

Newsletter, November 2020



Shutters coming down on Katoomba's Camera House

The Upper Blue Mountains is losing a huge slice of its incredible photographic history when Camera House on Katoomba's main street closes its doors for the last time on November 21.

Steve and Maureen Norris have run an independent retail photography business in Katoomba for 26 years – 21 of them under the Camera House umbrella. They've been helped in their business by all three of their children, Matthew, Vicky and Michelle, and their granddaughter Tyler (16) who works in the shop after school.

Retail photography is a tough business in today's world of smartphones with built-in cameras, and social media sites like Flickr and Instagram, grabbing much of the market.

Yet, Camera House still thrives –

pumping out prints, selling cameras, bags, tripods and other gear, and running workshops. Sadly, Maureen's illness is the reason the shop is closing.

But what a legacy the Norrises leave. "Steve's seen the business through the whole transition from film to digital to smartphones. Huge technological changes," says Carol Thompson, who's worked in the shop for three years.

Camera House is a huge part of the upper Blue Mountains community, says Angela Doorley, who's worked for the Norrises for almost 10 years. "Some people are real regulars ... they come in once, twice, three times a week. They've been sent photographs of their grandchildren to their phones and they want us to print them.

"The technology's a real challenge for them and it's something the other stores can't help them with," Angela says.

It is these personalised touches that have reduced some of their regular customers to tears in the few weeks since Steve and Maureen announced the closure. "I've had so many customers in the last month literally crying at the counter because we're closing, and why we're closing, because we've made so many friends," Steve says.

Strangers are the beneficiaries of the personalised touch, too. Steve tells the story of one customer, a tourist, who wanted some shots printed from her iPhone but needed help. Being helpful "Maureen brought over a cable to attach her phone to the [processing]



Steve Norris at Camera House. Photo: Michael Peck.

machine and plugged it in to the machine,” Steve says. To Maureen’s astonishment “the customer put the other end of the cable into her ear!”

Needless to say, the customer left the shop with the printed shots she desired, and some very amused staff.

In the late 1990s, Steve was working as a professional photographer, which was tough going with a wife and three children to support, so he and Maureen decided to move into retail – just as the whole photographic industry was undergoing the biggest changes in its history – the rapid switch from film to digital camera and processing.

The pair bought Niagra Photographics, a Kodak laboratory opposite Katoomba station, that was formerly Souvenir Snapshots.

Their first premises was a tiny little space underneath Gloucester Flats on Katoomba Street. “It was like a dog kennel,” Steve says. “We had the lab machine, the processor, the printing machine ... a counter and room for two customers. There was a cupboard in one corner with louvre doors and one person could stand in there – that’s where we made our tea and coffee.”

They lasted three years in the cramped conditions before moving to No. 88 Katoomba Street where they traded for

Those were the days – not so long ago. From the Lithgow Mercury, March 2001, before iPhones killed the market for point and before VHS slid into obsolescence with the increasing availability of ever-cheaper digital storage media.

Camera House
Katoomba 88 Katoomba St, Katoomba 2780
Phone 4782 5452

RICOH RZ-105SF DATE
A high quality camera at an amazing low price! 38 to 105 autofocus zoom, intelligent 'red-eye' reduction flash, automatic film wind, Creative Picture Modes, programmed auto exposure. It even has a handy DATE BACK feature and LCD information panel.
WITH 'DOUBLE-UP' 4 YEAR AUSTRALIAN WARRANTY.
HOT! \$199

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Canon EOS 3000 AUTOFOCUS
28-80 LENS Fantastic value! Full auto Single Lens Reflex camera with autofocus 28-80 Canon zoom lens. Auto creative modes and Manual exposure. 30 second to 1/2000th of a second shutter.
2 YEAR WARRANTY, 2x36 EXP. FILMS, 'EYES OF EOS' CD ROM, 'DOUBLE UP' PRINT BONUS.
\$549

Kodak DC3400 An easy to use two megapixel digital camera with autofocus zoom lens, built-in flash and Self Timer. Bundled with an 8MB card and you get an extra 10MB card too. High quality photos!
FREE KODAK 10MB PICTURE CARD while stocks last 2 TOTAL REWARD POINTS#
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FINO 120 SUPER Look through the viewfinder, frame your subject then zoom in close with the powerful 38-120mm lens. You simply push the button, the camera will automatically take bright, clear photos. *Buy it now and also receive a pair of Samsun 8x21 Binocs.
BONUS 8x21 BINOCULARS, 4 YEAR WARRANTY
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SHARP VL-PD6 The brilliant digital camcorder with 10x Optical (200x Digital) zoom, detachable 2.5" colour screen for remote filming. O LUX video and digital still image recording to Smart Card. *Buy it now at Camera House and receive a Sharp 6 Head stereo VCR at no extra cost!
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SAMSUNG VEGA 140 DATE Samsung have combined advanced fully automatic features with a powerful Schneider telephoto 38-140mm zoom and single 'Claf' mode for total ease. European Award Winner.
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FREE SHARP VC-H705 HI-FI VCR PLUS...
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The Lithgow Mercury, Saturday March 24, 2001

nine years. Their independent business has been part of the Camera House business model for about 21 years. “We wouldn’t have survived without them,” Steve says.

While business was going well at No.88 the premises wasn’t big enough to display all the goods it needed to make a sufficient turnover. Meanwhile, the whole photography industry was struggling with digital.

It was time to go big or go bust, the Norrises decided. They risked refinancing and moved the business to its current premises across the road at No.69 Katoomba Street, in a building that was three times the size but not that much more in rent.

“It was very scary,” Steve says of taking on the bigger risk. “One of the heads in the industry – [the boss of Maxwell Industries, then importers of Nikon] – said it was one of the gutsiest moves he’d seen in the industry. We won dealer of the year for Camera House that year.”

Since then, the arrival of smartphones has crushed sales of lower priced compact cameras – “the bread and butter of our sales” – because margins on top-end cameras are so small. “The industry’s never been tougher,” Steve says, but Camera House has stayed the course and Steve admits it’s a hard call to close.



Closing down! There are big reductions on cameras, lenses, tripods and stands at this familiar landmark for all Blue Mountains photographers. Photo: Michael Peck

In terms of the Norrises' legacy, there are the hundreds of customers – regular and not-so-regular – with their memories of picking up photographs of births, engagements, graduations, weddings – all those big life moments. And all the staff members who were given a career break by Steve and Maureen.

But there's more. The Norrises inherited the negatives from Souvenir Snapshots (or what was left of them

after a flood in the previous owner's garage, where the negatives were stored in rusty biscuit tins). All these negatives are being given to the Blue Mountains Historical Society on the shop's closure, and in turn will be handed over, for permanent safekeeping, to the National Archives of Australia in Canberra. Included are the negatives from Queen Elizabeth's visit to Katoomba in 1954.

There are more surprises lurking in the

archives for historians and other researchers. "Katoomba was apparently one of the first towns in Australia to do street photography," Steve says.

"Every photographer has his patch on Katoomba street. They'd take

25% off new cameras and lenses

50% off tripods and stands

Store closes 21 November

comes in with an old shot that has a number on the back and we can match it to a negative and identify the subjects". It is hoped that the historical society and/or the

National Archives

will complete Maureen's digital archiving of the negatives.



Queen Elizabeth II at Leura Station during the 1954 Royal Tour.

photographs of people as they walked by and an hour later [Editors: an hour!!] you could buy the print."

The archive also has weddings galore but the index has long since gone, so the people can't be identified but – and this is Maureen's particular area of passion – "occasionally someone

So, when you see the roller shutters come down on Camera House for the last time, it is not the end of the story: it's the beginning of a new, untold story.

Liz Morgan



Paul Rowe



Sometimes mistakes work out! This shot of a native sedge known as curly wig, or grandfather's beard, was taken on a windy spring morning, out on a track in dappled light – not ideal conditions for macro.

Add an extension tube to the mix, and

the chances of success were pretty slim. And yet, I was there, I had a new/old lens to test, and the early spring growth demanded attention.

Checking the images on the back of the camera it was apparent pretty early on that the crispy, sharp, “classic”

macro shots just weren't going to happen. But the images were appealing in other ways, showing movement, life and abstraction – much more interesting than what I'd started off chasing.

To me this was one of those times

where an open mind and a flexible agenda helped turn what would have been a miserable failure into a rewarding, enjoyable session.

Pentax K1, Takumar 50mm with 30mm extension tube.

Alan Daniel



Around the time I was compiling images for my slideshow of 'My Favourite Place – Home', I noticed my resident Blue Tongue in the part of my garden that is mainly original undisturbed bush.

I raced indoors to get my camera, checking settings as I quietly crept back to the same spot. Luckily, he/she was still there. The day was bright and

the lizard was cruising around in the sunshine, probably seeking insects.

I didn't want to frighten him/her away but needed to keep finding the right position for a half-decent shot whilst keeping enough distance. My all-purpose Olympus 14-150mm lens helped here as I was able to zoom right in.

I noticed the tongue flashing out from

time to time so changed my settings to a faster shutter speed of 1/1000s in the hope of catching a bit of the action.

I did manage a really clear shot of the tongue at this faster speed but ended up choosing this image taken at 1/250s as the lizard's head was sharp but there was just a slight movement in the tongue itself which I felt told a more interesting story.

After several minutes and around 60 frames, the lizard had had enough of my intrusion and ambled into denser, shady vegetation and the shoot was over.

Olympus E-M1 Mark II, 150mm, *f*/10, 1/250s, ISO 200.

Eve Taylor



This section shows all exhibition night images achieving the top score of 15. Click on an image to view it on Flickr.



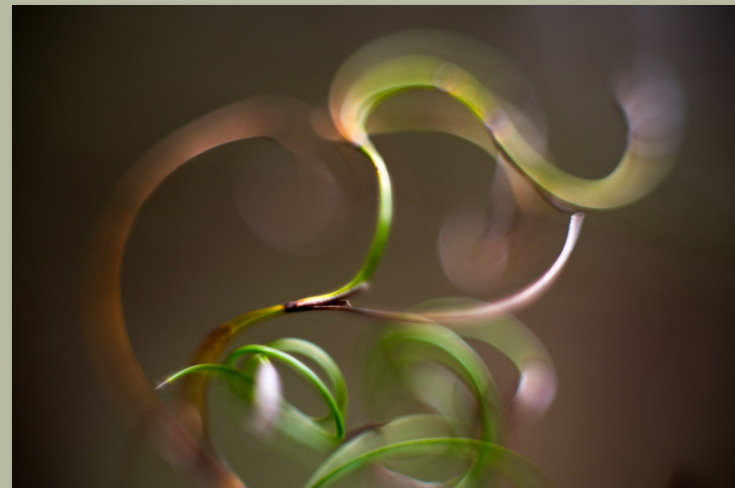
Geoff Atwood: *Bush Jester*



Geoff Atwood: *Harrier in Colour*



Eve Taylor: *Licked!*



Alan Daniel: *Macro Movement*
See more of Alan's photography [here](#).

Head over to Head On

The Head On festival is on for most of November and is showing a huge selection of national and international photographers' works in some 25 locations in Sydney – some of them outdoor venues, with a careful mind on Covid-19 precautions. Numbers for indoor events are naturally restricted, so online pre-booking is necessary for a lot of events.

Among the exhibitions are: Paper Tigers, showcasing 60 of the best Australian photojournalists (Twenty Twenty Six Gallery, Bondi Beach); The New Normal, in which UTS journalism students explore the post-bushfire and drought landscapes in NSW (UTS, Broadway); Silent Agreements-Marrickville-50-Home, in which Emmanuel Angelicas explores his neighbourhood, which he's been photographing since he was seven (ATLAS Community Centre, Marrickville) and Wildlife Photographer of the Year at the Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney CBD.

That's just for starters. There are openings, talks and online videos and sessions. See the full program [here](#).

Liz Morgan



Norman Seeff: *Robert Mapplethorpe and Patti Smith, New York City, 1969*, one of the images in the exhibition *Every Picture Tells A Story* – a collection of the most iconic photographs in music history and the stories behind them. Blender Gallery, 2884 Wollombi Road, Wollombi, NSW 2325, to 24 November.

Truth in Fire, at Nowra



Tim Georgeson: *Untitled*, from the Truth in Fire series, 2019-20.

If you happen to be trundling down the NSW coastline this summer, there's an exhibition on in Nowra that is worth checking out.

Truth in Fire is a project by filmmaker and photographer Tim Georgeson and Guringai artist Amanda Jane Reynolds, in collaboration with local

Indigenous knowledge holders and the Firestick Alliance, created in response to last summer's catastrophic bushfires in the region.

The exhibition runs from 11 December to 30 January. More details [here](#).

Liz Morgan

Creatures of Flight and the Night Exhibition

The beauty of Australian birdlife has been captured in an exhibition, *Creatures of Flight and the Night*, now on display at The Blue Mountains Botanic Garden by acclaimed photographer, David Ongley.

On now until Sunday 13 December.
More details [here](#).

Lisa Buchan

Wild Orchid Watch



For those who are out and about, why not add some citizen science to the day by joining in the Wild Orchid Watch (WOW) project. WOW is a citizen science project designed to collect,



record and share scientific information about Australian native orchids.

Why do orchids matter? Australia has the world's most diverse terrestrial orchid flora. However, many orchid species are threatened. They are highly susceptible to environmental change, are taxonomically complex, and many

questions about their taxonomy and ecology remain unanswered.

Orchids are often cryptic, population sizes vary seasonally and are widely distributed across Australia.

This makes it impossible for researchers alone to gather the necessary information to analyse

distribution and abundance and assign conservation status.

For more details on how to get involved visit the website [here](#).

Lisa Buchan

APS National Exhibition

The Australian Photographic Society's National Exhibition – Nature 2020 – is open for entries in three categories: Open Nature, Wildlife, and Macro.

Up to four images can be submitted in each section.

Entry for APS members is \$6, and \$26 for non-APS members.

The closing date is **29 November**. For more information, please click [here](#).



Jeffrey Venning AFIAP FAPS: *Crushing Seeds*, 5th APS Nature National 2018.



WildNature Photo Expeditions

Photography Workshops and Tours with Michael Snedic

With overseas travel pretty much postponed indefinitely due to COVID, Michael Snedic, owner and operator of

WildNature Photo Expeditions, is offering a new series of photography workshops and tours within Australia.

With borders starting to open bookings are filling up so you are advised to get in early.

The following workshops are currently available:

- 7 Day Carnarvon Gorge, QLD
- 8 Day Kakadu, NT
- 7 Day Waterfall Way, NSW
- 5 Day Cradle Mountain, TAS
- 5 Day Lamington, QLD.



For more information, click [here](#).

Michael Peck



Lesya Kim: Tyumen, Russia 2020, on [Flickr](#).



Man Ray: *Noire et Blanche*, originally published in French *Vogue* in 1926, sold for a record-breaking €2.6m in November 2017, surpassing the previous record for classic photographs set earlier that year by Ray's hand-painted photograph *Portrait of a Tearful Woman* (1936).

Man Ray in Fashion

Very few fashion photographers, like the late [Peter Lindbergh](#), have broken from a generally documentary approach to create images beyond the transitory. Man Ray was certainly one.

In 1920, following his third failed exhibition in New York, Man Ray abandoned “all hope of getting anywhere with painting” and moved to Paris, associating there with the Dada group. *La chevelure* (1929, right), like much of his photography, was influenced by Dada and Surrealism.

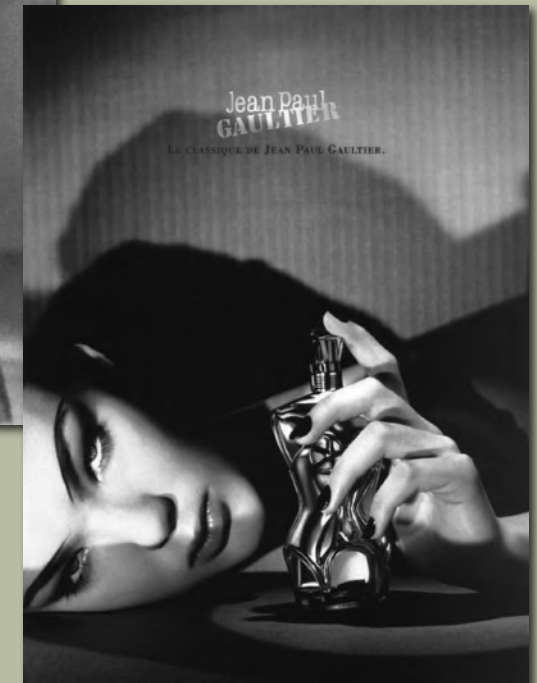
Ray's move coincided with fashion

magazines increasing the space they devoted to photographic images. In the 1920s and '30s his photographs for magazines like *Harper's Bazaar* transformed fashion photography, while funding his artistic endeavours.

In 1940 Ray, who was Jewish, wisely relocated to Hollywood. He then abandoned fashion photography to ensure his artistic reputation was not overshadowed by his commercial success. For more information see manraytrust.com, and watch [Man Ray Portraits: Lee Miller's House](#).

Michael Peck





Man Ray: *le visage peint* (c. 1930), with his lover, muse, collaborator and life-long friend Lee Miller (left); fashion shot for *Harper's Bazaar* with unknown models (centre); advertisement for Jean Paul Gaultier's perfume "Classique" (right) references Ray's iconic *Noire et Blanche*.

Aerial Photography Award

In its inaugural year, the Aerial Photography Awards attracted entries from 65 countries across 22 categories, including Man-made, Nature, People, Fine Art, Editorial, and Real Estate.

The entrants were invited to submit their best images captured using drones, helicopters, kites, balloons, or airplanes.

The jury comprised of 12 members including Sydney based photographer Hulia Boz.

Boz believes that aerial photography is a perfect combination of colour, line, and geometry.

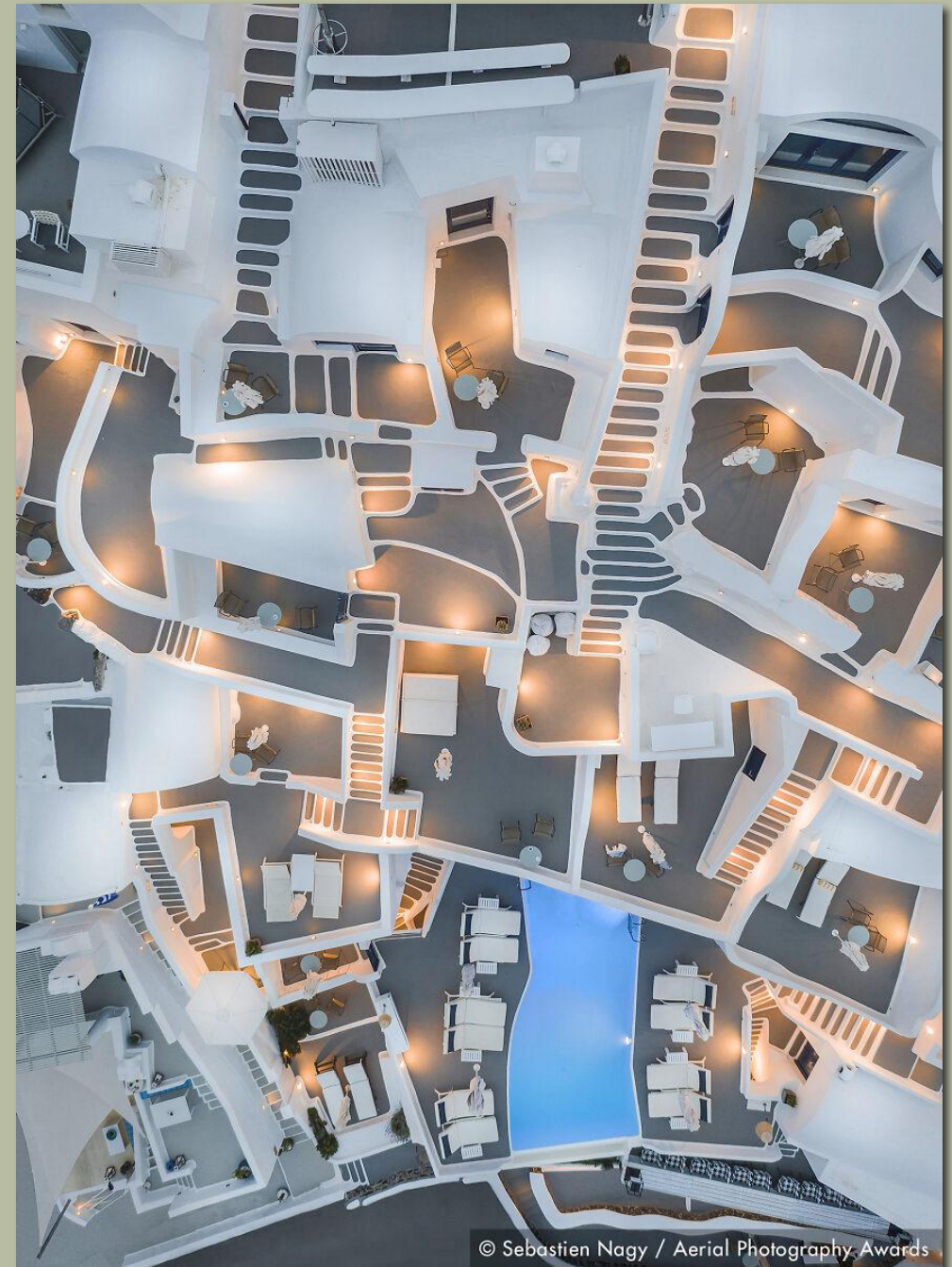
The title “Aerial Photographer of the Year 2020” was awarded to Belgian photographer Sebastien Nagy as he was awarded in six categories with a high average score. See one of his winning images on the following page.

Australia was represented by Brad Wallis who received second place in the “people” category (right).

To see all of the winning entries, please click [here](#).

Lisa Buchan





Sebastian Müller: *Skyggnisvatn*, first place in landscape category (left); Sebastien Nagy: *Abstract Greece*, first place in architecture category (right).

Micro Macro

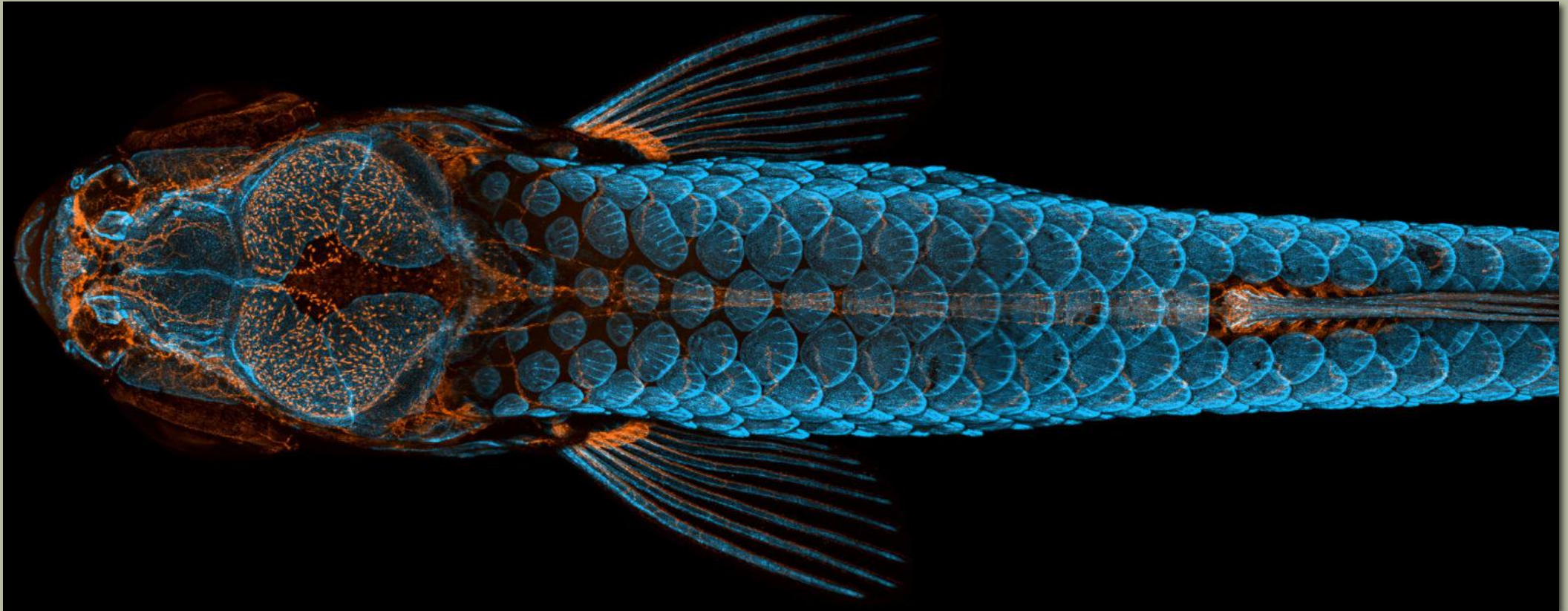
Have you ever wondered what a get when you cross photography and the micro science world – Photomicrography.

open to anyone with an interest in microscopy and photography. This year, more than 2,000 entries were received from 90 countries.

With images that leave you asking if it

juvenile zebra fish was achieved through the stitching together of more than 350 individual images.

The image was acquired using a spinning disk confocal, merging



Daniel Castranova, Dr. Brant M. Weinstein and Bakary Samasa: *Dorsal view of bones and scales (blue) and lymphatic vessels (orange) in a juvenile zebra fish.*

Celebrating its 46th year, Nikon's Small World is regarded as the leading forum for showcasing the beauty and complexity of life as seen through the light microscope.

The Photomicrography Competition is

is animal, mineral or vegetable, there is no limit to what can be photographed under the microscope.

The winning image (above) of a Dorsal view of bones and scales (blue) and lymphatic vessels (orange) in a

together maximum intensity projections of three separate image Z stacks to generate the final reconstructed image.

For all the winners, click [here](#).

Lisa Buchan



Dr. Yuan Ji (Shanghai, China): A 20 million-year-old winged ant, trapped in amber resin, Image of Distinction, Nikon Small World 2020.

O for the wings of a dove

The winners of BirdLife Australia's photography competition have just been announced. More than 6,500 people submitted shots, in several categories: portfolio (winner Claire Greenwell for her charming collection Australian Fairy Tern Behaviour); bird behaviour; bird portrait; birds in the landscape; backyard birds; human impact; a special theme on fairy-wrens, emu-wrens and grass-wrens; a youth category and birds in flight. Check out the stunning range of images [here](#) and think about entering next year!

There have been some terrific images of birds in flight at recent club Exhibition Nights. The newsroom came across a short YouTube video on tips for photographing birds in flight and thought it could be of interest for members who might want to try their hand at this tricky skill. See the video here [here](#).

And if you haven't caught it already, have a squizz at the three peregrine falcon chicks in Collins Street, Melbourne that thousands of people have been following during the hard Covid lockdown in Victoria. Hurry, though, the fledgling are ready to fly. [here](#) and [here](#).

Liz Morgan



Claire Greenwell (portfolio winner): *Prize Catch*. In late spring male Fairy Terns parade with 'prized' fish advertising their unmated status, and their fishing prowess, to potential females.

Winners: Comedy Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Following on from last month's newsletter, the winners for the Comedy Wildlife Photography Awards have been announced.

Did you pick the winning photo ?

Alex Walker's Serian Creatures on the Land Award. Charlie Davidson, with their picture - *Almost Time to Get Up*.

"The raccoon was just waking up and stretching. We have a raccoon in this tree every so often, sometimes for a night and sometimes for a month."

Spectrum Photo Creatures in the Air Award: Tim Hearn, with their picture - *Hide and Seek*.

"As this Azure damselfly slowly woke up, he became aware of my presence. I was lined up to take a profile picture of his wings and body, but quite sensibly the damsel reacted to the human with the camera by putting the Marsh grass stem between me and it. I took the shot anyway. It was only later that I realised how characterful it was. And how much the damselfly looks like one of the muppets."

Creatures Under the Sea Award – and Overall Winner: Mark Fitzpatrick, with their picture - *Terry the Turtle Flipping the Bird*



"I was swimming with this turtle at Lady Elliot Island on the Great Barrier Reef when he flipped me the bird!"

Affinity Photo People's Choice Award: Roland Kranitz, with their picture - *O Sole Mio*

"It's like he was just 'singing' to me! :) She had a very nice voice :)".

Lisa Buchan



New UK Youth Awards

The Positive View Foundation is a British charity supporting the most deprived 16-25 year olds, whose upbringing has led to negative consequences for themselves and others in their community.

Its Youth Empowerment Programme uses photography and film to draw such vulnerable young adults into positive activities – further education, training, employment, or voluntary work – to break the vicious circle of family deprivation and disintegration, gang violence, crime, and drugs.

In May the Foundation launched 'Lockdown: Taking a Positive View', a photography competition for young people aged 16-25 living in the UK to document the issues they have been facing during the coronavirus lockdown. The competition – the UK's first high-profile photography prize exclusively focused on youth – attracted over 3,500 entries.

Alma Rosaz took the first prize (£1,000) for her image *Dreaming of a Beach* (right). Her inspiration "came from reminiscing life before Covid-19. Creating kitsch and theatrical situations in surroundings we were all dreaming of while confined in our homes acted as an escape for me. Not being allowed to see anyone, the only models available were myself and my partner".

See the other winners and highly commended images [here](#).

Michael Peck





Sandra Bartocha: *Watercolours*, on [Flickr](#).

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Webmaster: Greg Wood: gsw333@gmail.com

Submitting images



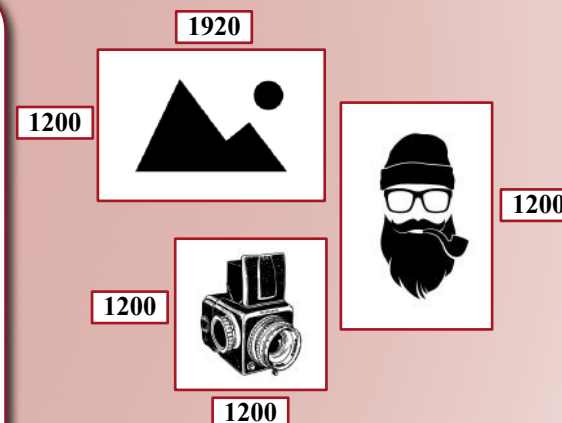
Apple Mail users: after attaching your images please ensure you select

Image Size: Actual Size

Whether submitting a DPI or digital images of your prints the required format is jpg (jpeg) with a **maximum width** of 1920 and a **maximum height** of 1200 pixels.

For a **landscape** image, set the longest side to 1920 ensuring shortest is no more than 1200; for **portrait**, set the longest side to 1200, and for a **square** image, all sides are 1200.

Please name your image file in the following format:
[type] title_initials.jpg e.g. [DPI] Blue Sausage_JX.jpg.
The three image types are [DPI], [CP] and [MP]. Use an **underscore**, not a dash



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