



LRPS — A PERSONAL VIEW

Paul Birchenough LRPS

PART 1

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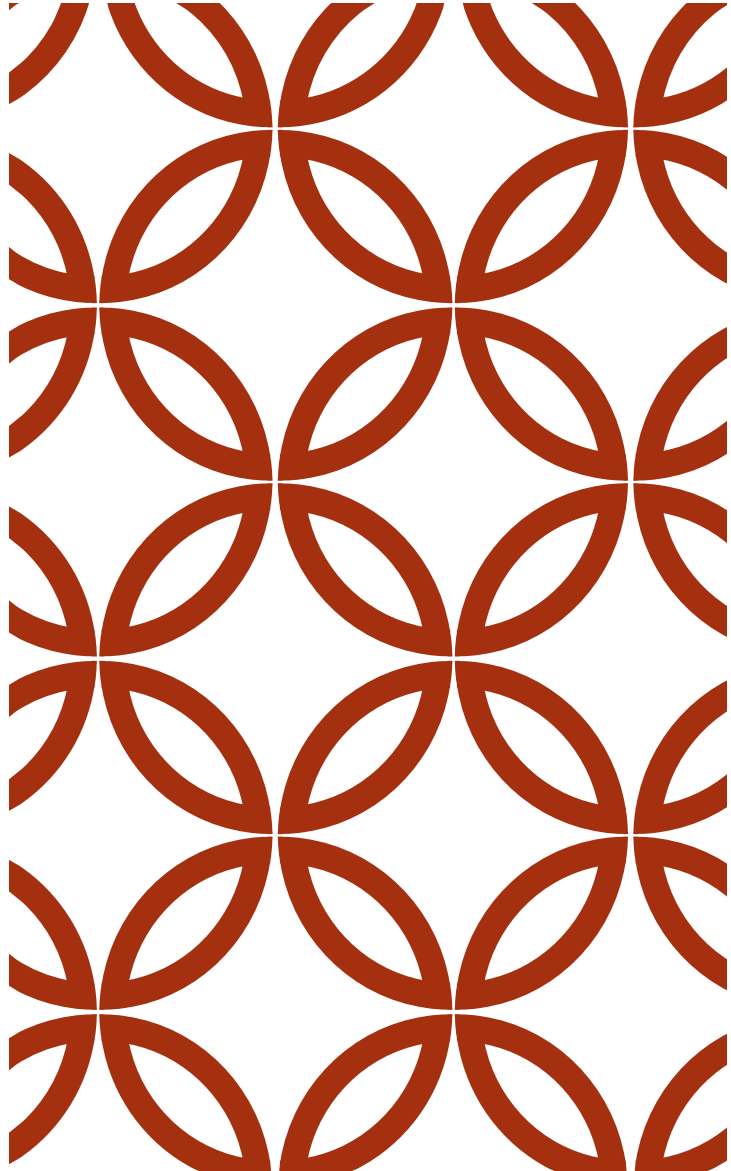
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WHAT IS AN LRPS?

RPS DISTINCTIONS

The Royal Photographic Society (RPS) offers three levels of distinction:

Licentiate

Associate

Fellowship

LRPS is the first level. The main focus is on camera skills

LICENTIATE



CREDIT: Jane Langston LRPS

Licentiate (LRPS)

To become a Licentiate of The Society, applicants must show variety in approach and techniques but not necessarily in subject matter. Demanding but achievable for most dedicated photographers.

ASSOCIATE



CREDIT: Glenn Porter ARPS

Associate (ARPS)

Requires a body of work/project of a high standard and a written Statement of Intent. Strong technical ability using techniques and photographic practices appropriate to the subject.

FELLOWSHIP



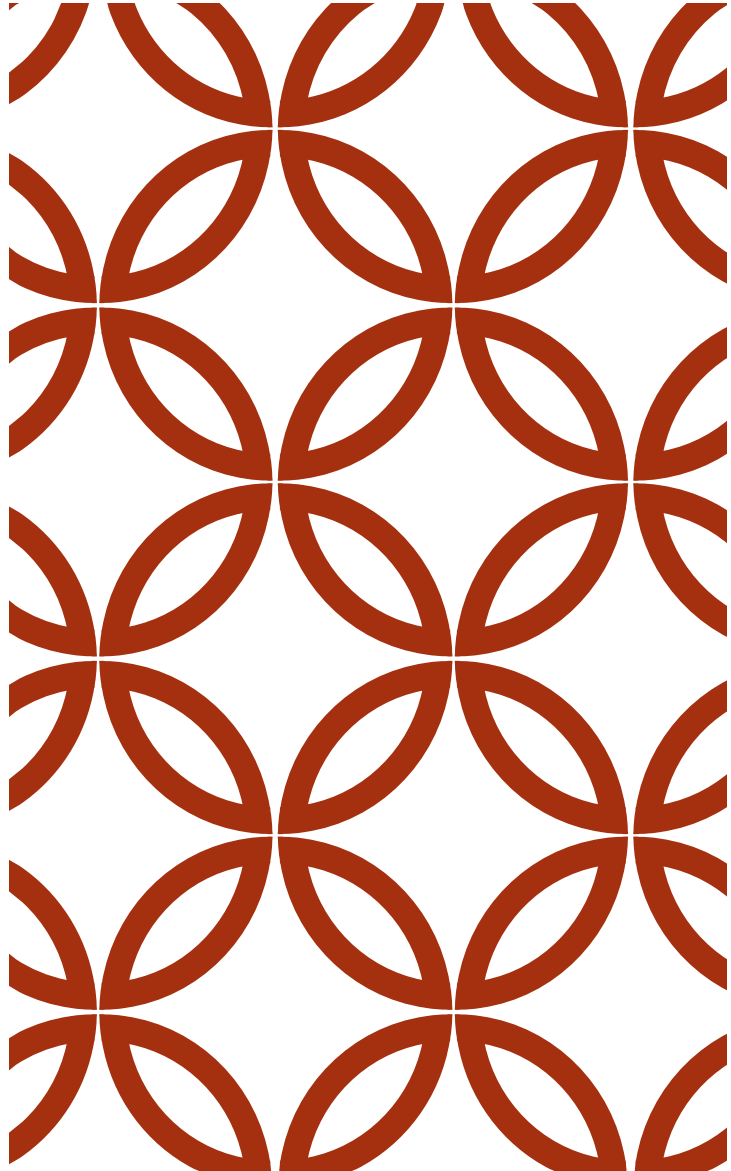
CREDIT: Adrian Gidney FRPS

Fellowship (FRPS)

Our highest level of Distinction. Requires a distinctive and cohesive body of work/project accompanied by a written Statement of Intent.

LRPS - CRITERIA

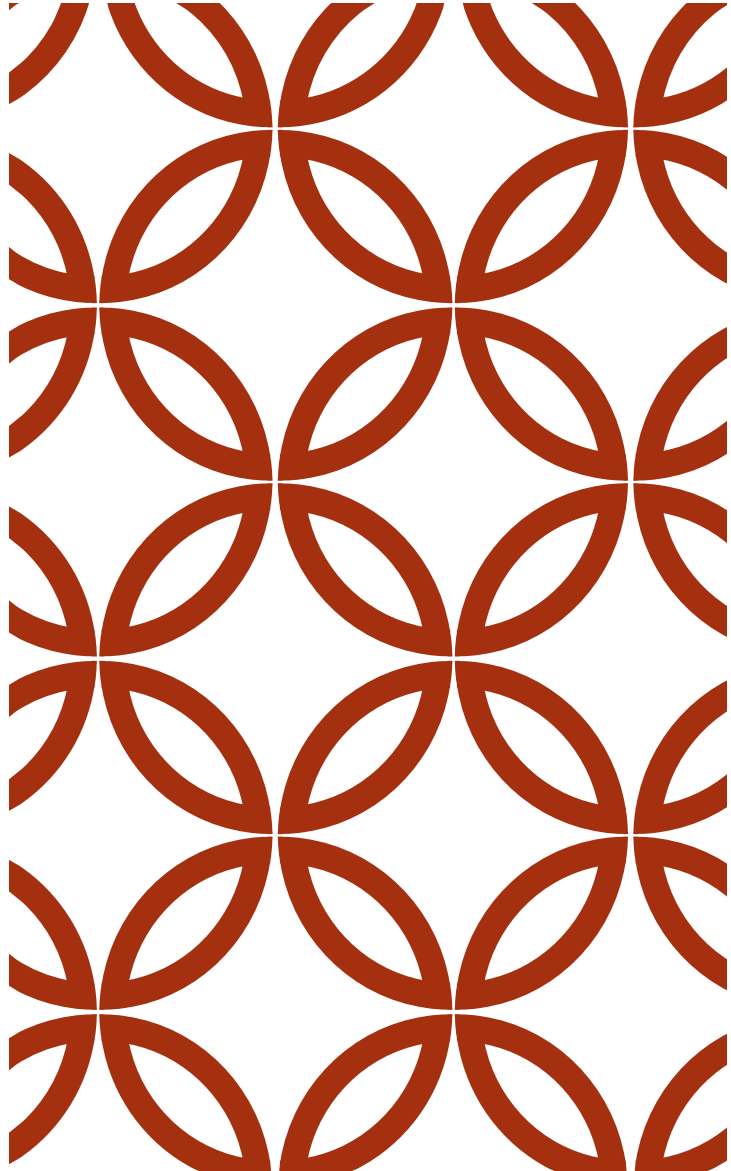
- Camera work and technical quality
- Visual awareness
- Communication
- Overall impression



WHY DO IT?

GOOD QUESTION!

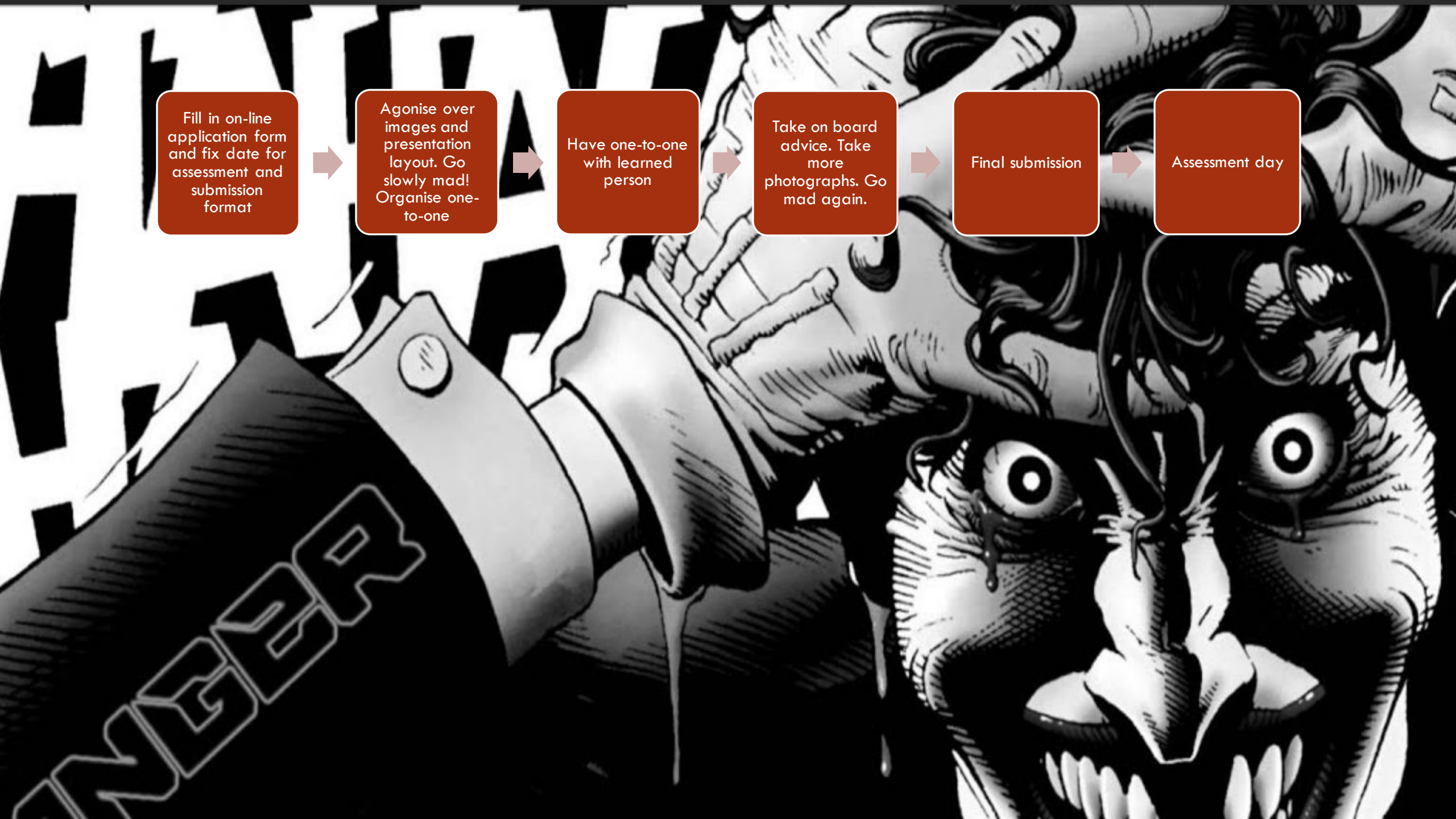
- The process will teach you a lot about photography and your personal interests
- You will acquire a decent range of camera skills, and will be well equipped to go forward
- It is a significant challenge, and enables you to focus on a photography project rather than just taking individual snaps
- You get some letters after your name
- Vanity



HOW DO I APPLY?

REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ 10 photographs on any subject
- ❑ A hanging plan, probably using one of the RPS templates
- ❑ Submit as PDI's, prints or as a photobook



Fill in on-line application form and fix date for assessment and submission format

Agonise over images and presentation layout. Go slowly mad! Organise one-to-one

Have one-to-one with learned person

Take on board advice. Take more photographs. Go mad again.

Final submission

Assessment day

Fill in on-line application form and fix date for assessment and submission format

Agonise over images and presentation layout. Go slowly mad! Organise one-to-one

Have one-to-one with learned person

Take on board advice. Take more photographs. Go mad again.

Final submission

Assessment day

- **22 Nov 2021**
- Fixed date for assessment of 14 July 2022
- Acknowledged 15 Dec 2021 along with submission details form
- **£85 paid**

- **3rd March 2022**
- Apply on line
- Organised for 5th May 2022
- **£40 paid**

- **5th May 2022**
- Very helpful
- A lot of good positive advice
- Janey Devine

- **6th May -1st June 2022**
- Take more images
- Seek counselling if required

- **18th June 2022 – deadline 22nd June**
- 10 images
- Presentation layout
- Submission details form
- One-to-one feedback form
- Submission by WeTransfer

- **14th July 2022**
- Held at RPS headquarters in Bristol
- Via ZOOM, but personal attendance is possible
- Each assessment lasts approximately 20 minutes or so
- Takes all day!

TEMPLATES

- ❑ A key requirement is that the 10 images are presented as a hanging plan, in most cases using one of the 6 available for download from the RPS website
- ❑ Editable PDF allowing direct upload into the template rather than cut and paste



LICENTIATE Presentation Layout

Digital Format

A 3x3 grid of 10 numbered image placeholders. Each placeholder consists of a number (01-10) centered below the text "CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE". The grid is as follows:

CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 01	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 02	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 03	
CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 04	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 05	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 06	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 07
CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 08	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 09	CLICK HERE TO INSERT AN IMAGE 10	

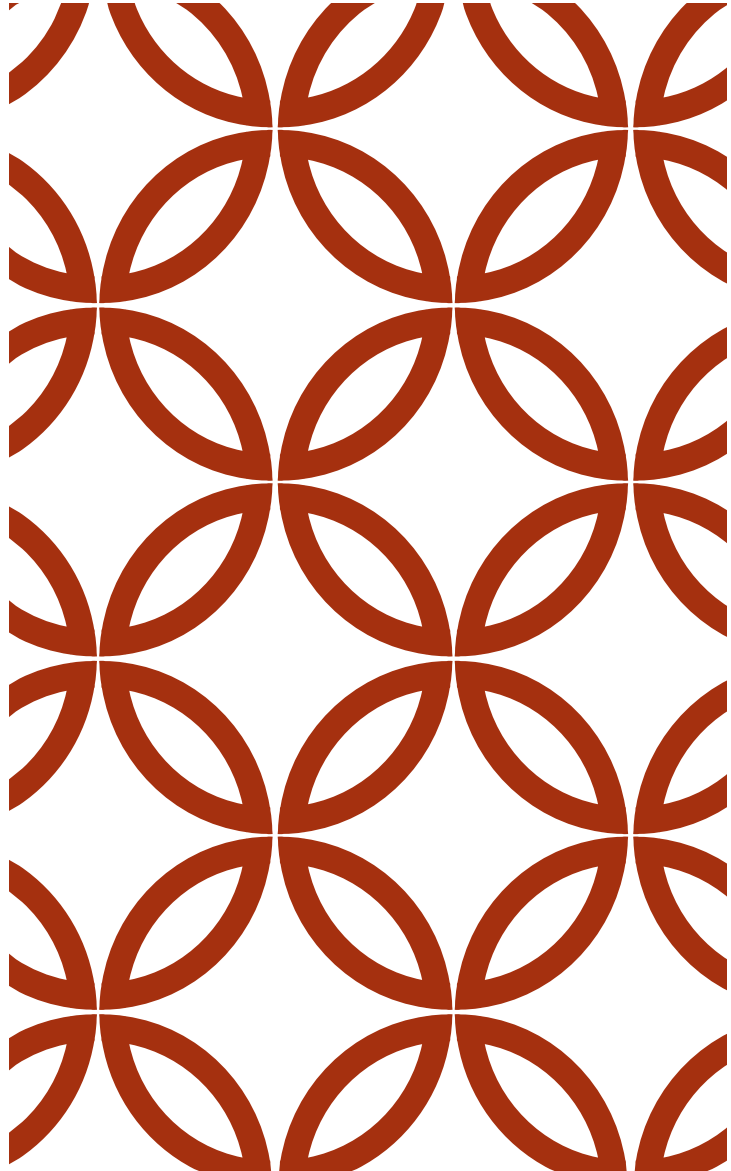
Applicant Name

Membership/Record Number

Assessment Date

Save As...

Print



THINGS TO GET RIGHT

TIPS

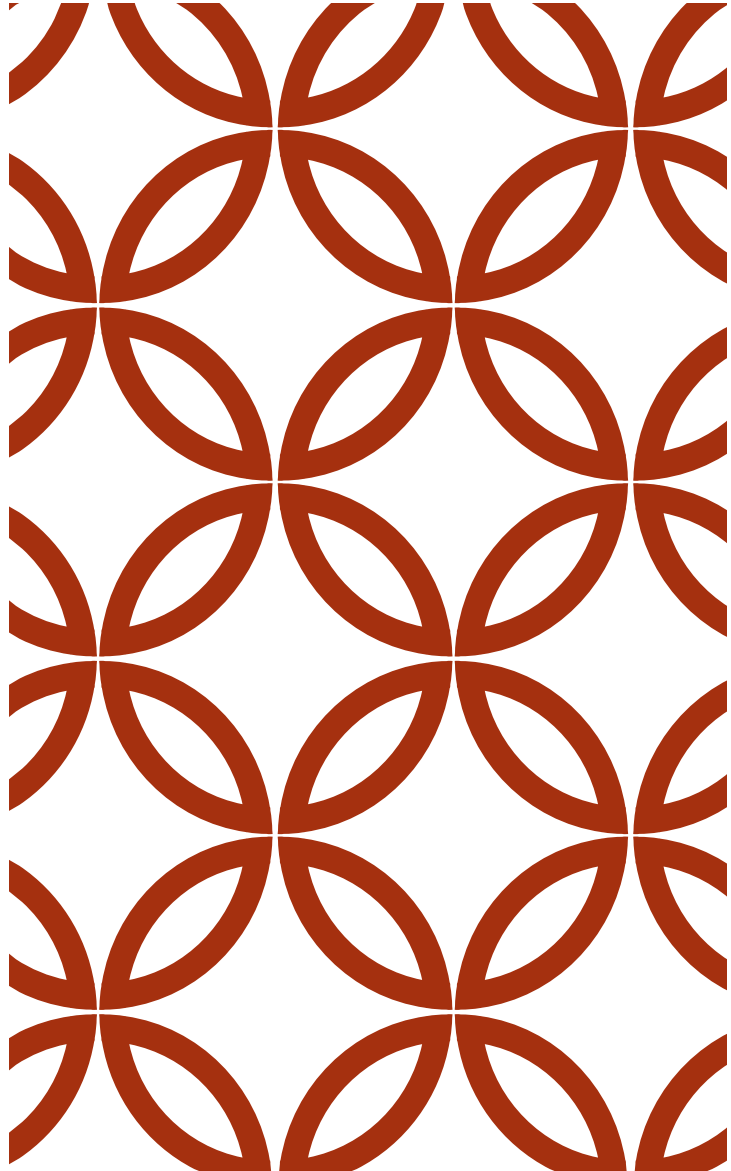
- ❑ Sharp focus and good exposure are a must. These can be automated on most cameras, so no excuse for getting this wrong – learn to love your histogram!
- ❑ Good composition. However, this is not a time to push creative boundaries or to challenge convention
- ❑ Long exposure eg nighttime, motion capture
- ❑ Artificial light and natural light
- ❑ Varied point of view
- ❑ Appropriate use of Depth of Field
- ❑ Decisive moment
- ❑ No need for consistent subject matter – include what you like as long as it demonstrates some specific skill
- ❑ Try to avoid too much repetition
- ❑ The panel needs to be carefully thought through as a hanging plan. Best to start thinking about this early on and let it influence your choice of images

COMPOSITION

- Rule of thirds
- Leading lines
- Symmetry and patterns
- Negative space
- Framing
- Interesting viewpoint
- Background
- Have a clear subject
- Remove edge distractions
- Too busy

DECISIVE MOMENT





MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

IN THE BEGINNING



AS IT HAPPENED

- ❑ My Mom was a keen photographer. She had a Box Brownie and an Asahi Pentax K1000 35mm SLR camera.
- ❑ My first camera that I bought myself was a Kodak Instamatic in about 1977
- ❑ I went on to get involved in scientific photography during the 1980's. Schlieren, Laser Pulse, Particle Velocimetry and time lapse photography. Usually used Pentax cameras
- ❑ First digital camera around 2000. Kodak DC4800 – 3.1MP!!
- ❑ Upgraded to a Canon Powershot S3 IS in 2007 – 6MP

KODAK DC4800

I got a Kodak DC4800 in 2000. Really only suitable for holiday type snaps. Quality nowhere near film. Very little in the way of post processing software at the time of release, but it did show the way forward. Here are a couple of examples from 2002 using the DC4800....




CANON PS

Upgraded in 2007 to the Canon Powershot S3. Considerable improvement on the DC4800. Felt like a “proper” camera. Here’s a couple of examples from 2010/2017 taken with the Powershot...

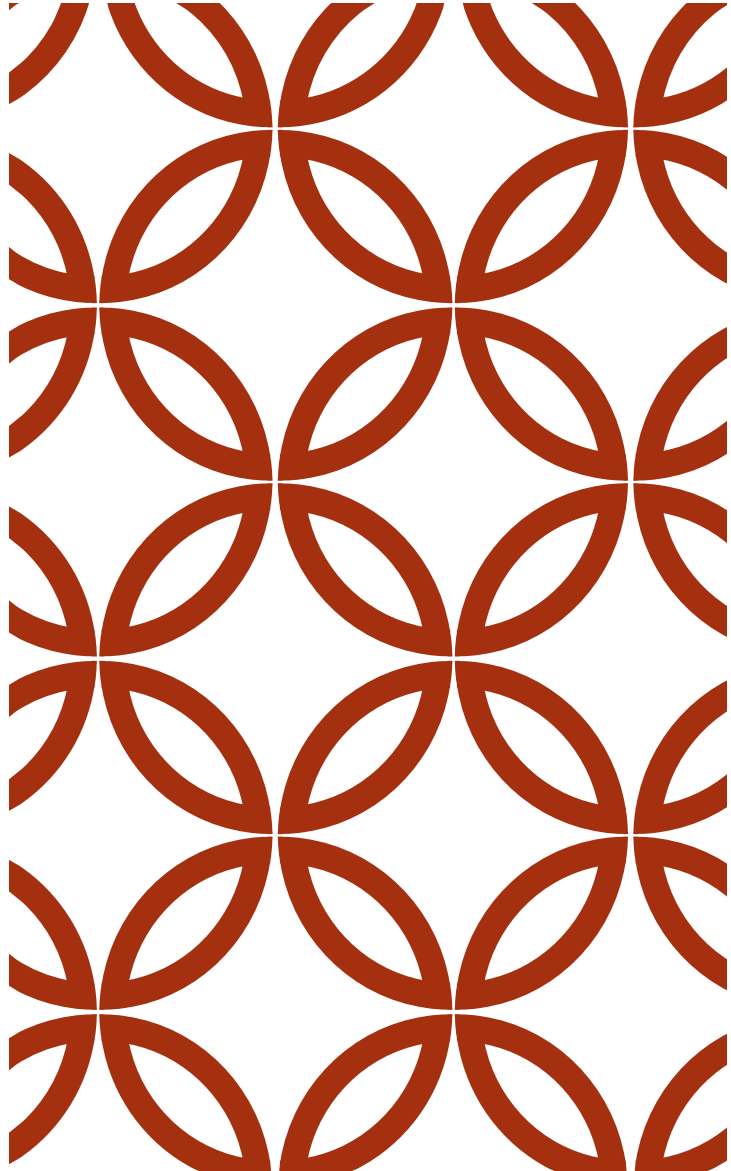


HERE AND NOW

- ❑ I still have the Canon Powershot and it works very well.
- ❑ The DC4800 has long gone 
- ❑ In 2019 I decided to get a DSLR and take up photography as a hobby, rather than just a passing interest.
- ❑ I now have a Nikon D7500 plus several lenses, and also a FujiFilm X100F compact camera as well as my smartphone. My LRPS submission was based on these two cameras.
- ❑ I took two Open University courses in 2020.
 - TG089 - Beginners course intended to be a precursor to LRPS
 - TZFM201 - More advanced course aimed at ARPS
 - Both 10 weeks, and requiring around 10 – 20 hours per week
 - I would recommend TG089, but not TZFM201
- ❑ Started thinking about LRPS early 2021....

PART 2





INITIAL SELECTION

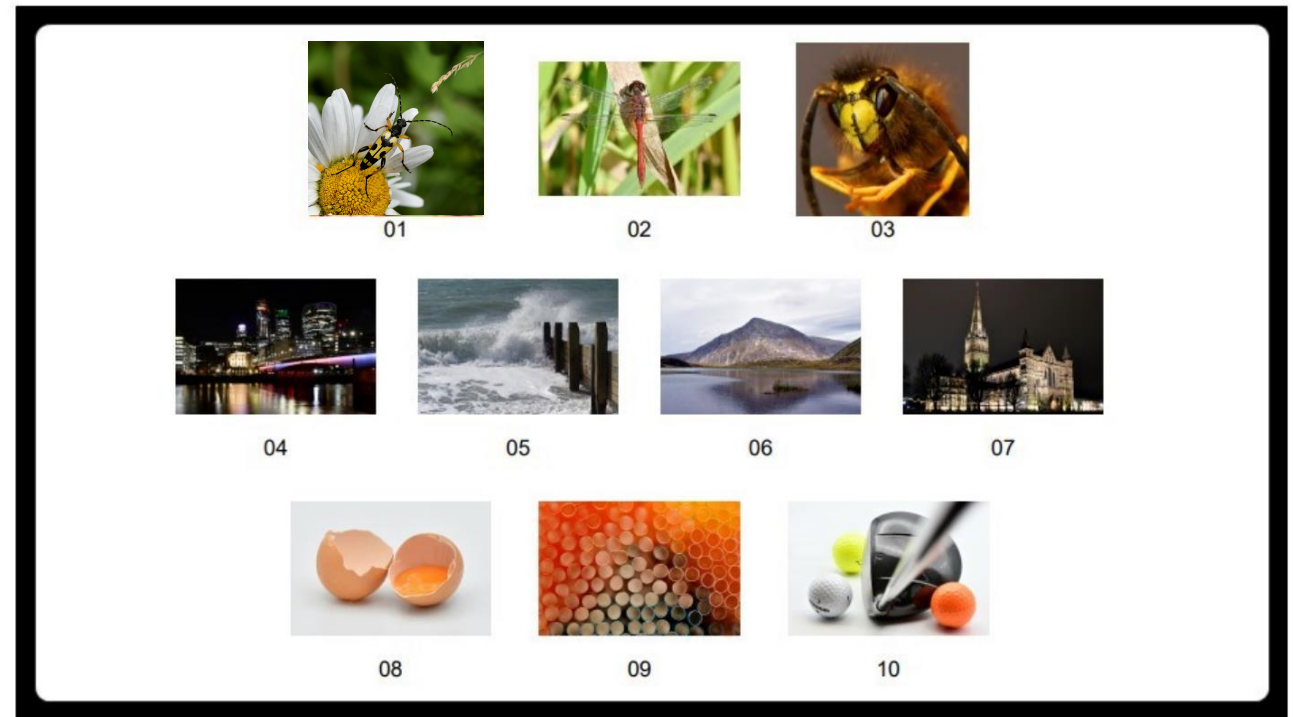
PANEL

This panel was put together in the early part of 2021, and submitted late April for a one-to-one assessment



LICENTIATE Presentation Layout

Digital Format



Applicant Name

Membership/Record Number

Assessment Date

Save As...

Print

IMAGE 01

Decent image. Focus a bit soft in places. Better if the centre of the flower were not cropped off. The grass is a distraction. Probably best not to use.



Nicely focused, but background too busy. Don't use.

IMAGE 02



IMAGE 03

Best of the three insect pictures. Bit scary! Perhaps too close, but good sharp focus on the eye. Probably OK for final submission, but without other insects, it will be difficult to locate in the presentation panel. "DROP THE BUGS!"



IMAGE 04

Best image in the whole submission. Recommended for final panel. Exposure just enough to capture light trails on the bridge and to develop the reflections in the river.



IMAGE 05

OK for submission in final panel (just). The detail in the breaking wave and surf is good, and the groyne gives a leading line and depth, otherwise it's just another photograph of a wave! Decisive moment?



IMAGE 06

Nice landscape. Bit too much sky? Reflections are good, but maybe cropped too much at the bottom. Nice foreground with the patches of reeds. Possible.



Good exposure, and well focused. Crop a bit tight on the spire. Possible.

IMAGE 07



Good exposure, and well focused. Good “High Key” image. Good composition. Recommended for final panel.

IMAGE 08

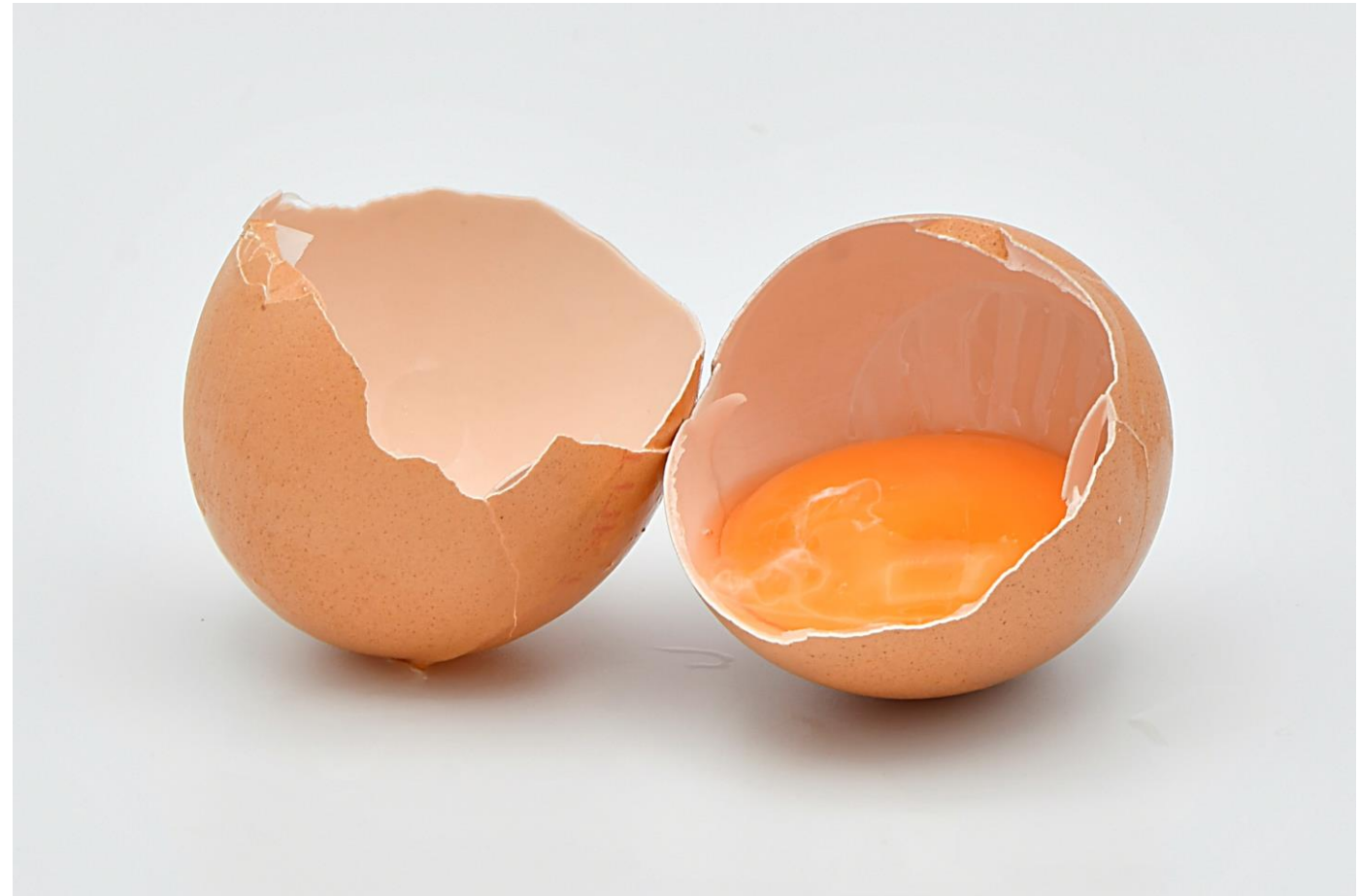


IMAGE 09

Interesting composition. Eye catching colours. Good use of DoF ensuring that only the ends of the straws are in focus. Difficult to know whether to include this one – abstract images are always a bit contentious. May be best to play safe and leave out



IMAGE 10

Another high key image. Interesting point of view and good DoF effect. Rear ball is just a bit out of focus. Possible.



SUMMARY

- Drop the bugs
- Need extra images with motion
- Need better demonstration of DoF
- May need extra close-up work
- Decisive moment?
- Not quite there yet

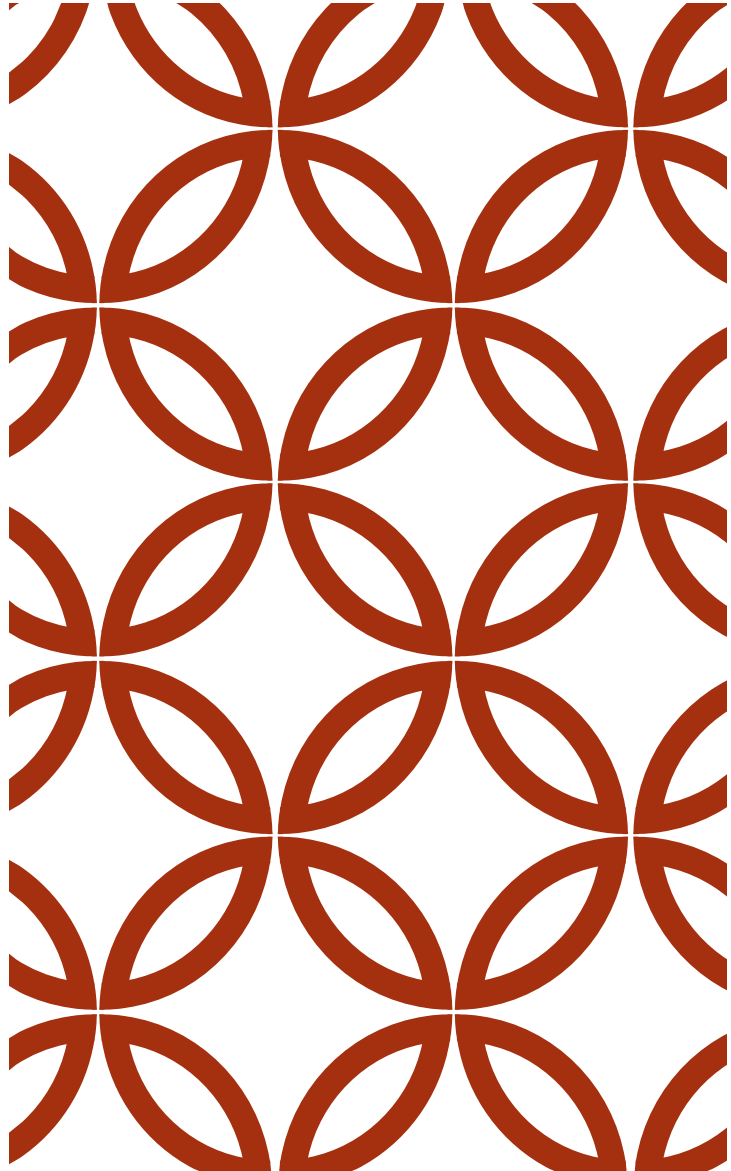
SUMMARY



Applicant Name

Membership/Record Number

Assessment Date



FINAL SELECTION

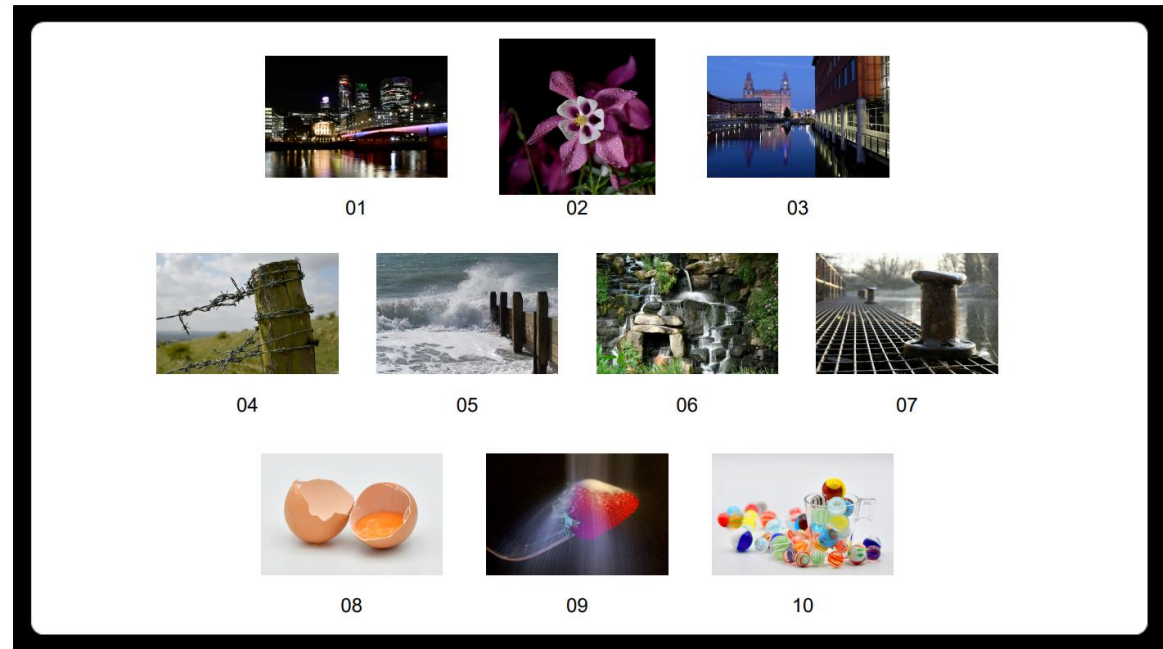
FINAL PANEL

This is the final panel arrived at after much agonizing, head scratching, late nights, alcohol abuse and foul language

THE
RPS
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

LICENTIATE Presentation Layout

Digital Format



Applicant Name

Membership/Record Number

Assessment Date

IMAGE 01

Retained from one-to-one. Good example of long exposure night photography. Decent composition with a strong leading line provided by the bridge. Exposure about right. High F-stop to allow large DoF and “twinkly” effects on lights.



IMAGE 02

Included as a close-up. Taken at night, but relatively short exposure. Lots of detail. Shallow(ish) DoF to get the background blurred. Local artificial lighting.

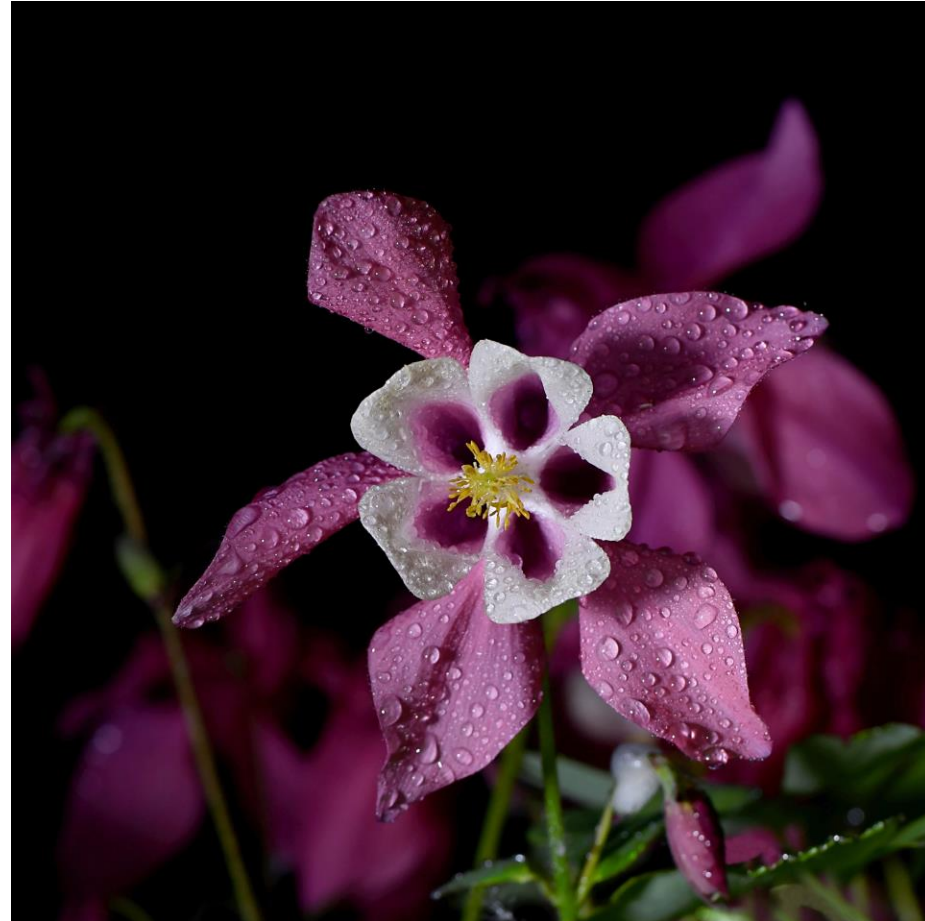


IMAGE 03

Another night shot with long exposure at “Blue Hour”. Intended to replace the shot of Salisbury Cathedral. I prefer this. It has good leading lines, nice reflections plus it’s well exposed and all in focus. One of my personal favorites.



IMAGE 04

This is another shot I really like. Compositionally, I think it works, and the background is nicely out of focus to emphasise the post and barbed wire. I saw this as a replacement for the Snowdonia landscape.



IMAGE 05

Retained from the one-to one. It almost qualifies as a “decisive moment” snap. Looking at it now, it is probably the weakest image in the submission, but it’s OK. I’m not embarrassed by it!



IMAGE 06

This is a deliberate attempt to capture motion in a long exposure using a Neutral Density filter. Exposure was 30 seconds. I was pleased with this. It was helped by the fact that this was a very still day, and the various leaves and plants did not move during the exposure.



IMAGE 07

Despite some overexposure in the sky, I think this is a good image. It is included because of the unusual viewpoint, the relatively shallow DoF and the very strong leading lines.



Retained from the one-to-one. Photographed in a light box. Good exposure, and well focussed. Good “High Key” image. Good composition.

IMAGE 08

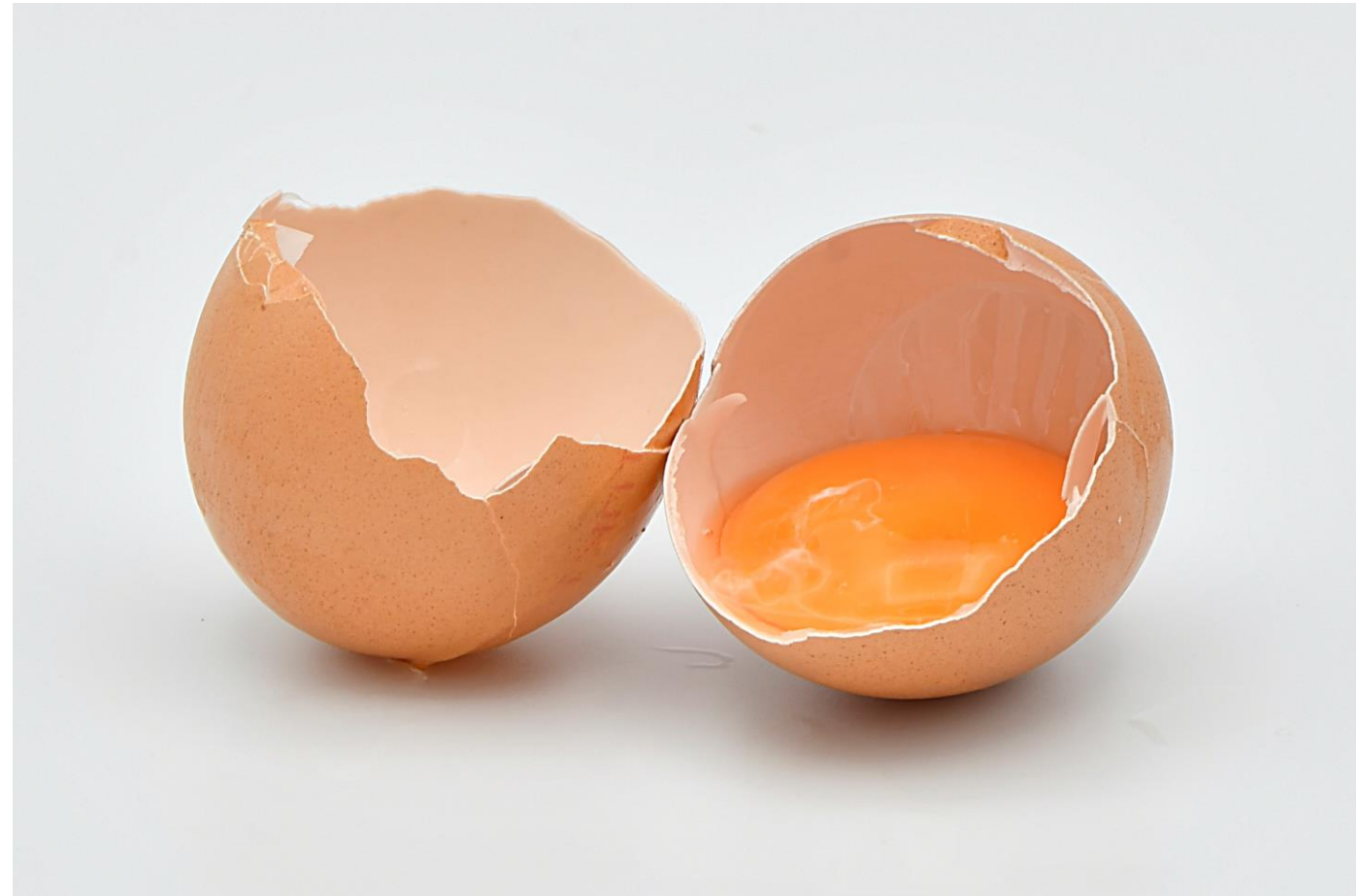
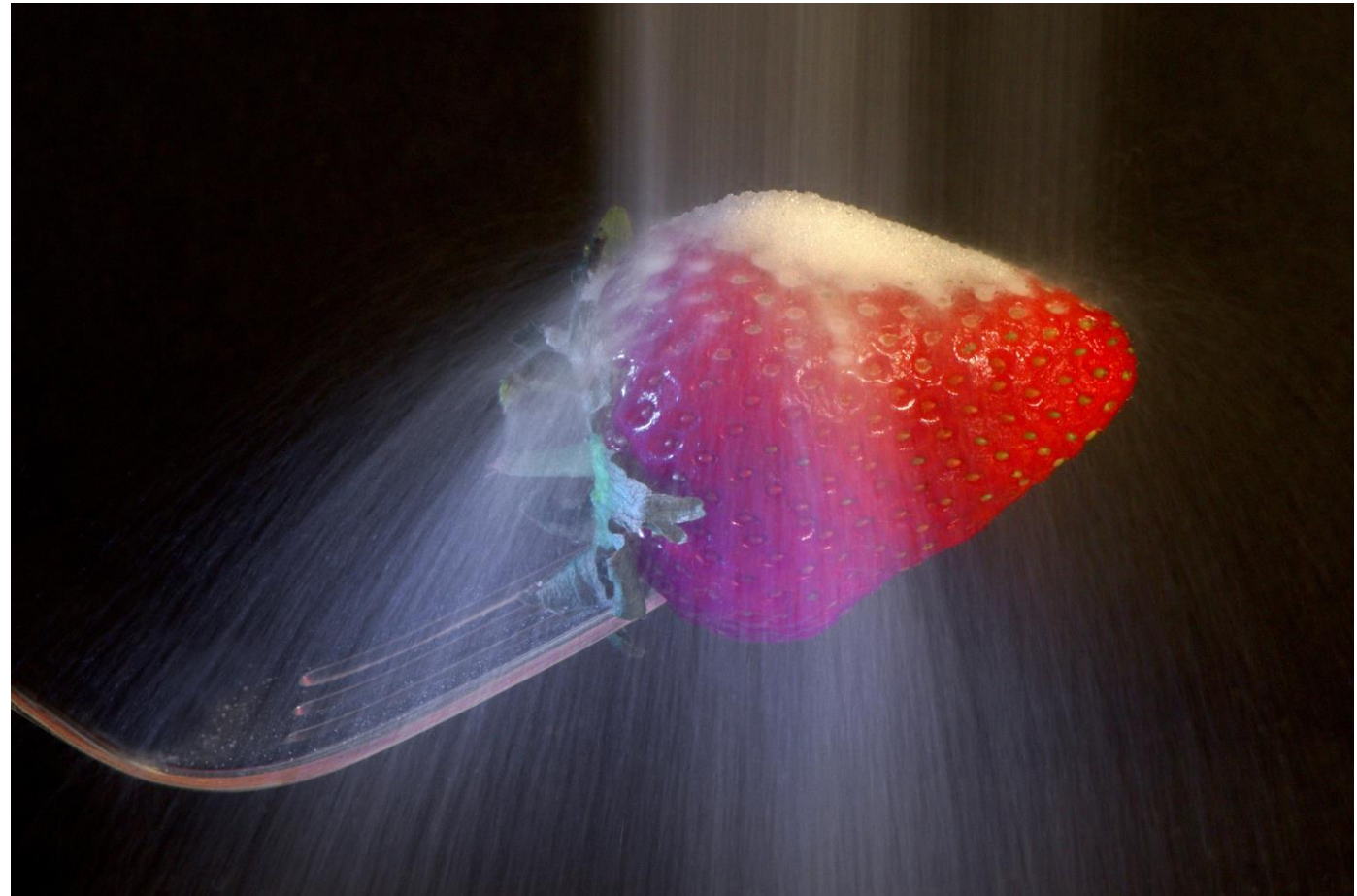


IMAGE 09

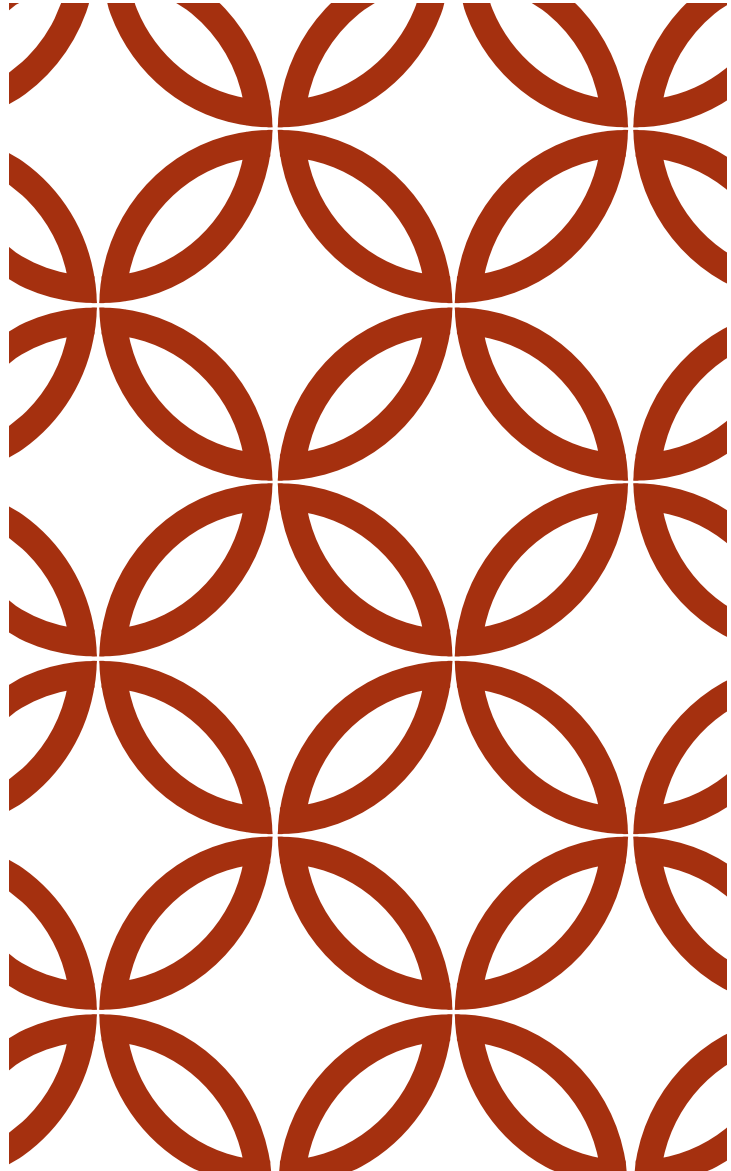
Included as another example of long exposure and motion capture. 6 second exposure. Artificial lighting. I had many attempts at this. The tricky part was avoiding over exposure of the sugar crystals sat on top of the strawberry. The histogram came in very useful on this one.



This was included as a deliberate exercise in using DoF effectively. Another high key image, shot in a light box.

IMAGE 10

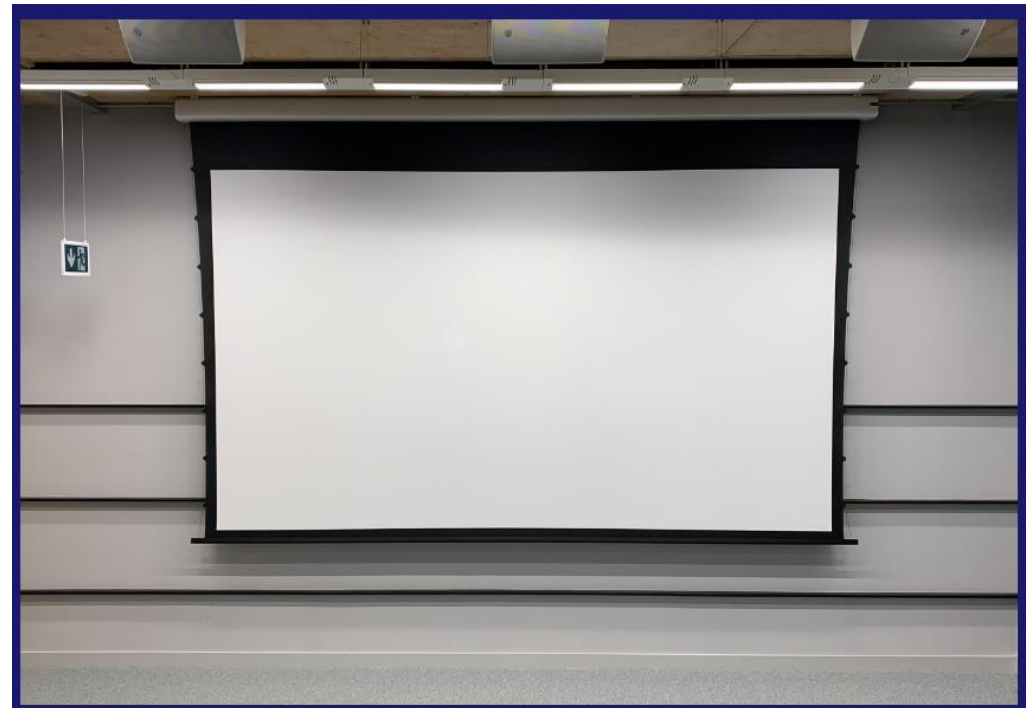




THE BIG DAY

THE ASSESSMENT

- ❑ Attend in person or via ZOOM. I used ZOOM! Apart from my own assessment, I sat through 5 other assessments. 3 were successful, 2 were unsuccessful
- ❑ Each image is projected for 7 seconds
- ❑ Each image is viewed twice by the judges
- ❑ Individual judges are then invited to comment on the submission
- ❑ A vote is then taken as to whether the candidate has been successful





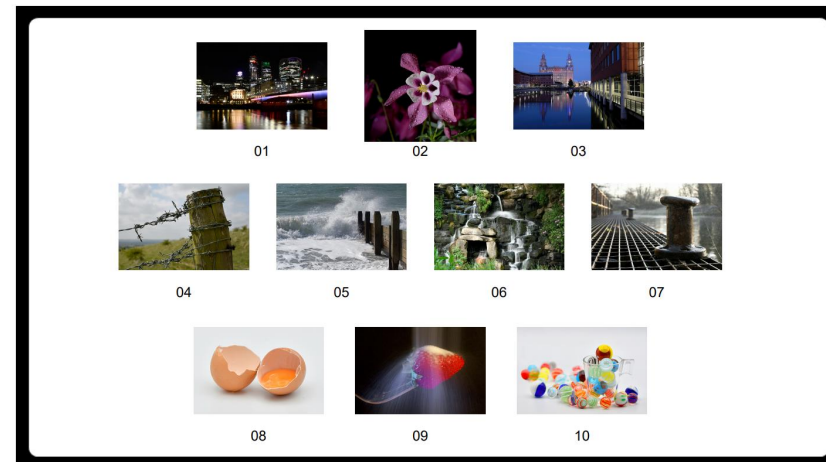
MY ASSESSMENT

- ❑ A bit of an anti-climax really!
- ❑ Very few specific comments – probably a good sign
- ❑ Image 2 has a couple of edge distractions that could have been cloned away
- ❑ Image 5 is the weakest
- ❑ The judges were complementary on the arrangement of the panel. Nighttime, natural light, artificial light
- ❑ The submission was considered to easily meet the standard required
- ❑ Unanimous verdict – certificate arrived after about 10 days

THE RPS
ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

LICENTIATE
Presentation Layout

Digital Format



Applicant Name

Membership/Record Number

Assessment Date



high five



*This is to certify that
Paul M. Birchenough
has achieved the standard required
and is enrolled as a Licentiate of
The Royal Photographic Society of
Great Britain*

14th July 2022

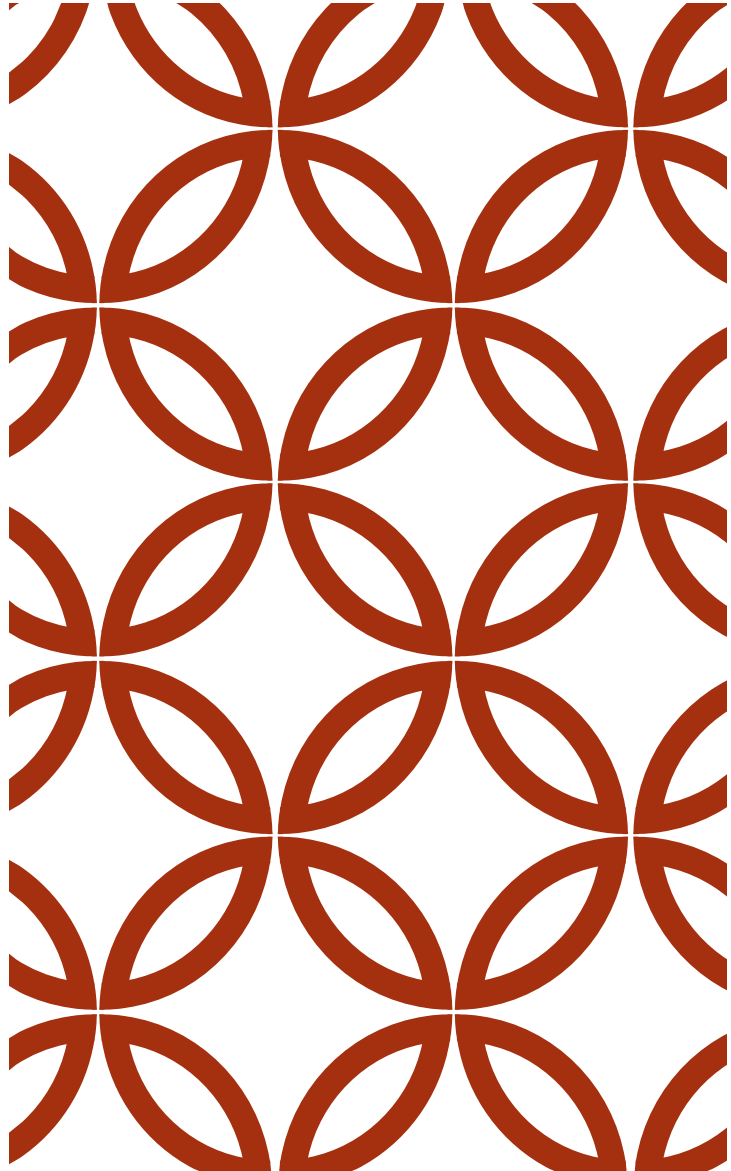


The Seal of the Society

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Simon Hill".

Founded 1853
Incorporated by Royal Charter

President
Simon Hill HonFRPS



JOB DONE!
