

photoWORLD

Vol 1 No 3
Winter 2004/5



KONICA MINOLTA

Photo by R J Bull

10% off repairs and servicing for Photoworld club members

The Konica Minolta Photoworld Club Camera Check Scheme runs all year round, taking the seasonal load off the service department. Service will give Club Checks 'absolute priority' and these will normally be accomplished within 3-4 days of receipt. This is great news but please be sure to allow a little more time – and please do not send equipment to the Kelso address.

As a Photoworld subscriber you have a permanent 10% discount off all repairs and servicing if you deal directly with Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Limited.

The Service Address is:

**Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Ltd
Service Department
Unit 7 Tanners Drive
Blakelands
Milton Keynes MK14 5BU.
Tel 01908 200400**

If you ask for the discount, your membership status will be checked and validated. If this is disputed, you may ask the Service Department to check with us, and we will confirm your paid-up status or enable you to renew your subscription if has lapsed not more than six months ago.

Equipment under **1st year warranty** can be sent in directly, accompanied by any document showing the date of purchase, including credit card statements etc, even if you have not returned your guarantee card. But you should always **complete and return warranty documents** after buying equipment.

Club Checks

The cost of a Club Check, inclusive of VAT and return insured carriage, is:

£18.68 for camera + lens

£25.85 for all video and digital products

Club Check tests include shutter speed accuracy, aperture accuracy, metering accuracy, and focusing accuracy. They also include checks for correct electronic operation,

Information on this page is printed in each issue for your benefit – please use it.

Call 01908 200400 for service!

film transport, AF operation, self timer, flash synchronisation and all other key operational aspects of the camera. External cleaning of camera and lens is undertaken, along with loose dust removal.

Equipment which passes the tests will receive a **Test Certificate** and may qualify for the **Extended Warranty** (right). If problems needing repair are found, you will be contacted with an estimate – the Club Check cost is deducted from the cost of the repair if you decide to go ahead. You also get your 10% discount. See also new information about direct repairs, below.

Direct Repairs

If you know your gear needs to be repaired, remember that a repair always includes a full service and a 6 month guarantee on the whole item. If you have equipment which you think needs repair, you can send it for a Club Check service, enclosing your payment.

You can also send items directly to the service department for repair estimates outside this scheme. Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Limited will accept equipment directly from readers and provide estimates, it is not necessary to go through a dealer. If the estimate is not accepted then a charge of £5.88 is payable for return.

There is a difference between the Photoworld Club Check and a Service. The check may show that your shutter speeds and so on fall within ISO tolerances, but a Service may allow adjustment to better than ISO standards. It also allows lubrication, tightening of screws, cleaning and adjustments.

Extended Warranty

The **Minolta Extended Warranty Scheme** is available on new equipment. However, you may be able to take out a warranty on a camera which has just been repaired, or overhauled. The warranty is an optional extension of the usual six-month repair guarantee to a full two years. This offer is administered and underwritten by Domestic &

General Insurance Company. Some parts for older models are now no longer available, and Konica Minolta have to restrict these warranties to the list below. If your equipment is more recent, but now out of warranty, call the Service Dept for advice on 01908 200400. If you wish to find out more about the warranty terms, ring Domestic & General's Helpline on 0181 944 4944.

Please note this is NOT the same number as for our Camera Equipment Insurance facility.

Please enquire to the Service Dept about earlier Konica products. We shall be publishing details for Konica owners in future *Photoworld* editions.

KONICA MINOLTA EXTENDED WARRANTY SCHEME

SLR BODY

Dynax 9, 7 and 5
800si, 700si, 600si
500si & Super
505si Super
300si, 303si
404si
X-700, X-370S

COMPACT

Zoom 70, 70EX
Zoom 90, 90EX
Zoom 105, 105EX
Zoom 115
Zoom 125
Zoom 150
Zoom Pico
AF-25, AF-35
F-25, F-35BF
F 35ST Super

AF FLASH

5600HS
3600HS
5400HS
1200AF Macro

AF LENSES

AF 100-300 (D)
AF 24-105 (D)
AF 75-300 (D)
AF 28-80 (D)

AF 35-70/3.5-4.5

ACCESSORIES

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VC-7, VC-6, VC-9

MD LENSES

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MD 50/3.5 macro
MD 135/2.8 tele
MD 28/2.8
MS 100-300/5.6-6.7
MD 35-70
MD 70-210
MD 50/1.7
also 220X flash

VECTIS

Vectis 40, 300, 300L,
3000, 2000, 30, 25,
260, 200, 20, 100BF,
Weathermatic, GX-1,
GX-2, GX-3, GX-4. Vectis
S1, S-100, V lenses
400RF, 22-80, 50 macro,
28-56, 25-150, 56-170,
80-240, SF-1 flash

DIGITAL

Dimage 7, 5
Dimage S304
Dimage E203
Dimage E201

Dimage RD-3000

Dimage RD-175

Dimage 2330

Dimage 2300

Dimage V

Dimage 1500EX

Scan Multi, II, Pro

Scan Elite, II

Scan Speed

Scan Dual, II

Quick Scan, Plus

PHOTOMETERS

Flash Meter V Colour

Meter II Colour Meter

IIIF Flash Meter III, IV

Spotmeter F

Spotmeter M

Autometer IV-F

Autometer III, IIIN

Autometer III Flash

BINOCULARS

Activa: 8x42DWP,

10x42WP, 7x35W,

7x50, 8x40W, 10x50W,

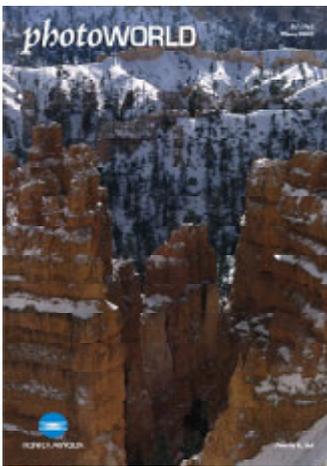
12x50W, 7-15x35,

8-20x50, 8-22x27,

10-30x27, Pocket

8x25WP, Pocket

10x12WP, 8x25FM,



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photowORLD

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Who's Who @ Konica Minolta Photo Imaging UK and the Photoworld Club

The headquarters of Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Ltd are the former Konica offices at Feltham, Middlesex, close to Heathrow Airport, the M25 and London.

From 1980 on, Minolta (UK) Limited was based in Milton Keynes and the Service Department remains there along with distribution.

For Club members, your two key contacts will still be at Milton Keynes.

Bernard Petticrew is Technical Support Manager, and has a database of information on Minolta products going back to the SR system and beyond. He is the man to contact for advice on conventional (silver imaging) photography, and to obtain instruments manuals or literature. His direct line is 01908 208 325.

John Baker is Service Centre Manager. You should contact John with any queries about repairs or service in progress (it is not necessary to telephone before sending equipment in for a Club Service Check). He is on 01908 208 352.

The Konica Minolta Photoworld Club continues to be free to subscribers to *Konica Minolta Photoworld* (formerly *Minolta Image*). For membership queries or advice on photo technique and camera use, call **David Kilpatrick** on 01573 226032 or email iconmags@btconnect.com.

Paul Genge, who has dealt with digital technical help in the past and will be known to many readers, is now Product Manager of Konica Minolta UK, and digital helplines are 0870 0104107 for the UK, 1850 946478 for Eire. Feltham is now HQ for both the UK and Southern Ireland.

The address for Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Ltd is:

**Plane Tree Crescent
Feltham
Middlesex TW13 7HD**

and the main switchboard number is 020 8751 6121.

We shall keep you updated on services for owners, contact names and telephone numbers. Please use the the Konica Minolta website, if possible, to look for solutions before calling directly.

The Photoworld Club

The Minolta Club of Great Britain was founded in the mid-1960s by Japanese Cameras Limited, and published its magazine *Photoworld* until shortly after the formation of Minolta (UK) Ltd, when the title was changed to *Minolta Image*.

With the merger of Konica and Minolta, and the existence of more than one other magazine called *Image*, the magazine has been returned to its original name and the club is now the Konica Minolta Photoworld Club UK.

The directors are **David and Shirley Kilpatrick**, who are independent of Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Ltd. David and Shirley have been writing and editing photographic magazines and books for 30 years and are directors of Icon Publications Ltd, based in the Scottish Border town of Kelso.

You can email David via iconmags@btconnect.com, or telephone 01573 226032 during office hours, for subscription help and general photo advice.

Websites and email

There are Konica Minolta websites operated in the UK, Europe, the USA and Japan. The correct web address to use is: <http://www.konicaminolta.co.uk/> but since the merger the sites continue to develop, and separate areas still exist for Minolta and Konica. At the time of going to press you can also access www.minolta.co.uk and www.minoltaeurope.com directly.

Technical support, software and firmware downloads, product news and information are all available on-line.

You can download digital camera samples taken by David Kilpatrick by visiting <http://www.pbbase.com/davidkilpatrick>

There is also a European owner

club site called **Konica Minolta Photo World** which requires registration (a simple process of filling in an on-screen form) to use. This is at: www.konicaminoltaphotoworld.com and is available in English, French and German. There are monthly competitions which can be entered on-line, together with all the latest product information, a range of technical background articles and some profiles of Konica Minolta users.

You can join a Minolta discussion group at www.yahoogle.com; fill in Yahoo membership, which is free, and you will find this group founded in 1998 now has nearly 5,000 members.

There is another Web Minolta mailing list called the Minoltians, available at www.theminoltians.com, with on-line galleries.



Konica Minolta has launched a whole new revitalised range of inkjet papers and speciality products including T-Shirt transfers, label sheets, professional media and double sided photo gloss. Look for the new branding in retailers now.



Bernard Petticrew, Technical Support Manager – 01908 208 325



John Baker, Service Centre Manager, 01908 208 352



*Paul Genge
Product Manager*

Technical Help

Digital – UK 0870 0104107
Film – 01908 208 325

Brochures

and details of your nearest stockists 0208 751 6121

Service and Repairs

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Photoworld Club

01573 226032

Dynax 7 Digital: the best 6 megapixel DSLR made

As a publisher and editor of two photographic magazines entirely unconnected with Konica Minolta, I have to be objective in reviewing or testing equipment. I can't show favouritism, and when Canon or Nikon – or whoever – produce a good product it gets the praise it deserves.

If anything I have tended to hold back on Minolta (and since the beginning of 2004 Konica Minolta) as I buy and use the system myself, and anyone will tend to be biased towards the kit they work with. We have bought, and use, two other makes of DSLR already since no such item existed in the Konica Minolta range before the Dynax 7 Digital.

When I tried the D7D at photokina, I was pleasantly surprised. The latest offerings in other systems have generally been very expensive, large file size professional models or budget specification entry-level innovations. The D7D is a semi-professional DSLR, with a far superior build quality, viewfinder and control layout. Handling this camera even briefly is enough to allow any potential buyer to understand why it costs almost twice as much as some 'rival' 6 megapixel models. Looking through it, the focusing screen size and brightness is so far superior to the alternatives that it has persuaded existing owners to change systems to Konica Minolta. This is not a myth; I've corresponded by email with photographers who have switched from both of the established DSLR brands after trying the Dynax 7 Digital.

Size is not all that matters in the world of megapixels. Quality counts. The long-awaited Konica Minolta D7D delivers the cleanest, most highly detailed files in its class. David Kilpatrick reports.



If the image out of the camera did not match the superior build and ergonomics, there would be little point in that switch. Cameras are now offering 8 or more megapixels. The D7D has only 6. When you line

up D7D Extra Fine JPEG against the best JPEG from a rival 8 megapixel camera, the Konica Minolta image processing and colour management gives it a distinct edge. Print both to the same size, and the retention

of very fine detail without compression artefacts works in the D7D's favour. The result is as detailed as a typical 8 megapixel image, with far superior natural colour rendering.

Noise at high ISO settings has been a big issue with CCD-based cameras as opposed to CMOS sensor models, where shooting at 800 or 1600 ISO has been more of a practical proposition. The Dynax 7D is the first 6 megapixel CCD sensor camera to achieve a working ISO range from 100 to 1600 with ultra low noise. It is grainless (if that term can be used) at 100 or 200 settings, very smooth at 400, better than a typical CMOS sensor at 800 and perhaps a little more prone to noise at 1600. The noise is unobtrusive and does not destroy resolution of fine detail, which the D7D retains at this setting.

It is possible to boost the ISO to 3200 (a menu option unlocks this extension to the speed range) and noise becomes strong at this setting. Even so, it remains film-like in its graininess, and does not disrupt the image.

The purest detail from the D7D is obtained by setting both the Contrast and Sharpness options to -2 rather than the default of 0, which is ideal for making prints directly from your memory card. There is a Noise Reduction function which works on longer exposures, and helps eliminate coloured noise; officially this has no effect on normal shots, but we found there is a hint of smoothing applied to fine textured detail, and if you are not making exposures longer than

1/30th it is best to turn NR off.

While shooting raw files (.MRW) ensures you can make adjustments later on including white balance, sharpness, contrast and exposure there is no visible difference between Extra Fine JPEG



This is the actual size of the rear LCD display, here showing full information (the standard view is even clearer when shooting). To the left, the size of a review image, which can be magnified. The magnifier automatically homes in on the point of autofocus at maximum zoom, to check sharpness in a single action.



"You can never have too many pictures of meerkats", someone commented when I placed this image on Internet to be examined in its full size – not sharpened – form. You can view this image and others from my D7D tests by going to:

<http://www.pbase.com/davidkilpatrick/d7d>

the password for the galleries is: hypo1

The data are: 1/200th at f8 with 100-300mm Apo D lens set to 200mm, ISO sensitivity 400, noise reduction turned off, Anti Shake turned on, -1 stop exposure compensation, Sharpness set to minus 2, contrast set to minus 2. Here the image is reproduced to 8.5 x 12.75 inches in size and cropped; it is at about 240 dpi resolution, similar to a typical inkjet print requirement.

and a file processed using *Dimage Viewer 2.37* at camera settings.

The raw file does hide some extra dynamic range, particularly in the highlights, which is a good reason to shoot raw when exposure and lighting conditions are difficult.

Fortunately, the D7D has the largest and clearest image review screen of any DSLR. At 2.5 inches diagonal, it provides a clear view of each picture and an accurate indication of colour and exposure. You can easily tell whether a second shot with adjustments is needed.

The screen also doubles as an information display, and intelligently switches itself off or on as you lift the camera to your eye or drop it down to view the settings. The characters these are shown in are so large that someone like me, normally wearing glasses to correct for short sight, does not need to 'lift the specs' to view the screen. For anyone with less than comfortable accommodation to viewfinder, distant and close-up vision this large screen is good news!

The secret weapon

I don't think anyone who has reviewed the camera will disagree with my view that the D7D has the best 6 megapixel performance to date. Two other cameras were launched at the same time using the same Sony CCD – one a rangefinder digital in Leica M mount, the other a compact SLR – and it is fair to assume that they may also have 'come the distance'. CCDs like this have been in use for a couple of years, and gradually improved in quality. The technology for processing the images they produce has improved too.

Konica Minolta do, perhaps, have the benefit of studying all the previous generations of other makes using a similar sensor. Maybe they also have the leverage to secure a special level of quality control. Whatever the case, with CxProcess III and this sensor, Konica Minolta have raised the bar for 6 megapixel CCD image quality.

This might be enough to make the camera worth it.

In fact, you get more – far more.

The Dynax 7 Digital incorporates in-body Anti Shake, image stabilisation using chained piezo actuator motors. These clever electronic device are based on crystals which expand or contract when a current is applied. A single crystal hardly moves at all, but by ganging up a whole row of them with appropriate leverage, the CCD assembly in the D7D can be shifted up to 5mm off centre in any direction. Two piezo devices provide the movement.



Jonathan Hilder of Piers Photography, Lacey Green, Buckinghamshire, took this superb theatrical shot hand-held at the side of the auditorium from a production of 'Grease' by Pipers Corner School in which 184 children took part. "It was a great way to test my new camera and some 750 pictures later I was really very pleased – worth the wait, I thought", he says. The exposure was 1/40th at f5.6 with a zoom set to 300mm, ISO 800.

Below: member Magnus Wedberg of Skaerbolmen, Sweden, took this great winter street shot with a 24-50mm f4 zoom lens set to 40mm, and the Dynax 7 Digital at 1600 ISO. The result was a sharp exposure at 1/6th second. White balance was set to Auto, which does not cancel out genuine warm colour casts like this. Both photographs submitted as JPEGs by email.



Motion sensors and information from the lens – ideally a modern D type – provide a calculation of the necessary movement and direction, constantly updated in a time which engineers described as 'microsecond' response. Even during the exposure, changes in the shake vector are compensated for. Since the focal length and focus distance both have an effect on this calculation, AF 'D' lenses are best suited. Older lenses do not provide the same accuracy of input, and in some cases such as the original 50mm and 100mm macro lenses the Anti Shake will not be fully effective for close-ups.

I found that it gave a major improvement in hand held shots with many older lenses despite this. As a long-term user of Minolta AF and Dynax who has never felt the need to upgrade many excellent bits of original 1980s kit (the system was designed in 1985) I have both those macros, the 70-210mm f4, 24-50mm f4, 35-70mm f4, 50mm f1.4 and 24mm f2.8. Why would I have a 24mm f2.8 and also a 24-50mm f4? Before digital, we had to shoot slides and negatives, or maybe colour and black and white... two cameras! The 24-50mm allowed two matched lenses when teamed up with the 24mm, 35-70mm, or 50mm.

With the D7D, the 24-50mm becomes a very useful 35-75mm equivalent. The 100mm f2.8 macro is a wonderful lens (150mm 1.5:1 macro in effect!) and the 70-210mm performs quite well. I added two new lenses to my outfit with the 7 Digital – a Minolta 100-300mm f4.5-5.6 Apo D zoom, and an independent 14mm f2.8 straight line wide angle, both at very reasonable prices from Mifsud in Devon. I would have hesitated at buying the non-Minolta ultra wide at its normal price of almost £800, but at a mere third of RRP it fills a gap until a Konica Minolta ultrawide for the digital format becomes available.

The Anti Shake truly finds its forte with the 100-300mm Apo lens, which is bitingly sharp, and shows it when the picture is stabilised. This lens is equal to a 150-450mm when used on the D7D, giving a 'pull' for my favourite zoo subjects which far exceeds the 200mm setting of my Dimage A2.

It is all too easy to forget just how much difference the 1.5X cropping factor makes in terms of magnification, which includes a reduction in depth of field and greater sensitivity to camera shake combined. At 450mm, a normal camera would need 1/500th shutter speed to be reasonably sure of a sharp picture, and this is what should be used with the D7D and a 300mm lens. In practice I was shoot-

ing at 1/60th or 1/125th at 300mm, with perfect results, and even going down to speeds like 1/20th with one in three pictures acceptable.

Combine Anti Shake with fast 'legacy' lenses such as the 100mm f2 or 35mm f1.4, add noise-free ISO 800 performance, and you have a combination which no other DSLR can match. Image stabilisation built into lenses is either extremely expensive (on lenses such as a 300mm f2.8) or requires a relatively small aperture. It's possible on long telephotos because their design means they have small rear elements, and the moving glass parts can be placed at this point. But you can't so easily build an image stabilised fast zoom, or ultra-fast portrait lens.

Anti Shake built in to the D7D body provides image stabilisation with all lenses, no matter how wide in aperture. It is currently the only DSLR image stabilising system which allows you to shoot at a faster aperture than f2.8, or a focal length shorter than 28mm; no 'IS', 'OS' or 'VR' lenses exist beyond these limits. Nor is there such a thing as an image stabilised macro lens.

The typical cost of an image stabilised version of one lens can be twice that of a non-stabilised design. The D7D brings Anti Shake stabilisation to even the lowest-cost M-AF fit optics and once bought with the camera, it is there for every lens you use, at no further expense.

Performance in use

Because there is now an internet community of Konica Minolta users, a great deal of feedback on performance and problems with the new camera has been shared.

While reviews in the press have made adverse comments on exposure metering, this is not supported by user experience, and seems to be a matter of reviewers failing to understand digital exposure requirements. Over-exposure is unacceptable with digital images, and the D7D doesn't overexpose.

Focusing accuracy using autofocus has been a problem with all digital SLRs, because examination of image files at 100 per cent view shows the smallest focus differences very clearly. The Dynax multiple sensor, intelligent AF system works very well but requires understanding, including 'read the manual'! The red targets which glow in the viewfinder are not *pinpoint* focus spots. They represent the centre of a larger, rectangular focus sensor in every case. The highest contrast within the subject may be at *any point within*



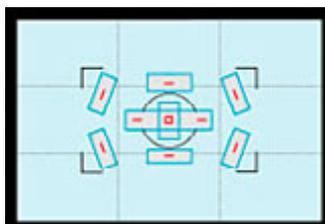
Pako Dominguez Faura shot this using the 24-105mm D zoom, ISO 400, 1/15th at f4.5 hand held in an art gallery in New York. See: www.phototeka.net



Andy Johnson took this with his 500mm RF AF lens – the Minolta mirror lens for the AF system, equivalent to 750mm when used on the digital format. The image is cropped square. Details were: AS off, tripod mounted, 2 second mirror lock-up, 1/500, ISO 160 (on auto), spot metering. Taken on 25th November 2004, the day before full moon. You can see a full size version at: www.ukexpert.co.uk/photopost/showphoto.php?photo=9841

the area of the sensor indicated by the viewfinder illumination, and with wide area AF, information from D lenses and multiple AF sensors may be used to set an optimum focus.

This works extremely well with many difficult subjects including action shots and 'grabbed' candids. For critical focusing, use the DMF (Direct Manual Focus) option in S (single shot focus) AF mode. This



When using AF, you need to be aware that the illuminated markers show the centre of each larger AF sensor zone.

disengages the autofocus as soon as the first pressure on the shutter release has locked on to the target.

If you now continue to hold first pressure, focus will not change, so slight distance adjustments are possible by moving the camera a little. You can also focus the lens using its manual focus ring at this point, and then release the shutter, after which the mechanism returns to AF for the next shot.

Having grasped these two main points – that the D7D gives exposure similar to that needed for slide film, and that the focus sensor areas are large – the incidence of disappointing shots drops to around zero.

Lens choice is critical to performance. Some of the older lenses are not as well suited to digital capture as the new designs released with the camera. The best results are given by apochromatic zooms, macros and telephotos where the rear element is a long way from the CCD sensor. Fast, top quality lenses like the 85mm f1.4, 50mm f1.4 or 100mm f2 are superb when teamed up with Anti Shake and ISO 800. Fixed focal length wide-angles have been proved excellent, with great results coming from the 20mm f2.8.

The least satisfactory results come from the lower cost zooms, and some early wide-to-tele zoom designs. Independent lenses of lower quality can be very disappointing; we have an 18mm f3.5 which was acceptable enough on film, though no match for a real Minolta lens, and on the D7D it proved almost unusable.

The camera has been sold packaged with the budget 28-100mm D series lens, which is quite acceptable, but the new 17-35mm f2.8-3.5 and

28-75mm f2.8 D optics are specially designed to cut internal reflections and colour fringing. These new lenses are D series ADI chipped, with circular edge iris diaphragms, and the prices are a fraction of the earlier Minolta G series closest equivalents.

It can not be over-emphasised that digital shooting requires as much care with technique as 35mm – and more. You are in reality working with half-frame film! Tripod use, working at ISO 100 when possible, bracketed exposure, stopping down one stop more than your instinct tells you, careful manual focusing on the excellent acute matte screen. . . all these things will pay dividends.

Storage and speed

The Dynax 7 Digital uses CompactFlash cards or Microdrives, and of the two I prefer CF because it is more durable and the latest cards are very fast. I'm using a **Lexar 1Gb 80X Professional** with Write Acceleration, though the D7D does not support this function.

Because there is no speed penalty whatsoever for shooting RAW+JPEG, I use this setting. Having the extra JPEG file is a useful back-up which permits enlarged viewing on the camera's screen and direct printing. It takes under 7 seconds to write a full size raw file, thumbnail and Fine JPEG to card. The 128Mb memory buffer accepts nine shots at 3 frames per second before you need to pause.

The manual states that if you do not have a memory card inserted, the shutter will not fire. On the D7Ds delivered in 2004, it has been possible to shoot freely with no card loaded: the only warnings given are a small E in the finder and the absence of 'shots left' information. Shots written to the buffer are not transferred to the card when loaded. It is very important to double check that a card is loaded. We are hoping that a firmware fix will implement the shutter lock-out when no card is loaded.

The USB 2.0 cable connection is neatly placed in a sliding window set within the card door. The door provides additional support to this small connector. Recognition on our Macintosh systems was instant and transfer of files, when connected to a USB 2.0 port, faster than most hard drives. This is where the Lexar 80X card shows its speed. It can't make the camera process and write files faster, but for downloading images from the camera to a USB 2.0 computer, the faster the card you can get, the better.

Amateur Photographer's review reported some corrupted images,



A quick ISO 1600 auto white balance anti-shake snapshot – the first with my D7D, 100mm f2.8 macro lens. The section represents a 12 x 18 inch print. It's much better than film!



In the studio, the ISO 100 setting is very useful. This photograph was taken at f16 using the standard 50mm f1.4 lens and three Elinchrom studio flash heads (300 + 300 side softbox and background gelled, 600 overhead softbox) at 1/4 power, ISO 100, daylight white balance.

but in two months of discussion by new D7D users on internet email lists, this never emerged as an issue – nor have we lost a single image due to card errors. In my experience, formatting in another camera, in a PC card reader, or using specific card readers are the most likely sources of file reading errors. Fortunately the D7D in USB Mass Storage mode seems rock solid – just plug in the cable and go!

Colour and contrast

Introducing this camera is difficult because it does more than you imagine. Like the Dimage 7/A series, it allows **Digital FX** to be set. These include Contrast, Sharpness and Hue adjustments. Such settings only affect JPEGs directly, but give raw .MRW files some embedded instructions which are passed to the *Dimage Viewer* application. You can

change the settings later with raw; they are not reversible with JPEGs.

Files can be saved as AdobeRGB (a wide gamut suitable for professional work), Natural sRGB (ideal for both computer monitor and photo printer use) or Natural+ sRGB (the same with 'increased contrast and acutance').

There also a feature called **Zone Matching**, which makes the D7D uniquely appealing to wedding and portrait photographers. You access this by changing the function of the ISO button, in the camera menus, to choose either High Key or Low Key and work at a fixed ISO 250 or 100 setting with Natural sRGB JPEG save.

High gives extra data capacity to the highlights and bright tones, while brightening the image overall – it simultaneously pulls white highlights such as a wedding dress into range, but ensures they don't go grey, and that full textural detail is recorded.

Low opens up shadows for predominantly dark, moody images without lightening the whole picture, keeping a rich black and normal highlights, while adding extra separation to darker tones in that critical range which is so difficult to print well.

Typical uses would be High for a bridal portrait, or Low for a moody studio shot of a Louis Armstrong lookalike.

What High and Low do in-camera (with the benefit of a histogram check on the LCD screen to show you the big difference they make) is replace time consuming raw conversion exposure and gamma adjustments, or *Photoshop* Levels tweaking. Using Zone Matching, you can take a card straight from the camera and print from it without needing a PC to make standard corrections.

The control of the D7D does not end with this sophistication. The Auto White balance is naturally not very 'total' (DSLRs can not read from the CCD to do this) but preset White Balances are comprehensive and have a superb plus/minus adjustment for warmer or cooler – Tungsten -2 is subtly different from Tungsten +2, but not all tungsten lamps are the same, and this is a wonderful function – five different tungsten settings!

As if this is not enough, you can opt to adjust in Kelvins (the colour temperature scale) in 100 degree increments from 2500 to 9900. Combined with the Hue setting and options for Custom White Balance by reading from a grey card, the D7D offers the most comprehensive colour control around.

This is taken even further by *Dimage Viewer 2.37* which includes instructions for using a Konica

Minolta colour temperature meter, and the CC scales provided, to adjust raw images to an exact setting.

While you might assume the raw file is not affected by camera settings, how embedded or non-embedded profiles are handled by *Dimage Viewer* makes some difference. The Natural+ sRGB setting, for example, results in a raw file being opened with the Saturation control set to zero, but more saturated colours calculated.

One thing is certain – no DSLR offers a wider range of colour balance and image control options than the Dynax 7 Digital.

Exposure control

With the usual PASM settings the D7D has the familiar Program Shift function, and like the Dimage A models, can have its front and rear control wheels assigned different functions.

There is a substantial main and flash exposure compensation dial to the left hand side of the prism housing, as on the Dynax 7. This gives full control over over-rides and is normally locked in zero position.

For routine plus/minus adjustments, it is much easier to give one of the control wheels this function (I use the front one). Then all you have to do is move a finger off the shutter release, and turn this to step to the over or under setting you want.

With control wheels set up (via simple Menu Screen commands) there is really no need for me ever to switch from Program exposure except for Manual shots such as studio flash.

The display in the viewfinder shows you exactly what's set, and the camera does not switch off during normal operation; there is no need to have a finger activating the shutter while turning a control, a problem I have found on some other cameras.

This set-up eliminates any need for a plus-minus button press, and in fact the whole design of the D7D means you will hardly ever need to press one button then turn another control. Everything is either a sequence, or a single action.

Professional features

The 7D includes many of the professional features of the Dynax 7, adapted for within the constraints of digital. It has a 2 second mirror-up delay in place of a full mirror up pre release mode; this is sufficient, with the well damped mirror, to ensure vibration free tripod exposures even without a cable or remote release.

It has time-lapse functions, capable of unattended photography of a subject at intervals. It has



The excellent ISO 1600 performance of the Dynax 7 Digital makes shots which would once have been impossible or unsatisfactory on film come to life. Desmond Lim shot this using Anti Shake, 1/3rd of second at f8, 24-105mm lens set to 30mm. Chijmes, Singapore, a national heritage site.

depth of field preview, studio flash synchronisation via a PC socket, mains adaptor operation, an optional vertical grip with additional battery capacity, and wireless multi-head flash compatibility.

Autofocus can be set to be intelligent (auto-sensing for movement or fixed subjects), continuous, or single shot; manual focus is easily set, or automatically available using DMF. Spot metering, spot focus, user selected focus sensor, and comprehensive exposure adjustments all meet the most critical requirements. The dioptic focusing eyepiece has a wide range, good eye relief, and

does not require your nose pressed against the LCD just to see the screen.

The tripod bush is centred on the lens axis, there is a CCD plane focusing index for macro, and the strap lugs are positioned for good balance with popular lenses. The strap comes with leather-type protectors for the body finish, and is a substantial width for comfort. A clear protector is provided to snap over the LCD screen, but mine was lost with a week. It appeared firmly clipped in place; then one day it was gone.

The NP-400 battery is the same cell as the A1 and A2 take, and since I immediately mixed up my old and

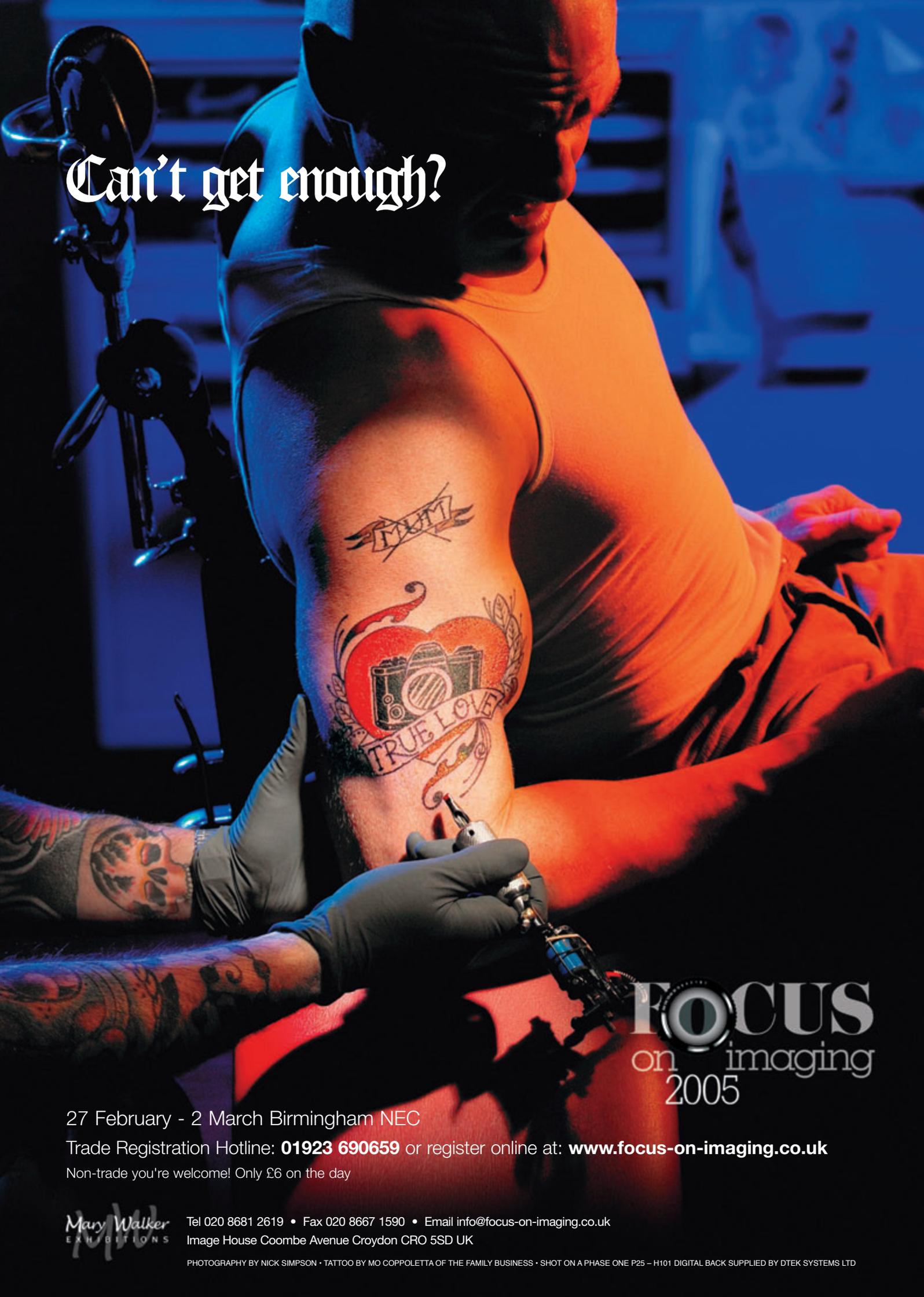
new cells, I can only report that it seems to have an excellent life but I have not yet taxed it enough to run it down quickly. Users say 300-400 shots should be possible on a charge.

In 2005, superior *Dimage Master* software will be available for raw file conversion. At the time of writing, I have not seen what features this will offer. Tethered operation linked by USB 2.0 to a PC system is also promised.

Overall, the Dynax 7 Digital makes up for a long wait by winning 'best of breed' where 6 megapixel DSLRs are concerned. It will not disappoint you.



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photoWORLD gallery

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Winter-friendly subjects welcome you to our quarterly *Photoworld Gallery* open reader competition – and one is digital, one shot on film.

You may now enter pictures taken on Konica equipment as well as Minolta, and this is retrospective – vintage Minolta pictures were always eligible, and the same goes for vintage Konica.

You may also enter pictures from other camera brands made on Konica films and (if colour negative rather than slide) processed and printed by a Konica photofinisher, normally a High Street mini-lab using Konica paper and chemicals. See the new entry rules on page 14.

Each picture used will receive a prize of Konica Minolta supplies – E6 35mm slide film, 35mm colour negative film, inkjet paper or CD-R media. Film entry winners will be sent films, and digital winners will be sent paper or CD-Rs (or both). The prize packs are at the discretion of Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Ltd.

As always, all entries remain your own property and we require only single rights use in the context of the *Photoworld Gallery* pages. Slides are returned (you must send return p&p); prints and digital entries are only returned if you ask for them to be, and enclose return p&p.

Right: taken at Didcot Railway Centre Photographers' Evening, February 20th 2004, by Brian Turner of Filton, Gloucestershire. Brian used a Minolta Dimage 7i, set to ISO 200, -1 EV, 2 second exposure at f4, 90mm equivalent focal length, tungsten light balance, processed from raw.

Facing page: Peter Karry set up this home studio example using a Dynax 9xi with 90mm macro lens, exposing for 30 seconds at f16 using tungsten lights.



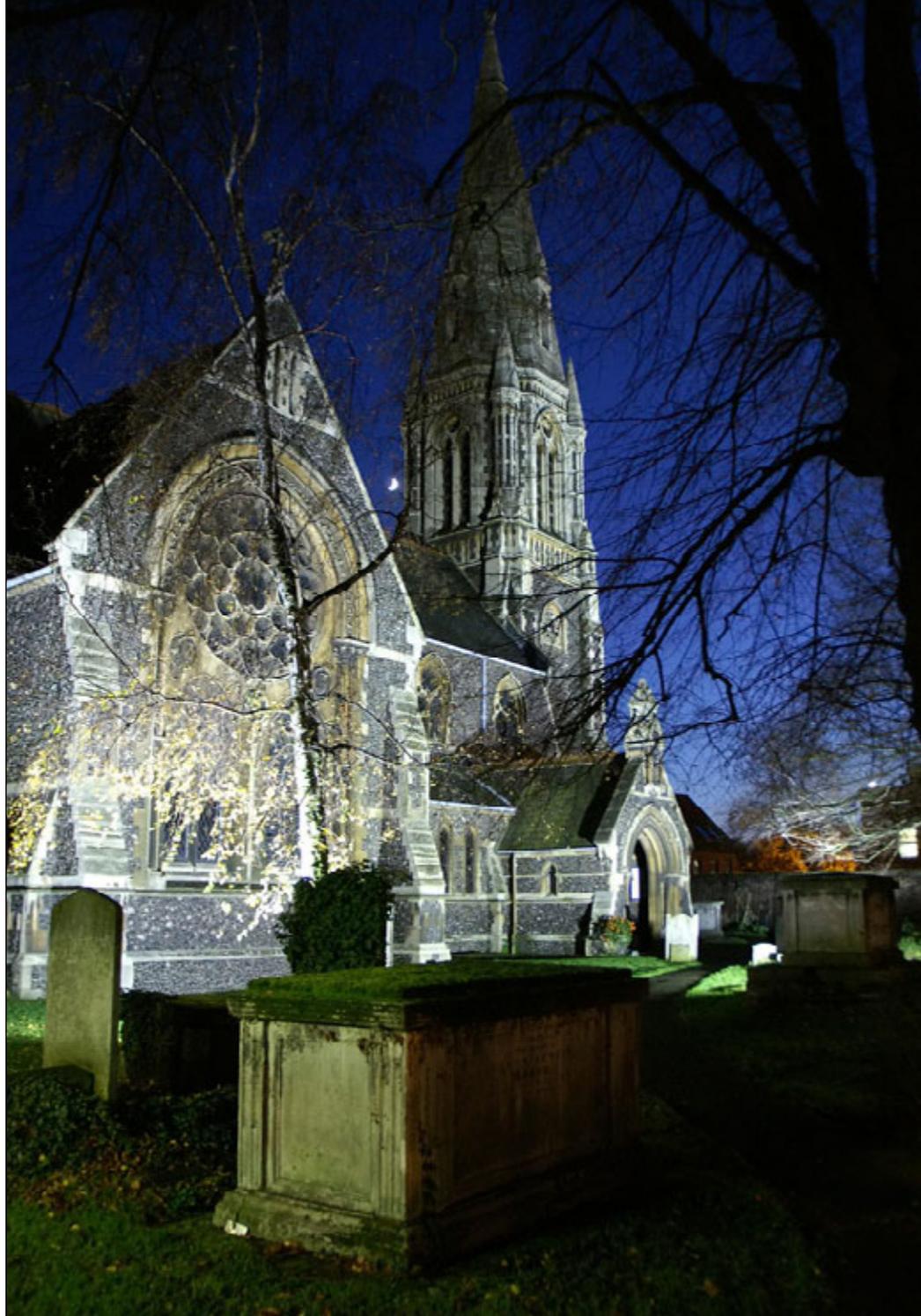


Gallery Rules

You may enter a maximum of three slides, three prints and three digital images every quarter. Slides must be in non-glass mounts, clearly labelled with your return address on each slide, and protected in a plastic sleeve or wallet. Prints must be no larger than 12 x 8"/A4, on glossy photographic paper NOT inkjet paper, unmounted, with name and address and caption details on the reverse. Digital images should be on an ISO 9660 Mac/PC readable CD-R, in RGB JPEG or TIFF form, file resolution set to 300dpi and should be a minimum of 1600x 1200 pixels in size. A printed contact sheet, or reference prints, must accompany your CD.

Slides must be accompanied by return post and packing; prints and digital entries should be accompanied by return post and packing only if you require their return. Otherwise, they may be filed or destroyed as seen fit. Konica Minolta Photo Imaging (UK) Ltd and Icon Publications Ltd accept no financial responsibility for the receipt, safety or return of entries.

We suggest entries are sent in within two months after receiving your magazine at the latest, but it's best to enter shortly after getting your edition. You may send single digital entries consisting of a high quality JPEG from any Konica Minolta digital camera to iconmags@btconnect.com stating 'Photoworld Gallery Entry' in your email subject header, and including your postal address and all caption details in your email.



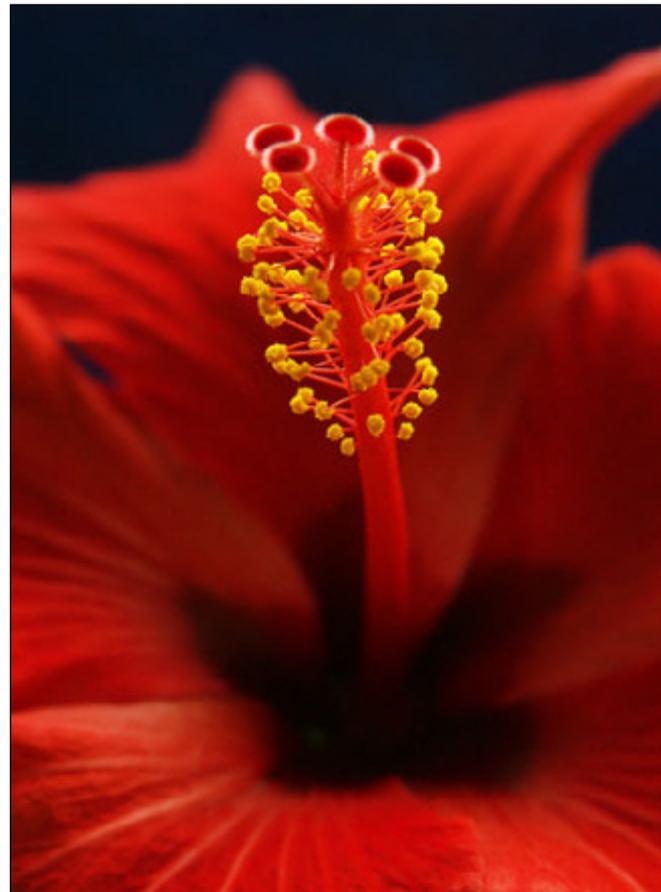
Top: our first entry from a Dynax 7 Digital user – St Andrew's Church, Hertford, by Andy Johnson. Andy used the new 17-35mm f2.8-4 D lens, at full aperture for 1/5th of a second at 800 ISO setting. See <http://www.ukexpert.co.uk/photopost/showgallery.php?si=km+7d> for more of Andy's D7D photos.

Right: by Chris Mole of Danehill, Sussex. Chris has graduated from film to digital, being one of our regular contributors to Minolta Image many years ago, and later returning to 'active service' with the Dimage 5. He is now using a Dimage A1 – this great action shot is 'Dive', taken off the coast near Fiscardo, Kefalonia; 1/640 sec at f8.





Above: Snow Deer, by Steve Bright. Scanned from film and submitted on CD – a seasonal subject submitted in September, just the right time to do so. Below left: the quality and capabilities of the Dimage A2 are shown clearly in this shot by Barbara Mellor, a moth through a conservatory window in Devon. ISO 125, 200mm focal length equivalent, 1/200th at f3.5. Bottom right: Hibiscus close-up by Tony Jones, Dimage A1, tele macro setting, ISO 100, f5.6, natural light, Anti-Shake used.



Patience pays

It is always a difficult decision to make – whether to take a shot and move on, or hang around hoping conditions might improve. Such decisions are made all the more difficult if you are in the company of non-photographers or if the weather is cold, midgy, wet or misty – even more so when leading a photographic workshop, where a wrong decision could lead to much disappointment.

Mist is always a frustrating element to work with and there are two, possibly three, tactics to consider. One is to drive around trying to find the edges of the mist where light quality and atmosphere is most dramatic. This can be expensive on fuel, especially if you find yourself driving in the “wrong” direction.

An alternative approach is to decide on the image you want and to sit tight until the mist lifts and conditions improve. The problem here is that the mist may persist for the rest of the day! In hilly locations, there is the option of climbing higher to get above the mist – looking down on mist-filled valleys or



Duncan McEwan is used to waiting for the light – it’s a trade secret for landscape specialists. But when do you pack in and go home?





Left hand page top: the view from the roadside, the first sighting of the potential shot. Lower shot: viewed from within the field, from path leading from the entry gate. This page: above, the desired angle of view, with simplified foreground. Below: improved foreground clumps and better lighting as time passed, with the addition of a 0.6D (2 stop) neutral density graduated filter over the sky to reduce the brightness of the mist.



glens can be most impressive.

Such decisions were faced in producing the images in this article. The morning mist was fairly thick, but quite high, giving some opportunity for lochside and frosted tree pictures, even although the lighting was very flat. Because of its variable thickness, it looked possible that the mist might gradually burn off letting the sun come through, but every time it looked promising, the thinning gaps would close as the mist thickened up again. A decision was made to hang around the area, moving only short distances, rather than rushing around looking for the edges of the mist.

I actually drove passed the small barn and tree, barely giving it a second glance, but half a mile down the single track road the image of it crystallised in my mind and an immediate about-turn was made.

Once the scene had been assessed, it was easy to accept that this could be the opportunity of the day and, with every indication that the mist would lift, I was prepared to wait for as long as it took. The next two hours passed remarkably quickly, capturing the scene as conditions changed.

The composition from the roadside appeared somewhat weak and a stronger foreground was envisaged by being closer. Entry to the small field through the gate gave an oblique approach which seemed interesting, with three rams adding an extra element to the scene. After initially appearing inquisitive, they proved rather timid and moved off stage which was rather disappointing. In the flat, grey light, the scene lacked colour but looked inviting and various compositions were explored. A 0.6 ND graduated filter was tried in order to reduce the uniform

brightness of the mist and introduce a more varied density to this area, but the benefit was not convincing.

As the light brightened, some colour began to creep into the scene. A polarising filter was added to remove reflections from the wet surface of the roof, pulling as much colour as possible from the rusty iron. The same effect was evident on the bases of the rushes and the polariser also emphasised the touch of blue sky that was now appearing through the mist. As the mist cleared on the left, the shape of the tree assumed a much more dynamic form with branches and twigs stretching out into the top left corner and standing out more clearly against the blue.

When the sun emerged fully, the scene was instantly transformed and the pace of change accelerated rapidly. The frost melted at an amazing rate and it was just as well I was already in place, because within minutes everything was dripping wet. With the frost gone and the mist burned off, a clear blue sky with loch and mountains beyond suddenly emerged. A lovely scene in its own right, but I never took a shot, probably mesmerised by what had preceded it.

Did I anticipate the image I ended up with? The honest truth is "no". However, I did appreciate that the scene had potential and that should be a strong enough trigger for anyone. Recognising potential and then making shrewd judgements is a powerful combination of attributes that can produce rewarding results.

It had been a cold couple of hours, but with no wind, it was not uncomfortably so and a flask of coffee added to the pleasure. Patience and anticipation had been rewarded.



Left: the same composition as the previous shot (bottom of page 17) but without the neutral density filter, giving a more natural appearance.

Above: the final shot. Emergence of direct sunlight and slight lifting of the mist, aided by a polariser used to strengthen the blue of the sky and the contrasting colour of the rusty roof.

All photographs by Duncan I. McEwan. Duncan is leading various workshop weekends photographing Scottish landscape in 2005 – see club events page for details.



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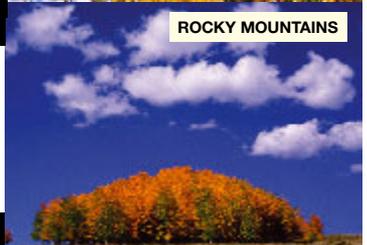


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Red Rock Winter

Robert Bull ARPS visited the canyons of Utah for a different kind of snow scene

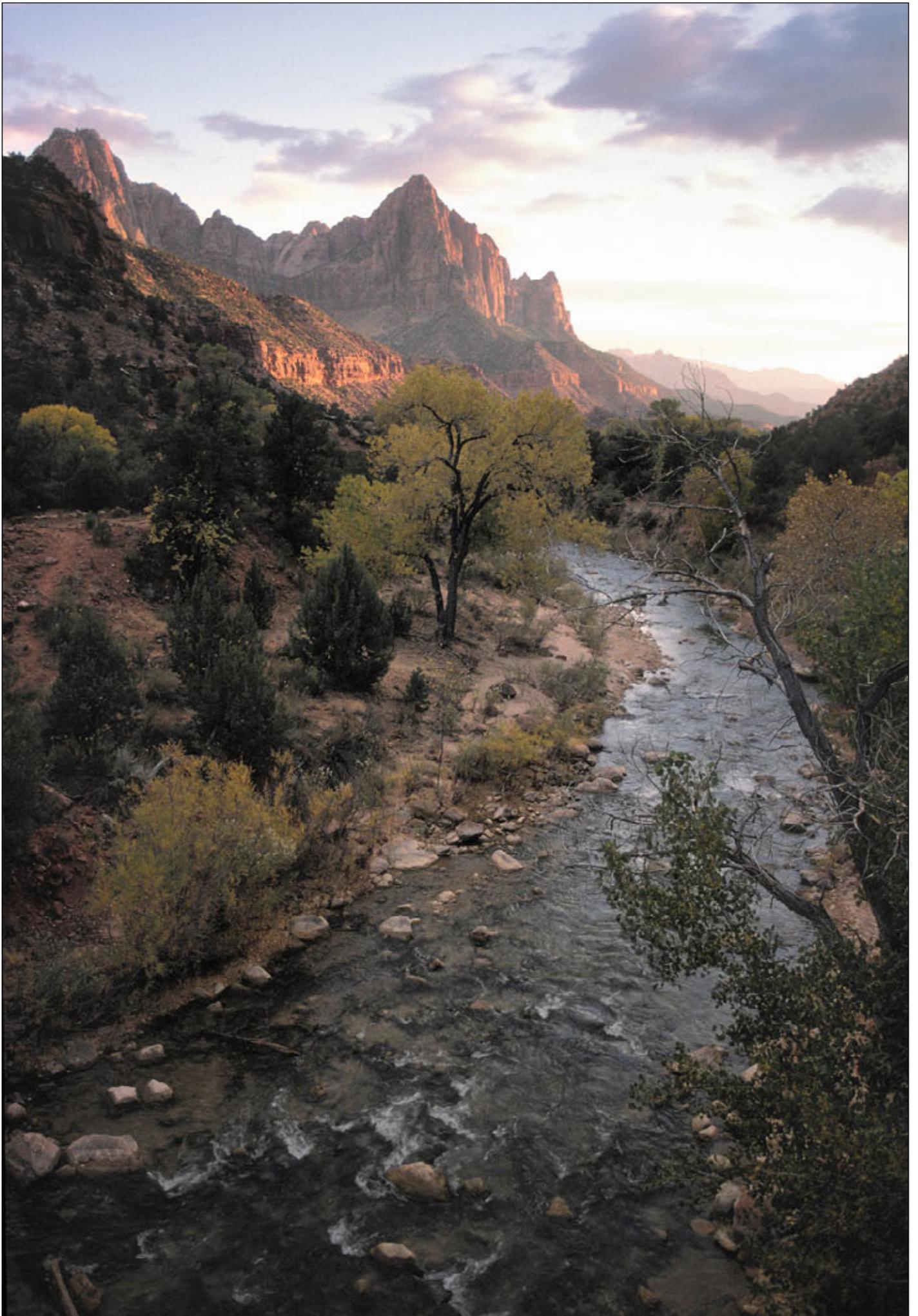
“It’s tripods at dawn,” said Simon, tramping with careful haste back to his stance. Warm pre-dawn light made rock formations glow cherry-red out of a sea of soft blue shadow, but the rim of the Grand Canyon is not a place to slip. Moments later the sun cleared the horizon, and contrast rocketed. Isolated buttes glinted like mirrors of gold in an ocean suddenly midnight. This is a place where you really, really, need a Spotmeter F... and you need a solid tripod, not just because crepuscular exposures require armies of sullen seconds. A tripod commands precise composition. If your composition isn’t as perfect as you can make it, are you in the right game?

What else do you need to photograph the canyons of the south-west USA? Warm clothes. The “sweet light” around dawn and sunset does not come at cosy times of day, and Bryce Canyon is nearly 9,000 feet above sea level. May is bad enough, but dawn in February is infamously bitter. Frozen photographers have frozen



*In Arches National Park Utah.
Above: Bryce Canyon*







perceptions, and if your choice lies between yet another lens, or a woolly hat, leave the lens at home. I was very glad of my heavy insulated jacket.

Wise photographers take their supplies with them, including the inevitable batteries and cleaning kit. Cable releases for manual focus cameras can also, wearily, be labelled consumables, but electric ones are far too expensive, so take care of them. My favourite film stock is Kodachrome 25, now discontinued. With the Yellow God apostate, I pay my tribute at the Green Shrine. If you do, too, stock up with ammunition

before you quit the UK. The red rock country of Utah and Arizona may be a rite of passage for landscape photographers, but it suffers a curious dearth of camera shops. A film famine can spoil your entire stay, so be warned that consumer print film and maybe a little Ektachrome Elite is all you will easily find.

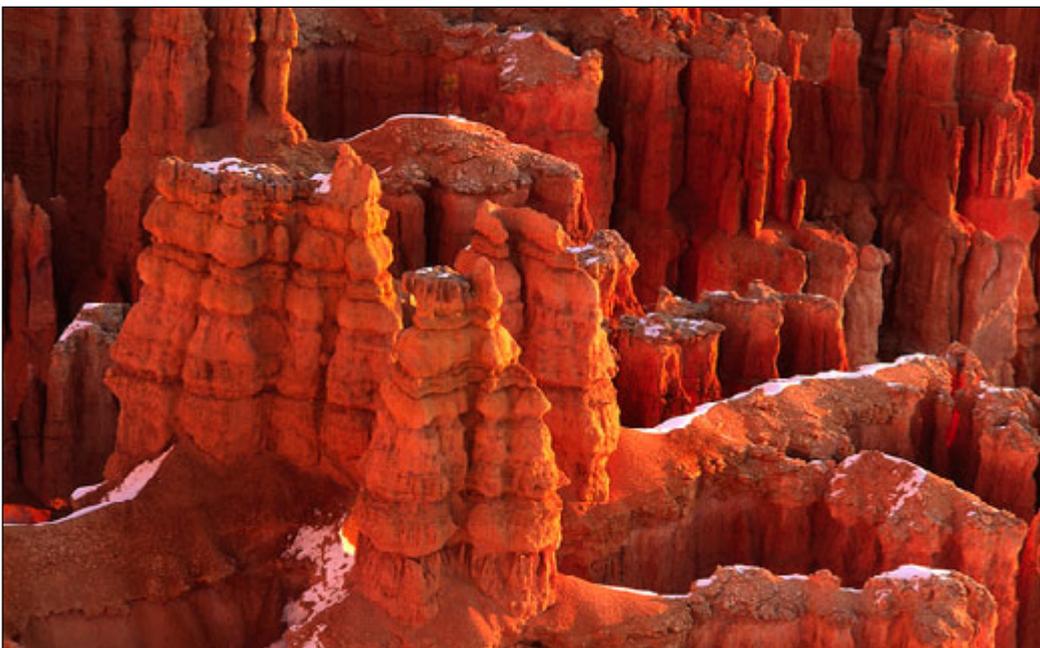
Your lens arsenal need not be extraordinary, but however much lateral freedom you have, perching on the rim of a canyon pins you at a fixed distance from an often distant subject. Longer lenses are more useful than short ones, and zooms

invaluable. If I were doing it again, I'd want a zoom that goes out to 300mm instead of 210. Monument Valley is another big landscape, but parts of it along the 17-mile loop road, most of Zion Canyon, and Arches National Park offer mid-range and smaller landscapes that will not especially tax your lens set. Cohab Canyon is a gem of smaller-scale rock detail.

Carrying kit is invariably uncomfortable and inconvenient, and the best way to carry something through air travel is not necessarily the best for field use. On the sort of tour where you rarely go far from your transport,

a camera backpack seems the best solution. If you are hiking further, I advise a regular pack because it carries better and has more room for extra clothes, lunch, first-aid kit and so on. In this mode, camera gear goes into a photo "bum bag" augmented if necessary with a small camera bag or pouches inside the rucksack.

Finally, if you want to load the dice in your favour, don't be yoked with aesthetically constipated normal normals who don't grasp the need to freeze your tabs off at unearthly hours of the morning just to get your holiday snaps. Choose a photo tour run by someone who knows the area, arranges the logistics, and gets you up in time for the pre-dawn glow. I travelled with Nigel Turner Photography: point your browser at www.nigelturnerphotography.com or contact his agents Windsor & Neate Travel on 01635-528355.



Facing page: Bryce Canyon National Monument. This page: Arches National Park. Both national parks in Utah. Robert Bull used Minolta XE-1 or X-700 bodies with Minolta MC or MD 17mm, 24-35mm zoom, 50mm f1.4, and independent 90mm macro and 70-210mm zooms. 'Manfrotto 055 tripod used invariably', he adds.

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From slides and prints to digital – Xt copying

Not even owning a mobile phone, far less a computer, I was reluctant to try digital photography. After giving up photographing animals for a living and having sold all my 35mm equipment plus a 3000APS compact which I have been happy with for the past couple of years, I had an open mind as to the next purchase.

However, since it has become possible to make your own prints without a computer, I thought I would like to try out a small digital compact. I wanted something that was small enough to fit into a shirt pocket, was of good enough quality to give reasonable prints and was not too complicated for a beginner.

Having studied all types of small digital cameras and reading as many reports as possible, I found that once again my preference was Konica Minolta – the **Dimage Xt** to be precise and this was the one I settled on.

When I purchased the camera the weather was as usual, vile, rain and high winds but, being anxious to try it out, I had some old 35mm

Michael Gilroy found that the Dimage Xt close focus and zoom allows copystand digital dupes from 6 x 7cm and larger originals



Aquarium shots copied using the Xt – below left, Mink Tang; below right, Dusty Angel; above, Lion Fish. Michael's original slides were Minolta 35mm shots copied to 6 x 7cm slide dupes – difficult to scan, but quick to digitise this way.

transparencies which had been duped to approximately 6 x 7, and I started out by photographing some of these using a small lightbox and an old Cullman camera support bracket.

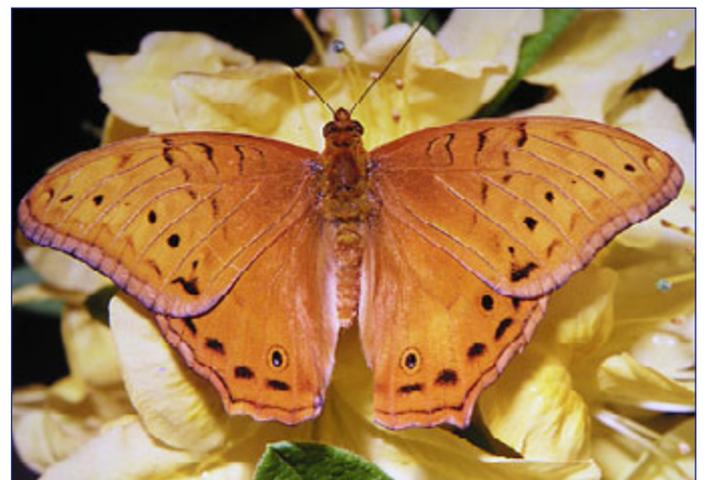
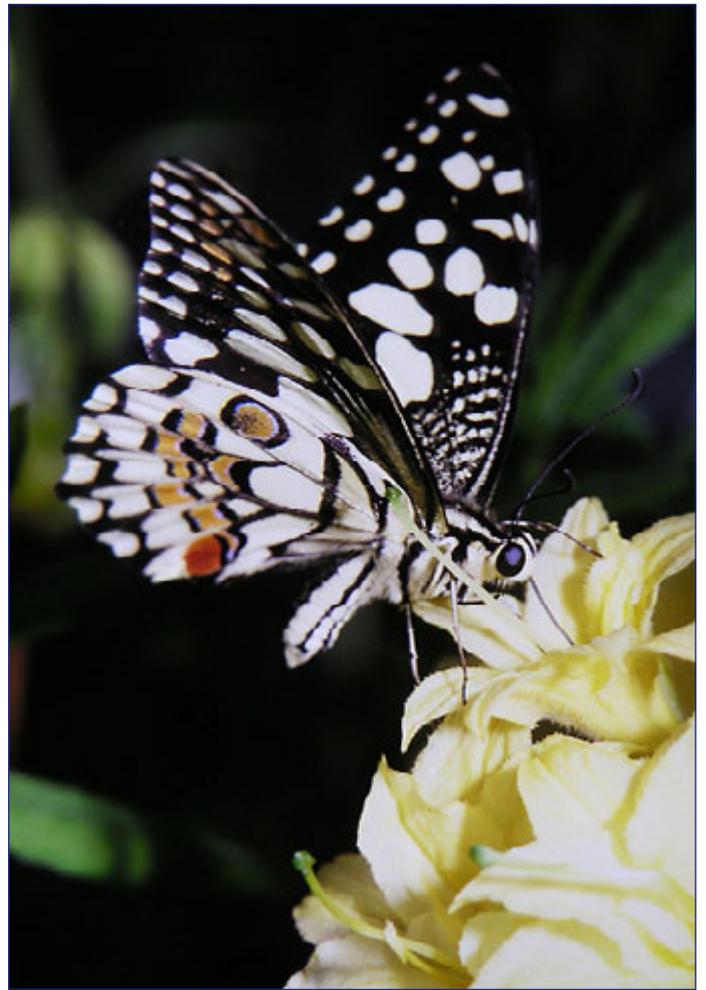
The zoom was used at its full 3X extension and the camera set at its closest focus. The camera handled these well and I was very pleasantly surprised by the results.

With a copy stand and lights instead of a transparency lightbox, old prints can easily be copied. To make digital copies from 35mm slides a better camera – such as the Dimage A2 or Dynax 7 Digital – is needed with the addition of a slide duplicator attachment.

By now the weather was improving so I could move outside and take some close-ups of garden flowers using a monopod. All the pictures were taken on fine quality and the other settings on auto.

I remain very pleased with the camera and am glad I made the move to digital and look forward to taking many more pictures.

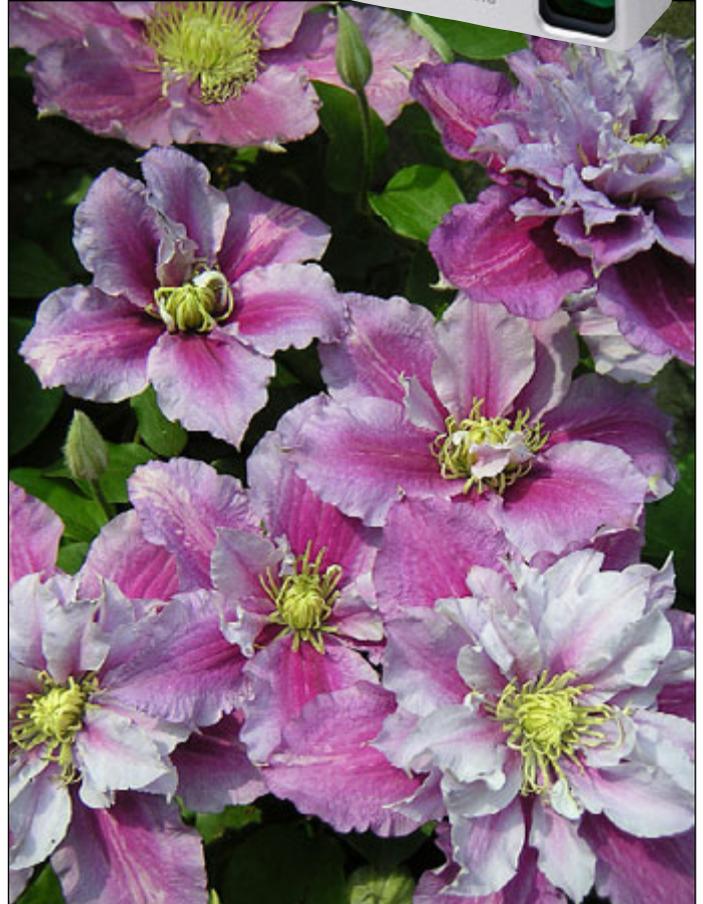




This column – top, Mongolian Gerbil. Readers who keep small animals will have seen Michael Gilroy's distinctive pictures in the most popular pet-keeping guides. Above: Family group, an old slide converted to digital using the Xt without needing a slide scanner, and with very natural results. Right hand column, butterflies: top, Lime Swallowtail; centre, Red Lacewing; bottom, Australian Cruiser.



Times move fast in digital and the Xt at 3.2 megapixels is now superseded by the Dimage Xg with 5 megapixels as the top camera in the pocketable X range. It's what we are still using at Photoworld though, as the results are more than adequate for 'notebook' use and reproductions up to 7 x 5 inches. For close-ups, composition on the rear LCD screen is recommended.



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Top left: the grain of the enlarged slide shows in this copy of a close-up of a robin. Lower left: not a copy, but amongst the first direct digital shots Michael made with the Xt – Camellia flower. Right hand side top – Apple blossom. Above – Clematis.

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INSURING A DYNAX 4 AND LENS could cost you as little as £12.00 a year under the new Konica Minolta Photoworld revised Insurance plan. This is the basic premium for a camera worth up to £300, and offers fantastic coverage for anyone travelling on regular holidays including long winter breaks, with 60 days abroad included even if taken in a single block.

With a low excess of only 10% (minimum £35) and theft from locked vehicles covered subject to a higher minimum excess of £100, the policy is also suitable for semi professional users at slightly higher rates with a minimum excess of £50 (but still at 10% beyond this). Typical premiums for amateur users are £45 a year for an outfit worth up to £1,600 or £100 a year to cover £3,500. Best of all, any repairs or replacements are guaranteed to be Konica Minolta specific, and the scheme offers a unique 'new for old' provision as long as the premium reflects the value.

Be sure to insure the value of digital cameras as an outfit. You may have bought extra memory cards, flash, case and accessories like portable image storage drives – all these can be insured as part of your camera kit. Enquire for premiums to cover your PC, laptop etc.

If your camera is an older model, the nearest modern compatible equivalent will be its 'replacement value'. You must, however, insure it to this value. A vintage SRT303b with 50mm f1.4 lens, for example, should really be insured for £500 and not for its original cost of half that, or current value of around £150. That's because a new SLR with 50mm f1.4 is a surprisingly expensive item. If your equipment requires a repair under insurance, this will always be a Konica Minolta service department repair. You will never be required by your insurance to use a third party

repair service – this frequently happens with other insurers, because they negotiate a deal for cheap repairs across the board. With our insurance you do not run that risk. In the event of any dispute, Photoworld is always there to provide impartial advice on the best course of action. Photoworld does receive annual commission on the insurance scheme and this goes directly into the budget to fund our sponsored lecturers, meetings and events, so by using this insurance plan you are also supporting the Photoworld Club.

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built-in quick locking mechanism for ease and speed of use

The water colour city

Our files of slides have been busy recently as I extract and scan the best images for the picture library Alamy. While digging, I found twenty or more films from a trip to the Venice Carnival which the Minolta Club organised in the mid-1990s.

The **Dimage Scan Elite 5400** has transformed my ability to turn archive slides into marketable digital files. By recording every grain of the film sharply at 5400 dpi, creating images over 100 megabytes in size, and simultaneously removing all scratches and dust from E6 type transparencies, it enables me to offer perfect shots. A little retouching work is sometimes needed, and I show one example here where a darker sky was blended with a lighter foreground and many TV aerials removed. Most pictures only need a little attention to fine detail.

The films Shirley and I used for that Venice Carnival trip were extremely assorted. They included 160 speed tungsten light film with a conversion filter in daylight,

The Venice Carnival 2004 is from January 28th to February 8th. Venice is uniquely suited to traditional film photography, as David Kilpatrick has rediscovered.



1000 speed grainy fast film, two different brands of 50 ISO film, and every speed between. We also used polarisers, colour

polarisers (dichroic), graduated colour filters and a wide range of lenses from 20mm to 300mm.

Through the scanner, each type of

film emerged with its unique palette of colours. Not one of the film images looked as if it could have been taken with a digital camera. The detail in the 100 megabyte images (big enough for an A2 poster) was often held down to grain level by the superb Minolta AF lenses used on our 9xi and 7xi bodies. No matter how good a digital file from a professional digital camera may be, it can never look like this. It may look 'better' in some ways but for the atmosphere and antique colours, mist, light and drama of Venice that strange assortment of slide films just hit the mark.

That is not to say digital photographers should avoid a trip to the Carnival! It was revived again in 1999 after a period of problems with funding, and the last few years have seen it grow back to its old status.

Whether or not any of those Venice images sell through the library, I greatly enjoyed rediscovering them with the help of the scanner and learning why I should not, perhaps, abandon film for good!



The original slides as scanned



Left and top: by Shirley Kilpatrick. Slide film gives unique colour renderings. Below: a filtered tungsten film shot by David Kilpatrick.



Grand Canal view composed from two exposures scanned and merged, by David Kilpatrick. Bottom left: by David – see the original scan. Lightness and colour adjusted in the area outside the campanile reflection the emphasise the effect. Bottom right: shades of Casanova, by Shirley Kilpatrick. The new film will make Venice a big attraction especially for the 2005 Carnival.



the QUEST for perfection

Photoworld sponsors Colin Westgate's Quest workshops which welcome Konica Minolta users of all abilities. The Autumn programme includes a full course on digital imaging covering four days.

DIGITAL MONOCHROME:

THE FINE PRINT

with Les Mclean

(1 or 2 days, at Seaford)

Monday/Tuesday 21/22

March 2005

Les Mclean is best known for his superb darkroom work, but over the past few years he has been using the computer to make many of his monochrome pictures. Building on his darkroom experience and using high quality pigment inks he is now producing prints he is happy to designate as 'fine art'. In this workshop, he will demonstrate his techniques, including a practical method of monitor calibration, scanning, use of curves, tonal controls and layers. He will also show how to make large negatives for contact printing and for alternative processes, such as cyanotype. His approach will be to replicate the controls employed in the darkroom - this workshop is not a Photoshop tutorial, but a practical means of learning how to obtain the finest aesthetic results. The second day will be spent using negatives (or transparencies) from participants and working with the author, making the best possible images from them. A digital projector and large screen will be used so that all procedures will be clearly seen.

Price £95 both days (deposit £35) £52 either single day (deposit £20). 20 places (OFFER - book both days and come to Picture Forum for only £15!)

NEW WORKSHOP!

DARKROOM MASTERCLASS

with Les McLean

(1 or 2 days, at Seaford)

Wednesday/Thursday

23/24 March 2005

Despite the rush to digital, the darkroom is very much alive and kicking, and a well crafted monochrome print has a quality all of its own. Les McLean is a highly qualified printer, having spent many years making fine prints, using techniques such as split grading, post and pre flashing with white light, two bath development and many more. In this workshop, he will demonstrate these techniques by using his own negatives and a selection from participants. You are therefore invited to bring

To book any of these workshops and receive information on the 2005 programme, write to: Quest Photography, Colin Westgate, 2 Marine Parade, Seaford. East Sussex BN25 2PL - or telephone 01323 897812 mentioning that you have seen this in Konica Minolta Photoworld.

your 'difficult' negatives - even those that you might consider impossible to print! As every negative is different, you will learn not only from Les printing your negative, but also from those of other participants. N.B. This workshop may be booked either as one day, or both days.

Price £125 both days (deposit £40), £65 either single day (deposit £20). 10 places (OFFER - book both days and come to Picture Forum for only £15!)

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

with Colin Westgate

(1 day, at Seaford)

Wednesday 30 March 2005

Landscape photography is often thought to be fairly simple and indeed, it is not difficult to obtain 'straightforward' pictures. However, results are often disappointing and to make outstanding landscape pictures requires vision, and perhaps a new way of seeing. In this workshop, we will discuss the principles of landscape photography applicable to both monochrome and colour, including the uses of various lenses and filters, choice of subject matter, selection of viewpoints, principles of exposure, use of light, dealing with movement etc. A review of participants pictures will also be undertaken. After lunch, we will go into the landscape for some field work, where you will be able to put into practice what you have learned from the morning session.

Price £48 (deposit £20). 10 places

ADVANCED MONOCHROME PRINTING

with Colin Westgate

(1 day, at West Mersea,

nr. Colchester)

Monday 4 April 2005

(subject to demand, additional dates by arrangement - please ask)

This workshop is intended for photographers wishing to improve and expand their printing skills. Using advanced techniques such as

split grading and paper flashing, prints can be made from virtually any negative, (providing there is detail on it!) including those which may previously have been dismissed as 'hopeless'. The quality of today's Multigrade and Variable Contrast paper is now excellent, and the amount of control and versatility available is such that 'graded' papers are now virtually obsolete.

Price £48, (deposit £20).

Includes sandwich lunch & all materials. 4 places

EXHIBITION PRINTING IN MONOCHROME

with Colin Westgate

(2 days, at West Mersea,

nr. Colchester)

Tuesday/Wednesday

5/6 April 2005

(subject to demand, additional dates by arrangement - please enquire)

Quest's 'top of the range' printing workshop, designed to enable you to get the maximum from your negatives and to make prints up to 16" x 12" (40 x 30 cm.) in size, suitable for use in exhibitions or for sale. Fibre based papers will be used for the highest quality, and prints will be archivally processed and optionally selenium toned for maximum depth. Advanced techniques, such as split grading, pre and post flashing will be employed as necessary. The number of prints produced will depend

on the difficulty or otherwise of printing any particular negative. As this workshop is time and materials intensive, it is restricted to TWO PEOPLE ONLY, and this is reflected in a higher than normal price.

Price £158 (deposit £50), includes sandwich lunch and all materials. 2 places only.

SPRING IMPRESSIONS

with Colin Westgate

(1 day, at Leonardslea, nr.

Horsbarnham, West Sussex)

Tuesday 26 April 2005

This workshop will demonstrate the beautiful impressionistic effects which can be obtained by using various diffusion methods. The vibrant spring colours of the exotic flowers at Leonardslea make an ideal subject for this. After viewing work and discussing techniques, we will spend the rest of the day photographing in the gardens. Slide or negative film, or digital, can be used. This is your opportunity to try something really different and exciting, with lovely images virtually guaranteed.

Price £48 (deposit £20), 10 places. (Price includes Gardens entrance fee and refreshments (but not lunch) .

THE HIDDEN LANDSCAPE

with David Lane

(1 day, at Seaford and 1 day

at West Mersea, Essex)

Saturday 30 April 2005

at West Mersea

Sunday 1 May 2005

at Seaford

There are probably more people photographing the landscape than any other subject - yet it remains



Photo by Colin Westgate

one of the more difficult areas of the art. Results are frequently disappointing, with the camera failing to adequately portray what was seen by the photographer. David Lane's vision of the landscape is rather different to most – he seeks the intimate detail usually overlooked by others, sometimes moving to within inches of his subject. His pictures are subtle and sensitive, and not nearly so weather dependent as in normal landscape photography. Photographers attending this workshop can hardly fail to be inspired. David will initially show his work, which will be followed by practical field work in the landscape.

David Lane lives in Tynemouth, and his work is highly acclaimed. Many of his pictures are held in private collections and galleries.

Price £62 (deposit £20) 10 places.

NEW WORKSHOP!

MODEL ON LOCATION

with Eddie Sturgeon LRPS

(1 day, at Seaford)

Saturday 7 May 2005

We have not run this workshop for

the past few years, but by request, it is again being included. This will therefore be your opportunity to photograph an attractive model in a stunning beach location, and in one or more other settings. The workshop will be under the direction of Eddie Sturgeon, for whom this type of photography is a speciality. Help and guidance regarding poses, angles and exposure will be given, and everyone will have time with the model to request individual poses. Furthermore, if you would like to bring along a model of your own, you would be most welcome to do so.

Price £62 (deposit £20). 8 places.

DIGITAL COLOUR

THE FINE PRINT

with Hugh Milsom MFIAP

(1 day, at Seaford)

Thursday 16 June 2005

(date to be confirmed – please

check before booking)

Hugh Milsom's digital colour prints have a wonderful subtle quality not often seen elsewhere and in this workshop, he will demonstrate the techniques used to make them.

Topics covered will include scanning, selections, layers, masking, hue & saturation, levels and curves. Hugh has exhibited his digital pictures extensively in recent years and has been extraordinarily successful, winning numerous medals. A digital projector and large screen will be used so that the procedures demonstrated can be clearly seen. Some previous experience is recommended but is not essential.

Price £48 (deposit £20) includes lunch. 20 places.

INFRARED PHOTOGRAPHY and TECHNICAL PAN FILM

with Hugh Milsom MFIAP

(1 day, at Seaford)

Friday 17 June 2005

(date to be confirmed – please

check before booking)

Infrared and Technical Pan are both specialised films capable of giving superb, but different, pictorial results. The effects obtainable with mono infrared film are often very distinctive and artistic, but can be unpredictable and difficult to handle. Hugh's many years of experience have resolved

these problems, so that you can be confident of getting good results. Hugh will outline his techniques for using the material, illustrated by examples of his work. He will then show you how to load and handle the film, which has to be done in controlled, dark, conditions. The afternoon will be taken up by location work in the nearby landscape.

Hugh Milsom has been making pictures with infrared and Technical Pan for many years, and is the author of two books – "Earthsong", Creative Monochrome (1995) and his second, a definitive guide to infrared photography, was published in 2001.

Price £58 (deposit £20). 10 places.

SPECIAL OFFER – both Hugh Milsom workshops £90 (deposit £30) – save £16!



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120/12 exp.	---	7.95	---	---	14.25	---	21.75
120/18 exp.	8.50	---	11.75	15.70	---	22.00	---

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CD ARCHIVING SERVICES

Standard in lab time 3 days

Each image on your film is scanned to a JPEG format file and written to CD-ROM at the time of processing. Files do not include film processing.

35mm roll film	Negative Film	Transparency Film	Image size (when opened)	Optimum print size
CD Image	6.95	N/A	6.2M approx.	5 x 4
CD Archive	14.70	22.00	14.0M approx.	9 x 6
CD Archive Gold	22.00	35.00	24.8M approx.	12 x 8

120 roll film	Negative Film	Transparency Film	Image size (when opened)	Optimum print size
CD Archive 120	15.70	N/A	24.8M approx.	10 x 8 / 10 x 10

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Standard in lab time 3 days

Total of prints required of the same size and paper surface from any number of originals

Print size	Price shown per print				Print size	Price shown per print			
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6x4	0.95	0.58	0.38	0.28	16x12	6.30	4.10	2.70	2.00
7x5	1.25	0.75	0.40	0.38	18x12	6.30	4.14	2.76	2.00
8x6	1.50	0.90	0.60	0.45	20x12	9.80	5.50	3.56	2.50
9x6	1.50	0.90	0.60	0.45	24x16	11.24	6.70	4.50	3.30
10x8	2.75	1.65	1.10	0.82	24x20	14.70	8.22	5.88	4.41
12x8	3.00	1.80	1.20	0.89	30x20	17.25	11.25	6.90	5.10
16x10	4.95	2.90	1.90	1.48	30x24	19.50	11.90	7.90	5.90

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The danger, in using any fisheye lens, so everyone is advised, is that the photographs tend to become too stylised and repetitive. So when I had the opportunity to buy a 16mm Minolta full-frame fisheye lens, I was almost put off from the purchase. The full-frame version is not the instantly recognised circular image, but fills the full frame across the 36 x 24mm film. My advice to you now, after going ahead with my purchase, is not to be diverted.

You can differentiate the types of photographs you take with this accessory, and it is such a fun lens to use that it becomes a danger to the health of your other lenses. On the basis that the more you use any lens, the healthier it becomes, you may just find yourself using it over and over again. Obviously with such a short focal length, giving an ultra-wide angle of view, there are several pitfalls to watch out for. Although it does not quite reach across 180° horizontally (it is only this on the diagonal) it is very easy for unnoticed items to come into view. You must watch the edges of your camera viewfinder much more often than you normally do. This discipline must extend to doing this even after taking the shot, and if there is a suspicion that something new and distracting has crept into the image, wait until it has disappeared or adds to the composition, and take the shot again.

In these circumstances, film is cheap, and better to have your picture

180 degrees and no shade...

Peter Karry looks at one of the unique benefits of shooting film – the full frame 16mm fisheye



The curved lines created by the fisheye lens are well suited to subjects which are curved to start off with, like these fishing boats which Peter found at the Algarve village of Armacao de Pera. Both photographs with Dynax 8000si and 16mm AF lens.

twice than risk having an extra unattached arm entering the image. If you are using digital, the fisheye lens is not as effective because you do not get the full frame but it can still be used for wide-angle work and special utilities for Photoshop allow you to straighten out the curved lines.

Of course, one of the early problems was that I got my own feet appearing at the bottom of picture, especially when using the vertical format. Another typical problem is casting your own shadow into the frame – what a good reason for not taking photographs with the sun behind you! The old rule of having the sun behind you when taking photographs really does not apply most of the time in my photography, but there may be no option with a fisheye.

If the image you want to capture is directly opposite the location of the sun, you may need to get down low and shoot upwards, or hide your own shadow amongst other naturally cast shadows by the scenery around you. What you can do, and that I really enjoy, is more easily to shoot into the sun's rays ("contre-jour"). This can be controlled because the sun's disc becomes so small, that you can hide it behind some aspect of your photo. I have hidden it behind a fountain, and even behind the cables that supported a bridge. The danger of flare stills exists if you have the sun's disc in the picture, but because it is small, from many places the





This page: a vertical view can work well in cities – Admiralty, Hong Kong, skyscrapers, 16mm AF at f11 on 8000si.

Facing page top: curved lines, and a nearly central horizon, reduce the distortion effect in this shot at Agra Fort in India. Bottom: a sea horizon does the reverse and really shows the curvature but the rocks at Ponte de Piedade, Algarve, look good.



amount of flare is still minimised. In all situations, extra care of the exposure needs to be taken.

I would always use the camera's spot metering facility if available, to check what exposure to use – although I may just take 2 shots, one with spot metering, and another with centre weighted

(or averaging) metering.

Often, you will find this lens being used to take landscape and architectural photos. Straight lines tend to be bent by the fisheye, and the nearer to the edge of the frame, the more they curve. Conversely, the closer radiating lines are to the centre of either the short or the long side of the frame,

the closer they are to staying straight, and some lines appear straight because they fall on a radius of the image. There may be a good case for having the horizon in the centre of the picture, which is opposite to the normal advice, because this will then be straight. If the picture is balanced, forget the rule-book, and see whether

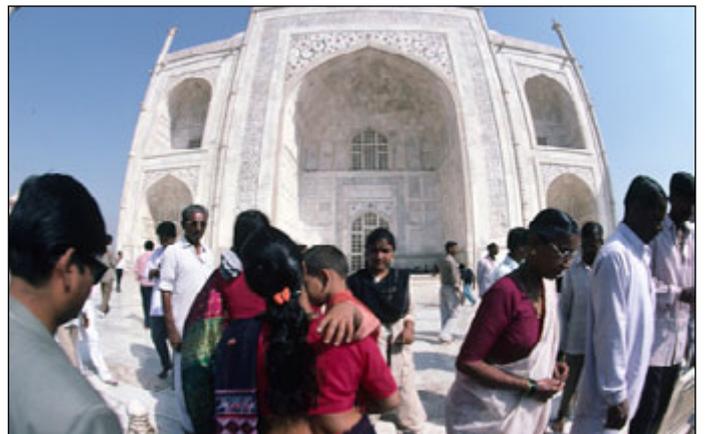
your shots can take this approach.

Another benefit lenses like those made by Minolta in the past for both MD and AF systems, is that they have built-in filters. The yellow and the orange are really effective with black and white photography, but can also be used as a creative tool when using colour film. You can use the benefit





There are many compositions which can look natural with a 16mm fisheye. Above, suspension bridge in Portugal – note how the radial lines appear straight. Below left, paperweights – round objects which work well in curved renderings. Below right, central horizon at the Taj Mahal. It's clearly a fisheye shot but still acceptable.



that the lens will focus to items very close to it, by taking close-up shots. With the great depth of field, this means that subjects can be kept sharp, especially if you use depth of field techniques to maximise this.

'People photography' is extremely popular, and another occasion when you can find the fisheye of enormous benefit, is when you find yourself in the middle of throngs of people, and want to portray the vastness of the crowds. Once again, you will need to be very disciplined and watch for extraneous details creeping into the shot. You will end up with some aspects of the crowds becoming very dominant – usually the nearest heads, but this effect can have its own impact.

Because the front element of this

lens extends beyond the lens rim, it is very easy to catch dirt or fingerprints on it. A soft cover is provided to protect against this, but it still happened to me. The small amount of smudge did however significantly increase the flare, so I could see the impact, and it became really necessary to correct this. I preferred to send it back for cleaning and checking to Konica Minolta, rather than risk using any chemicals to clean it myself.

So, by using this specialist lens, creativity can be encouraged, in terms of breaking the rules, and building up individual style. This is quite the converse of what many people think. If you feel like giving it a try, you could always hire one, before deciding to buy it – so good luck!



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Dynax (Maxxum) series autofocus SLRs

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7000/5000 upgraded by fitting BH-70L big battery holder	4 x AA

Minolta Manual focus SLRs

XM, XE-1, XE-5, XD-7, XD-5, XG-1, XG-2, XG-9, XGM, X-9	2 x EPX-76
X-300, X-300s, X-320s, X-500, X-700	or 2 x 10L14
SRT-101, 100, 202, 303, 100x, 101b, 303b, SR7, SR1 meter	1 x PX625

Minolta Vectis (Advanced Photo System)

Vectis S-1, Vectis S-100, Vectis 40	2 x CR2
Vectis 3000, 300(L), 30, 25, 2000, 200, 260, 20, 10, UC, Weathermatic, GX1	x CR2

Minolta Himatic compacts and earlier rangefinder models

Minolta AL-F, AL-E, Himatic 7, 7s, 9 and 11	1 x PX625
Himatic 7S-II, 5, G, G2, C	1 x PX675
Himatic E, F	1 x PX640
Himatic S, S2, GF, AF, AF2, AF2M	2 x AA
Minolta CLE (Leica M mount system)	2 x 10L14 or EPX-76

Autofocus and Focus-free compacts (modern series)

140EX, 135EX, 105EX, Panorama Zoom 28	2 x CR123A
90EX, 70C, Weathermatic DL	1 x DL223A
Riva Zoom 110, 160, 160c, 150, 130, 125, 130c	1 x CR123A
80c, 150c	1 x CR2
115EX, 75W, 70W, 70EX, 90EX, RZ70, Pico, Mini, Panorama	1 x CR123A
105i, 90C, Twin 28, AF Zoom 65, AF Zoom 90, AF Tele Super	1 x 2CR5
AF 5, 100AF, AF35EX, AF35, AF35C, Riva 35, Zoom 60	2 x AA
AF-101R, AF-20R, F-10/BF, C-10, Memory Maker	2 x AA
FS-E, FS-EII, FS-35, AF-E	2 x AA
AF-C	4 x 10L14
AF-T	2 x AA or DL223A
AF-Z, AF-EII, AF-DL, AF Tele 60, AF-SP	4 x AAA or DL223A
TC-1	1 x CR123A

Minolta & Konica Minolta Digital Cameras

Dimage V, Dimage EX, Dimage 2300, 2330, E201	4 x AA 1300+mAh (NiMH)
RD3000, DiMAGE 5, DiMAGE 77i/7Hi, S304/404/414	4 x AA 1600+mAh (NiMH)
Dimage Z1, Z2, Z3, Z10, GT530	4 x AA 1600+mAh (NiMH/Alkaline)
X21, X31	2 X AA 1600+mAh (NiMH/Alkaline)
F100, F200, F300, E203, E223, E323, X20*	1 CR-V3 or 2 x AA* 1600+mAh (NiMH)
RD-175	1 x 2CR5
Dimage A1, A2, A200, Dynax 7 Digital	NP400 Lithium-Ion
X, Xi, Xt, Xg	NP200 Lithium-Ion
X50	NP700 Lithium-Ion
G400, G530, G600	NP600 Lithium-Ion
G500	NP500 Lithium-Ion

(NP500 and 600 are identical except for capacity and may be interchanged with the Konica DR-LB4)

Konica Film Cameras

Hexar RF	2xCR2
Hexar AF	1x2CR5
Lexio 115, 70, 70W	1xCR2
Mermaid	1xCR123A
Z-up 60e, 80e, 100W, 115e, 125e, 130e, 150e	1xCR2
Z-up 2B, 80	1x2CR5
Z-up 70 Super, 70 VP, 110 VP, 110 Super, 120 VP	1xCR123A
Z-up 135 Super, 140 Super, 150 Super, 150 VP	1xCR123A
Revio, Revio II, Revio CL, Revio Z2, Revio Z3	1xCR2

Konica Digital Cameras

Q-mini, QM-3501E	3xAA
KD-100	2xAA
KD-220Z, 200Z	2xAA, 1xCRV3
Q-M200	3xAA, 1xPX-LB1
Q-M-100, M100V	4xAA
KD-300Z	4xAA
KD-300Z	1xDR-LB1
KD-3300	2xAA, 1xCRV3
e-mini, C2	2xAAA
e-miniD, e-miniM	2xAA
KD-25, 20m, 30m	2xAA
KD-420Z	NP-600
KD-310Z, 410-Z, 400Z, 500Z, 510Z	1xDR-LB4

Minolta Exposure Meters

Flashmeter V, Autometer IV F, Spotmeter F	1 x AA
Flashmeter IV	1 x AA + 1 x PX28
Autometer III F, III and II; Spotmeter M	1 x PX28
Colormeter II, Flashmeter II	1 x MN1604
Flashmeter III	6 x 10L14
Booster II	1 x PX28

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4SR44	£4.50	£8.75 (also called PX28)		

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