

2018 Conference Abstracts

Laurie Lewis - keynote speaker

Laurie Lewis ARCA, MA, MFA attended art schools at Walthamstow and The Royal College, The University of California, Motion Picture Division, UCLA.

He made documentary films in the USA covering the Chicago Democratic Convention riots and on gun control for Warren Beatty. In the UK, he made a feature film on the camera-makers Gandolfi and concert films with Frank Zappa, The Rolling Stones and Ian Dury.

As a photojournalist, he has worked in disaster zones covering earthquakes in Kashmir, volcanic eruptions in Iceland, shot magazine features in Nicaragua, South Africa, Russia, China, Indonesia, the Himalayas, France and the USA.

As arts correspondent, his work has appeared in The Sunday Times, Sunday Telegraph, the Guardian, the Independent, Rolling Stone magazine, Time and Life, focusing on classical music, ballet, dance, rock'n'roll and jazz.

His portraits, made in the studio and more often on location, appear in the collections of the V&A, the National Portrait Gallery in London and the Hôtel de Crillon, Paris.

He has had exhibitions at the Royal Academy, the Photographers Gallery and at the Hankyu Gallery in Japan.

Andrew Bruce, Digitisation Officer, The Postal Museum

A Blank Slate (Setting out to deliver first class digitisation)

The 2017 opening of The Postal Museum marked London's first new major museum in a decade. The new museum was designed with a purpose-built digitisation studio to not only support the documentation, preservation and access of the large and varied collection, but also to provide a revenue stream by offering digitisation to external museums, archives and individuals. With no pre-existing in-house digitisation efforts or projects the creation of The Postal Museum Digitisation Studio allowed for a completely blank slate.

Just like planning a fantasy football team who hasn't whiled away the hours considering the way they would set up their dream museum studio?

One year on from opening this is our story of how to set up a digitisation studio from scratch. How to set up a new studio with no baggage or legacy systems to contend with, the practicalities of space, choosing paints, finding the perfect black flooring, choosing kit, finding staff, designing workflows, benchmarking, our decisions to work with imaging standards and the success of offering digitisation to external institutions.

Jason Candlin, Silverbeard Images

From Medicine to Museums

This paper will discuss a personal account over a three year journey from being one of the countries leading Medical Photographers to working as a freelance commercial photographer in the cultural heritage sector.

At the beginning of 2017 I took the plunge and went fully freelance launching myself as a commercial photographer, this came with the obvious challenge of putting the word out and finding work. After 25 years of working in photography you'd think the phone would never stop ringing the reality is it takes time, however what the 25 years does bring is 25 years of contacts and networks. After a rocky start which saw me still supplementing my photography income with other work, I landed a contract working for a publishing house and digitisation agency who were collaborating on a project with the Imperial War Museum. My skills in the medical and scientific world stood me in good stead for the challenge of Museum work.

Having worked as a Medical Photographer at various levels for more than 25 years I found myself in the unfortunate position of being made redundant at the end of 2015. Having done the same thing for such a long time I struggled to decide what to do next. Into 2016 and I had a variety of interim roles but all the time I found myself migrating back towards photography.

This was the springboard I needed, I learnt new skills and honed existing skills, learnt how to deal with contractual matters, and above all got into the habit of self directed working. I now do a variety of work as a commercial photographer with specialist skills in medical, scientific and now the cultural heritage sector. I have contracts with a number of organisations, a few repeat clients and a new network of growing contacts.

I've made it through the dark days post redundancy and managed to find my place in the world and my business is now growing and whilst its a little scary at times it really is enjoyable and I have rekindled a passion for what I do.

Kieron Cheek, Assistant Digitisation Photographer | Alfred Gillett Trust (C & J Clark Ltd)

Footwear in Focus:

The Alfred Gillett Trust was formed in 2002 by members of the Clark family, to professionally manage, preserve and promote the extensive collections amassed by the family and its famous, long-established shoemaking business. For the last four years, we have been engaged in an ambitious project to photograph over 25,000 shoes, sandals, boots, slippers, clogs and other footwear, creating a large archive of high-quality digital images for both Trust and company use. The collection is extraordinarily diverse, ranging in date from the Roman period right up to the present day and featuring the work of many different designers and manufacturers in a vast array of different materials, as well as examples of traditional indigenous footwear

from all over the world.

For historical reasons our shoes have been stored, cared for and documented in a fairly inconsistent and haphazard way. Accordingly, from the very beginning the digitisation work has been integrated into an ambitious multidisciplinary project to assess, treat, redocument and rehouse the objects in line with current museum practice. Although the project is still ongoing and will be until at least 2021, we are very pleased with the work we have produced and want to start sharing it. We would therefore like to present to conference a short overview of the project and some of the highlights and challenges we encountered in working with this unique and fascinating collection.

Amelie Deblauwe, Senior Digitisation Technician, Digital Content Unit, Cambridge University Library

How colourful could 'Life of Edward the Confessor' be?

The colour profile of a digital image will face multiple challenges throughout its journey, from creation all the way to publication. Accuracy, consistency, and reproducibility are amongst them.

This talk will explore different aspects of colour management surrounding the digitisation of a 13th century manuscript 'Life of Edward the Confessor' including the photography-related concerns, the publication of images in a mainstream magazine, and the relevance of faithful colour reproduction in the context of academic and scientific research.

Further to visual assessment and software-assisted analysis, spectrophotometer measurements across various media and devices can reveal discrepancies in output and highlight the need for consistent set-ups and protocols. We will examine briefly the implications of these.

Lastly, we shall consider what happens once an image leaves the protective environment of your servers and gets a life of its own. Is there a place for creative license in publication of archival images? When does a reproduction stop being a helpful tool?

Hans van Dormolen

In this paper I'll give an overview and an update of the adoption, present and future use of the Metamorfoze Preservation Imaging Guidelines. The Metamorfoze Preservation Imaging Guidelines are published by the National Library of the Netherlands in January 2012. The basic principle of the Metamorfoze Guidelines is "what you see is what you get". That means that no visible information of the original is lost in the preservation master file. To do so, the tonal capture (white balance, exposure and gain modulation) has to be correct. So correct tonal capture is one of the most important objective measurable criteria to carry out (mass) digitization projects according to Metamorfoze.

Since its publication in 2012, the Metamorfoze guidelines are used and adopted worldwide by the cultural heritage community and by camera & scanner manufactures. In 2017, ISO/TS 19264-1 is published. This ISO standard is based on the Metamorfoze and FADGI guidelines. Metamorfoze version 2.0 is under construction now. A new element in version 2 will be the use of formula CIE2000SL=1 to specify color accuracy.

Ben Gilbert, The Wellcome Trust

Stories of science, medicine, life and art.

Our health is bound up in so many aspects of our existence. Wellcome Collection's online stories explore the many and varied ways in which science, medicine, art, and the connections between them all, challenge, inspire and shape our lives.

Listen to a handful of these stories and go behind-the-scenes on a recent ambitious commission to document and celebrate the NHS turning 70.

Dave Green, Dave Green Gallery

Digitising the Beaford archive

Two years ago I took on the challenge of an 18-month contract to digitise 10,000 35mm monochrome negatives and 2,600 contact sheets from the Beaford archive, convert them to positive images, enhance and clean up as appropriate. The archive totals 80,000 negatives spanning an 18 year period from 1971. Roger Deakins, the acclaimed and now Oscar-winning cinematographer, started the archive in 1971, under the direction of John Lane, then director of Beaford Arts. The following year it was continued by James Ravilious, son of Eric, for a further 17 years. The Hidden Histories project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and others, is an ongoing three-year project of which my involvement was for the first 18 months. 1,500 of the Ravilious 'best' and 'good' images were already held in digital format in the archive; my task was to digitise 9,000 of the 'poor' and 'fair' of his work and 1,000 never-before-seen images by Deakins.

For my presentation I would like to take delegates through the process and experience of this commission from choice of equipment and setting up the studio, to digitising contact sheets and negatives, training and role of volunteers, inverting to positives, enhancing through Lightroom to cropping and spotting in Photoshop. The presentation will be well illustrated with pictures from the process and with the iconic images of rural life produced.

Elizabeth Hunter, British Library

The Endangered Archives Programme

The programme was set up in 2004 with an initial grant of £10 million from Arcadia (a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin) and is administered by the British Library. The programme's aim is to help save archives that are at risk of deterioration or destruction making the material available for scholarly research. The

digitisation equipment is then left within the country to encourage further initiatives.

They have supported over 350 projects so far in more than 90 countries from Armenia to Zanzibar and there are now more than 6 million images online. Many grant recipients had succeeded sometimes against all the odds, and the E.A.P. team felt it was important to share the knowledge gained and put together a handbook, which has just been published through Open Book Publishers to help future grant holders.

My involvement with the project came about because they wanted to show in the book, examples of images that weren't up to their required standard next to images of how they should ideally look, and give advice on how to achieve the result.

They also invited past grant holders to talk about their experiences and I will be sharing some of their anecdotes along with photos of the archives they were planning to digitise.

Blazej Mikuła, Senior Digitisation Technician, Digital Content Unit, Cambridge University Library

If 'a picture is worth a thousand words,' what is a video worth? In my opinion, quite a lot and, thanks to the new technology, making films easier than we think. Good film needs a good story and in our collections we have all sort of treasures waiting to tell their own stories. So why not make a film about it?

In this presentation I will share my simple working method and techniques and describe the equipment needed to make a short film on a budget and how to set up for filming interviews, editing and uploading the final product on YouTube. This session aims to provide a more practical approach in making a short film that is visually attractive, short and on a budget.

A good story is all you need. 4K Red Scarlet is nice but will my mobile phone do? Any story needs good audio.

What is most challenging in filmmaking is a gripping story but I imagine that this one won't be a problem.

Jacqueline Vincent, Brechin Imaging Services / The Brechin Group Inc

Cambodia's Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum Archives: onsite photographic digitisation, preservation and online access of historical records from the Khmer Rouge S-21 Prison for UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme. Photography is about communication using light and the captured images to tell stories; cultural heritage digitisation links past, present and future with those images. Our project role is to communicate and share digitisation and preservation skills onsite with a team of local Museum staff and DDD university students to photograph and scan archive

collections.

Held within the Archives of Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (TSGM) is the unique and largest collection of over 400,000 forced confessions and biographical documents, photographs, negatives and bound materials from the notorious S-21 prison during the dark days of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge reign against the Cambodian people. An estimated 17,000 people were held at S-21, tortured and eventually killed.

TSGM Archives was inscribed on the UNESCO Memory of the World International Register in 2009. Funded by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and overseen by UNESCO, the TSGM Archives Preservation and Digitisation Project was launched in January, 2018 and by the end of this project anyone with access to the Internet anywhere in the world will be able to view, edit and use the TSGM Archives.

In our presentation, we will describe technical challenges of working onsite in a developing-world museum environment where climate control and power fluctuation are not optimal. We will discuss our technical solutions as well as best processes to maximize production while meeting and exceeding international archival imaging quality standards.

As the most important aspect of this project, besides the creation of digital images, is the capacity building of the Museum staff, another challenge has been part of our project. Cambodia has not seen a project of this extent and technical level, hence the challenges of spreading expertise to local staff in a sustainable way and hence our hope on setting a new standard of digitisation in Cambodia.

Even though the production is structured and doesn't change from one day to next, every day there is a new surprise regarding the archives. One day we discover new documents; on another we find a new digitisation challenge.

The archives of Tuol Sleng are a treasure, in a sense that it has not been totally discovered, which makes the project team feeling like explorers in a vast history of this former prison.