

## 2023-2024 SEASON >>>

*Roger's report*

*The review*

*Leslie Holmes Travels with my camera*

*Competition news*

*Federation & FIAP news*



*"African fish eagle"  
- Leslie Holmes*

## A Monthly Insight into the activities of Stroud Camera Club

# STROUD CAMERA CLUB



## Contacts >>>

## Welcome to Stroud Camera Club

*We hope you enjoy this Newsletter. If you want any help with matters relating to the club, or your photography in general, we are here to help.*

Chairman: Roger Matthews

Secretary: Trish Bloodworth

Treasurer: Leslie Holmes

Competitions: Richard Atkinson

Publicity: René Cason

Programme: Ali Garrett

**For more information, including contact emails for all the committee please go to [www.stroudcameraclub.co.uk](http://www.stroudcameraclub.co.uk)**



*"A waxwing winter" – Allan Jeffcutt*

## Roger's Report

We may be a medium-sized club on the edge of the WCPF area, but Stroud Camera Club continues to punch above its weight with another excellent result at this year's WCPF Inter-Club competitions for prints and digital images - finishing in the top 20% in both disciplines. While this is a great result, I am sure we can do even better next year - one of the most rewarding things about being your Chairman, has been to witness the steady improvement among many members of the Club. Congratulations to all the members who represented our Club this year.

Competitions, be they external or part of our competition diary, are great for getting us out with our cameras and perfecting our art, but Members' Nights are also a great opportunity to experiment and try things that may fall outside our normal areas of interest. As I write this, and with only a couple of days to go before the Triptych/Creative evening, I have just finished my contribution - nothing outstanding as you will have seen by the time you read this, but a great opportunity to practise using tools and techniques that add to our repertoire and may help lift your next competition image to the next level. I encourage all of you to take advantage of these opportunities and to continue to develop as photographers. Let's knock

Bristol and Dorchester off their top-slots when we head back to Exeter next year!

With the AGM around the corner (11 Apr), I am delighted that (subject to election) we have identified a new Competition Secretary - thank you Kerrin. However, we continue to seek volunteers who are prepared to step forward to help run our amazing Club. Our next priority is to find a successor to Ali as Programme Secretary. Ali has done a fantastic job in pulling together our programme for the past two years and already has most of next year's programme in the bag but is now ready to step back. If you would like to join the team as Programme Secretary, please contact myself or Ali to discuss further - the Club can only thrive with the support of its members!

AND FINALLY – REMEMBER

*Volunteering your opinion is not  
volunteering.*

## Tales with my Camera – Trish Bloodworth

A heart rate at the start of the evening, of 145 was just a small indication of the nerves I had to be hosting a whole session as the invited speaker. Ali had persuaded me to give a talk having heard that I had spoken to Gloucester Camera Club earlier last year. That was far less scary – and especially as I forgot to switch on the microphone, so no-one heard what I was saying anyway!

Wanting to do something that would be of interest to as many members as possible I showed around 170 of my images, some just my personal work, and some my salon entries. The images really followed my “journey” since 2018 when I set out to become a more competent photographer. As many people know, I love my photography and am always trying out ideas and different genres, so I covered a lot of ground in my talk from composites and ICM, to “straight” images. I think people did also enjoy my “out-takes” proving it is not as straightforward as it sometimes looks! The evening ended with a brief talk through of some of my “workflow” and edits, which I’m hopeful people did manage to follow along with.

As I’ve said before I certainly wouldn’t have done any of this without the support and camaraderie of Stroud Camera Club members – so a massive thank you and for the lovely comments you have also shared with me. Onwards and upwards!

## The review >>>

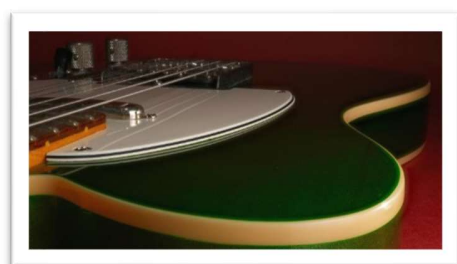
### 15 Minute Image – Mark Evans

*A very last-minute change in evening with our scheduled speaker Graham Walton sadly cancelling on Wednesday afternoon due to ill health. The committee sprang into action and offered up various ideas as a substitute, but ultimately it was a recorded talk from Mark Evans that saved the day.*

*Mark, who runs [www.camversation.co.uk](http://www.camversation.co.uk) kindly allowed us to download his mobile phone talk free of charge to show at our club night. Mark guided us on his journey (quite literally as well) with his mobile phone and showed us how he takes photographs that he might not have done with his regular camera. It was fascinating to see how he took quite a standard photograph, but because he knew what he had “seen” he was then able to crop and adjust the photograph using Snapseed to create compelling, storytelling images. As was mentioned he won his camera club digital section with purely mobile phone images – wow!*

*Mark’s use of Snapseed and talking us through how he uses it was very interesting. No use of built in presets, but purely his own edits, often at selective level to really pull out that story from his image. [Brian Dinnage as a user of Snapseed has confirmed that there are excellent online tutorials built into the app.]*

*For anyone interested in the Camversation Community, full details are available at <https://www.camversation.co.uk/>*



*“Squier 60s Classic Vibe Telecaster FSR, in Candy Apple green” – Glyn Heskins (Chairman’s challenge winner)*

## Facebook

### **Why don’t you upload or view some of the member images on our Facebook Group?**

If you are not yet a member, simply click the link within Facebook and answer 3 quite simple questions. Upload your image to the group – ideally for an image post use 2048px on the long side (either height or width) to get the best resolution for anyone viewing.

Be aware of “privacy” rules before posting.

Please “like” and “comment” on members’ posts.

**For more information go to**

**<https://facebook.com/stroudcameraclub>**

## Chairman’s Challenge >>>

The brief – “Produce 3 images that capture your interests other than photography (‘Getting to know you through photography’). The images will be judged on the quality of the latter but will provide an opportunity to combine your interests to paint a picture of who you are.”

The timescale – nearly 2 months.

Last minute entries – lots!

As usual a very entertaining evening, with members sharing via their imagery a little bit about themselves. Who knew we might see David Hamilton as a Strictly Pro, or that we have so many musical members; Glyn and Paul E with amazing guitar collections (and apparent ability too), Richard A with an opera collection that could take a lifetime to watch in entirety, and Jeff with a passion for Elvis. The guitarists are probably outnumbered by the cyclists with Gerry, René and Mick all showing different close-ups of a bicycle.

Chris Organ was absent on the night, and members are still left wondering if he has

managed to retrieve his shoes, or if he is stuck in the mud in just his socks! Kerrin and Carol both shared their love of completely bonkers outdoor experiences – caving and cold-water swimming, respectively.

Roger chose to show the images in the order in which they were received, amazingly Ian’s wood cut jigsaws were not the final entry, Brian D valiantly took that position with his passion for reading – one wonders if perhaps he was so busy reading, he forgot the date! Leslie was not really last, just Roger had momentarily mislaid her entry, of course our envy levels shot up with her “Out of Africa” experiences!

Roger always enters his own challenges and didn’t disappoint with his dedication in consuming fine wine, fine fish and driving a fine car!

A great evening with ultimately Roger awarding a super bottle of wine to Glyn and Trish for their efforts.

## Travels with my camera – Leslie Holmes

I have always loved travelling and photography, and each has been a good excuse for the other. Until recently travelling has been largely tied to family trips, school holidays and limited annual leave, but now our children have left home, and work has become a distant memory my passion for both has taken off – big time. Over the years I have done a few longer exploring trips, photography holidays and joined small group trips as a solo traveller and in March 2022 I did my first wildlife photography trip. This was the beginning of something inspiring and addictive. The combination of a passionate, hard-working, and demanding group lead, other photography geeks for company, amazing scenery and lots of time spent with and watching the animals has been an experience like nothing else.

The company I have travelled with most is Exodus and the trip that got me started was [Photography safari - Kenya](#) led by Paul Goldstein. This trip had been highly recommended by a colleague and it didn't disappoint. It has however ruined me for any other African safari.

I arrived in Nairobi a day early and had a morning in Nairobi National Park as a warmup. I was still recovering from breaking my wrist and was concerned that I would struggle to manage the weight of the camera all day. The park is in the centre of Nairobi and hosts a large variety of animals – not elephants though as it's too small for them to roam and there is the danger, they would have the fences down. I had a guide/driver and a vehicle to myself and as we entered the park was greeted by a huge hippo crossing the road – we really were visitors in their world. We saw rhino, zebra, giraffe, and lions amongst others, but had to stay on the roads and there was lots of jostling for position if there was something interesting. It was fun, but busy and frustrating for photographs, and felt like it had the potential be stressful for the animals, although the drivers did try and move on when it got too much.

Next to the park is [Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage](#) – they rescue baby elephants and raise them to reintegrate back into the wild, with a 95% success rate. At the Nairobi nursery you can join the keepers at feeding time, and watch the babies come down for a bottle of milk and a roll in the mud. I loved it – got to stroke an elephant as it walked by me, got splattered in mud as they played and even managed a few photos. I have also visited [Kobe tough beads](#) and [Kazuri beads](#) both ceramics enterprises that have done a huge amount to support women in local

communities. My first visit to Kenya was not long after covid and the lack of visitors to the country had had a huge detrimental economic impact on local communities and wildlife with an increase in poaching particularly of rhino horn.

If I can I try and arrive a day early as the photography trips are full on and this gives me a bit of time to explore, acclimatise and recover from any jet lag. The trip proper started with an early flight from Wilson airport into the Maasai Mara – this saves a lot of driving time and gives a real sense of how huge the Mara is. The [Twin Otter Plane](#) landed on a dirt track runway with unperturbed zebras and gazelles grazing alongside it. Our safari vehicles and guides were waiting for us by the runway. One vehicle took our main bags to camp, and we piled into the others to start our first game drive – make sure your camera gear is ready and don't even think about stopping to freshen up. There are usually 3-4 people in each vehicle with a Maasai guide/driver and Paul alternates who he has with him each game drive. The trips I have done have had about 8-9 people on them - some non-photographers, but the majority are very keen and experienced photographers, and the array of cameras and lenses is impressive. The Toyota Land Cruisers are specially designed for safari with open sides and tops, pockets for stashing kit and beanbags and flip up sides for resting your camera on. One of the vehicles has a side that can be lowered so you can lie flat for your shots. The first time I was in this one I managed to graze my elbows from too much manoeuvring to get into a good position, but worth it as you are very low and looking eye level to the animals. On the most recent trip, we did get out and walk alongside the vehicle so that we could get down low to photograph giraffes against a dark sky, but usually this is not allowed. Toilet stops or tyre inspections are done behind the vehicle in a safe space. The animals do not associate the vehicles with food, or think of them as threatening, but if you are seen as separate from the vehicle then you could be fair game.

The [Kicheche Safari Camps](#) are all private conservancies with strict rules that benefit both the local communities and wildlife. You can only do a game drive in the conservancy if you are staying in it, which limits the total number of vehicles. You can go off road which gets you very close to the animals and only a small number of vehicles are allowed near the animals at any one time. The animals ignore the vehicles and probably think of us as mobile bushes.

## Federation News

### WCPF Members Exhibition

Now open for entries – closes 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024.

<https://photoexhib.com/wcpfex/login.php>

The entry classes are 3 Digital classes (Open Colour, Open Monochrome, Nature) and 3 Print classes (Open Colour, Open Monochrome, Nature). The cost remains £8 for one class, plus £3 for each additional class.

## Leslie's links

### Photography safari - Kenya

<https://www.exodus.co.uk/trips/kenya-holidays/premium-adventures/kenya-photographic-safari-paul-goldstein-premium-adventure/wyx>

### Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage

<https://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/>

### Kobe Tough Beads

<https://kobetough.com/>

### Kazuri Beads

<https://kazuri.com/>

### Twin Otter Plane

<https://www.airkenya.com/about-us/fleet/de-havilland-canada-dhc-6-300-twin-otter>

### Kicheche Safari Camps

<https://kicheche.com/>

### Patience and Pitfalls in Wildlife

#### Photography

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORN8OCn\\_WNU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORN8OCn_WNU)



Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage

The Camps blend beautifully into their surroundings with gorgeous comfortable tents, shared dining, and communal spaces. The food is delicious, and everything is included from wake-up coffee and biscuits to sundowners and drinks with your meals. The camp staff are lovely and welcoming – it really does feel like nothing is too much trouble and you are very well looked after - from the hot water bottles in the vehicles on the early morning game drive and the cheerful “bush Uber” to escort you to and from your tent in the dark. Wild animals go through the camp, and you hear them around you. We had a hippo snoring very loudly outside our tent in January – well that’s what I told my roommate. Sharing accommodation helps keep the cost down and as we are out so much during the day it suits me.

The days are long and busy, and I wouldn’t have it any other way. We usually meet about 05:30-05:45 for coffee/tea and biscuits before starting the first game drive and set off from the camp in the dark. This year we encountered three large male lions just outside camp and followed them as it got light. This early you have the opportunity for side or back lit photos with dew on the grass and breath and the animals are often more active at daybreak. The guides communicate with each other and usually quickly learn where the best sightings are – cheetahs, leopards, lions, bat eared foxes, servals, cubs, newborn elephants. Last year we witnessed a zebra give birth – 19 minutes from birth to walking – we all felt like proud midwives. If we find an animal with cubs, we might spend most of the game drive with them – watching the cubs play and anticipating if the mother will hunt.

In terms of photography, record shots are great, but aim for something with originality, clear uncluttered backgrounds, and foregrounds, avoid cross-over unless you can claim it’s intimacy. Ask to move when there is foliage or something in the way. If the guide can move to a better spot for everyone they will. When the animal is moving try to have the front leg furthest from you forward – this opens the animal’s chest out and makes it look bigger. Air, dust, and spume all add something to a picture. The guides will spend a lot of time moving the vehicles so that you have the animals walking towards you – avoid retreating bum shots. Trust your guide they are usually very experienced and good at anticipating where an animal might go. Try panning for action shots – not easy but when it works it gives a real sense of speed. Slow shutter can also be used to convey movement, get rid of clutter, and gives a more abstract and unusual shot, but hard to get right. You do need a long lens, at least 400mm, and even that might not get you close enough. A wide-angle

lens is also useful for big sky shots at sunrise and dusk as well as getting animals in their environment. Have a lens cloth available and do check your lenses for dust and rain drops. Most importantly be ready and know your camera, you need to be able to change aperture and shutter speed effortlessly and remember to change them back to your preferred default.

At other times, the action can all be happening right next to the vehicle and using your phone for video can be better at telling the story than a photograph. Keep the videos short and give them a clear beginning, middle and end. Paul suggests have the animal walk into shot and out of shot, rather than trying to follow it. Experiment with timelapse and slow-motion video too. The latter is great for birds taking off and lightning. And finally have fun, put the camera or phone down and just experience being there even during the quiet times it is an amazing place to be.

Breakfast is had on the game drive – with tables set up if quiet or in the vehicles if we’re close to something interesting and we usually head back to camp when it gets hot and bright. This year we had unseasonal rains, which kept the temperature down, and we could stay out longer - bad weather makes for interesting photography. Lunch is at camp and then we are out on another game drive about 3:30 with sundowners at dusk and back at camp just as it is getting dark. In time for a speedy shower and another delicious dinner.

There is downtime between game drives, and this can be useful for downloading and reviewing photos. I have brought a small laptop with me on the last couple of trips and it has been helpful in both backing up photographs and allowing for critique during the trip. Most evenings people are encouraged to share a select few photos for feedback and it’s fascinating seeing what everyone else has done as well as getting ideas for things to try or avoid. Paul shares his pictures and will talk through his workflow, which he keeps as minimal as possible. This video [patience and pitfalls in wildlife photography](#), produced for Chris Packham, introduces both Paul and his views on photography perfectly.



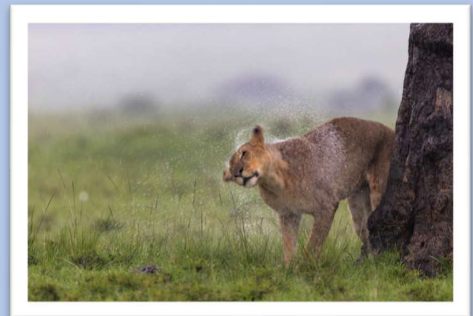
*Newborn Zebra*

I have learnt a lot and thoroughly enjoyed my trips to Kicheche and having had a delicious taste of wildlife photography I am keen to do more – with photography trips last year to India for tigers, Svalbard for polar bears and Antarctica for incredible ice, snow, and penguins. Most of my trips have been with Paul - I know he’s somewhat marmite, but he works incredibly hard to get the best photographic experiences and will push you out of your comfort zone to see things differently and perhaps get photographs that work, and if they don’t it’s only a photo – you were there. I still think I can take better pictures and I am very aware of all things I miss or could try differently, and because of this I keep going back to try again. I have some more photography trips planned this year and I am hoping I can keep going as long as my knees and finances hold out – I absolutely love it.

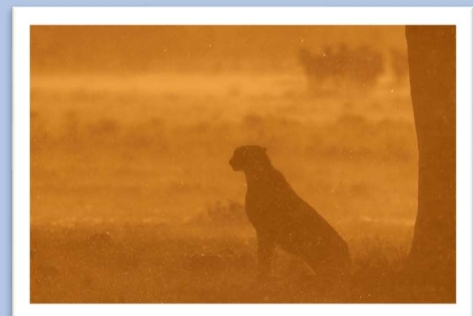
*Below are just a small selection of Leslie’s super images.*



*Cheetah cubs – slow shutter*



*Shaking the rain off*



*Cheetah in the rain at sunset*

## Open Competition – Top Digital



“Poking Up” – Leslie Holmes

## Open Competition – Top Print



“A selfy in Sicily” – Geoff Perrett

*“Photography makes you see.” - Annie Leibovitz*

# 2024 competitive thoughts...

Open number 5 was a high-scoring event with some memorable images in both the Digitally Projected and Prints sections. The guest judge for the competition was Steve Varman LRPS (<https://stevevarman.co.uk/>) whose critique of every image was detailed, thoughtful and much appreciated by the club members.



"Hong Kong Market Steps" – Carol Barchou

## OPEN No 5

Another high standard competition with plenty of genres represented within the awarded images.

There were a wide range of members scoring 17's in both digital and print - so a high standard competition overall.

### Prints

- 20 - Geoff Perrett - A Selfie in Sicily
- 19 - Leslie Holmes - Cheetah Cubs
- 19 - Leslie Holmes - Chinstrap Penguin
- 18 - Roger Matthews - Bite!
- 18 - Jeff Wilson - The Portrait
- 18 - Jeff Wilson - The Beauty in Black and White

- Roger Matthews
- Jeff Wilson
- Richard Atkinson
- Carol Barchou
- Trish Bloodworth
- René Cason
- Kerrin Malone
- Steve Vines
- Derrick Whitmore
- Scott Antony
- Annie Blick
- Ian Peters
- Mick West

### Digital

- 20 - Leslie Holmes - Poking Up
- 19 - Trish Bloodworth - Viva Magenta
- 18 - Trish Bloodworth - Wild colt foal
- 18 - Leslie Holmes - African Fish Eagle

All images are available on our website – just look under "Results".

coming up >>>

## March 2024

1. Thursday, March 7, 2024 - Battle with Newent and Forest of Dean
2. Thursday, March 14, 2024 - Peter Crane ARPS - Street photography
3. Thursday, March 21, 2024 - Competition No. 6 - Monochrome
4. Tuesday, March 26, 2024 - Back To Basics
5. Thursday, March 28, 2024 - Battle with Cheltenham and Cirencester

## Next Competition

21<sup>st</sup> March 2024

MONO

Hand in and enter by 7<sup>th</sup> March.

## INTERNATIONAL SALON NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS to the following members who have had acceptances into International or National (BPE) Photographic Salons/Exhibitions!

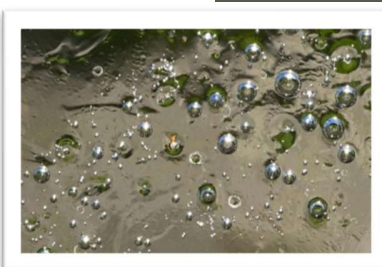
Mark Halling – Bristol & Photo Group Art Nouveau

René Cason – Bristol & Maitland (Australia)

Trish Bloodworth – Bristol & Maitland (Australia)

## CONGRATULATIONS

Please send details of your acceptances or other external "wins" to [secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk](mailto:secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk)  
Apologies if you are missed here – please let me know so you can be added next time.



"Bubbles in ice" – David Hamilton

## ADVANCE WARNING

- IMAGES YOU WILL NEED!
  - Mono & Image of the Year
  - Member nights:
  - Pattern, texture, Many
  - A few unseen images for the 3-way Team Challenge

UPLOAD YOUR IMAGES – to your gallery and our Facebook Group

## High Scoring Prints

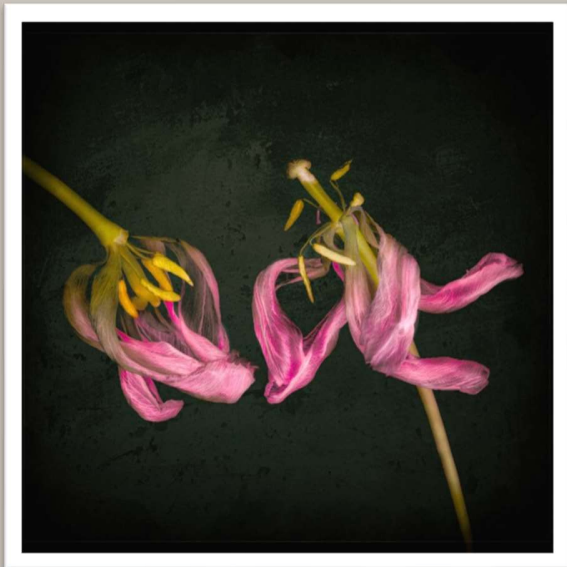


“Chinstrap penguin” – Leslie Holmes

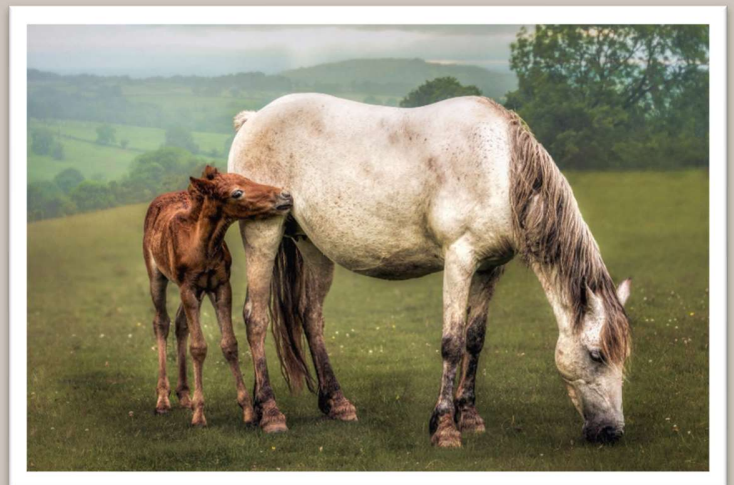


“Cheetah cubs” – Leslie Holmes

## High Scoring Digital



“Viva Magenta” – Trish Bloodworth EFIAP



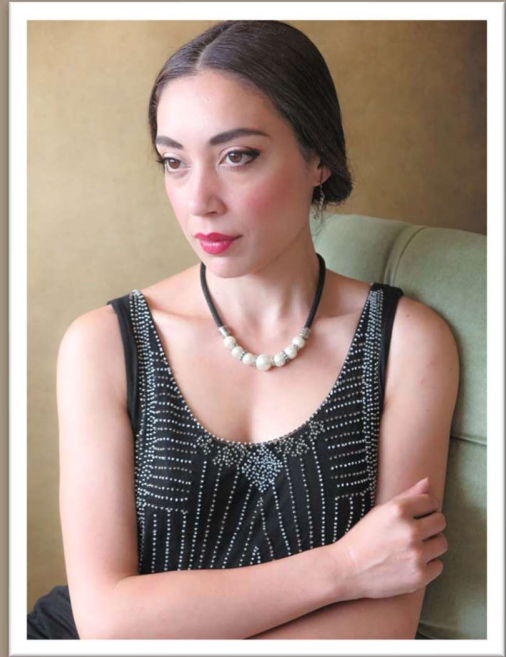
“Wild colt foal” – Trish Bloodworth EFIAP

*"The eye should learn to listen before it looks." - Robert Frank*

## More High Scores from the Print Competition



*"Bite" – Roger Matthews*



*"The portrait"  
– Jeff Wilson*



*"The beauty in Black and White" – Jeff Wilson*

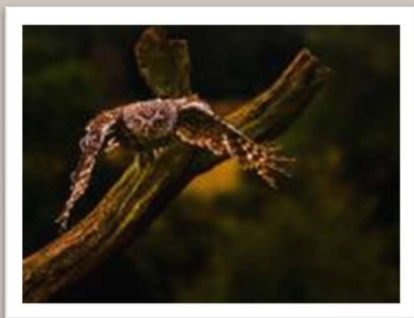
## Some of the scores of 17 from the print competition



*"Painting by numbers" – Kerrin Malone*



*"Winter Storm" – Steve Vines*



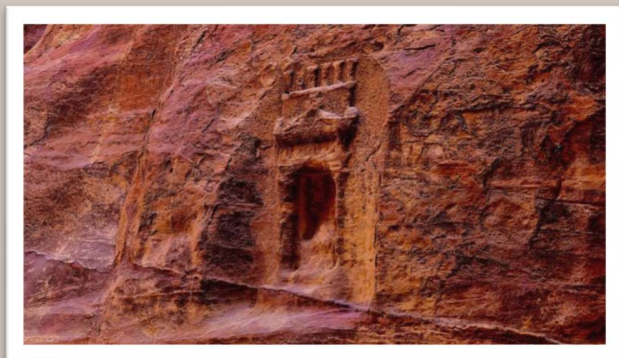
*"Little Owl approaching" –  
René Cason AFIAP*



*"Bullfinch" – Richard Atkinson*



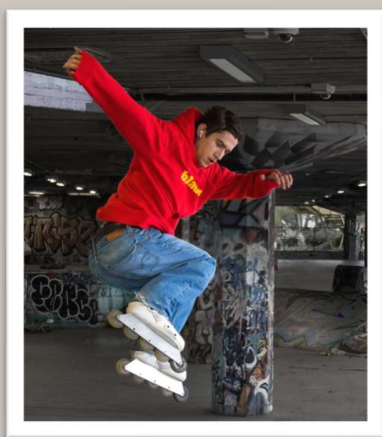
A selection of some 17's from the digital



*"Nabatean doorway" – Scott Anthony*



*"Kingfisher eye on the prize" – Mark Halling*



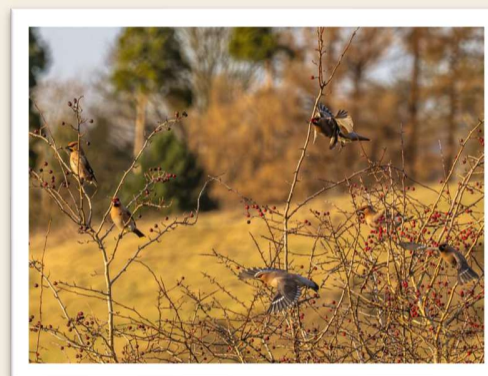
*"Skater" – Mick West*



*"City skyline" – Annie Blick*



*"Boats" – Brian Dinnage*



*"Feasting waxwings" – Ian Peters*



*"St David's" – Roger Matthews*

See more on our website: [www.stroudcameraclub.co.uk](http://www.stroudcameraclub.co.uk)