

Forest of Galtres Camera Club

Monday January 21st

Pushing Photography to The Limits

Emma Littlefair

Emma Littlefair BSc, President of Ripon Camera Club, considers herself a 'bit of a geek'. Others would say she was an enthusiast with a flair for turning even mediocre images into something dynamic and unexpected. Photoshop is the prime software through which she achieves this.



Emma Littlefair

She began by making the point that manipulation of photographs is almost as old as photography itself. Back in 1858, Henry H. Robinson combined five different negatives to create Fading Away. There is an image of General Ulysses S. Grant (circa 1902) which is a combination of three images. Worth googling to find these images and more.

Emma, inspired by her father, wanted to take photographs of her children and not just the happy snaps that are generally taken. She began to search for ways to show the characters of her children through the images she took. This led to learning about layering, masking and brushing.

The evening was in two parts. In the first part, Emma shared a variety of images and in the second, explained some of the techniques she used to create them. She began with one of the first images she had taken of steps on Holy Island. She showed the original straight from the camera shot. Then the final version that was the result of processing through Photoshop. Not perfect, as she pointed out, but the beginning of learning what could be done. She is clearly a person of imagination and creativity. An idea will develop and to produce the desired image, Emma will have to find the subject she wants. Then through Photoshop, perhaps isolate it and use layering, brushing, masking and filters etc to create the image that was formed in

her head. A photograph of her laid on the ground to take an image of one of her favourite sports cars shows photography comes before comfort. After processing, the effect Emma wanted to achieve, can be seen below.



The image of a tornado impacting on her home, required about 300 layers to achieve the desired effect. Through her photography and processing, Emma seeks to show the viewer the feelings of people, their personality, the impact of an event, sometimes a sense of the apocalyptic and the bizarre. The ordinary image turned into the extraordinary, some having the same reward as a sensitive painting. Landscapes become magical. The energy an acrobat requires to reach high in the air before somersaulting lends itself so well to Emma's creativity.

The process of printing, the type of paper used, both impact on an image to complement the effect that was sought. Emma uses a Canon Pro 100. She pointed out that if a print is not to deteriorate too soon, then quality printing and paper is essential. She showed members the importance of the later through the same image printed onto different papers. She will use sometimes, pearl, maybe canvas but particularly, titanium lustre.

There are many tutorials available on Youtube. Books, such as Steve Caplin's How to Cheat in Photoshop CC, Adobe Photoshop CC Classroom in a Book and Scott Kelby's Digital Photography are available who prefer the book approach to learning new skills.

The images were striking, the talk engaging and Emma inspiring.

Many thanks to her.

Next week, will be a Members Workshop.