



# VIEWFINDER



## Hemel Hempstead Photographic Society

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

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### In This Issue

This month we have the usual selection of images, this time from the Second Round of the PDI competition.

Following the sad death of Martin Parr, renowned for his colourful portrayal of a quintessentially British way of life, there is an article by Emyr Williams which originally appeared in the September 2021 issue as part of his 'Seven Photographers' series.

In the Snippets section there are links to some exhibitions which should be worth a visit if you're in London in the next few months.

*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

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**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).**

**The Committee would like to remind members 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.**

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### January Meetings

- 5th January - **2nd Colour Print competition (Judge: Ben Pike)**
  - 12th January - **Talk by David Gibson: Street photography - Capturing Moments (Zoom Meeting)**  
- **Register up to 3 prints for 2nd Mono Print competition**
  - 19th January - **2nd Mono Print competition (Judge: Chris Drury).**  
- **Submit up to 3 PDIs for Intimate Landscapes Set Subject**
  - 26th January - **Set Subject: Intimate Landscapes (internal).**  
(Comments by panel then other members. Informs entry for external Tring competition 26th February)  
- **Submit up to 3 PDIs for 3rd PDI competition**
  - 27th January - **External Competition - Rosebowl Round 2 Hosted by HHPS. (ZOOM Meeting)**
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## This Month's Meetings:

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*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 site, via email and/or on WhatsApp, which might indicate a change of location and/or activity.*

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The first session of December was an illustrated and highly informative presentation by Andy Sands on 'Ancient Woodland and Trees'. Rather than discussing how to photograph them, the first half of his talk focussed on the woodland and forest habitat, looking at the variety of trees and how they've been managed in the past. With the exception of some pockets of ancient woodland and remnants of temperate rainforest, most trees in British woods have been planted: Oak has been used for centuries to build ships and make furniture, while Pine plantations for furniture are a more recent addition. British forests were a result of the fashion for hunting after the Norman conquest, while woods were used for domestic products and fuel, and were managed through a combination of pollarding and coppicing. In the second half he discussed the world of fungi and slime moulds, with photographs of the often intricate and at times other-worldly shapes they create. Their minute size sometimes required the use of a specialised 200mm lens with a microscope attachment, rigged up in his home studio.

On 2nd December we again competed with Watford and Stoke Poges in the third round of the NW Federation competition at Stoke Poges. We came second (175 points) behind Watford (190 points). Stoke Poges came third with 170 points. Watford will therefore go through to the final. We did have a few successes however: John Humphrey got a starred 20 for 'Epiphyllum', while Rob Harley and Jim Turner got 19 for 'Crypt in Church St. Eutrope, Sainte' and 'Autumn Blaze' respectively.

The third session of the month was the second round of the PDI competition, judged by Alan Taberer. Of the forty eight entries he awarded four 20s and two 19s. As ever he gave his usual erudite and positive comments, peppered here and there with anecdotes from his own experience, although some might argue that the scores he gave to some images were a bit on the lean side.

To round off the first half of the season we had the annual Christmas Quiz, once again hosted by David Howard as Quizmaster. There were eight rounds, each with ten questions. Topics included Geography, Food and Drink, Song Lyrics, Photography, Things That Happened In December, and Guess The Year (it's so disconcerting when the years appear to telescope as you get older, and merge into each other so they become less distinct!). A number of people got more than fifty correct answers, with Emyr scoring the highest. Several people contributed to a Christmas raffle from which most people managed to win prizes, so a good way to start Christmas.

*Jim Turner, Editor*

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**Members' Articles**

**Martin Parr  
(May 1952-November 2025)**

**By Emyr Williams**

(Reproduced from September 2021 'Seven Photographers: No. 7')



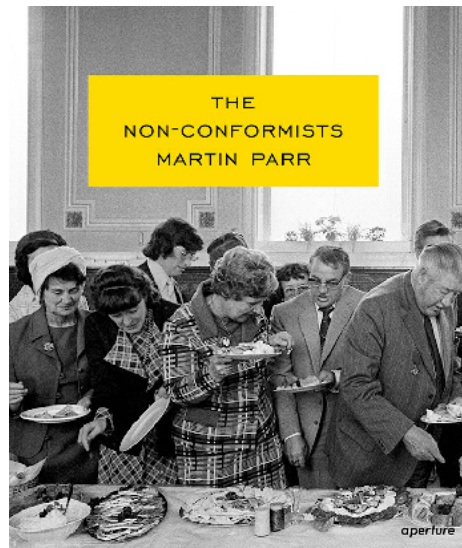
Which of the other photographers in this series do you think said this: “Martin Parr’s not just from a different planet, he’s from a different universe”?

Well, it was Henri Cartier-Bresson. Actually another of the seven, Philip Jones-Griffiths, then Head of the Magnum photo agency, even lobbied hard against him being elected a member. Subsequently, though, he was elected the Head of Magnum!

Many say he’s Britain’s greatest and most influential photographer - others that he produced too many enigmatic and self-indulgent images. A man who divides opinion, then, as these first very different images attest.



But for now, let's start at the beginning. He was born in Epsom; his grandfather, an FRPS, was an early influence, and by fourteen he already wanted to be a documentary photographer, going on to study photography at Manchester Polytechnic. An early job working at Butlin's as a roving photographer was a seminal experience before he moved to West Yorkshire for five years photographing rural lifestyles and how they were changing. Curiously, though typically unconventionally, he focussed on the Methodist and Baptist non-conformist chapels of the declining farming communities as the centrepiece of his observations.



Black and white, using a 35mm Leica M3, was his chosen medium for several years until he switched dramatically to colour in 1982. A good deal of his vast output since then deployed highly saturated images, Martin volunteering that "I'd encountered the postcards of John Hinde when I worked at Butlin's and their bright saturated colours had a big impact on me".

The summers of 1983/4/5 culminated in his first famous colour photobook 'The Last Resort', focussing on working-class families on holiday in New Brighton on The Wirral, as you can see in the two photographs below, and which heralded the development of a whole new tone in documentary photography. At the time, though, he had to weather huge negative reactions to his unflinching depictions.



Next he tackled the middle classes of the West Country in the later Thatcher years - publishing 'The Cost of Living' in 1987 before spending seven years initially travelling to create his very striking work 'Small World', a critique of mass tourism which he later expanded in 2007; four of his images here tell some of this story.



There were many other projects too, most benefiting from his “clear-eyed, unsentimental, but ultimately affectionate view” as the critic and writer Gerry Badger put it. There were also other projects whose depictions border on the surreal and seem to come from that other universe that Cartier-Bresson alluded to!



He certainly knew how to use documentary photography, photographic art, and everything in between to create and divide opinion. By now, his influence on British cultural life has been considerable, through his photography; his huge and often-exhibited collection of photobooks, postcards and photographs; and his work as an Artistic Director, TV and Film documentary maker, Professor of Photography several times over, and owner of his own considerable Martin Parr Foundation. That's Martin Parr today - and all through using his eyes and imagination in a way we all aspire to and occasionally achieve. As the photographic curator Thomas Weski put it: "He's a chronicler of our age..... Parr enables us to see apparently familiar things in a completely new way."

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## Members' Images

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*[ Please note: For a better view of the images in Viewfinder, your PDF Reader software should allow you to zoom in.]*

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### This month's high-scoring images

#### PDI Competition Round 2

##### 'Michael' by Roger Hudson

Michael was our model at the recent November club photo shoot.

I found close-up shots the most successful. For this shot I used a 70-300mm zoom lens close up at 270mm. Camera was a Fujifilm XT-3.

Exposure was ISO 1250, f/7.1 at 1/70th second.



##### 'Thames-side Reflection' by Richard Anthony

The image was taken in the Runnymede area using a handheld Olympus OM-D E-M10 II micro-4/3 camera fitted with an M.Zuiko 14-42mm lens set at 17mm (34mm equivalent at 35mm).

The exposure was 1/4000 sec at f/7.1 with sensitivity set at ISO 1000.



Photoshop Elements 2021 was used for post-processing that included contrast and saturation adjustment, plus cropping to present just the reflection of the buildings rather than the whole scene.



### 'Woodland Walk' by John Humphrey

This was taken with my iPhone. I had no control over the settings, but the metadata shows that the exposure was f/1.8 at 1/100 sec with ISO 32.

The picture was taken in the Lady's Walk area of Ashridge Woods. I had finished taking a series of pictures with my 'proper' camera and had packed everything up in the camera bag. At that moment the perfect character walked into the scene, so I had to bring my iPhone into action.

The image was converted to sepia using the Tint setting in Photoshop's black and white tool. A light vignette was applied by making a heavily feathered

section of the picture edges and lightening the selected area with Photoshop's Levels adjustment. This helped to draw attention to the centre of the picture as well as enhancing the misty impression.

### 'Cloe' by Rob Harley

The image was chosen because it was a simple image of a pretty girl looking relaxed, with a genuine smile, and with direct eye contact with the photographer. Judges tend to like such images! It was taken back in 2011 at a shoot with Cloe and my daughter Christina at a Studio Group shoot. John Marshall set up the lights for the shoot. The exposure was 1/125s (but really the duration of the flash) at f/8 and ISO 100 with a focal length of 165mm.

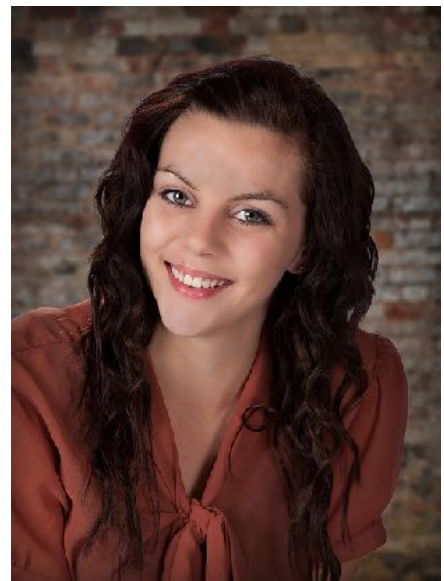
No changes were made in Lightroom but the following changes were made in Photoshop:

The skin was smoothed a little.

A brick background was put in, to replace the plain grey background. The colouring of the background was chosen to match Cloe's clothing. The background was blurred enough so you could see what it was but without it being distracting. In order to get the mask to work as well as possible, two versions of the subject layer were used. One layer with Blending Mode of Darken

was used which made the hair show up against the brick background. A second layer using Select Subject, but then amending the selection to be inside the edge of the hair, was made to ensure all the lighter area of the subject (such as the face) were visible.

Slightly bright areas on the forehead and chin were darkened using Curves, with a Blending Mode of Luminosity to avoid changing the colour. A distracting bright streak in her hair was made less of a highlight, by cloning over it. The second catchlight in each eye was removed (there is only one sun!). Finally, the overall image was darkened a little and a vignette was added.



**'Amaryllis Hybrid' by Rob Harley**

This image was taken at home in my study on an iPhone 15 Pro Max. Two continuous lights were used. The exposure was 1/50s at f/2.2 and ISO 200 with a Focal Length of 24mm (full-frame equivalent).

The amaryllis was grown from a bulb, which is always fun. It's surprising how quickly they grow and how big they get - you need quite a big background.

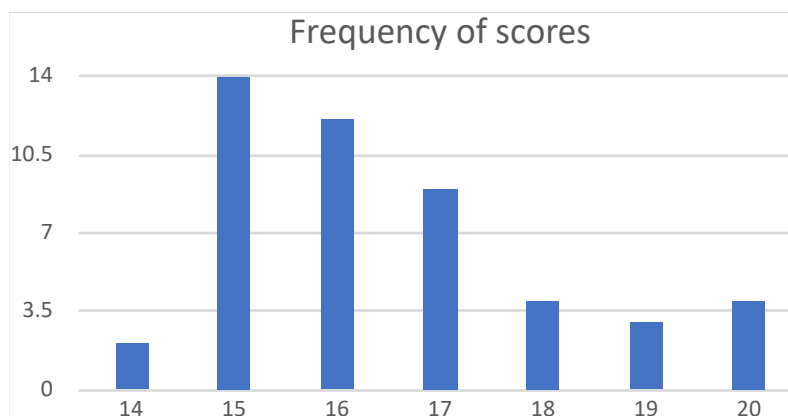
There was half of a second flower in the frame, which was cloned out, along with a few other small pieces of clutter. The grey background was darkened to turn it into pure black. The image was cropped to ensure the outside of the stork was exactly in the bottom corner. That left a nice clean, simplified image. Now I could play with it.

The image was flipped horizontally and then I tried various Blending Modes for the top image. Several Blending Modes looked good, but I liked Lighten the best. To finish off, the stalks going into the bottom corners were given a subtle vignette and a 1-pixel keyline was added using a colour sampled from the green stalk.



## PDIs Round 2 - Results

Group	Position	Score	Author	JS and Title
C	01	20	Geoff King	34 Nosey
	02	19	Linda van Geene	10 White Stargazer Lily
			Richard Anthony	35 Thames-side Reflection
	04	17	Geoff King	27 When The Wind Blows
			Mike Mitchell	16 Blakeney In November
	06	16	Clare Long	31 Still Waters
			Clare Long	37 Somewhere Over The Rainbow
			Emyr Williams	01 The Grin
			Linda van Geene	21 Bald Eagle Profile
			Richard Anthony	04 Seaside Reflections And Shadows
	11	15	Clare Long	13 Homeward Bound
			Emyr Williams	39 The Lost Shoe
			Geoff King	14 Say A Prayer
			Linda van Geene	47 Feathers
			Mike Mitchell	26 Letting Off Steam
			Mike Mitchell	42 At The Point
			Richard Anthony	28 Nearing Flight Speed
	18	14	Emyr Williams	32 Welcome To St Albans
B	01	18	Brian Howard	03 Tulip
			David Howard	15 Last Shot Of The Session
			Ian Shaw	07 Brancaster Beach
			John Marshall	22 Daisies
	05	17	Brian Howard	45 A-J
			James McCracken	02 Beauty Midst The Corn
			James McCracken	36 Hebridean Sunset
	08	16	David Howard	24 Let's Rock
			Ian Shaw	18 Bird Of Paradise
			James McCracken	17 Fish Market Raider
	11	15	Brian Howard	20 Double Yellow Rose
			David Howard	46 Draco & Spear
			John Marshall	05 Roseanne
			John Marshall	48 Rock Chick
	15	14	Ian Shaw	43 Veiled
A	01	20	John Humphrey	41 Woodland Walk
			Rob Harley	19 Amaryllis Hybrid
			Roger Hudson	25 Michael
	04	19	Rob Harley	09 Cloe
	05	17	John Humphrey	12 Wapping Window
			John Humphrey	30 Oxford Circus
			Ully Jorimann	08 Olga In The Pink
			Ully Jorimann	23 Wing Of A Bumblebee-Type Camaro
	09	16	Brian Burgess	29 Kissing Kittiwakes
			Rob Harley	40 The Old Ship's Rudder
			Roger Hudson	38 Mohave Desert 39000ft
			Ully Jorimann	44 Long Way Up To The Entrance
	13	15	Brian Burgess	06 The Corridor
			Brian Burgess	33 Long Way Home
			Roger Hudson	11 Strike A Pose



PDI Round 2 Frequency of scores

## 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									
MP	C	Brian Howard	15	16	18										49
		Linda van Geene	17	18	18										53
		Richard Anthony													
	B	Brian Burgess	17	17	16										50
		Clare Long	16	16	17										49
	A	Jim Turner	20	19											39
		John Marshall	20	19	20										59
		Rob Harley	19	19	20										58
		Roger Hudson	18	20	17										55
MP Total			142	144	126										412
PI	C	Clare Long	20	16	17	15	16	16							100
		David Guest	19	17	16										52
		Geoff King				15	17	20							52
		Linda van Geene	20	17	15	19	16	15							102
		Mike Mitchell	18	19	16	17	15	15							100
		Richard Anthony	20	18	17	16	15	19							105
		Emyr Williams	17	16	17	16	14	15							95
	B	Brian Howard	16	17	17	18	15	17							100
		Ian Shaw	16	17	19	18	16	14							100
		James McCracken	20	19	17	17	16	17							106
		John Marshall	17	15	16	15	18	15							96
		David Howard	18	16	17	18	16	15							100
	A	Brian Burgess	16	16	16	15	16	15							94
		John Humphrey	15	19	17	17	17	20							105
		Rob Harley	19	18	16	19	20	16							108
Roger Hudson		17	18	16	15	20	16							102	
Ully Jorimann		17	16	20	17	17	16							103	
PI Total			285	274	269	267	264	261							1620

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**Editor's Pick**

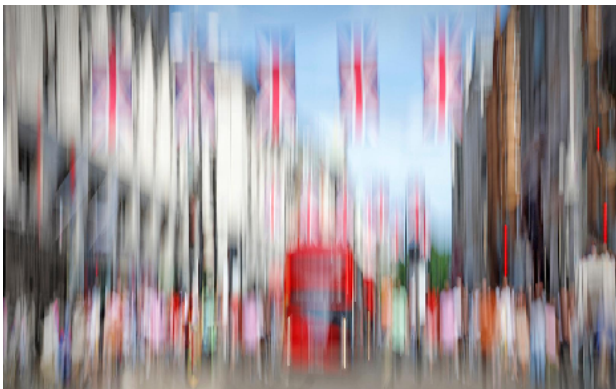
A selection of other images from this month's competition



'The Grin' by Emyr Williams



'Susanne' by John Marshall



'Oxford Circus' by John Humphrey



'The Lost Shoe' by Emyr Williams



'Strike a Pose' by Roger Hudson

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## Contributions

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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.

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### Snippets....

[Martin Parr: A Life In Pictures.](#) Following on from Emyr's article, a compilation of some of Martin Parr's photographs.

Lens Culture [Street Photography Awards 2025](#)

### Exhibitions

The annual [Wildlife Photographer Of the Year](#) exhibition is at the Natural History Museum until 12th July

If you haven't yet seen it, the Lee Miller exhibition is still on at [Tate Britain](#) until 15th February, I'm told by a friend that it's well worth seeing.

And on the subject of war photographers, Lynsey Addario has been someone I've admired since I was given a copy of her book 'Of Love and War' as a Christmas present several years ago (not the cheeriest book to browse through over Christmas admittedly). She's particularly concerned with the effects of war and its aftermath on the lives of women in conflict zones. Here are some [short videoed interviews](#) on the events and photographs which have defined her career.

**Food For Thought**

"Be a first-rate version of yourself rather than a second-rate version of somebody else." *Judy Garland*

'There's something very interesting about boring.'" *Martin Parr*

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