

Herefordshire  
Photographic  
Society

Newsletter | Issue 6  
Autumn/Winter 2021

**SNAP**SHOT

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## *Get Ready For It!*

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For the last critique of the year we're asking you all to explore the great outdoors and submit your best landscape shots and so we've pulled together a few tips that might inspire you to get out and about. When the weather starts to feel a little too wintery to venture outside then why not stay indoors and have a go at still life photography? Anything and everything can be photographed and we'll show you how to get started. Amanda's taking us on a trip to "The Darkside" or to be more specific ,she'll be looking at the increasing popularity of smart phone photography. We'll close this month's newsletter with "A Little Black Book" review, so there's lots for you to read over your glass of mulled wine!

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## *Step By Step*

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**Landscapes – they fill some of us with dread and some of us with excitement!**

What are the main fundamentals to ease you into this genre of photography? Take some time to research your destination and find out more about your local area's beauty spots before you set out. Take a look at what others have done to give you inspiration, you can still put your own stamp on things. Pre-Planning should not only cover your destination but also your composition, the weather forecast, your kit and your aims, so start to think about the shots that you want to take when you arrive at your chosen destination and make a note of your ideas. Ask yourself if this is a one-off visit or are you planning to create a panel of photographs of the area that you've chosen? When you arrive at your destination take a look around, read through your list of shots that you made earlier, is it still relevant or have the priorities changed at all? Remember those



rules of thirds or perhaps try breaking them for a change and see what happens. Experiment with different viewpoints, lenses, apertures, shutter speeds and try shots in both black and white and in colour. Take your time, but most of all, enjoy the view! (If you're travelling alone always let someone know where you're going and approximately how long you'll be – and don't forget to charge your mobile phone to take with you).

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## *Burrrrrrrrrrr!*

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**When it's cold outside and you really don't want to venture out, why not try some still life shots?** Anything and everything can be photographed! The golf ball image here uses a black background and an acrylic tile to create the reflections and the jumpers and scarves image was taken in a conservatory on a coffee table. A dark blanket, coloured paper or a wooden board can provide a great base or background. A piece of white paper can act as a reflector if needed to brighten the foreground of your objects. It's worth taking some time to look through some magazines or at images on the internet for more inspiration.



Sometimes it's down to trial and error to get the shot that you want so don't forget to move your camera or objects around or you move around them, change the angle of view to see what works. Don't forget that flat lay images also work very well for still life objects. At this time of year there are also lots of festive decorations that can be photographed or used as props too.

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## *To The Dark Side!*

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**Well, OK not really a trip to the Dark Side, this is all about Smart Shooters -** but for me, as one of the more 'traditional' photographers with my cameras and lenses I've always seen my iphone purely as a phone not a camera – until now. Which is why I wanted to share a very interesting article that I read in Digital Camera Magazine (issue 248 November 2021) called "A Day in the life of a Smart Shooter" which got me thinking about the future of my kit too. Mike Kus (a Smart Phone Photographer) now only uses his mobile phone in his pocket to capture "stunning scenic images" and half the photos in his book were taken on the way to somewhere because as Mike explains, he "doesn't really go on dedicated photoshoots that often". I think that's probably the

freedom that using an iPhone brings with it but I still wasn't convinced that this might be the way forward for me.

The magazine article kicks off with a quote "As the old saying goes, the best camera is the one you have with you, so spare a thought for Mike who has 3 with him at any one time!"

Of course, being an "old school" user this conjures up a picture in my mind of a poor photographer red in the face, puffing and panting as they struggle with the last few steps of the steep incline they have just conquered to get "that shot" their 3 camera bodies packed into an enormous ruck sack containing every lens under the sun slung over their shoulder. But, this is Mike the Smart Shooter and his three cameras come in the form of Smart phones and fit comfortably into his pockets! For convenience and portability this is a big tick from me (and my back and shoulders too!). Let's not forget that it doesn't



matter how good all this kit is, it's not going to help you take better photographs, so maybe the iPhone does have more to offer?

Mike adds that he's "always liked the idea of making things accessible and not highbrow. Whether you have got a camera or a camera phone, enjoying photography and building up a body of work is possible for anyone – it doesn't matter which device you choose to do it on".

Which is absolutely true but what about image quality? Trust me when I say that his photographs are really stunning – it's well worth looking at Mike's Facebook page to see more of his work – here's the address:

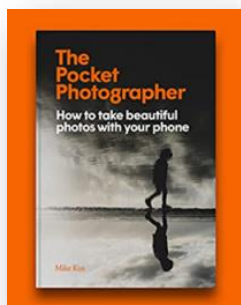
<https://www.facebook.com/mikekusphotography/>

So, which are Mike's go-to camera phones?

They are – Huawei P40 Pro, Apple iPhone 12 Pro and OnePlus 9 Pro, each of which has 3 lenses.

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Mike also has a new book out now which is called 'The Pocket Photographer:



How to Take Beautiful Photos With Your Phone' by Mike Kus and is published by Laurence King at £14.99p. Mike describes it as follows :

“The book isn't about how to work a camera in any way, there's none of that information. It's a book about the creative side of photography”. I think that sounds pretty refreshing - I think that I can get too caught up in the technical side of things.

I was adamant for a long time that I would never use a mobile phone to take a photograph until I too had left my precious camera gear neatly packed up in its rucksack at home and saw a fantastic shot that I wanted to capture. I had to use my husband's iphone. Staggered at the quality I did indeed purchase an iphone shortly afterwards. But, even to this day, I still can't get my head around using this instead of my full camera kit and only use my iphone as a 'reference tool of places to go back to' so that (yes, you've guessed it!) I can return to the same spot, with all of my camera gear and lenses and re-take the shot that I already have on my iphone.

There's just something about setting up my tripod, camera, lens and all the other paraphernalia that comes with this hobby, and then on returning home the anticipation as I work through the 100 or so shots that I ended up taking to capture the image that I can call "The Best One" (which has probably been sitting on my iphone all this time). But to me that's not the point it's the process that I love. I suppose I'm just a bit of a techie dinosaur and that eventually the iphone will dominate the market just as my digital camera did as it dominated the darkroom era. Portability of kit is something that is worth consideration for the future though. So, do I think that I'll move to the Dark Side and become a Smart Shooter? Perhaps it might be worth submitting a couple of iphone shots to my camera club's next critique to see what members think? Sssssshhh! Don't tell anyone! Amanda Apps

Hampton, Niall "A Day in the life of a Sharp Shooter" Digital Camera Issue 248 November 2021 pp10-15.

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## *Little Black Book*

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Finally, this month's Book Review is all about a Little Black Book by Henry Carroll called "Read This if you want to take Great Photographs". It boasts "No Scary graphs, No techie diagrams, No Camera Club jargon "Read This if you want to take Great Photographs" walks you through the fundamentals of composition, exposure, light, lenses and the all-important art of seeing without drowning you in technobabble.



No technobabble guaranteed! This book is broken down into 5 clear sections and each of these explains the fundamentals of Composition, Exposure, Light, Lenses and Seeing.

The first page kicks off with a diagram – a box with a hole in it - and explains that your camera is precisely that. Your most valuable piece of kit? Your eyes!

The style of the book runs along the same lines really, and it's punctuated with images from the likes of Henri Cartier-Bresson to Ansel Adams which illustrate each chapter.

The Bish, Bash, Bosh guide to aperture is both clear and concise with the pages following this chapter each dealing with varying depths of field alongside images that demonstrate exactly what this looks like.

The book may be small but its pages are packed with information not only for the beginner but also for the more experienced among us. Or simply use it to gaze at some great photographer's work in the images throughout. Definitely one for the bookcase! Carroll, Henry, 2014 "Read This If You Want To Take Great Photographs" London, Laurence King Publishing Ltd.,



# Merry Christmas everyone!