am not of the school which subscribes to simplifying and decluttering pictures. That's why I chose the image on Monday night as a quick demo of my approach to processing. So painters I love include the Breughels and the great French Landscape painters of the 17th century amongst many others.

One of the first photographers books I bought was of the work of Edward Weston one of the founders of the f64 school. It is large format work often of simple objects or nudes where the texture and surface is beautifully rendered. In many ways different from my current approach but very beautiful rather formal work. To some rather sterile but I feel it's often sensuous and beautiful.

There are so many great photographers whose reportage work is important. There is one for me, although not one of the greats or particularly well known, that I rate very highly. He is Roman Vishniac who recorded the Jewish communities of central Europe during the late 1930s at a time when it was illegal for a Jew to even own a Leica. The pictures of the soon to be destroyed people are immensely moving. I discussed the book with my granddaughter who had just returned from touring Europe during her gap year and she could recognise the buildings in one of his pictures of Bratislava. Although the buildings survive, the testament of a lost culture is so important.

Last Summer expecting it to rain, it did, I took a couple of other books from my library with me on holiday. The first was of the work of Man Ray. He has been very influential in the surrealist and Dadaist movements in Europe and the USA and thus has influenced many later generations of painters and photographers. The more I looked at his work, although it is fascinating and historically important, the more I found it to be exploitative and in the end rather superficial. I also had with me a book on the work of Fay Godwin, in the eyes of some, the greatest English landscape photographer of the 20th century. Her work is more than beautiful, she brings a warmth and humanity and at times humour to her work that I love. Even better, the first picture in the book is 'leaping lurcher'. How she managed to take it I don't know but as we live with a lurcher who we have watched clear a fence, she got it just right.

References: Edward Weston Forms of Passion, Passion of Forms: Pub Thames and Hudson  
To give them light, the legacy of Roman Vishniac: Pub Penguin Viking.  
Man Ray, Photographs: Pub Thames and Hudson  
Fay Godwin Landmarks: Pub Dewi Lewis in association with the Barbican Centre.

### **Newsletter Items**

Please send any items for future issues of Mold in Focus to Chris Noble at [photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk](mailto:photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk)

### **Mold Camera Club AV Competition**

**Closing Date – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

**Entries no longer than 5 minutes  
and must contain a soundtrack.**

### **Challenge of the Month**

**There will be no challenges for  
February or March as we are running  
the “Tourism In Mold” Competition  
(See Page 4).**

**The Challenge will return in April.**

**Images from January on Page 8**

**Thanks to all who contributed**

## Chairman's Address – Software Choices

Gosh in to the end of January 2011 already. I am getting worried we are in danger of outgrowing our new home! But what a pleasant thing to be worried about. It is splendid to be welcoming new members, a very warm welcome to you, and to see the club thriving. Isn't it lovely to be warm on a Monday evening! This coming Monday we hope to have the club's big screen up so it should become much easier for all seats in the house to see the projected pictures. Our plan is to stay in the Daniel Owen for the rest of this indoors season and then review at the AGM.

Last Monday as part of the presentation about photographic workflow I demonstrated a bit of mine using Adobe Lightroom. This has become my preferred first line software and I can do at least 95% of my picture processing in the one programme. However what I did not say although I had intended to on the night, was, that my preference should not too heavily influence any of you in your choices of software. In my earlier days of using a computer to play with images I tried quite a range: Paintshop pro, Phase one, Photoshop with the early versions of Camera Raw, Rawshooter and I think several others, I have also tried Photomatix which I am completely hopeless with. I cannot get any pictures from this sort of software to work for me. They just look yuck. I have tried and still occasionally use various plug ins for Photoshop So, as with cameras what matters is to use the software that works for you. There is no one best solution and it is easy to end up spending a lot of money whilst experimenting. Some of the reputable firms do let you download and try the full programme for a time before having to pay. There is one caveat and this regards the Linux OS and associated software. I may be wrong and hopefully someone will correct me but I don't think that at the moment Linux offers full colour management solutions. If getting colour and tones really right is important for you it is probably best to avoid Linux, a pity because it has a lot going for it and some of the software is free!. I know both Windows 7 and the latest Mac OS have had colour management glitches but there are lots of users who sort the problems out!!

So once you have had a play I do recommend you getting to know your software really well and sticking with it - your pictures will be the better for it.

David

[www.pistyllphoto.org.uk](http://www.pistyllphoto.org.uk) / [www.nwemf.org.uk](http://www.nwemf.org.uk)

## NORTH WALES PHOTOGRAPHIC ASSOCIATION

(Member of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain)

### EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHY 2011

#### SELECTORS

Judy Boyle FRPS,FIPF Des Clinton FRPS,FIPF,MFIAP Christine Widdall DPAGB,AFIAP,BPE3

#### SELECTION

Saturday 9th July 2011 at The Electric Mountain Centre Llanberis

#### OPENING

Wednesday 7th September 2011 at The Electric Mountain Centre Llanberis

#### SHOWING

Wednesday 7th September to Sunday 9th October 2011 at The Electric Mountain Centre Llanberis

Entry forms etc. from Chris Noble or Andy Polakowski



## BEAUFORT PARK HOTEL

HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTRE

# PHOTO COMPETITION

We are happy to announce our third Newsletter Competition. This time we are sponsored by the Beaufort Park Hotel for a theme of "Tourism Around Mold". Therefore all entries must be taken in and around Mold (within 5 miles of Mold Post Office) and the subject must have something to do with Tourism. Entries are restricted to members of Mold Camera Club only but members can enter as many times as they like.

- Entries must be in JPG format and within the club 1400x1050 dpi limits.
- Entries should be sent by e-mail to [photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk](mailto:photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk) and must be received before 5:00pm on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011.
- All images must be named as follows:  
Your\_Name-Image\_Title
- The winner will receive a voucher for Sunday Lunch for 2 People at the Arches Bar, courtesy of the Beaufort Park Hotel.
- The winner will be selected by judges from Mold Camera Club and the Beaufort Park Hotel and will be announced in the April issue of "Mold In Focus". The judges decision is final.
- The Beaufort Park reserves the right to use any of the images in their promotional materials although copyright remains with the photographer.

Your local Favourite

The Arches

Kick start the New Year with the Arches Healthy Option

Tuck in to some tasty lunch for just £5.00

Address: 40-42 Newington, Mold, Cheshire, UK  
Tel: 01352 755 646 Fax: 01352 757 132  
Email: v@beaufortparkhotel.co.uk  
www.beaufortparkhotel.co.uk

## MEMBER PROFILE



**Name:** Ang Jones

**Camera:** Anything I can snaffle out from under Steve's nose (but I pretend the Canon 7D is mine!)

**Lenses:** Whatever Steve's not using at the time

**Software:** Adobe Photoshop 5

**Other Hobbies:** Parchment craft, puzzles of any type, Geocaching

I'm a real late-comer into the world of 'proper' photography. I've used compact cameras for more years than I care to remember but only to capture 'memories', nothing more serious. I still love the compact camera but am growing to love the DSLR even more.

My problem now is that it's such a steep learning curve and I'm really struggling to absorb the technical side of photography. Thankfully I usually have Steve by my side to help me work through which of the seemingly countless corrections I could make to capture just exactly what I want, so it's very much work in progress! I joined Mold Camera Club at the beginning of this season and am so grateful to the many members who've given me encouragement, advice and inspiration. The standard of photography of the club members is in my opinion 'way up there', you've set the bar really high & it'll take some going to reach it, however I'll try my hardest to get close!

I worked for Shell for almost 30 years, sadly having to take ill-health retirement from the company in 2006. However, circumstances during my last couple of years with them led me to discover the many benefits of Holistic Therapies. So much so, that I decided to train as a Holistic therapist myself. I enrolled at Deeside College and over a period of 3 years I gained internationally recognised qualifications in Reflexology, Swedish Body Massage and Indian Head Massage. This also led to me becoming a Reiki Master/teacher.

I've also tried my hand at various forms of card making but found that my heart lay with parchment craft, it's a very time consuming hobby but the results can be stunning.

In September last year, Steve & I were introduced to Geocaching – a modern day take on the good old fashioned treasure hunt. There's in excess of 1.2 million Geocaches hidden worldwide by people from all walks of life. The organisation celebrated its 10th anniversary last year; it's a well guarded secret, but we don't mind selectively sharing it with you responsible folk! Since starting Geocaching we've seen more of Flintshire via its public footpaths than we have in the 22 years we've lived in the county! So, if I've managed to whet your interest, pop along to [Geocaching.com](http://Geocaching.com) and take a peek.

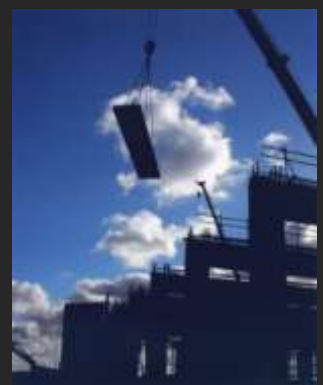
I'm hoping that once the days lengthen and the light improves, I'll be able to combine Geocaching and my slowly increasing knowledge of photography to get out there with a camera and get cracking on building a solid collection of images.

You never know, one day I might even have the confidence to share them with you!

Thanks for reading my waffle,  
Ang

# PHOTOGRAPHY CHALLENGE - NEW BEGINNINGS

For the Monthly Challenge we asked you to produce images to the theme “New Beginnings” Here’s what we received. Thanks to John Bell, Chris Noble, Malcolm Reynolds Steve Jones & Chris Davies. We look forward to seeing more when the challenges resume in April.



## John Rutter – Industrial Photography

As you may have noticed, I have not been at the club much over the last three months. This was mainly due to actually getting paid for some work writing operating manuals and setting up operator training for a chemical plant.

During progress towards start up, I did what I always do and photographed everything while it was still open. This was something I learned to do in my 20 years at ICI, as the cost of reopening just to have another look was usually enough to get a summons to see the boss.

The albums of pictures I have put together for every chemical plant I have ever built have been worth their weight in gold (literally). I usually had my leg pulled while I was taking them, but 3 years down the line, suddenly everyone wanted copies.

I started to take this type of photography seriously when I was lucky enough to be able to ask the ICI professional photographer to take publicity pictures for a product launch for one of my plants. I tagged along as his assistant and gofer while he lugged a half plate camera up and down long flights of stairs and arranged up to seven flash heads containing 15, 100 watt size, flash bulbs.

We spent hours tweaking the positions of the flash heads to get the light just where he wanted it, then going round with the light meter as a cross check, then rechecking to make sure the cables were all off the shot. Finally he set the camera and guns off and waited for a few seconds with the shutter open to build up the ambient background light. In eight hours, we would take three pictures. (It was from these pictures that I realised that the light from fluorescent tubes is very green). I was rewarded for all the patience and care when one of the pictures was printed up to 8 feet by 4 and took pride of place in the entrance to the research building.

I think I learnt more in that week than I have ever done and the techniques have been used in my own photography all the way up to going digital. I think, when I eventually decide on subjects which need full manual control, that the techniques will still work.

The attached picture was taken in October 2010 using my Fuji F200, mainly because of its size. The gap between the rotor and the casing was only just big enough to get my hand through, so I inserted my left hand and passed the camera to it with my right. (I am right handed). I then had to guess the angle of the camera so I could get a top to bottom panorama. I managed two out of three in alignment, the result of which can be seen. I then had to get the camera out without dropping it. And the purpose of the picture? The maintenance schedule requires the machine to be opened at least every twelve months. The picture will allow for a very accurate comparison of how much wear has taken place. Invaluable for forward planning.

'The technique we used to take the big pictures is the same as that used by O Winston Link for his night shots of American railways.' A Google of OWL will bring up the pictures.

John Rutter



## Always carry a camera with you! - Steve Jones

Whilst Ang and I were out and about, Ang spotted Peter Kay outside the Labour club in Connahs Quay. However, as Peter was with a photographer and their assistant I was mesmerised by the photo shoot! Needless to say I had my trusty little Fuji compact camera with me so I jumped out of the car and managed to get some pictures. Peter was, for some reason helping out with the photo shoot and holding one of the flashguns which was being remotely controlled by the photographer. I will finish by stressing that Peter was very understanding, didn't object to the interruption I created and was more than happy to pose for a photo - I took the two of us at arm's length. What a guy! I must be into photography more than I thought as I spent more time talking to the photographer than Peter!



We never did find out the reason why Peter was assisting with the photo shoot or why he was in the area.

The moral of this tale is always carry a camera with you. You never know what you may see/find.

## North Wales & Wirral Audio Visual Group

The IAC Geoffrey Round International AV Competition is being held this year on Saturday 12th & Sunday 13th March 2011 at Capel Curig

Closing date for entries is 7th February 2011.

All are welcome for the weekend - please contact [marion@nwawavg.org.uk](mailto:marion@nwawavg.org.uk) for details and/or to book session tickets/meals etc.

# Too Much Print, Not Enough Mount

## (Part Two)

### Andy Polakowski

Last month I looked at the relationship between the four borders of a mount when a print is not flush mounted. This month I will look at the relationship between the print and the mount and whether there is an optimum print size.

Chemical photographic paper sizes are of traditional rather than systematic origin using rounded inches (20"x16", 16 or 15"x12", 12"x10", 10"x8") and are "squarer" than the current A series that came from the business and industry world. In general the method was to use a mount the next size up from the paper so that a 16x12 print would go on a 20x16 mount giving a 2" border all round, 10x8 on a 12x10 mount giving borders of 1" and so on.

However, those Imperial sheets have a length 1.20 to 1.33 times their width whereas with the A series of papers it is 1.414 times. The advantage of the A series papers is that because of this 1.414 ratio (the square root of 2), every time you cut a sheet in half the length is still 1.414 times its width. For instance A0 paper is 1189x841mm and is 1 square metre in area; halve it 3 times and you get A3 (420x297mm), 4 times and you get A4 (297x210mm).

And why is this better for photographers? Simply because the format of the paper is now a better match for the popular film or sensor sizes. 35mm film and full size sensors such as in Canon's 1Ds and 5D models are 36x24mm, their APS-H sensor in the EOS 1D variants is 28.7x19.0mm and their APS-C sensor is 22.2x14.8mm - all of these have a length 1.50 times their width.

So back to the question (and a chance for some mathematics): is there an optimum print size for a given mount? Many years ago a former Chairman of the Club, Ted Hillman, after a similar discussion, gave me a formula. What he said was that to find the width of each border (except the bottom one): "multiply the print length by 1.429, take away the length of the print and then halve the answer; add 10% to the border size for the bottom border". Turning this round and simplifying it you end up with: print length equals mount length divided by 1.429. Applying this to a 500x400mm mount: 500 divided by 1.429 gives a print length of 350mm. Three of the borders will therefore be 500 minus 350 and then halved giving 75mm. Adding 10% for the bottom border means that the print height will be 400 minus 75 (top border) minus 83 (bottom border) giving 242mm. The final optimum print size is 350x242mm. Interestingly it gives a length to width ratio of 1.45, very close to the A series ratio (1.414) and sensor ratios (1.50). Trouble is this paper size is between A3 and A4, something like A3.5 (?). Cutting an A3plus (483x329mm) sheet in half gives 329x241mm which is close(ish).

Another formula I have (a photocopy from an unknown book, possibly American) is by Joseph Femblatt: add the mount length to the mount width, take away the mount diagonal and divide the result by 6. This answer gives the top border width. The side borders are 1.5 times the top and the bottom border is double the top.

Again, for a 500x400mm mount: 500 plus 400 minus 640 (square root of 500 squared plus 400 squared) then divide by 6 giving 43mm. This is the top border. The side borders are 43 times 1.5, giving 65mm, the bottom border being 2 times 43 giving 86mm. The print length via this formula is: 500 minus 65 minus 65 giving 370mm, and width: 400 minus 43 minus 86 giving 271mm. The optimum print size is 370x271mm (ratio 1.37), rather a better use of A3 paper.

So, is there an optimum print size? Possibly. One advantage of a smaller than normal (A3) print on a 500x400mm mount is that it provides a buffer for itself in a crowded exhibition and allows you to control the setting for your picture; another is that it enables you to get away with a less sharp image if necessary.

You decide.

Andy

# Member's Photos

A Selection of images from the recent Photo Merge Competition

More images, with the results, on Page 24



Flying South For Winter (Paul Harper)



Harvey Smith - Chester (Elaine Williams)



3D Television (Chris Noble)



Runs Like Clockwork (Chris Davies)



My Car Keyring (Chris Davies)



Should've Gone To Specsavers (Steve Jones)



## **Mold Camera club enjoy the Winter Wonderland experience! - John Bell**

**Photos by John Bell, Janet Davies, Ang Jones, Steve Jones, Chris Noble & Elaine Williams**

It is said that more than 250,000 people visited Chester's Winter Wonderland (not a bad start for the city centre economy in 2011!) Well of course – we as Mold camera club did our bit in supporting the event – in answer to the invitation sent out by Steve Jones – (our once again fully employed tea-boy, who has returned from his sabbatical – after having tea and coffee provided for us at the Beaufort Park Hotel)



Steve suggested we meet up on Wednesday the 29th December at the Big wheel itself in Chester to enjoy a photographic evening – a real Winter Wonderland.

So although the weather was cold and also a little misty – a total of 14 members and guests met and did our bit to boost the city's economy! We must have spent a good two hours just taking pictures of the wheel, while some of the group performed on the ice rink so that we could practise our 'action shots'!

The wheel itself was quite a challenge to photograph, trying to get the right amount of movement and motion blur, but the helpful thing was that we did have a number of experienced photographers with us who were willing to share their knowledge and help us out when needed, and that to me is the added benefit of the club and meeting up on evenings/events like this one, for you're with like minded people who are willing to work along with you and help out when you're not sure what you're doing!



After exhausting every possible photographic opportunity we could, we then headed off towards the River Dee, by which time visibility was getting worse - plus we were cold and the warm welcoming lights of the pub were beckoning us to come in – and so we gave in and enjoyed an hour or so warming ourselves up with a well deserved drink!

A brilliant night was had, with a great photographic opportunity.

Our sincere thanks go to Steve for organizing the event for us!!



# Book Review (Jonathan Frings)



This month's book review is Rankin – Portraits

Rankin is arguably the best-known portrait photographer working today. He is the 'go to' guy for stylish portraits for royalty (actual, political and particularly Hollywood). This book, 350 pages long and with no words other than a very brief introduction, brings together many of his portraits into one coffee table book. I was very lucky to get this for Christmas – Waterstones in Chester had sold out with no more coming in, but fortunately Amazon had a few (and at a discount to the £40 face price). Now even Amazon has sold out, although they are offering some second hand copies.

It would be very easy to snipe and say that it's relatively easy to get good photos of the people that he photographs most of the time. You could also argue that he has a definite approach that he uses frequently and that the effectiveness of the ringflash catchlights in the eyes against a pure white background is diluted by the volume of them. I've also had a friend looking at the book comment that some of the pictures are very airbrushed.

What I think is unarguable is that very few if any of the pictures, taken on their own, are anything less than stunning. Yes, many of the photos are essentially close ups of the faces, and often even less than that (either through exceptionally tight cropping, the use of props to cover the face or through shadows to concentrate the focus on one feature). One picture of Michael Stipe, for example is essentially an eye, an ear and a part of a palm – Rankin certainly isn't afraid of empty space. However, the thought and care that has been put into each picture is remarkable, and the styling is meticulous. There's rarely any feeling of randomness – wearing whatever they happened to pick up that morning, for example – and when it does happen it's hard to avoid the conclusion that that too was a deliberate choice. That's not to say that there's no spontaneity in the photos – it looks like many of them have been taken while the subject has been playing around in front of the camera and Rankin has just chosen the particular moment to take.

There's also a huge amount of humour in many of the photos. Sometimes its from the props – Kevin Spacey playing with a fire extinguisher, Ricky Gervais bloody but triumphant as a boxer, Robert Downey jr. with a bizarre musical instrument wrapped around him. Other times it's the expressions – Terry Gilliam biting his nails, Siena Miller going cross-eyed, Timothy Spall virtually gurning. Occasionally it manages to be both – Anna Friel pulling faces while tearing up pictures of her looking perfect.

In many ways it's the pictures of the men in the book that are most interesting. Perhaps it's a commentary on the way that the publicity game works that men are more able to play with their image while women tend to have to look idealised. But, whilst there are gorgeous pictures in here of Catherine Zeta Jones and Madonna, for example, it's photos of Ewan MacGregor, the Stones and John Simm which are perhaps more memorable. That's a generalisation, of course – some more established women, such as Greta Scaachi and Tori Amos, perhaps feel better able to play with their look, while there's also a fair share of pretty boys like Jonathan Rhys Meyers.

For me, it's the formal portraits that are probably the least successful. There's one of the Queen against a Union Jack that closes the book and works well (possibly because it's less formal than some), but the portraits of Gordon Brown and Tony Blair look a bit stiff. That said, Mikhail Gorbachev comes across really well in his.

Rankin says in the introduction 'it's really about getting yourself and the subject in the right mood...You need to connect on some level. It can be any level – even hate or distrust. But in some ways its always a collaboration'. As you can see from the subjects I've already named in this review, Rankin has had the opportunity to collaborate with a huge number of very successful and photogenic subjects. There is rarely any clutter in the photographs, just the subject and a plain background, which makes them look simple. As I know only too well, there's far more to it than that, though, and the skill in the photos is often breathtaking.

Now, where can I get a good, cheap ringflash?



# What's On To Photograph

## Events Around The Region

- **Spring Garden Open – Bangor – 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> February.** It's time to dig out your boots again as spring approaches. Come and discover Penrhyn Castle grounds with its carpets of snowdrops and the first of the early spring flowers, sit back and relax with the wonderful views, have a warming rest in the tearoom and explore the shop. Castle closed.
- **North Wales Battle of the Bands – Llandudno – 5<sup>th</sup> February.** The ultimate showdown of all your favourite local bands. Includes a full set by Courteous Thief on the eve of their album launch. Big prizes to be won and top name judges to be announced. To enter or find your nearest regional heat please call Carl Jones on 07727155699. ID will be required for bar service. Web : <http://www.venuecymru.co.uk> Email : [boxoffice@venuecymru.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@venuecymru.co.uk) Phone: 01492 872000
- **Model Railway Show – Llanberis – 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> February.** Get on track at our largest event of the year! Big, small, real or model - there's something for everyone – from the enthusiast to families – in this popular show. Take a ride on a mini train, marvel at shedloads of layouts and get all steamed up with UNA the engine! Web : <http://www.museumwales.ac.uk> Email : [slate@museumwales.ac.uk](mailto:slate@museumwales.ac.uk) Phone: 01286 870630
- **Llangollen Railway – Days Out With Thomas – 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> February.** Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends are visiting Llangollen Railway for great days of family fun. Gates open at 10am. Thomas will arrive at Llangollen Station between 10am & 10.30am. Appearing with Thomas and Sir Topham Hatt will be Daisy, Goliath & Clarabel. Book online at <https://sales.webticketmanager.com/llangollenrailway> Phone: 01978 860979

For a full list of events happening in North Wales visit  
[www.eventsnorthwales.co.uk](http://www.eventsnorthwales.co.uk)

## Out of the Box (OOB) – Ann-Marie Metcalfe

(Also known as Out of the Border, Out of Bounds or Out of the Frame)

What is an OOB? - Basically, this is an OOB



It is an image or photograph that breaks out of a frame you've created giving the impression that the resulting image is 3D. An out of the box photograph is created in Photoshop, or any other editing program that allows you to use layers and masks.

When creating your first OOB, I would suggest that you choose an image that can be easily converted. Animals and birds don't make good photographs for a first OOB because of fur or feathers that take a lot of careful work to mask. So choose something that has nice clean and straight lines. You work through your image creating layers and then masks to mask out the bits you no longer want to see.

This image on the right above was one of my first OOBs.

With practice and a careful hand you can create many humorous and very clever looking pieces of art.



This is another one of my very first OOB's. I can see plenty of faults in it and room for improvement, but I think the photograph that I took at a viking re-enactment was an ideal subject.

To create this kind of image, I follow a tutorial. The tutorial writer (known as Serrator) has kindly given permission for us to link to and use the tutorial. It is a .pdf so you will need Adobe Reader, so you can download it to your computer from the club forum. If you get chance, check out his work on flickr. Some of it is astonishing.

To see Serrator's OOB work go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/serrator/sets/72057594091393842/>

# 40 Digital SLR Techniques

This month we take a look at tips 3 & 4 in our series.

3. **White Balancing and Processing Parameters** – Whether light is artificial or natural it emits different proportions of the various wavelengths of light i.e. different light sources will give a different colour bias. This is known as Colour Temperature (CT) and is measured in the Kelvin (K) Scale. A CT of 5000-5500K is accepted as standard daylight and deemed as photographically neutral. A lower CT is more orange or even red and a higher one is blue. You will often see an orange tint to photos taken indoors while snow can sometimes appear to be blue. Modern light sources such as fluorescent or halogen emit green or magenta casts. It is important to note that, although often not seen by the naked eye, these lights flicker which can change the colour temperature. In addition then we have sodium vapour lights, used in street lighting, which gives off only orange and can make the scene look monochromatic.

The Human Brain has the ability to alter our perception in that the brain sees them as true colours even if they are off-colour. Digital Photography has managed to replicate this colour compensation and we know this as White Balance (WB). By adjusting the balance between the three RGB (Red Green Blue) channels a digital camera can make different colour temperatures look like daylight.

Many cameras have presets for the most encountered lighting conditions. When you begin photographing in a new location take some test shots to determine the White Balance. Auto WB tends to be the default in most cameras and should be used in good light conditions. If you shoot in RAW format (See Tip 2) you should be able to adjust the WB when you are processing the image using the RAW converter software. Other settings generally include:

- Incandescent/Tungsten: 3000-3500K – Household filament bulbs and tungsten studio lamps.
- Fluorescent: 4200-5000K – Tube lighting which can come with a variety of colour casts including warm, daylight and cool.
- Sunny/Daylight: 5000-5500K – Direct Sunlight.
- Flash: Similar CT to daylight, maybe slightly cooler.
- Cloudy: 6000-7000K- Blue cast light often found in the open without direct sunlight and indoors without artificial light.
- Shade: 8000-10000K – Shaded areas and outdoors on early morning or late evening.

DSLR's allow adjustments in other image processing parameters, which can be used creatively or to maximise the potential of your photos. Presets are fixed combinations of parameters, the most common of which are for portraits and nature shots. Portrait presets are usually used to produce better skin colours, reduce blemishes and reduce extreme highlights and shadows. Nature presets present vivid colours and sharpness.

The Saturation parameter adjusts colour strength. Increase it if you want colours to be more bright and vivid and reduce it if you want to make the colours less strong.

Contrast refers to the gradation of tones from dark to light. You increase this parameter to make the different tones more obvious and reduce it if you want them to look smoother.

One parameter that should be used with caution is Sharpening. Digital sharpening makes shapes appear sharper by increasing the contrast along edges and lines. This can be handled by the camera or by software during the processing. Over sharpening of images can make things appear unnatural so use with care. There is no magic formula for deciding the amount of sharpening needed; the output size and content are two important factors. Most recommendations are not to sharpen in camera and handle it at the processing stage.

You can also adjust the Colour Tone (Hue) of your images. Again use with care as increasing Hue shifts the reds towards yellow and decreasing shifts towards purple. White, Black & Grey are unaffected by hue adjustments.

The total set of possible colours captured by your camera, and their relationship to each other, are known as the Colour Space. Your DSLR may be able to use two or more of these. sRGB is the standard for most digital cameras, computer monitors and printers. Adobe RGB has more possible colours and is suited to more extensive editing and commercial press publication. However, you will need to use appropriate colour management and profiles to get good results.

4. **Exposure Modes** – Most modern SLR cameras allow you automatic, semi-automatic and manual control over the exposure. Essentially, these are different methods for controlling the shutter speed and lens aperture.

When you press the shutter release button on a camera the lens aperture closes to the set value and the shutter opens for the specified amount of time, exposing the imaging sensor to light coming through the lens. This is photographic exposure. The amount of light needed to create an image on the sensor is determined by the metering system (See Tip 5). To provide the right amount of light you need the correct combination of shutter speed and aperture. Often different combinations can produce the same exposure effects.

In photography light is not measured in linear proportions but in factors of two. Both aperture and shutter speed are calibrated in steps called “stops”. To increase by 1 stop means to multiply the amount of light by two while to decrease by 1 stop means to divide the amount of light by two. You can exchange stops of aperture for stops of shutter speed (and vice versa) and still maintain the overall exposure.

**Program Mode (P)** on your camera dial selects both shutter speed and aperture for you. In some cameras this can be adjusted by selecting from a range but in the main the choice is automatic.

**Aperture Priority Mode (A or Av)** is a semi-automatic mode with the aperture selected by the photographer the camera selects an appropriate shutter speed. The range you can choose will depend entirely on the camera and lens you are using. Changing the ISO can help with range selection.

One reason to use A or Av is to control the depth of field (DOF). DOF basically refers to the part of the scene which appears sufficiently sharp. Shallow DOF means that only a narrow region in the image will look sharp whilst with a wide DOF more of the image, in front of and behind the point of focus, will look sharp. We shall look at Depth of Field in more detail in a later Technique but it is dependent on a few factors:

	Aperture	Focal Length	Focus Distance	Viewing Size
Less DOF	Larger	Longer	Closer	Larger
More DOF	Smaller	Shorter	Farther	Smaller

**Shutter Priority Mode (S or Tv)** is similar to A or Av but in reverse, as in this case the Shutter Speed is set by the photographer and the Aperture by the camera. As with A or Av the restrictions on the type of camera and lens will apply. Set a high shutter speed if you want to minimise image blur caused by movement. The shutter speed needed depends on the speed and direction of the movement. For example motion towards or away from us is not as significant as motion from left to right, and motion closer to you will be more visible than motion further away.

Use slower shutter speeds to show motion blur. If you keep still, the moving subject will be blurred whilst if you follow the subject by panning the background will be blurred instead.

**Manual Mode (M)** gives full control of the Aperture and Shutter Speed to the photographer. This mode is useful when taking subjects that could fool the camera’s metering system. Subjects like snow or wedding dresses may make the camera think it is lighter than it is and dark suits etc. can have the opposite effect. You can set exposure based on part of a scene and then continue photographing without worrying about variations in subject brightness. This will only work as long as the light level remains the same.

Manual mode is also used when using an external light meter or when controlling the light level by varying flash output.

Some DSLR cameras have a series of preset modes which may include a fully automatic mode (green) as well as presets for common subjects such as portraits, landscapes, sport and night scenes. These usually limit your control of camera functions including WB and ISO. Because of these limitations they should be used with caution.

Next month we will take a look at **Metering Modes** as well as **Focusing**.

## Member's In Action



At the Photo Merge Comp (Ian Parker)



Three Wise Men (Andy Polakowski)



It's A Long Way Down. (Chris Davies)

The next Forum Challenge  
will be hosted by  
**Chris Noble**  
on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup>  
February from 7:30pm  
until 9:30pm

## Quarry!

**25.10.2010 - 6.2.2011**

A photographic exhibition by  
Eryri photo group and Caernarfon  
Camera Club, revealing some of the  
diverse beauty of North Wales's  
slate quarrying industry - its villages  
and its people, as it was and as it is  
today



**National Slate Museum**  
**Llanberis, Gwynedd LL55 4TY**  
**01286 870630**  
**[www.museumwales.ac.uk](http://www.museumwales.ac.uk)**  
**Free admission**



# NWAWAVG Workshop – 23rd January 2011

## Chris Noble

I have, over the years, attended a number of workshops on the subject of Audio Visual Shows and in the main I have found most of them to be of value in one way another. Some provide a good view of what is going on with AV's by seeing the work of other people and I have often found inspiration.

Other workshops provide information through lectures and slide shows giving details about how certain things are achieved within AV software etc.

All of these workshops are very good if you are a Visual or Auditory learner but a Kinaesthetic learner needs to have hands on with the tools, as it is by doing that they learn. So it was with great excitement I attended the NWAWAVG Workshop on 23rd January, knowing that the plan was to actually create an AV on the day.

The day began with a look at some work by some of the members (mine included) and useful feedback was given and taken away to improve the sequences shown. Following this our hosts (Marion Waine & John Rowell), gave us an introduction to the day in that we would all be given a set of images, access to a selection of music and recording facilities. Our task was to create a 4 minute AV to include a soundtrack using the images etc. provided. We were then, very quickly, shown the images that were available to use, all of which were taken at the Llanberis Slate Museum.

Next , we were split into 4 groups and told to get on with it. As there was a group of us from Mold Camera Club we decided to get together as a team (two of our members absconded and joined Marion's group but I won't embarrass Andy & Peter by naming them).

Over tea break we discussed what was needed and David (our chairman) came up with the novel approach of looking at the images with 21st Century Health & Safety in mind. The deeper the discussion went the more comedy was added and we ended up with a Basil Fawlty like character being the Quarry Inspector. Over the next four hours or so we had plenty of fun whilst we toiled with the difficulties of sound and making sure we got a good clear inspector's commentary over our selected images, but in the end we managed to produce a half decent sequence in the time.

The day finished with a look at the results that all the groups had come up with and certainly every group could go away feeling quite proud of what had been achieved.

Yes we had lots of fun doing it, but we also learned from one another about techniques, styles and approaches to AV production. As somebody who enjoys hands on learning I can certainly advise other AV groups to look at this format as an option for future workshops.

Thanks to Marion & John and everybody who was involved in putting the day together. Looking forward to the next one.

## Photographic Workflows – Chris Noble

**What is a Workflow?** A workflow is a method of working, one that is consistently used from job to job and varies very little between jobs. It's a process by which you manage your photography from start to finish, covering the preparation right through to producing the final output.

A workflow will have a series of steps which you follow in order to achieve a specific goal and it is the organisation of those steps and how rigidly you stick to them that makes the workflow a success or failure. The steps can be as simple or as complicated as you wish to make them, but the important thing is that they are used to ensure that you are producing the level of photography you want in a consistent way. It doesn't matter what workflow you choose in terms of simplicity or complication but it is important to find a system that works for you and stick to it as much as you can. Some of you are probably using a workflow without even realising it.

**Steps in the Workflow:** As said the workflow will contain a series of steps to get you from the start of the job to the finish. For me the important steps are as follows:

- Preparation
- Photographing
- Transferring Images to the PC
- Processing
- Output

Other important steps to add to these are Storage and Backup but we will look at these separately in the next issue.

**Preparation:** Being ready is one of the most important aspects of photography. As I write this my camera bag is sitting in the corner fully prepared so if I get a phone call I can put the bag straight into the car and go, knowing that I have what I need without checking.

Preparation is about making sure you have the right equipment in your bag, and that it is in full working order and ready to use. So it's important as part of your workflow that you regularly clean and maintain the equipment. Preparation is about making sure your batteries are charged and back in the camera (not left in the charger) and it's about making sure the cards are formatted and ready for use (not left in the card reader).

Some people tell me I carry too much equipment on a shoot. My response is that I'd rather have too much than too little, because I'd rather have tired shoulders than miss that all important shot.

**Photographing:** It is vital that no workflow gets in the way of creativity and spontaneity. Photography is an art form and it is vital that nothing stifles this in anyway. However, there are certain things you can do that help with the workflow, like ensuring your camera is ready for use by being switched on ( A camera switched off is not ready and might as well be at home) and set up to the most likely settings you are likely to use in the next two minutes.

Getting into the habit of constantly checking and adjusting your settings will help when it comes to that grab shot. It also helps avoid that situation when you take a lot of shots only to find the settings were totally inappropriate.

One thing I don't spend much time doing on a shoot is reviewing images, particularly in a very active environment. I certainly don't delete in camera. If you're spending too much time looking at the back of your camera, you could be missing an important chance. There's plenty of time to review when you get back to base.

**Transferring Images to the PC:** As soon as I return from a shoot, the cards are removed from the camera and all images are immediately downloaded to the PC. I should point out that the batteries are put on to charge at the same time (Preparation begins now). Once the images are downloaded I update the metadata to include copyright and location information and then take a backup of those images to another hard drive (later I will also back them up to DVD).

The next stage is to go through the images, grading them so that I can decide which are the most likely to process and which should go straight in the bin. Once reviewed, I check the review and then discard the ones I do not want. At this point I will then delete the images from the memory cards, knowing I already have 2 copies stored.

By the time I have finished this, the batteries are charged, the cards are clear and everything is back in the bag ready to go again.

**Processing:** I have a standard method by which I process images but I will vary from this when the need arises. I am not going to go into full detail but in the main I:

- Open the image in Camera RAW and make adjustments as required
- Save the image as a DNG file (Adobe's RAW Format) and open the Image in Photoshop
- Run an action to set the colour space and create a set of basic layers
- Make the adjustments I need, adding/removing layers as required
- I will then crop as required, check I am happy and finally sharpen if necessary
- Save the image as a PSD file
- Save the image as a full sized JPG
- Save a second full sized JPG and close the file
- Open the second JPG and adjust the size to meet DPI/AV requirements(1400 x 1050)
- Make a backup of all images to a second hard drive.

**Output:** It is important to know what you intend to do with the images you have processed. Depending on what your final output is you may need to do additional processing.

For me I have already created a version of the image for use as a DPI or in an AV. It is this file I will load to my photo sharing site (FOTOPIC). If I am going to print the images I will create a version with calibration for the printer.

And that's it, preparation to output in simple steps. I'm not saying it's the perfect workflow but it works for me and I know I have a consistent approach to every job be it for myself or a client. If you've got a workflow and it works stick to it. If you haven't then I suggest you start using one. It may be daunting at first but the more you use it the better it becomes, almost second nature.

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## Photographic Workflows - The Allen and Noble show - Steve Jones

Listening to fellow members, this is one of the many presentations we have all looked forward to during our winter season. We were not to be disappointed as the Allen & Noble show had our attention all evening. Well done guys. I wish I had done a head count on the evening as our new venue was full, members even standing at the back to see what David Allen and Chris Noble had to offer us. The tea and coffee takings certainly indicated the evening was well attended!

So, what the heck was this all about? If you were unfortunate enough to miss this, then sorry but you missed a treat! A whole evening of valuable information which would benefit most, if not all of the MCC members.

## Part 1 Mr Noble:

Chris (Mr Noble) started the evening with his view of what a workflow should consist of and asked the MCC members how many of us used a workflow, not too many hands were raised at this point. Following which Chris described what a workflow was, it being completing a job from start to finish. For example, preparation of your equipment to saving the images on your pc/disc and finally producing your images. Following this, Chris once again asked the audience, "who uses a workflow?" and most hands in the audience went up.

Chris then took us through the preparation of equipment for a shoot. For example do you have the correct lenses? Is there a memory card in your camera(s)? Are your batteries charged (if you use rechargeable) and do you have spare batteries?

Chris stressed that two important points are:

- Your camera should always be switched on. A camera not switched on is a camera that is not ready.
- Don't spend too much time reviewing and deleting images on the back on the camera. While you're doing this you could be missing the next shot. Plenty of time for housekeeping when you get back to base.

Chris then stressed that image transfer is one of the most important parts of a Photographic Workflow. Therefore, when you have returned to your base, save your images at the first opportunity! Ensure you make backups and create a permanent archive. Also ensure you have a backup stored away from your base location just in case of a fire at your base location.

You could almost hear a pin drop when Chris stressed the requirement for so many back-ups, but just consider this: You could have spent a whole day photographing a wedding, you get back to base, make one copy, delete the images from your card and then horror upon horrors you lose the photos! Disaster! Yes, insurance is available for such events but nothing can replicate that day again!

Chris then described his process of creating different files, working on the images, creating more backups and then preparing prints; either for printing from your base location or sending to a commercial Lab.

During the presentation Chris used some very elaborate process maps (Flow charts) to depict what is required. I always use the adage 'work smarter not harder' and Chris's workflow system certainly encouraged this. In summary Chris's 3 main reasons for a workflow:

- Consistency and Efficiency
- Organisation
- Security

Chris concluded his part of the evening with one final point of importance. Don't, under any circumstances, let the use of a workflow interfere with the Creative side of your photography. Being organised in what you do is great but not at the expense of losing the artistic side of the job.

To which Chris received a huge round of applause - how was Mr Allen going to follow that?

## Part 2 Mr Allen

David (Mr Allen) reiterated all the points Chris had made to us and stressed the importance for equipment checks before a shoot and ensuring we made adequate back-ups at the first available opportunity.

David then moved on to his software of choice, Adobe Lightroom. He provided us with an overview of the tremendous ability of this photographers' package describing the advantages it possess over Elements or Photoshop.

Lightroom	Photoshop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a data base programme</li> <li>• It will handle .jpg .tiff .psd and RAW files</li> <li>• The original file is not altered</li> <li>• All modifications are recorded as database information</li> <li>• Files for other uses are exported as new files</li> <li>• Presets are widely used</li> <li>• All history is saved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are pixel editing programmes</li> <li>• Will handle a broader range of files</li> <li>• The original file may be altered</li> <li>• All modifications are stored as saved image files</li> <li>• Files for other uses are created by save as.</li> <li>• Actions can be created</li> <li>• History is lost when the programme is closed</li> </ul>

One thing that David did mention however, was that whilst downloading your files from camera/card, go and make a cup of tea or coffee as this process can take quite a while (especially if you have shot in RAW).

David then described the five modules within Lightroom, namely Library, Develop, Slide show, Web and Print.

David continued to provide us with a further overview of some of the functions within Lightroom and then selected an unedited picture taken only the day before. My gosh, this was a brave move. The picture David selected was not the most inspiring of pictures (a rather flat and uninteresting picture of a fallen tree and some shaded woodland.) However, before our very eyes, using the functions within Lightroom, David transformed this picture into something that became vibrant and lifelike; such is the power of Lightroom combined with David's skill!

He then showed us the process required to prepare pictures for print or lab processing.

In conclusion, David summed up 'The fifth rule of Lightroom' and 'The first of photography': **Enjoy!** This was met with rapturous applause from the MCC members!

Thanks guys for a great evening's entertainment!

#### Feedback (on the forum) from some of the members:

- Well done to Chris and Dave for a great night of information - super stuff.
- Really enjoyed Monday's presentation, I only wish I could have followed all of Dave's keystrokes as I had trouble repeating the exercise at home. Very useful though to know it can be done with perseverance.
- Thanks for the presentations last night David and Chris.



Photos by Club Events Photographer, Ian Parker

## Competition 4 – Photo Merge - Results

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> December saw another very successful internal competition, this time held in the warmth of the Daniel Owen Centre, our first visit to our new home. Thanks to John Dougherty of the Bebbington Club who did a great job getting through all the entries.



The results were as follows:

### Beginners Prints:

No Entries

### Advanced Prints:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Phil Parsons	Getting To Know Me (above left)	20
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Andy Polakowski	Three Speed Bikes (above right)	19
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Chris Davies	My Car Keyring	18
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Stuart Worrall	Southstack (HDR)	18
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Phil Parsons	A Walk In The Country	18

### Beginners DPI:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Ang Jones	Hear See Speak No Evil (below left)	20
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Elaine Williams	Harvey Smith - Chester	19
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Paul Harper	Flying South For The Winter	18

### Advanced DPI:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Steve Jones	Becks (below right)	20
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Chris Noble	3D Television	19
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Chris Davies	Runs Like Clockwork	18
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Steve Jones	Should've Gone To Specsavers	18

