



PERMAJET THE INKJET PAPER SPECIALISTS - PROUD SPONSORS OF THE PAGB e-news

# e-news

from the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain

Issue 398 01 February 2026

# DON'T MISS

## THE GRAND OPENING OF THE NINTH MASTERS OF PRINT



**YOU**  
**ARE INVITED**

<< Will the 2026  
exhibition look as  
good as 2025?

**You bet it will!**

**St Martin in the Bull Ring, Birmingham**  
**from 1.00pm, with a formal opening at 2.00pm**

Hon Editor: Rod Wheelans MPAGB MFIAP FRPS FIPF HonPAGB HonSPF. [e-news@thepagb.org.uk](mailto:e-news@thepagb.org.uk)

Opinions expressed in e-news are not necessarily the opinions of The Photographic Alliance of Great Britain and neither the Editor nor the PAGB accepts any liability for any content. Any mention of products or services in e-news does not constitute an endorsement or approval of those items

I have received quite a lot of wonderful images but where is yours?

# e-news 400

The first e-news in March will be my 400<sup>th</sup> and it is going to be really special.

If you want to be a part of it, send me your very best image, the best you have ever taken or the one which has brought you must success. Or maybe, just your favourite photo, the one you like even if nobody else does.

It would be nice also if you were to include 50-75 words about yourself or the image and I will be happy for you to include a web address to more of your images if you wish.

I must have it not later than 19 February 2026. A little earlier than previously published. Normal PDI size, 1600px X 1200px, or something near is good. Save it as a jpeg Q10 and filename it *Your Title by Your Name* as this is what will be embedded on the image when it is saved to our e-news gallery.

e-mail it to [e-news@thepagb.org.uk](mailto:e-news@thepagb.org.uk) but, if you are sending from a Mac to my PC, please be aware that I will receive the image in the body of the e-mail, rather than as an attachment and there will be no filename so that you must include this in the message.

If you want to use WeTransfer or Dropbox please let me know in a separate e-mail. I will acknowledge every one that I receive so, if you haven't seen my reply, please try again.

DO IT NOW PLEASE. *Red*

## Irish Photographic Federation Images of Distinction



cipf

PORTLAOISE  
OCTOBER 2025



[<< This gallery is WELL worth visiting!](#)

Photographic Alliance of Great Britain

## MASTERS OF PRINT

Sponsored by CEWE and Online Paper

### [e-news 398 extra](#)

with ALL the results of the NINTH MASTERS OF PRINT, including the Individual Awards, the Club Gold and Diamond Trophies, the SALON DES REFUSES and the HALL OF FAME



# THE Photography & Video SHOW

14 – 17 MARCH 2026  
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SALE!**



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for any photographer**

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exhibiting  
brands

**500+**  
live talks  
& demos

**350+**  
speakers

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PAGB26\* Visit [photographyshow.com](https://photographyshow.com) to claim**

**Free entry for professional photographers\*\***

\*Discount applies to standard adult entry only and cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotion, including concession rates. The code expires at midnight on 13 March 2026 and cannot be applied retrospectively. \*\*Professional photographers, videographers, content creators and image-making industry representatives can apply for FREE entry to the show. All applications must be made before midnight on 13 March 2026 and will be verified against specific criteria.



**BOOK  
NOW!**







THE  
**Photography  
& Video** SHOW



## Photographic Alliance of Great Britain Awards for Photographic Merit

**WE ARE ONCE AGAIN OFFERING ADVICE AT  
THE PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO SHOW**



BPAGB



CPAGB



DPAGB



EPAGB



MPAGB

We will have qualified advisors available, on our stand, to look at your Prints or PDI in relation to the standard required to achieve one of our awards.

Apply NOW to [e-news@thepagb.org.uk](mailto:e-news@thepagb.org.uk) with the following

- **Your name and current distinctions**
- **The Award you wish to be advised for**
- **Applying in Print or PDI and which will you bring?**
- **Your Club and Federation**
- **Which day you would prefer.**
- *(Depending on numbers we may not be able to provide this service on every day)*



Find us easily on  
Stand B21, near the  
main entrance.





NEW EVENTS 2026

YOUR COMPLETE PHOTOGRAPHY PLATFORM

# STUDIO MASTERS

PORTFOLIO BUILDERS | TRAINING DAYS | PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

STUDIO MASTERS | MIKE BAKER

INTRODUCTION TO OUTDOOR FLASH



BPA

Studio Masters

DEVELOP AREA | POST PROCESSING | LIGHTING | ASSESSMENTS & MORE

JUST ADDED



**SHOOTING IN SMALL SPACES - PART THREE**

In this session, we're working with Anastasia to create our take on a classic Vogue cover shot.



**SHOOTING IN SMALL SPACES - PART TWO**

In this session, Mike walks us through the lighting setup for model Chris, a member of the bike club that Lisa...



**SHOOTING IN SMALL SPACES SERIES**

For our November monthly live, we travelled to Shropshire to work with member Lisa Roscoe in her 12x9...

Studio Masters  
DEVELOP

MORE >



**OCTOBER JUDGES ASSESSMENT 2025**

This month marks a significant evolution in how we support your growth as photographers.



SHOP  
COMPETITION  
MAGAZINE  
FB COMMUNITY  
FREE TALKS



EXPLORE OUR DIVERSE PHOTOGRAPHY PLATFORM

[WWW.STUDIOMASTERS.ORG](http://WWW.STUDIOMASTERS.ORG)



# GB Trophy and GB Cup

sponsored by Epson and Paper Spectrum

**OPEN FOR ENTRY NOW UNTIL 1st March 2026**

We are pleased to announce that the GB Cup and the GB Trophy are now open.

The GB Trophy for Prints remains free of charge to encourage you to print more and we will accept both A3 and A4. There are two categories, Open and Nature.

The GB Cup for PDI is charged at 60p per image and has the following categories, Open, Nature and Limited Eligibility, designed especially for smaller clubs.

Full details of these competitions can be found on our Central Management System (CMS)

A Club entry requires a personal CES account with Club Officer approval. [SEE HERE](#)



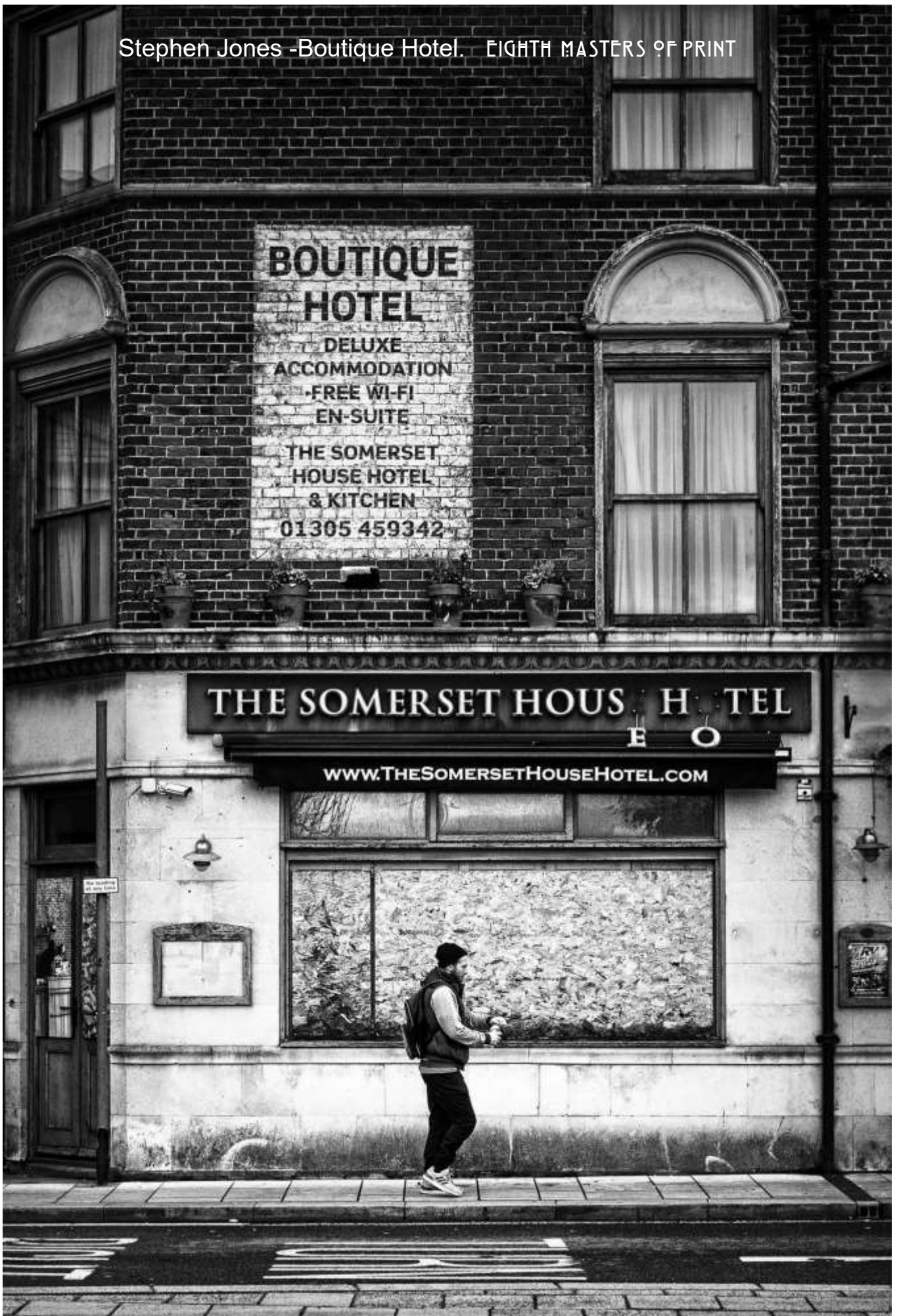
In previous years the GB Trophy Prints were only exhibited in folders at The Photography Show but now they are formed into an exciting travelling portfolio which is available to view “in YOUR hands” at YOUR Club. This is a great opportunity to view, handle and discuss the Accepted Prints.

Another great reason for your Club to enter as your prints will be seen by other club members all over the UK. And, of course, you can have it too!

The portfolio is FREE to hire but Clubs are required to pay the postage to its next location and perhaps from its current location unless this is another Club.

To book, please e-mail the RLS Secretary, Peter Fry, at [lectures@thepagb.org.uk](mailto:lectures@thepagb.org.uk)







## PRINTS MATTER

It's not finished until it is printed

# Bristol International Salon 2026

FIAP, GPU & PAGB Patronages

The 80<sup>th</sup> Bristol Salon is **OPEN FOR ENTRIES**. **CLOSING DATE 1 FEBRUARY**.

Colour, Mono, and Nature sections in both **PRINT** and **PDI** and prints can be forwarded to the Midland Salon.

Enter at <https://bristolsalon.co.uk>

We expect to make 200 + awards, would appreciate your support, and look forward to receiving your entries.

### The Vale of Evesham Camera Club National Internet Exhibition Photo2026

Member of BPE and PAGB Patronage (2026-017)

[www.EveshamPhoto.net](http://www.EveshamPhoto.net)

**Entry Now Open  
CLOSING Midnight  
Saturday 28 February 2026**

**4 Digital Sections  
Colour Images  
Monochrome Images  
Natural History  
Experimental / Creative Images**

All entries must have originated as a photograph. Text Generative AI or Computer Generated images are not permitted.

Entries are made Online and all entrants will receive an illustrated A4 **printed** catalogue



**arena**  
PHOTOGRAPHERS FROM THE SOUTH

## Photography Seminar 2026



PHILIP JOYCE



SANDY BARKER



MARK POWELL



WIKKA PALESTRA



BRITTA JACOBSEN



JOE CORNISH

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[www.arenaphotographers.com](http://www.arenaphotographers.com)

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Remember - Click on most of the photographs to browse them on the e-news website





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Hugs and kisses from the PAGB

>>>>>>>>>>



**Who has an image for the Valentine Day issue?**

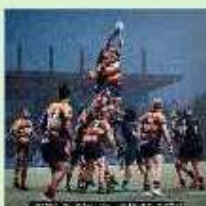
GB Trophy 2025



Woking Photographic Society - Brendan McIlhargey - The Boy And The Bird



## THE CHILTERN ASSOCIATION OF CAMERA CLUBS



Credits: PAGB Medal winners  
from the Chilterns Hundred  
Members Exhibition 2025  
Julie Mullings (Gold)  
Steve Miley (Silver)  
Terri Adcock (Bronze)

# AWARDS FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC MERIT (APM) ADVISORY DAY WORKSHOP

supported by the PAGB

**Amersham Community Centre**

Chiltern Avenue, HP6 5AH [Venue details](#)

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 10am – 5pm**

**Refreshments on arrival (10am)**

The morning session (11am-1pm) will explain the PAGB Awards for Photographic Merit and the standard of work necessary for the BPAGB, CPAGB, DPAGB and higher levels. There will then be an interactive assessment session.

**Lunch 1pm. Lunch is not provided. There is an on-site café.**

In the afternoon session (2pm-5pm) those booked to bring images for advice will get the opportunity to have an initial set of images assessed on their current standard with guidance about which level they might aim for and what they might need to do to achieve this.

The cost of the event, including refreshments (tea, coffee) is £28 for those bringing images for advice. There will also be observer tickets costing £13. Observers may not bring any images for advice.

**Admission is by pre-booked ticket only.**

**Tickets are limited and will be allocated in order of application.**

Information about the event, including types and number of images for advice are on the CACC website, including the form to book for advice and the form to book as an observer. <http://thecacc.org.uk/pagb-awards-workshop/>

**OPEN TO MEMBERS OF AFFILIATED CLUBS IN ADJACENT FEDERATIONS**



# Photography Is Not a Competition by [Darren J. Spoonley](#)

Photography is often spoken about as if it were a competition, measured by likes, awards, or comparisons with others. Yet at its core, photography is a deeply personal practice. The way we see, decide, and capture moments is unique to each of us, shaped by our experiences, timing, and attention. Understanding this distinction is essential to sustaining a meaningful and fulfilling relationship with the creativity that photography allows.

## Photography as a Personal Practice

I have been photographing for a long time—long enough to notice patterns in my own behaviour, and long enough to see how easily photography can drift away from what first made it meaningful.

At some point, photography started to be spoken about as if it were a contest. Not officially, of course, but in practice. Who is seen more? Who shares more? Who progresses faster? None of that was ever part of why I picked up a camera, yet it slowly crept in around the edges.

Photography, at least as I understand it, is a personal act. You are alone when you take the photograph, even if you are standing beside someone else. You decide where to stand. When to wait. When to walk away. Turning that into something to be measured against others changes its character completely. I do not think photography survives that shift very well.

## The Trap of Seeking Approval

To understand this, we need to be honest with ourselves, for starters. There was a period when I chased approval. I recognized it only after the fact. I would come back from a shoot and immediately think about how an image might land online rather than whether it meant anything to me. I adjusted framing. I avoided certain scenes because they felt too cliché. I leaned toward what I thought would work rather than what had actually caught my attention at the time.

The photographs from that period are fine, technically. But they feel like they lack my personal input or even style, for that matter. I was there, sure, but only partly. Comparison played a large role in that, and I only recognize that now when I look back. I was constantly looking at other photographers' work and quietly ranking myself against it. Not out of jealousy, as such, but out of measurement. As if photography were something that could be leveled and scored. It's OK to get inspiration from others, but to then make ourselves feel bad because of it—that's not how it should be. It shouldn't work like that.



## Comparison and Its Consequences

Everyone arrives at photography with different circumstances. Different times in life, access, energy, and responsibilities. Some people travel constantly. Others work close to home. Some are early risers; others photograph after work when the light is already fading. Some only have a small window to shoot, while others have multiple opportunities. Treating all of that as a single ladder ignores reality.

I have looked at work that is far stronger than mine and felt deflated. That feeling never improved anything. It did not sharpen my eye or slow me down and make me think more while in the field. It only made me question decisions I had already

made. When we focus on one thing, it can grow, and if it's the wrong thought process, it can fester. The doubt lingered longer than it should have, and I only recognize that in retrospect.

When attention drifts too far outward, it affects our behavior. Subtly at first. You start seeing subjects through the filter of what has already been successful elsewhere. I'm sure there will be people reading this who have seen a shot and gone to the same place to get their version of the same shot, nearly placing their tripod in the exact same holes left by others in the past. Certain compositions begin to feel "safe." Others feel like a risk, not because they are wrong, but because they do not resemble what you have been seeing praised.

I noticed this in myself after spending too long looking at other people's portfolios. I would head out with ideas that were not really mine. The photographs looked familiar in a way I could not explain. It took stepping back for a while to recognize that my decisions were being influenced before I even reached the location. Distance helped. Not isolation, but space.



### Real Progress Takes Time

Real improvement in photography is slower than most people want to admit. It happens quietly, more so. You begin to notice light sooner than you used to. You recognize when a scene will not work and move on without frustration. You stay longer when something feels unresolved instead of rushing to fill an SD card, so you at least have something to bring home.

Real progress comes from repetition and reflection. From seeing the same place in different conditions. From reviewing images weeks later and understanding why something did or did not work. It is not dramatic. You often only notice it when you look back at older work and realize you would not make those choices now.

I keep old photographs for that reason. Not because they are “bangers.” Some are poor. Some still hold up. Together, they show a line of thinking over time. They can also show growth and progression in my skills, and a style of my own evolving. None of that had anything to do with outperforming anyone else.

### Photography, Experience and Social Media

At its core, photography records experience, not achievement. A photograph says, “I noticed this.” Nothing more than that. It does not declare importance or status. It does not elevate the photographer above anyone else standing nearby. Some of the images that matter most to me are from ordinary moments. Places I walk regularly. Light hitting a rock or cliff for a few seconds before disappearing. They remind me of being there, paying attention. I do not need agreement from anyone else to justify them. Art is subjective, after all, and it should remain that way, in my opinion. Not because some social media influencer has made something cool.

Social media, of course, complicates this, whether we like it or not. The way these platforms are built encourages comparison. Numbers are visible. Response is immediate. It is difficult not to read meaning into that, even when you know better. One image receives attention; another does not. It starts to feel like an evaluation.

The platforms themselves are not the problem on their own. They are tools. What matters is how they are used and what you allow them to feed you. The phrase “you are what you eat” applies here more than most people realize. Spend enough time consuming polished, spectacular work, and you start to believe that everything else is inadequate. Subtlety feels weak. Ordinary subjects feel unworthy of attention. You begin to question your instincts.





Used carefully, these platforms can do the opposite. Following people whose work aligns with how you want to see. Seeing someone grow with you feels far more rewarding than seeing someone move out of your league.. Engaging with the process rather than the outcome. Sharing without watching the response too closely. These small decisions change the effect entirely. I now limit how much time I spend there - not as a rule, but as a habit. When I do engage, I try to be intentional about what I am taking in. It keeps the balance right. I also find myself hitting the like button on newer photographers, as I know how that felt when I was starting out, and perhaps that might encourage them more as a result.

### Sustainable Photography

Stepping away from competitive thinking changes photography back into something sustainable, a longer conversation. Images accumulate over time as evidence of attention, not performance.

Of course, it would be remiss of me not to mention competitions in photography can be good for focusing our minds on one particular subject, but too often, if the desired result isn't achieved, it can have the opposite effect that we were hoping for. Why did that photo win? Mine was better; they must know the judges, they must have a secret sauce, etc. If not carefully considered, we could fall into that trap again very easily.

No one else can make your photographs. Not because they are better or worse, but because they are shaped by your experiences, your timing, and your choices. Competing ignores that entirely. Photography grows the same way it always has - through attention, through time, through returning again and again without needing to prove anything. It is not about winning. It never was.

I feel it's important to digest this and ask ourselves some important questions. There are no right or wrong answers, of course, but you should be honest with yourself and take a moment to let your answers sink in. ASK YOURSELF;

- **When you head out with your camera, what are you actually trying to achieve? Is it an experience, or is it to measure yourself against someone else?**
- **Have you ever changed how you framed a shot because you thought it would look different online?**
- **Do you review your work to understand it, or just judge it?**

I'd love to hear your thoughts in the comments, [CLICK HERE](#), and let's get this conversation going.



About Darren J. Spoonley

FOLLOW



[darrenjspoonley.com](http://darrenjspoonley.com)

Darren J. Spoonley, is an Ireland-based outdoor photographer, Podcaster, Videographer & Educator with a passion for capturing the beauty of our world.



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# L&CPU

This article is from Focal Points, the L&CPU newsletter, and the event is open to any club member from their neighbouring Federations

**On 15 February there is to be a PAGB Awards for Photographic Merit (APM) Workshop.** This event will be run by the PAGB to tell attendees all about the Awards, what they entail and how to apply. On show will be pictures that have been successful at each of the various levels so you can get an idea of what the actual standards are. There will even be an opportunity to look at a few of your pictures, to advise what you might need to do to work towards an APM

As you may know, the Adjudications are held twice a year and **Federations take it in turns to host the event in their region. The L&CPU will host it in April 2027** and this will be your opportunity to attend a local Adjudication and, whilst busily chewing your finger nails, watch your pictures being displayed in front of a large audience and scored by the APM panel of six judges.

One word of warning - **if there are insufficient people willing to attend this Workshop, then it will be cancelled, so get your tickets**, come along in February, listen to the criteria for each of the levels, look at the pictures on show, tell yourself that you have equally good pictures at home, apply for the awards **and take your rightful place when the L&CPU hosts the Awards for Photographic Merit in April 2027.**

Tickets are available from the [L&CPU portal](#) sign in and go to **services**, then to **buy event tickets**.

You can also e-mail [james@copthurst.co.uk](mailto:james@copthurst.co.uk) and pay on the door.

The entry fee is **£10.00**. Car Parking is free  
**15th February 2026**

**St Mary's Parish Centre, off Devonshire Road PR7 2BY**

What3Words [///tens.only.cooks](#)

A reminder that the 2026 Inter Federation Print Exhibition is available as un-mounted prints to Federations between the months of August 2026 and May 2027. The months of November 2026 and January 2027 have already been taken. The main exhibition opens at Smethwick on 11 July and runs to 26 July.  
Roger Parry. Inter Federation Sub Committee Chairman.



Register to attend [HERE](#)



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With  
**Phil Penman**

**20th February 2026**  
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