

VIEWfinders

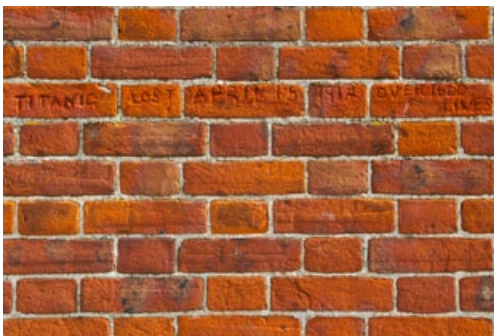
English-Speaking Photography Club of Brussels
Newsletter no. 179, October 2011

31.10.2011

Newsletter Deadline

19.10.2011

Next Meeting



Photos by Simon Pugh

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We look forward to seeing you all, old and new, at the Swedish Church and Cultural Centre (35 avenue des Gaulois, 1040 Brussels, tel. 02.387.25.19), next to the Merode metro station (metro lines 1 & 5, trams 81 & 83, buses 22, 27, 61, 80).



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September Meeting Review

NEW PLACE, NEW FACES & A TOUCH OF BEAUTY

Our first meeting of the new 2011-2012 season on September 21st was our first in our new location: the Swedish Church Cultural Centre near Merode. This very accessible location was obviously very popular, since we had a fantastic turn-out of some 60 people, our largest audience ever! And about 20 new people, too numerous to mention by name here, came to check out our activities, so it looks like photography is becoming a very popular hobby, so we will do our best to keep all people interested. The Centre has a nice bar area for socialising, and we were well looked after by our new hosts. A big thank you to them.



Photo by David Van den Bunder

The committee was kept busy getting to grips with the new place, setting up equipment, arranging furniture (but happily much, much less than at the British School), looking after the guest speakers, and welcoming the constant stream of people at the door. So many people that it was difficult to start on time, but

eventually we all found a seat, and our first guest, Vincen Beekman of Recyclart (www.recyclart.be) talked to us about the future night-photography project POZE 4. More details of how we can get involved in this will follow.

Then our main guest speaker, Danny De Cock, took the stage. Danny calls his work "Touch of Beauty", and he likes to reach out and reveal the beauty in what he photographs. In the presentation of his favourite "beauties", he gave us hints and tips on the way he had taken them:



Photo by David Van den Bunder

the lighting, the composition, the reasons etc. He included several shots of urban landscapes in Brussels, taken for the Brukselbinnenstebuiten association, which runs tours which strive to make both residents and visitors to Brussels look at the city differently. All of these showed that we too could go out into the everyday streets of our city and try to photograph it well and differently, by paying attention to the lighting (using low, warm sun, for example), the composition (include the things you want to tell a story, exclude the rest), or the viewpoint (chose one which avoids Brussels' grey sky!). Lastly Danny showed us images from a project close to his heart, from Senegal, where he has built up close relationships and works with a charity- these images showed us the beauty he found there. Two of Danny's photo books were on sale at the meeting, and can be obtained through Viewfinders. See also www.touchofbeauty.be.

Caroline

Challenging Challenges

This season, our two challenges will be on the themes "Anyscapes" (December 2011 meeting) and "Blue" (April 2012 meeting).

"Anyscapes" – a neologism we invented to embrace the various types of "scapes" that are popular in art. Landscapes, Cityscapes, Seascapes, ... or any other "scape" your creativity can imagine, capture in an image and convey to your eager audience.

"Blue" is a colour, yes, but it has many other meanings too, and any of these presents an interesting challenge when expressing it within the bounds of a photographic image. The challenge rules and some hopefully inspirational notes for the December challenge can be found attached to this newsletter. So go on, be bold and show us all what you can do!

Alun



Photo by Simon Pugh

Assignment Ideas - Park Benches

Again this season, we're doing an "assignment" – something to test your creativity and possibly take you outside your comfort zone, but most of all meant to be fun. The assignment this time is to be "Park Benches and the images will be viewed and discussed at the club meeting in January (18th).

Imagine, you're working 'on assignment' for a newspaper or magazine. The editor has asked you to provide some emotive images to accompany an article about park benches – their social importance, their sorry state or the advance of new design or technology for these otherwise very common items. Brussels, as are many towns and villages, is full of green (and not so green) areas with benches, all of which can pass as "parks" for this article.

So, go out and see what this otherwise rather mundane object can produce under the creative gaze of a Viewfinder!

Alun

6 Questions for Richard Sylvester

Richard first came to Belgium in 1970 with the US Army, preferring Belgian beer to the war in Vietnam. After returning to university life in Florida, he came back to Belgium and in 1975 started his career at the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer where he still works today. He is looking forward to retirement next year to be able to spend more time on photography.



1) Let's begin at the beginning - how did you get started with photography?

After taking travel and vacation photos in the early 1970s, I wanted to learn more about photography so I followed a photography course at the university that I was attending. This gave me the opportunity to learn how to develop black and white film and make my own prints. Although I had access to a darkroom for a few years upon settling in Belgium in 1975, my photography was limited to the occasional travel and holidays snaps. My interest increased again with the appearance of digital cameras, combining together my interests in photography and computers. Three years ago, I started taking photography more seriously and signed up for the first of a number of online courses that I have followed, which led to the launch of my photography website. I finally became a member of Viewfinders two years ago.

2) Which of your pictures is your personal favourite? Can you tell us why?

This macro of a smoky quartz with hessonite garnet has to be my favourite. Everything comes together in this photo: the composition, the depth of field and the complementary colours of blue, my favourite colour, and orange. It provides a perspective that you just don't get otherwise.

3) What genre of photography interests you most?

With my wife's hobby of gems and minerals, my main interest has been in

macro photography. It is challenging from a technical point of view as the depth of field is extremely limited. I enjoy it because of this challenge and also for the beauty of the details and colours that can be brought out in the stones and which are not readily visible to the naked eye. One day, I would like to take the next step and try photo microscopy, photography through a microscope, which will provide an even greater level of magnification compared to what I have done today.



4) If you had to pick just one camera to shoot with, what would it be?

I currently use a Nikon D300 and the Canon Powershot S95 when I want a small light compact camera that I can carry in my pocket. Although the S95 is an excellent camera, it does have its limitations, especially in low light. The camera that I would like to shoot with from now on isn't available yet. It should be a marriage of the quality of a good DSLR and the convenience of a compact. In addition, it should be able to shoot macros and high quality video. Perhaps

some of the new mirrorless systems that are starting to appear will be a step in this direction. However for me, I am waiting for the Nikon D400 that should be announced in the coming months.

5) Why do you enjoy Viewfinders? Tell us about the most interesting experience you had with the club.

I enjoy Viewfinders, not only for the friendships that have developed and the contacts that I have made, but also because it has awakened the artistic side of photography in me, a part of photography that I had never paid enough attention to. It is important to get the photo as correct as possible in the camera so you don't have to spend your time cropping and editing on the computer. The Challenges have been, shall we say, challenging, and I always look forward to them. Viewfinders is a great learning experience.

6) Any (photographic) advice you'd like to share with your fellow viewfinders?

I found the online photography courses that I followed to be very instrumental in improving my photography. The critiques of your course photos by the instructor and also by the other students are an invaluable learning experience. Practice makes perfect, well at least it is supposed to. What is important is to keep shooting and learn from your successes, mistakes and the critiques of others. Learn how to use your camera to its full potential even if it means reading the manual!

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On the Web

A site that appears regularly in this part of the newsletter is that of the BBC. There are literally thousands of photos spread throughout the site but some of the most spectacular are to be found on the 'travel' section which is run in conjunction with that other great bastion of travel photography – Lonely Planet. Surf along to www.bbc.com/travel and check out the 'Slideshow' area for some fabulous images from around the world.

Simon

Club Equipment

Viewfinders has the following equipment available to members for monthly loans:

- Canon 300D camera
- Canon negative scanner
- HP flatbed scanner
- ColorMunki screen and printer colour calibrator.

Requests for the loans should be made to the Club President in advance of the meetings when they are to be collected and they should be returned at the following meeting.

Cartoon Capers



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Upcoming Events

19 October - Club Meeting: Trip Photos and Member's Portfolio. Trips/Member Portfolios evening: Oostende/De Haan and Mons trip presentations and some member portfolios

16 November - Club Meeting: Outside Speaker. Piet Van den Eynde.

14 December - Club Meeting: Challenge Evening: 'Anscapes? Anyscapes? Any ideas!' The judge will be Danny de Cock.

18 January 2012 - Club Meeting: Assignment 'Park Benches'. Further details to be announced shortly.

For more information about these events, please see the website: www.viewfinders.be

Viewfinders – Committee 2011/2012



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Any items from members for publication are welcome. Images are particularly welcome, please send them in as jpgs, with no less than 1400 px on the long side, and minimal compression. Please be aware that, in accordance with the layout, some cropping may occur. Please send submissions to the newsletter to newsletter@viewfinders.be