



DAVENTRY

PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



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Alex Timmermans

Alchemist

Alex Timmermans never imagined that a photographic process, which has been invented by Archer more than 160 years ago, was going to have such an influence on his passion for photography. Alex Timmermans, born in 1962, is a self-taught photographer with a strong liking for ancient photographic techniques.

[Storytelling | Alex Timmermans](#)



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He practiced photography throughout his whole life, starting with a Nikormat ftn. The change from analog to digital seemed to be a logical step. However, the excitement and magic of films got lost during this change; “everything became more predictable... too predictable”.

Working on the wet plate process made photography inspiring again. Being able to use antique camera's and brass lenses with a glorious photographic history like Dallmeyer, Hermagis and Darlot. It is pure because of the possibility to use ‘simple’ chemicals to reproduce amazingly detailed pictures. In this photographic process, coincidences will greatly influence the result. Apart from working with chemicals, these coincidences can be caused by the many different weather conditions as well. In general, shooting a single plate takes about one hour or sometimes even longer. Most of this time is consumed by setting up the lighting, pose and the positioning of the camera. Apart from this, there is no possibility to prepare plates in advance.



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So — to make just one single picture — you will have to go through the whole process: cleaning the glass, pouring the plate with collodion, sensitize, exposure, developing, washing, fixing, washing it again and finally varnishing. However, seeing the picture changing in the fixer bath — from a negative into a positive — is a magic spectacle which makes it worthwhile to spend so much time and energy on it. Doing this outdoors means you will have to take everything with you, including a mobile darkroom, home-made chemicals etc. A fully loaded wagon.

Collodium photography is not only a kind of photography. It is a passion as well!

Alex has succeeded throughout the years to collect a few original studio cameras with a formats up to 60×60cm. Last year a camera to personal specifications with a plate size of max 24×24inch was made for him.

Moreover, throughout the years, he has collected a priceless collection of antique lenses. Mainly Petzval type lenses are the lenses he prefers to use. The characteristics of a Petzval lens is that it produces extremely sharp images in the centre and becomes softer going outwards. More information about this fascinating process can be found on Alex's collodion weblog : www.collodion-art.blogspot.com.

The making of Swan lake

This video was made by Patrice Lesueur of Lightinabox. It shows the making of "Swan lake". The picture was made by using the antique wet plate process or Collodion process.

[The making of "Swan lake...." - YouTube](#)



Response from Alex Timmermans

Hello Michael,

Thank you for asking.

I am honoured and please feel free to publish it.

It might be a good idea also to mention my website. Www. Alextimmermans.com.

Best regards Alex



Debby Harry © Robert Mapplethorpe

Robert Mapplethorpe's photograph of Debby Harry is a good example of how to photograph a strong attractive women with attitude.

[The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation](#)

DPS WHAT'S ON IN SEPTEMBER

- 3rd Members evening practical session - Visit to 78 Derngate (£7.80 pp max)
10th Competition (Projected) - FISH (DEAD OR ALIVE) - Guest Judge: TBC
Graham Brown Memorial Trophy
- 17th Members evening - 10 in 10
24th Guest Speaker: Carl Wright - Advanced Camera Techniques
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DPS COMPETITION THEMES 2019-20

September - **Fish (Dead or Alive)** - Projected*
October - **Borrowed Art - Print**
November - **Creative** - The Peter Cosentino Trophy - Projected
December - **Curves** - Projected*
January 2020 - **Open - Panel of 3 Prints**
February 2020 - **Food** - Projected

* Graham Brown Memorial Trophy entries will be judged before the start of the DPS competition

Hollis Trophy Entry Deadline - Sunday 29th September
Badby Challenge Cup - November 19th

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