



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

This month started with an informal internal challenge (rather than a competition) with the set subject on the theme of Glass, and a selection of images is included on pages five and six.

This month's issue also show-cases the first of the season's competitions, with images from the first round of the PDI competition. As the first Colour Print competition was on the last Monday of the month images will appear in next month's issue, but you can find the results on page 14 of this issue.

There are some interesting links in **Snippets** which are well worth a look, including exhibitions of the work of two iconic photographers of the fashion world - Lee Miller, and Cecil Beaton; and some news about Affinity Photo editing software.

Jim Turner, Editor

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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 (from January *the membership fee for the rest of the season is half the full fee*).

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.

November Meetings

- 3rd November - **The Intimate Landscape: A talk by Simon Turnbull**
(Preparation for Tring Photography Club competition 26th February 2026)
- 5th November - **External Competition: Rosebowl Round 1 (Hosted away on Zoom)**
- 6th November - **External Competition: N W Federation Group C Round 2**
(Hosted away at Watford, between HHPS, Watford and Stoke Poges)
- 10th November - **Members' Evening: All-shoot.**
(An opportunity for all participants to photograph a model)
- **Register up to 3 Prints for 1st Mono Print competition**
- 17th November - **League Competition: 1st Mono Prints (Judge: Micki Aston)**
- **Submit up to 3 DPs for Set Subject: Portraiture**
- 24th November - Set Subject: Portraiture**
(Critique of images from 1st All-shoot or other sessions)
All meetings (including this one) in downstairs cafe for rest of 2025
-

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.*

The session on 29th September was on the set subject of 'Glass', with thirty-four images presented as projected images, and a panel (David Howard, John Marshall and Ullly Jorimann) providing an initial commentary, with members giving their input afterwards. A selection of images from the session can be seen on the pages 5 and 6.

Photography takes many forms. Some photographers like to photograph people, either in the street or in a studio; some like being outdoors and photograph the landscape. If none of these appeals to you Steve Brabner of the Amersham Beyond Group (a sub-group of Amersham Photographic Society) showed some creative alternatives. In our second session of the month he covered a number of creative techniques, including photographing flowers in ice, Intentional Camera Movement (ICM), and composite images to create book-covers, etc. Some of these were perhaps more successful than others, but there were some outstanding examples of what could be achieved if you're stuck for something to photograph. (He also included some images, generated in ChatGPT, of people doing somersaults - which resulted in some bizarre creations!)

The third session, on 13th October, was the first of the League competitions. Amanda Wright provided her usual insights in judging the first PDI competition, with 45 entries to work through. There were some excellent entries which proved something of a challenge, as she held back 20 images for further consideration, eventually awarding five 20s.

The First Round of the Rosebowl competition between Buckingham, Banbury, Northfield and Hemel Hempstead camera clubs was held on Wednesday 15th October at Buckingham Camera Club. David Howard attended the event on our behalf and reported that before the held images were reviewed we were last, but when the held images were taken into account we came first with 269 points, ahead of Northfield with 260 points. We had one starred image - '**Snowed In**' by Jim Turner.

On 20th October we were hosts to the first round of the North West Federation competition, between Hemel Hempstead, Watford and Stoke Poges, judged by Mark Buckley-Sharp. As this was an external competition between member clubs of the Federation, Mark emphasised that he was looking for evidence of the art and craft of photography, with scores in the range of 15 to 20, and starred images for higher quality. He made some interesting and generally constructive comments on each image, comprising fifteen prints and fifteen PDIs. The final tally was close in both categories, but the final score was a tie, with each club coming first, with 173 points! For Hemel, two prints scored 20* - John Humphrey for '**Seascape**', and Richard Anthony for '**Well Past its Best**'.

This month's last session was the first round of the Colour Print competition, judged by Peter Prosser. As usual his comments were positive and constructive. Often his criticisms were about minor issues which detracted from an otherwise good image - for example a colour didn't quite fit the image, or a single colour, such as green, which can be obtrusive and could have been toned down slightly. Out of a total of thirty prints he awarded two 20s and three 19s, with nearly half scoring 17 or 18.

Jim Turner, Editor

A selection of images from the Glass Set Subject



'Glass-based Still Life'
By Richard Anthony



'Bubbles and Swirls'
by Ullly Jorimann



'The View From Inside'
by David Guest



'Waiting for Wine' by Rob Harley



'Glass and Bottle'
by John Humphrey

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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.]

This month's high-scoring images

PDI Competition Round 1



'Centre Of The Explosion' by Rob Harley

This image was taken at Waddesdon Manor at the 2024 Christmas Lights exhibition using my iPhone 15 Pro Max.

The exposure was 1/100s at f/1.8 and ISO 50. The focal length was 6.76mm which is equivalent to 48mm on full frame. Rather than take the whole scene, I framed this part of it. There was no further cropping in post-processing. The image was saved as an HEIC file rather than jpeg to get a higher resolution image.

There were no adjustments made in Lightroom so the image was imported directly into Photoshop. The image was rotated from portrait to landscape

and then flipped vertically, which gave it the best look.

The crockery was largely cream-coloured but also showed some pink. This did not look great, so a Gradient Map Adjustment Layer was used to experiment with different colours.

After trying four other colour gradients, the gradient chosen was Black for the shadows, Blue for the mid-tones and Yellow for the highlights. The yellows did not come out as well as I hoped and were further adjusted to be pink. The background was darkened to become near-black.

Finally the image, which is very busy, was de-cluttered somewhat by cloning out some supporting wires and moving inwards some details (especially the spoon on the right hand edge) which were too close to the edge of the frame. When moving the spoon inwards, I took advantage of some of the comments from the Risky/Experimental Images members' evening.

'Relaxing at the Hot Springs'
by James McCracken

The Camera was a Canon 5D Mk 4 DSLR, hand held, with no filters and set to Aperture Priority.

The lens was a Canon 24-70mm at 61mm. Exposure was 1/200 sec at f/4 with ISO at 200.

The image was shot in Raw Format and the detail in the moving water improved with Structure adjustment.



The model was a young Chinese lady called Minh-Ly who was touring Italy a few years ago and had written to me to see if we could get together for a shoot.

She is well known for her love of water shots and we have near us some lovely hot springs cascading from the mountains so we got together for a shoot.

We often go there with the children although finding a suitable area for a good composition was a little tricky, but she was absolutely great, finding lovely poses and remaining relaxed throughout.

The shot was one of many taken which pleased both of us.

'Pièce de Résistance' by David Guest

Nikon D7200 (APSC) with Nikon 28-120mm f/3.5-5.6 at 48mm. Exposure: 1/40 at f/7.1 ISO 4000, hand-held.

Taken at a military re-enactment event - scenario: two German soldiers and a French civilian woman in occupied France circa 1943-44

The slight toning of the monochrome. image reflects the appearance of monochrome images from that era.



'Calm Day on the River' by Ullly Jorimann

The image was taken in my hometown Landshut in my favourite location (other than the purple sofa in my favourite café), by the river across from a pretty row of houses. The view is always good for great shots at any time in the day, but best in the sunshine and when the water is still, to give me reflections. The little trees are actually new, no doubt planted by the town for my photographic delight.

I took the image with my Samsung phone on a late summer afternoon, and the clouds were the cherry on the top. I used regular phone settings, so I am not sure about what they translate to other than good depth of field for landscapes.



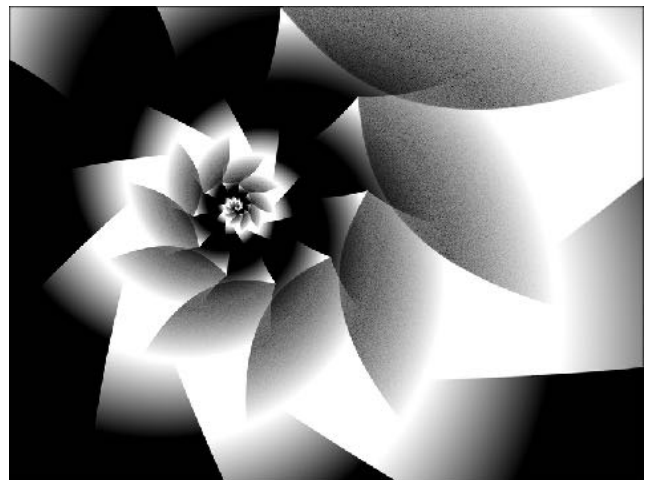
I did the post-processing in Elements, cropping around the edges for optimal compositional balance, removing some weeds at the bottom, darkening the image slightly with Levels and improving the colour saturation for a bluer sky. Voila!

'Vortex' by John Humphrey

Vortex started life as a simple picture of the intersection of a wall and ceiling. This has been the start for quite a number of my abstract images.

It was converted to pure black and white using Photoshop's Threshold setting and then spiralled using the Photospiralisation software. This is tricky to use, and has become even more challenging following an update, but creates the so called Droste effect in which the starting image is progressively diminished in size and rotated. The centre point of the spiral can be dragged to a position that gives more balance to the result.

Some digital noise was added to give a more textured effect.



**'Vintage Style Car Detail'
by Richard Anthony**

The car was an Excalibur, part of a vehicle display at Houghton Hall Park last summer. As with most such displays it was not possible to get a shot without unwanted foreground and/or unwanted background detail so I settled for a few detail shots, selecting this one for the competition.

The camera used was a Micro Four Thirds Olympus E-M10 MkII with a 14-42mm M Zuiko lens set at a focal length of 22mm. ISO 1000 sensitivity was set and an exposure of f/8 at 1/2500th sec.



'Dinner's Ready' by Linda van Geene

Taken in the Farne Islands with an Olympus Micro Four Thirds (MFT) camera with zoom lens set at a focal length of 300mm (600mm equivalent), hand-held. Finding a suitable bird with an uncluttered background was the most challenging thing.

The exposure settings were ISO 800, aperture f/9 and shutter speed 1/640 sec.

Processed in Lightroom and Photoshop (Levels) and cropped to size.

'Hoverfly Approaching Flower' by Ian Shaw

This was just a lucky record shot of a common roadside wildflower in France, but now increasingly common here, probably due to a warming climate.

I didn't notice the hover fly until after the picture was taken. Fortunately I set a fast shutter as it was a very breezy day.

Canon 800D, 1/320 sec., f/11, ISO 200, 70mm to 200mm zoom lens.

Levels and saturation were tweaked in Photoshop Elements. I was disappointed that the wing movement was so fast and transparent that it was not visible when projected.



'Beach Encounter' by Clare Long

This photograph was taken with my iPhone (15 pro max).

It was taken at Sunderland Harbour on a blustery afternoon in August. I was trying to focus on the flowers with the lighthouse in the background. I took a number of shots because I was aware of people walking along the path and the scene was ever-changing, giving each shot a different dynamic. There was no connection between these two individuals but I chose this photo because it hints that there might have been an encounter.

The photo was taken in portrait mode which helped to create the blurred background, adding mystery.



'Great Photo' by Mike Mitchell

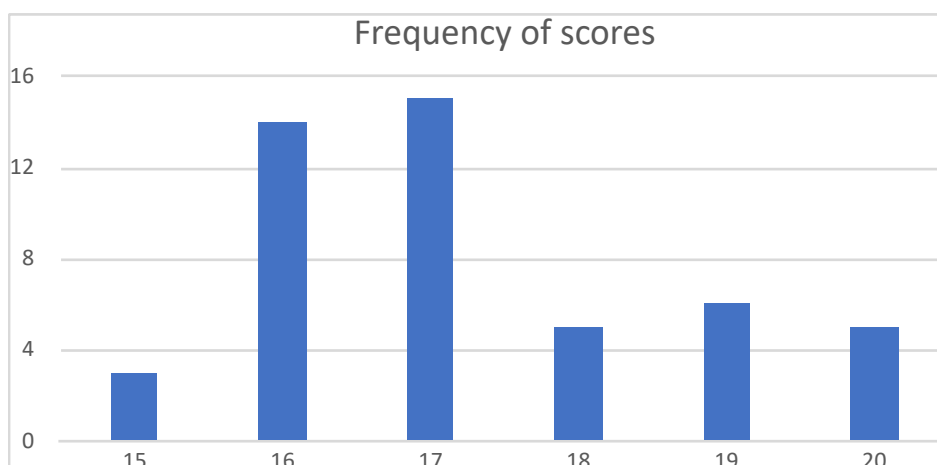
This was a grab shot taken with a phone camera. I was waiting to take a picture down the alley, and I thought that it made a rather good street photo with the lady taking the picture herself. I also included the pillar, which I think Amanda [Wright, the judge] liked, as it had rather attractive patterning.



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PDI Round 1 - Results

Group	Position	Score	Author	JS and Title
C	01	20	Clare Long	09 Beach Encounter
			Linda van Geene	02 Dinner's Here
			Richard Anthony	14 Vintage-Style Car Detail
	04	19	David Guest	08 Pièce De Résistance
			Mike Mitchell	23 Great Photo
	06	18	Mike Mitchell	04 Italian Style
			Richard Anthony	20 Harbour Reflections
	08	17	Clare Long	33 Stadium View
			David Guest	27 Firefighter
			Emyr Williams	15 Mont Blanc In Portrait
			Emyr Williams	34 Peeking Across
			Linda van Geene	25 Ait Benhaddou
			Richard Anthony	31 Glass-House Flower
	14	16	Clare Long	21 Flow
			David Guest	43 A Lesson In History
			Emyr Williams	26 Broken Windows Abstract
Mike Mitchell			42 Adriatic Silhoutte	
18	15	Linda van Geene	44 Waiting For The Ferry	
B	01	20	James McCracken	06 Relaxing At The Hot Springs
	02	19	Ian Shaw	48 Hover Fly Approaching Flower
			James McCracken	28 Rare Swallowtail Dining At The Salvia
	04	18	David Howard	01 Turn And Burn
	05	17	Brian Howard	30 An Unknown Lily
			Brian Howard	39 Squirrel Looking For Food
			David Howard	35 Smile And The World Smiles With You
			Ian Shaw	47 The Weir
			James McCracken	40 Evening Tranquility
			John Marshall	03 Triangles
	11	16	Brian Howard	13 Emma
			David Howard	19 A Dolly With A Brolly
			Ian Shaw	46 A Competent Surfboarder
			John Marshall	38 Cocoa Time
	15	15	John Marshall	18 Backlit Teasel
A	01	20	Ully Jorimann	36 Calm Day On The River
	02	19	John Humphrey	22 Vortex
			Rob Harley	10 Centre Of The Explosion
	04	18	Rob Harley	16 Quizzical
			Roger Hudson	24 Time To Rest
	06	17	John Humphrey	45 City Skyline
			Roger Hudson	12 These Boots
			Ully Jorimann	11 Morning On The New River
	09	16	Brian Burgess	05 Bubbles
			Brian Burgess	29 Puffin Bringing Home Dinner
			Brian Burgess	37 La Corbiere, Jersey's Sentinel
			Rob Harley	32 Waiting For Wine
			Roger Hudson	41 St Paul's From The Millenium Bridge
			Ully Jorimann	17 Bubbles And Swirls
	15	15	John Humphrey	07 Scattered Tulip



1st PDIs Frequency of Scores

PDIs Cumulative Scores

League	Group	Author	Round and Preference												Total	
			Round 1			Round 2			Round 3			Round 4				
			01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03		
PI	C	Clare Long	20	16	17											53
		David Guest	19	17	16											52
		Linda van Geene	20	17	15											52
		Mike Mitchell	18	19	16											53
		Richard Anthony	20	18	17											55
		Emyr Williams	17	16	17											50
	B	Brian Howard	16	17	17											50
		Ian Shaw	16	17	19											52
		James McCracken	20	19	17											56
		John Marshall	17	15	16											48
		David Howard	18	16	17											51
	A	Brian Burgess	16	16	16											48
		John Humphrey	15	19	17											51
		Rob Harley	19	18	16											53
Roger Hudson		17	18	16											51	
Ully Jorimann		17	16	20											53	
PI Total				285	274	269										

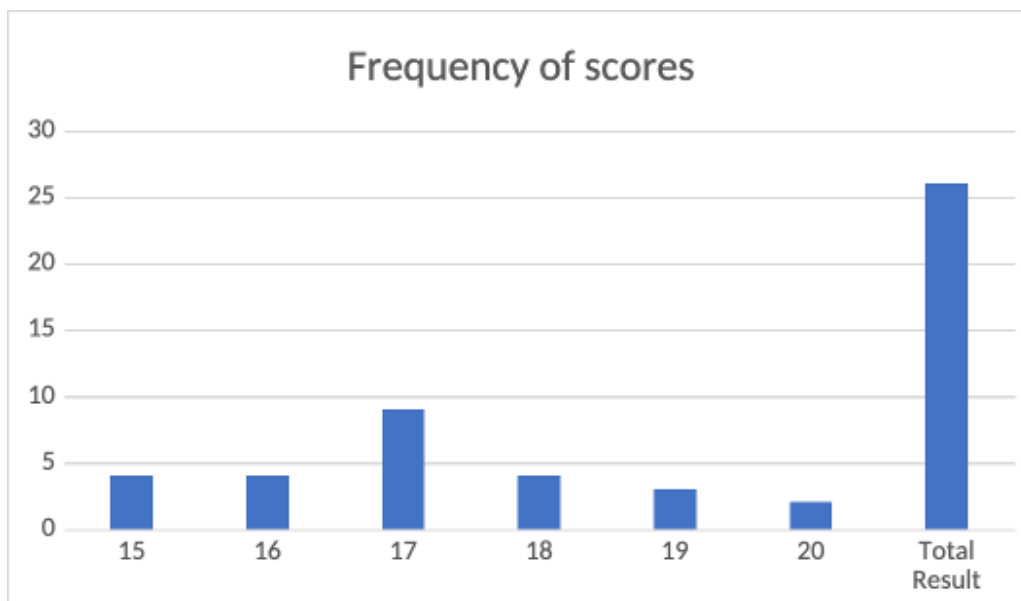
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Colour Prints Round 1 - Results

Group	Position	Score	Author	JS and Title	Pref
C	01	17	Clare Long	23 Quiet Reflection	03
			Linda van Geene	11 Among The Gilly Flowers	02
	03	16	Clare Long	08 Still Waters Run Deep	01
			Clare Long	16 A Touch Of Autumn	02
			Linda van Geene	18 Looking The Wrong Way	03
	06	15	Linda van Geene	03 Banging Heads	01
B	01	17	Brian Burgess	06 Sun Setting On The Taj Mahal	01
			Brian Burgess	14 03 Eye Of The Dragon	02
			Brian Burgess	21 Dancing Queen	03
			Brian Howard	24 Emma	01
			Brian Howard	26 Bee On A Blossom	03
			Richard Anthony	22 Clematis	03
	07	15	Brian Howard	25 Amaryllis	02
			Richard Anthony	07 Rocks And Water	01
			Richard Anthony	15 Swan	02
A	01	20	John Humphrey	12 Borneo Pier	02
			John Humphrey	19 Ashridge Wood	03
	03	19	John Humphrey	04 City Of London	01
			Rob Harley	05 Popular Location	01
			Rob Harley	20 Flux	03
	06	18	Jim Turner	10 A Garden Of Earthy Delights	02
			John Marshall	01 Arabesque	01
			John Marshall	09 The Rough With The Smooth	02
			John Marshall	17 Homage To Vermeer	03
	10	17	Rob Harley	13 Having Fun	02
11	16	Jim Turner	02 Through The Garlic Wood	01	

Colour Prints Cumulative Scores

League	Group	Author	Round and Preference												Total	
			Round 1			Round 2			Round 3			Round 4				
			01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03	01	02	03		
CP	C	Clare Long	16	16	17											49
		Linda van Geene	15	17	16											48
	B	Brian Burgess	17	17	17											51
		Brian Howard	17	15	17											49
		Richard Anthony	15	15	17											47
	A	Jim Turner	16	18												34
		John Humphrey	19	20	20											59
		John Marshall	18	18	18											54
		Rob Harley	19	17	19											55
	CP Total			152	153	141										446

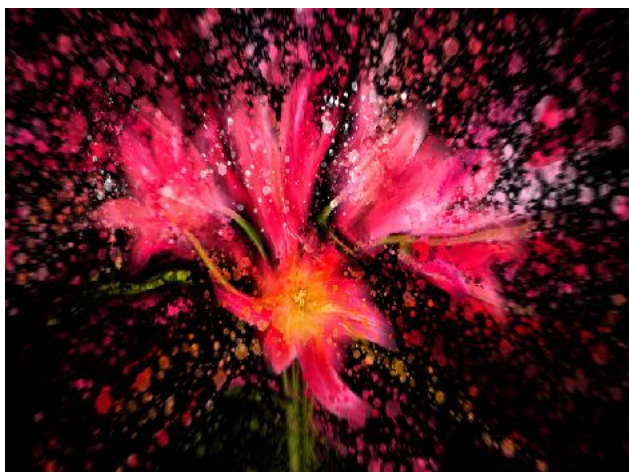


1st Colour Prints Frequency of Scores

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Editor's Pick

A selection of other images from this month's competitions



'Scattered Tulips' by John Humphrey



'Peeking Across' by Emyr Williams



'Adriatic Silhouette' by Mike Mitchell



'Flow' by Clare Long



'Stadium View' by Clare Long

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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....

Affinity Photo

If you've wanted to get into editing your photos but were reluctant (or unable) to pay for the software, you may be pleased to know that **AFFINITY PHOTO IS NOW FREE**. Just released by Canva, the owners, it comes as a bundle now called just Affinity and includes all the Affinity products: Affinity Photo is now called Pixel, Designer is now Vector, and Publisher is called Layout (equivalent to Adobe's Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign respectively - all in one package). All products are accessed from the menu at the top of the screen.

However if you want to use the more advanced AI-based features (called AI Studio in Affinity) such as Generative Fill, Remove Background, and Expand and Edit, you will need an annual subscription to Canva which costs £120. If you're new to photo editing you may not want to use those anyway. (Perhaps Canva have calculated that once you're familiar with the software and see what it can do, you may decide later to buy in to those more advanced features).

You can find out more, and how to download Affinity, on their [website](#).

Editor

Exhibitions

Following last year's biopic of the model-cum-photographer Lee Miller [Tate Britain](#) is showing an exhibition of her photographs until 15th February 2026. "The most comprehensive display of the late American photographer's work ever held in the UK.....With around 250 vintage and modern prints, including those never previously displayed, the exhibition reveals Miller's poetic vision and fearless spirit."

More Fashion photography: [Cecil Beaton's Fashion World](#) at the National Portrait Gallery until 11th January 2026.

Snippets (Continued)

"Somerset saved my sanity": [Don McCullin](#) at 90. Landscape and still-life photographs from his latest book.

For Nature lovers:

Images from [The Wildlife Photographer of the Year](#) Awards.

Not all [Wildlife Photography](#) is serious.

And some outstanding [wildlife photographs](#) from a 15-year-old Hertfordshire photographer.

More nature images (at the [micro](#) level).

And for those of us who like fungi a [selection of images](#) from a new book by [Steve Axford](#).

Further thoughts on AI and photography

A [professional studio photographer](#) has made the interesting point that AI Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT create content by trawling through vast quantities of material produced by other people (which is why the companies that develop them require enormous data centres the size of car factories to store it, and consume huge amounts of energy to cool the databanks). He pointed out that, unlike humans, LLMs can't (at the moment!) create new ideas or content based on their unique experience of being in the world. His conclusion - you've got to be better than the newest easy thing. - *Editor*

Food For Thought

Photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place.....I've found it has little to do with what you see and everything to do with the way you see it.

Elliott Erwit

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