



10_Autumn_11 NEWSLETTER

Digital Photography/Digital Art & Training News

• News about Photoshop Elements • News about training • News about digital cameras & local digital services.

Software News

Photoshop Elements 10

PSE 10 is available to buy from October 7th. I recommend buying it online from Amazon.co.uk. If you already have a copy of PSE (any version), you can save about £10 if you buy an upgrade version rather than the so-called full version. Both types of package are exactly the same but the upgrade requires a serial number from an earlier version.

My advice is much the same as previously, if you have not got version 8 or 9, then it is definitely worth buying. If you have PSE 8 you might like the extra features as version 10 contains all those in 9 as well as its new ones. However, if you have version 9, you might well decide to stick with it. Already, it is rumoured that the next version (PSE 11?) due in about a year's time, may be a significantly different product. PSE 10 comes on a CD with Windows PC and Apple Macintosh computer versions.

I have been using PSE 10 and these are the features that I like about it. If you have PSE 9 and are using it on a PC Notebook (laptop) or a monitor with a display screen resolution of less than 768 pixels in height, the chances are that you have been unable to use the advanced photo-downloader option. PSE 10 has corrected that problem, so this could be a massively useful reason to buy PSE 10.

PSE 10's Guided Photo Edit has added to its choice of semi-automatic ways to edit and improve photos. I like 'depth of field' which is a very quick and easy way to blur background parts of an image whilst highlighting other parts to stand out in sharp focus. This is great to highlight a subject and control how the composition of the whole image works. Also, I like the 'Orton effect' (named after its photographer inventor Michael Orton). Using three sliders, blur, noise and brightness, this editing effect creates a soft, dreamy feel for an image - great with lots of images but especially portraits. 'Picture stack' is another new guided edit that attractively splits an image into a choice of 4, 8, or 12 frames. Then a border width (small, medium, or large) is chosen to go around these frames to give a tiled stack effect. Looks good but not sure if you would tire of these after a while, although you can personalise the look using layers if you open the image in the full editor.

There are lots of new smart brush effects to let you easily change a background or change the visual look and feel of an image. Smart brushes are used to draw over all or part of an image and then apply the chosen effect to it. Two I like are 'pencil sketch' and 'oil pastel'.

The crop tool has been enhanced to give a choice of compositional grid overlays to the image you are cropping. Now, as you resize and crop, you can consider recomposing an image by making a decision about the 1/3rd / 2/3rd impact of your composition. This grid is similar to that which shows on many camera LCD panels. There is also a choice of a general grid overlay too, which could be handy if a horizon is not quite straight or a building has been captured not quite upright.

Regarding composition, it's a good moment to mention the content aware 'spot healing brush'. This tool is not new to PSE 10 but can be very useful for, easily and impressively, removing unwanted detail captured in a photo. Wipe the spot healing tool over the unwanted detail, for example, a street sign and just like magic, PSE 10 works out how to replace it by filling in the gap to match the surrounding detail. Incredible - not always perfect but uncannily it often is!

The other feature I like is the new options for adding text to an image. New text tools are 'Text on a Shape', 'Text on a Path' and 'Text on a Selection'. These additions mean that PSE 10 offers three alternative and attractive ways to apply text rather than just horizontally or vertically. It took me a little time to work out how to use these new tools successfully, although I am sure with frequent use this issue would go away.

I should also mention that there are a number of new ways to search and find images within PSE 10's Organiser as well as using it with FaceBook, YouTube and Flickr or ordering online Photobooks.

See Newsletter 9 for those new features in PSE 9, now carried forward in PSE 10. If you fancy moving to PSE 10, then click on this link to get a general overview including a route to some short movies of various features. Remember, it is crucial to know that your PC can run the software, so check out the technical specifications for PSE 10 at the end of the pdf brochure.

Electronic (.pdf) Brochure: -

<http://www.images.adobe.com/www.adobe.com/content/dam/Adobe/en/products/hobbyist10/pdfs/photoshop-elements10-product-overview.pdf>

If you would like some introductory training or some specific help getting the best out of any version of Elements, please contact me. Given a little boost of training, you could soon be expertly using Elements to improve and manage your photos whilst discovering new ways to organise, enjoy and share the photos you capture.

Course News

HURRY, HURRY, HURRY it's almost here: -

AUTUMN PHOTO TIME AT AMMERDOWN – a unique opportunity

With finances being tricky these days, it's very difficult to fill courses. Last year's project-based creative photography course at Ammerdown was really successful and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Distinguishing this course from my other courses, this one provides some concentrated time on developing a creative and personal approach to photography. It IS a really good course and represents very good value for money!

If you click on these links you can see for yourself not only how beautiful and inspiring a location Ammerdown is but also glimpse through a book and a slide show some of my photos and the work of last year's course photographers.

Course Photobook: -

<http://www.albelli.co.uk/view-online-photo-book/f84d3804-99b1-4d2c-b13e-27b3c72e7ec5>

Course Details & Slide Show: -

http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/residential3.html

Course Details and Booking Arrangements: -

<http://www.ammerdown.org/AutumnPhotoTimeAtAmmerdown.htm>

Please tell people about this course if you think they might be interested in enrolling for it (thanks)

Personalised Training

My courses provide very good value for money. I offer a wide range of training opportunities, all of which are tailored individually to match the client's needs. Visit my website to see the full details of what is on offer. These are some popular forms of my training: -

- ❖ **Gift Vouchers** given as presents, sometimes given with the gift of a new camera
- ❖ **One-to-one training** in the use of a digital camera or Photoshop Elements
- ❖ **Top up training** as a refresher or to help with specific parts of Photoshop Elements, or use of a camera
- ❖ **Telephone Tutoring** used by those clients who live further away or those locally who want to be able to call on me for help when they encounter difficulties or need some particular training that can be provided over the 'phone. Telephone Tutoring includes the use of free software to quickly see and share files.
- ❖ **Accompanied photoshoots** learning about your camera on a photoshoot with me on hand to help advise with camera settings, techniques and composition
- ❖ **Putting photos into AVs (slide shows)** to share with families and friends

Special training options include: -

- ❖ **A travelling laptop service** when I bring a laptop with me for training use. I don't charge anything extra for using one of my Laptops and software.
- ❖ **2-person training** with a like-minded friend to cut the cost of training - all that's needed is a large enough kitchen or dining room table to sit around with 2 laptops.

Digital Interest Groups (DIGs)

Becoming part of a **D**igital **I**nterest **G**roup for a modest membership fee is a cost effective and informal way of getting together to continue developing your interest in digital photography. Meeting bimonthly, DIGs meet in the home of one of the members to share latest images, exchange ideas and receive advice. With an agreed programme, I provide some in context, or by request, demonstration-training using a digital projector. In the spring and summer months, photoshoots are included too. I need about 5 or 6 people to form a DIG. If you are interested in joining or forming a daytime or evening DIG, speak to other interested acquaintances. Email me your name(s).

Talks & Demonstrations

Armed with a PC Notebook (laptop), screen, projector and a carefully chosen set of images, for a very modest fee, I provide personalised illustrated talks & demonstrations about digital photography to clubs, societies & other organisations. Recent examples have been to Gardening Clubs and Probus Groups aimed at their membership making the most of digital photography. My presentations range from how to shoot successful photography through to examples of what to do with photos including their use in audiovisual slideshows. Please pass on my contact details to anyone or any organisation that you know whose members might be interested in a talk or demonstration. (Thanks)

My Website

In addition to providing information about all the different kinds of training I can offer, and the galleries showcasing my own, students' and clients' photos, my website has some useful links to follow. Recently it has been updated to include some additional showcases of client's work and slideshows. In particular, the slide show of the exhibition "Through Our Eyes", held jointly with my first DIG, can't fail to impress. Use the link below to take you direct to my website.

Website Home Page: -

http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/index.html

Photobooks – a brilliant idea for a Christmas Gift

What to do with our photos can be a real problem! One solution is to sort some family favourites out to put together in a commercially printed photobook. You can use PSE to do this to print yourself or directly send to an Internet Printing company. Alternatively, there are several Internet businesses that offer this service through a choice of using an easy-to-use free download of their book production software or the use of their online software. The results can be stunning and all, of course, provide long lasting, lightfast, prints.

I have been using [Albelli.co.uk](http://www.albelli.co.uk) whose books are printed in Holland, then shipped and posted in the UK. The whole process is easy and takes about 1 week from beginning to end. An example of one of my books is included via this link: -

Albelli Photobook: -

<http://www.albelli.co.uk/view-online-photo-book/f84d3804-99b1-4d2c-b13e-27b3c72e7ec5>

Digital Cameras News

News about digital cameras & the DEVON CAMERA CENTRE (DCC), Exmouth

As I predicted the introduction and development of **Interchangeable Lens Cameras** has continued at a pace! Sony, Panasonic, and Olympus are at the forefront of this and each of these manufacturers has added new models to their ranges. Not available until November, Pentax and the mighty Nikon will begin to offer this type of camera too. Pentax is marketing a small-sized, 12 megapixel, **Pentax Q System** that features an unusual, post-shoot, creative dial on the front of the camera to change the look and feel of an image (previewed on its 3" LCD monitor). Nikon will have two mirrorless interchangeable lens camera systems, also with 3" LCD monitors, the **Nikon J1 and V1**. The more expensive V1 has a built in electronic viewfinder. With a 10 frames per second burst rate, this is adjustable (with limitations) to an incredible 60 frames per second. Canon surely cannot be far off from introducing this type of smaller, conveniently sized and well-featured camera system!

If you want a DSLR then the 18 megapixel **EOS 600D** complete with fully articulated (swivelling) 3" LCD is worth seeking out. Nikon's mid range rival to this Canon, the 16 megapixel **D5100**, also has a similar type of articulated LCD and is well worth checking out too.

Panasonic's reputation for excellent build and photo-quality is well established. Panasonic's latest model, the **DMC-G3**, a smaller sized 4/3rds interchangeable lens camera and their more compact camera sized **GF2** pack in a lot of innovative features.

My recommendation for what is now one of the larger types of **Interchangeable Lens Camera** is the one that I use - the fantastic 16 megapixel **Sony alpha 55 (a55)** that has a unique translucent mirror system to provide unrivalled continuous live auto focus and high speed continuous shooting! I just love it and continue to be impressed by the superb picture quality photos captured in a variety of shooting circumstances. This includes the auto HDR (High Dynamic Range) shooting mode that takes 3 photos in quick succession to combine them into one to reveal much greater than normal shadow and highlight detail. You can even handhold the camera to take auto HDR images as the camera spots any misalignment between the three exposures! See Newsletter 9 for more details of this camera and the lenses I use with it. Recently Sony have partly replaced their range as well as added to it. Sister camera to the a55, the 14 megapixel a33 is replaced by the 16 megapixel **a35**. Two new 24 megapixel models, the **a65 and a77** complete the line up. My advice is to forget the a35 (unless you don't mind that the articulated LCD is replaced by a fixed LCD) and consider the a55 or a65. Definitely the more expensive a65 is better than the a55 (it has a new sensor, improved battery life and improved movie recording features) but whilst it is still available, the cheaper a55 will not disappoint. The larger a77 is absolutely stunning in what it has to offer but this camera comes at a much higher price than the others. It is undoubtedly worth the extra price if you want its specification and can afford it. This camera is Sony's alternative to a conventional DSLR camera such as the **Canon 60D**.

Other really small and innovative interchangeable lens cameras, which are not much bigger than many compact cameras, is the **Sony alpha NEX range**. Check out the new upgraded models; **NEX-C3**, **NEX-5n** and the **NEX-7**. These cameras, like the a35, a55, a65 and a77 have translucent mirror technology. An optional OLED electronic viewfinder is available for the NEX-5n and the NEX-7. Each model has a 3" tilting LCD monitor. By no means cheap, the NEX cameras offer superb convenience matched to amazing specifications. If you want to own this size of camera, you can't fail to be impressed!

If you have ever wondered about the value of burst shooting, then see my a55's images [included at the end of this Newsletter](#). These are some images of the recently crowned world cycling champion, the UK's Mark Cavendish, as he raced through Exmouth in the 2011 Tour of Britain.

I know that some Newsletter's readers are now also owners of the a35 or a55. This note is especially for you. A few months ago, when Sony brought out the a35, a **free-of-charge firmware download** was issued by Sony to add the new creative shooting styles of the a35 to the a33 and a55. You will probably like some if not all of these. I like the ones that capture a selectable partial colour, for example, yellow or red, with all else in the image being captured in monochrome. There are some fun options too such as 'Mini' which makes the subject look like a miniature model. Very useful is an improved method for navigating the cameras menus whereby you can now set the menu button to remember where in a menu you last made a setting change. I have really found this useful, for example to turn 'steady shot' on and then to return, directly, to turn it off.

If you already own a DSLR, unless you want to start again with buying new lenses, changing from one camera manufacturer to another is expensive. Canon-fit lenses, for example, won't fit a Nikon or Sony etc. However, if you have been holding back on moving up to a DSLR, or moving down to a sophisticated camera, now is a great time to make such a move. Visit the Devon Camera Centre (DCC) to check out all the new models. With Christmas coming, Nikon, Sony, Panasonic (and maybe others too) will be having cash-back deals - so prices are likely to be particularly competitive.

At the moment, whilst stocks last, DCC have a special offer available on Nikon's entry level DSLR **D3100** bundled with the 18 - 55mm non-VR lens. Expected soon are the Pentax Q system, new Sony NEX models and the Nikon J1 and V1.

DCC have become a Panasonic dealer, so now you can expect to see the Panasonic range available in store. The **Panasonic TZ**, super-zoom, range of compacts is superb and several clients of mine have these. They are very user-friendly, easy to use cameras with good features including intelligent auto and very well built. Considering their compact size they offer amazingly powerful Leica optical zoom lens.

If **Compact Cameras**, **Bridge Cameras** and **Super Zoom Cameras** are what you would prefer there is a great choice available. One of my favourites, the **Canon SX30** super zoom camera has been replaced by the **Canon PowerShot SX40HS**. This will soon be in the shops with an expected price around £495 so it is not cheap. It is one of Canon's first models to feature the new **DIGIT 5** image processor. It has a **CMOS** sensor, which, is a similar type of sensor as used in DSLRs. So, along with its massive 35x optical zoom lens complete with image stabilizer, it should be worth checking out. I tried, tested and very much liked the SX30 and whilst stocks last, expect some very competitive pricing on this now out-of-production model.

DCC will be only too pleased to inform you about all these featured cameras and any other camera (or lens) that you are interested in and will be able to advise you on any camera to match your budget with your needs. DCC have their own offers to ask about too, including offers on tripods and other accessories.

Want to know more? Then if you live in or near to Exmouth you should visit the Devon Camera Centre where they sell at Internet prices. Make Exmouth's Devon Camera Centre your first and only point of call. Please support your local camera shop: -

www.devoncamera.co.uk

Why use burst? A selection of burst/continuous shooting shots taken as the cyclists raced at high speed past my side-of-the-road-location, during stage 5 of the 2011 Tour of Britain which ended in Exmouth: -



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The image that I hoped to capture of Mark Cavendish: -



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- 1 = Here they come!
- 2 = The leader (Mark Cavendish back in pack)
- 3 = Leader past now Mark C. in front of pack
- 4 = Mark C. about to go past
- 5 = Last part of Mark C. on left edge!

6 = Enlarged crop of 3 shows use of burst/how 15 megapixels camera allows good scope for a tight crop
* Stage 5 was won by Mark Renshaw with Mark Cavendish in a very close 2nd place; both were team members of Team HTC Highroad.

NEWSLETTER 11 will be out during spring 2012