



VIEWFINDER



Hemel Hempstead Photographic Society

Viewfinder is the monthly journal of photography for and by members of the **Hemel Hempstead Photographic Society** (otherwise known as HHPS).

In This issue

As a reminder, this season's League placings from the May issue can be found on page 4.

The full list of Annual Awards placings were in the June issue. This month there is a selection of the top-scoring images.

Who is your favourite rock-star, past or present? It may surprise you to know that as well as talented musicians, many of them are also talented photographers, although most do it as a side-line, perhaps initially to document their performances and the work that goes into them. In this issue Emyr Williams highlights the work of one of the best-known rock-star photographers - although as Emyr points out, some regard her as a better photographer than musician! In **My heroes: Rock-star Photographers**, Emyr highlights the progress of Linda McCartney's photography in the first of what, hopefully, will be an occasional series.

From The Chair

Hi everyone, this is my first post as your new chairman. Even though we are only a couple of weeks in, I think that it has been a positive start to the new season. I would like to start by thanking those people who have given up their spare time to assist with the two stalls that we have had so far.

For anyone who is unaware, Linda has volunteered to run our Facebook site. I am sure that we will all give her the support that she needs to make it a success.

When I was voted in as chairman I raised the subject of photographic accreditations/qualifications. I am going to start looking into this in the coming months so if anyone is interested, or has experience in these, could you please let me know.

On the 3rd of November we have Simon Turnbull coming to give us a talk on The Intimate Landscape. You may remember Simon offered to run a morning workshop in Ashridge. If we get 5 people it will be £40 each; four people, probably £50. When we floated the possibility last season about half a dozen members said that they would like to go. We are checking again to see if anyone is interested. If you are, could you please contact me and then we can contact Simon regarding his availability.

Thank you for your time, and I will see you on Monday.

David Howard, Chair, HHPS

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League Group Placings for 2025-26 Season

DPIs

Group A	Group B	Group C
John Humphrey	Ian Shaw	Richard Anthony
Ully Joriman	John Marshall	Clare Long
Rob Harley	Brian Howard	David Guest
Brian Burgess	David Howard	Linda van Geene
Dawn Murphy	James McCracken	Steve Ballard
Roger Hudson	Vicky Sinclair	Mike Mitchell

Colour Prints

Group A	Group B	Group C
John Humphrey	Brian Burgess	Clare Long
Rob Harley	Roger Hudson	Dawn Murphy
Jim Turner	Brian Howard	Linda van Geene
John Marshall	Richard Anthony	David Guest

Mono Prints

Group A	Group B	Group C
John Marshall	Dawn Murphy	Richard Anthony
Rob Harley	Brian Burgess	Brian Howard
Jim Turner	Clare Long	Linda van Geene
Roger Hudson		

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News, Information, Meetings

Back Issues and Contributions

Previous editions can be viewed and/or downloaded from the HHPS website in the Viewfinder Archive, (under the Viewfinder tab) which goes back to 2016. There you can also find the Viewfinder Index which has been updated to include links to all the articles from January 2016 to June 2025, listed under three headings - date, author, and topic.

Content from any member for future editions is always welcome, whether short, helpful, snippets, or longer articles (preferably illustrated with photos) of one or more A4 pages, and they can be about any photographic topic.

Reminders

If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining HHPS please bring them along. They can sample up to three sessions for free before deciding to join.

Members are reminded not to discuss displayed prints with judges, or within the hearing of judges, before the images have been assessed and given a score. Doing so could inadvertently influence the judge's decision.

October Meetings

6th October - **Talk by Steve Brabner: Beyond the Comfort Zone**
Approaches to exploring new themes and techniques
- **Submit up to 3 DPIs for 1st DPI Competition**

13th October - **1st DPI competition (Judge: Amanda Wright)**

15th October - **External Competition: Rosebowl Round 1**
(Hosted away)

20th October - **External Competition: NW Federation, Group C, Round 1.**
Hosted by HHPS (vs Watford and Stoke Poges)
- **Register up to 3 Prints for 1st Colour Print competition**

27th October - **1st Colour Print competition (Judge: Peter Prosser)**

This Month's Meetings:

*The majority of meetings will be scheduled for the Salvation Army Hall. However, it is still possible for circumstances to change, e.g. an event planned at the hall might be changed to a Zoom meeting or alternative venue at short notice. Consequently, **be aware of any special announcements**, usually posted on the web, via email and/or on WhatsApp, which might indicate a change of location and/or activity.*

At our first meeting on 1st September the first half was a presentation of awards for last season's Annual Awards competition (see June issue for list of winners - images below). In the second half images from members showed some of the things they had been doing during the summer break. It was also an opportunity for two potential new members to see what we do.

The second meeting on the 8th September was an interesting session, giving members the opportunity to present images they considered to be "risky", at least in terms of competition entries. Some images were experiments, in the sense that they were a new approach by the member, and, for competitions, might depend on whether a judge understood what the photographer was trying to achieve. Other images just needed some "tweaking" in editing software. Members were able to give their opinion on whether or not individual images really were risky or would in fact make suitable competition entries.

On 15th September Uly gave another of her travelogues, this time covering two trips to Northern Italy, rather than her usual foray into the United States. The first half covered a trip to the Lakes, Veneto and The Dolomites in 2023. The second half was a trip in 2024 to Switzerland and Piedmont. (Cakes were a prominent feature of both trips!). See the next page for maps of Uly's itinerary and images from the two trips.

The fourth session on the 27th was a "mixed bag" Members' Evening. Rob started the session with a demonstration of how to correct converging verticals in Camera Raw and Lightroom, using the sliders and customised Guides in the Transform section of the Develop Module. Other members contributed other ways of doing this in Photoshop (there is always more than one way to achieve the same result in photo editing). Members also contributed suggestions on creating vignettes - eg using the Radial Filter in Lightroom (reducing the size of the image and extending the radius of the filter beyond the frame of the image creates a less obtrusive vignette). In Photoshop an irregular selection can be made with the Lasso Tool, then reversing the selection and using a Curves Adjustment to darken the edges of the image also creates a less obtrusive vignette.

In the second half of the session Mike gave a demonstration of how easy it is to create a Photo Book in Photobox, with some examples of books he's created (he emphasised that its important to collect all your images together first and create your layout before committing to publish it, and to take advantage of any discounts on offer rather than accepting the full price).

Finally David Howard explained how to create and maintain a catalogue in Lightroom - although the process can be applied to any photo cataloging system. This included renaming images and adding tags or keywords during Import to make them easier to find - especially if you have images on different external drives (including those saved in the cloud). *[It's a useful practice to back up your catalogue - to an external drive - as well as backing up your images, as I found to my cost when I had a new drive installed on my computer and lost my Lightroom catalogue, which meant I had to start again from scratch - Ed.]*

Jim Turner, Editor



"A Piece of Cake"

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Members' Articles

My Heroes: Rock Star Photographers

By Emyr Williams

Just who exactly are our heroes? Film stars, painters, politicians, rock stars maybe - family members sometimes, or teachers perhaps - or pioneers, or possibly photographers? Well I've actually got a few, covering all those bases between them, I suppose, but the other day I wondered if there were any amongst them that ticked more than one box, maybe real superheroes even? Most of us know that Winston Churchill - and King Charles III too, for that matter - painted. Lady Gaga and maybe Madonna too are both strong musicians and film stars. Ronald Reagan, the erstwhile film star, somehow became US President, and even Arnold Schwarzenegger followed him in becoming Governor of California.

But, digging a little deeper into two of my passions - rock music and photography - I found rather more than I'd bargained for. Quite a few of the rock musicians were actually great, or at least very good, photographers. I already knew about a couple: Patti Smith and Bryan Adams; but then I found more, including Graham Nash, David Byrne, Bill Wyman - and Linda McCartney too - in what will be an occasional series about them all. Here goes the first then!

Linda McCartney

Well most photographers also like to think of her as Linda Eastman, heiress to the Eastman Kodak fortune. But it isn't so it seems; that's a myth, as I read in Paul's foreword to Linda's 1992 book '**Sixties: Portrait of an Era**'. It's so well-established a myth that I cross-checked it, but myth it surprisingly is. Her father Lee Eastman was actually a New York lawyer who represented show-business stars, fine artists and musicians, so Linda grew up partly next to that world, eventually graduating in History of Art, and getting into serious photography after moving out to Arizona for a while. Pretty soon, it was back to New York, holding down an office job while regularly absorbing the wonderful photography section at the Museum of Modern Art.

The Dave Clark Five, of all people, were her first paid-for subjects, though not her 'big break' - it turns out they were even more popular in the US than the UK (Tom Hanks actually still raves about them!) Though her father's connections must have helped her get some access to rock bands, singers and festivals, she herself actually grew to befriend many, like Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and Jim Morrison of The Doors well before they were famous. She began to photograph people more as they really were then than as they might later on have wanted themselves to look. However, these first four photos are actually of Linda herself, taken by the musicians themselves as they lived and laughed together. Firstly, by Jimi Hendrix, then Jim Morrison, Michael Clarke, drummer of The Byrds, and lastly by Graham Nash.

Linda McCartney by other Rock Stars



Linda by Jimi Hendrix



Linda by Jim Morrison



Linda by Michael Clarke



Linda by Graham Nash

But now for her own work, for which she had that all-important access to get the shots; but was she any good as a photographer? Well, I have to say I think she was. Witness firstly this 1969 shot of Jimi Hendrix.



Jimi by Linda

As she said “Jimi and I enjoyed a close relationship without having an affair” - you can see how relaxed he was in her company; a rarely observed view of the happy inner soul inside the somewhat troubled outer man. Her engaging friendliness, a natural thing for her, was key to much of her photography, as well as helping shape her whole life and later her influence on the world.

Back nearer the start of her career, though, she said “My big break was in June 1966 with the Rolling Stones: a session which came about more or less by accident”. She was, to her own surprise, the only photographer allowed on board a boat in New York for a press conference, and took the opportunity to get to know them, as you can see in this first image of Keith Richards, Mick Jagger and Brian Jones.

However it was the second shot here, of a very relaxed Brian Jones, that was noticed by Brian Epstein, the Beatles manager, a whole year later... leading to her first meeting with the Beatles!



Keith Richard, Mick Jagger, Brian Jones



Brian Jones

Other offers of work piled in, and she became a full-time freelance photographer, but one who unusually already knew many of her subjects. Here are a few, some in concert, others relaxed, featuring The Who, Ginger Baker of Cream, Janis Joplin, and Mama Cass of The Mamas & Papas.



The Who



Ginger Baker



Janis Joplin



"Mama" Cass Elliot

She produced interesting and often unusual images live in concert, in a completely different dynamic, as well: here are four from the late 60s, featuring Jimi Hendrix, Pete Townshend of The Who, John Cipollina of the San Francisco band Quicksilver Messenger Service, and lastly BB King.



Jimi Hendrix



Pete Townshend



John Cipollina



B B King

Linda came over to London in 1967 - to take more pictures, this time of Stevie Winwood and Traffic, and The Beatles. But before she did that, she happened across Paul McCartney at a London club by chance; 'our eyes met', she said.

But she didn't meet him again till the year after in New York, with true romance eventually being kindled later that year, and she moved over to London as Paul's girlfriend, though not their official photographer! Here are a few of her personal Beatles shots.



The Beatles



John and Paul



John

Soon after, The Beatles grew apart and eventually split, Linda married Paul, and then both children and Paul's new group Wings were born. Here are a few of her images from that next period, highlighting happiness but also life around their home and the people she interacted with.



Paul and baby Stella



Paul with two children



Archibald McFadyen



Paul with a dog

She became the keyboardist, as well as being a backing singer, in Wings, this being the period when she was mocked rather unfairly about her music abilities; but there was much more to come from her. By the way, this view of her is still around - this next bit's a bit of a digression!

Only a couple of years back, Rich Hall, the very funny though rather acerbic American comedian, actually compared her to me, of all people, in a song! But it wasn't a photography-based comparison. It was at the Tring Theatre, I was in the front row and got picked out for special treatment, which I didn't mind at all, of course. But when he realised I was now retired, he started singing:

*"Emyr sitting right here does nothing,
Like Linda McCartney in Wings,
He does nothing...."*

And so it went on...!

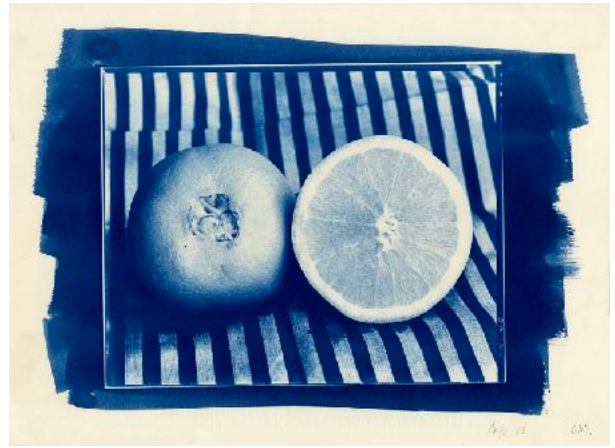
But even if the musical side isn't her very best bit, let's go back to the photography story.

She'd experimented with different techniques before, but in the 1980's she started using the cyanotype printing technique, a slow process which highlights the uv and blue part of the spectrum, producing strikingly unusual graphics and images, often looking like near-negatives, and which gave rise to the term 'blueprints'.

Originating at the birth of photography, in 1842, printing using this technique had been important till the 1940s. Linda had long been fascinated by the pioneering work of William Henry Fox (later of Fox Talbot fame) and used the cyanotype process both for its effect on some of her existing images, but also in taking new shots which stretched its creative potential, sparking renewed interest in the photography world, and earning her an RPS Exhibition. Here are just four from her.



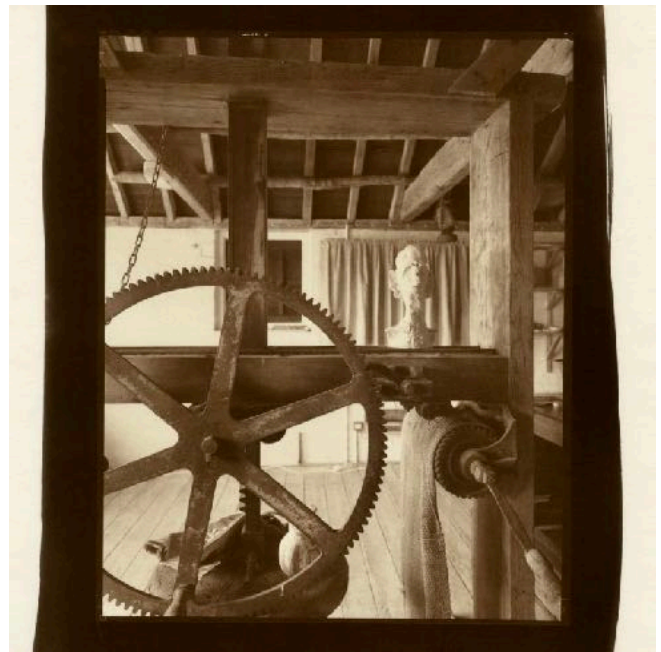
Two Birds



Cut Orange



Stella



Old Mill

I started off by flagging up how some of our heroes excel across different fields and interests, and of course, Linda was also a very prominent animal rights activist and additionally a 'loud and proud' vegetarian, writing cookbooks and going as far as founding, with Paul, the vegetarian Linda McCartney Foods company, whose products still live on today.

Though she died tragically young, at 56, in 1998, her memory and influence still live on, having impressed the world, both through her talent and also the influence of her thoughtful and kind personality.

The last words here are hers, and typically thoughtful:

"The real thing that makes a photographer is more than just a technical skill, more than turning on a radio. It has to do with the force of inner intentions; I've always called this a visual signature"

Emyr Williams

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Members' Images

[Please note: For a better view of the images in Viewfinder, your PDF Reader software should allow you to zoom in. Depending on the size and quality of your screen, the resolution of the images here should enable you to have a good view when the pages are magnified by at least 3x or 300%.]

A Selection of images from last season's Annual Awards

Colour Prints



'Olga' by Brian Burgess



'Railway Carriage'
by John Humphrey
(Overall First Place, Prints)

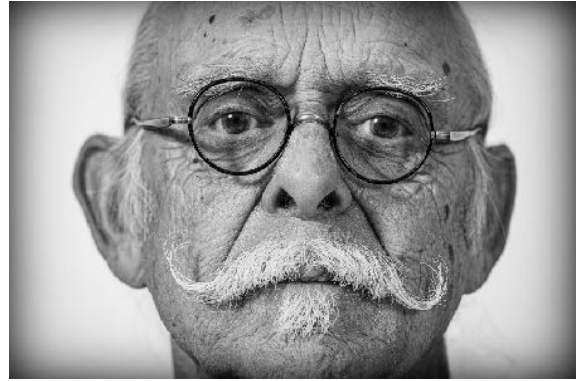


'Well Past its Best'
by Richard Anthony

Mono Prints



'Rice Field with Hut' by Jim Turner

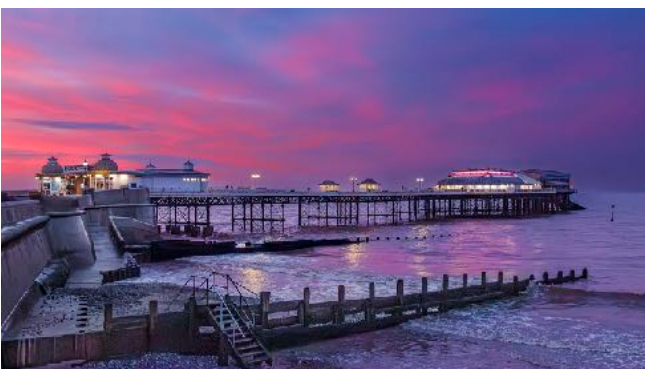


'Alan' by Rob Harley



'The Coat Rack'
by Clare Long

Projected Images (DPIs)



'Blue Hour in Cromer' by Jim Turner



'A Geezer' by David Howard



'Walls and Ceilings'
by John Humphrey
(Overall First Place, DPis)

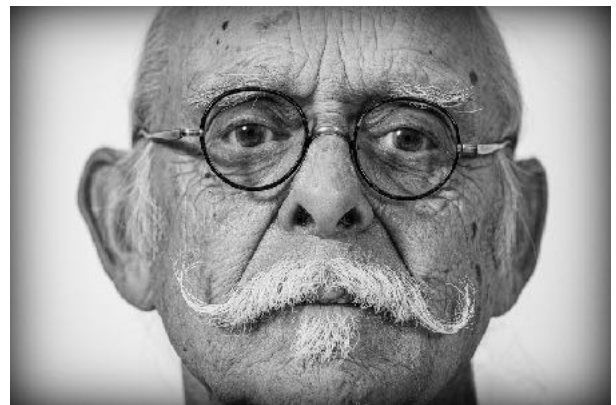
Special categories

Figure



'Baring Her Sole' by John Marshall

Studio



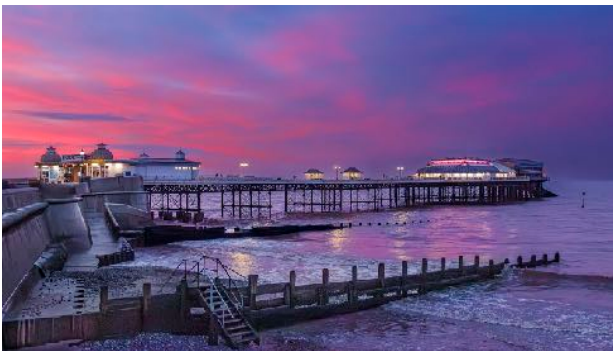
'Alan' by Rob Harley

Natural History



'Flower Power' by John Humphrey

Landscape



'Blue Hour in Cromer' by Jim Turner



'Rice Field with Hut' by Jim Turner

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Contributions

If you have any stories to share, or any useful hints and tips to pass on to other members, please think of Viewfinder. It would be great to have a different member's article every month.

Perhaps you have an image, or a set of images, that tells a story, or demonstrates a photographic technique or the use of a much-loved piece of equipment; or illustrates an interesting place or an unusual scene. If there is anything photographic that you would like to describe or explain for members, consider submitting something for inclusion in a future edition. You need only to supply a text and the images, and I will put it all into a suitable format for Viewfinder.

If you have something to contribute, please email me using the address in the footer and/or discuss it with me at a Monday meeting. Thank you.

Snippets....

Images from the 2025 [Astronomy Photographer of the Year Competition](#). Most of these images I imagine most of us will never be in a position to take (let alone witness the spectacle they show), but it's enough to marvel at the wonders that lie beyond our "pale blue dot". Winning images are on display at the Royal Museums, Greenwich, from 12th September.

[Ocean photographer of the Year](#). Some more awe-inspiring images, this time closer to home.

Following my suggestion to take inspiration from painters as well as photographers, [Theatre Picasso](#) showcases paintings inspired by the world of theatre, dance and entertainment. His fragmented images may not be directly translatable into photography (or to everyone's taste), but worth a look anyway.

[What Have We Done?](#) A short (4 mins.) interview with Sir Don McCullin reflecting on World Press Photo awards and his 70 years in photojournalism.

Food For Thought

A photographer is like a cod, which produces a million eggs in order that one may reach maturity.

George Bernard Shaw

While there is perhaps a province in which the photograph can tell us nothing more than what we see with our own eyes, there is another in which it proves to us how little our eyes permit us to see.

Dorothea Lange

If it doesn't absorb you, if it isn't any fun - don't do it.

D H Lawrence

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