

Viral St James Photo competition - No 5 'Impressions of lockdown'

Not too much guidance this week....

I imagine that we are all sort of getting used to the new normal of lockdown – some obviously better than others, so I apologise if this theme makes you feel a bit down... Alternatively, you may be appreciating some things more – community spirit, your garden, getting to know neighbours, cheering the NHS....

We are after photos that sum up the current situation – either in general or personally. The documentary photos below and at the end of this piece are clearly of the general nature and each tell a slightly different version of the same story, while the picture on page 2 is a very personal impression.



This is not one of my photos (I rather wish that it was...) - thank you to Time Magazine for this, but it sums up well a part of what we are all going through and thus gives an 'impression' of lockdown.

So you can all become press photographers for the next fortnight – something to do in the Morrisons queue, perhaps?

Or you try a different tack...



This is one of the entries from last week's competition 'still life' but was described by the entrant as '*a permanently transitional still life picture telling the story of each season in our lives....-currently Lockdown projects*' (no, it can't be entered again!)

If you are trying to suggest a personal impression such as in the photo above, bear in mind that the photo must stand on its own – with no written explanation necessary!

So no specific technical advice this week – if you are setting up and posing a shot like the one above, all the advice from previous weeks holds true, as indeed it does if you are going for a more 'documentary' photo – ie think of light, shadow, exposure, focus etc, but there is a case for keeping your camera set on full auto (not relevant to phones as they always are!) so that you don't have to think about settings, as you capture what may be a fleeting moment.

If you do use a phone, or leave your camera on a wide lens setting you might want to consider 'cropping' the photo – most modern cameras and camera phones can do this within the camera and create a new image for export, or you can use software such as snapseed (free for mobile devices) or an image editor (there are hundreds – many free) on a computer. This is where the rule of thirds from last week's note might come into its own!



Two versions of the same photo of what purported to be social distancing in Chinatown, Singapore 5 weeks ago..... The one on the right has been cropped to place the masked lady's face at approx 2/3 points to draw the eye better, removing the distraction of the skyline etc, but leaving enough detail to show that the location is a shopping street.

We are changing to a fortnightly competition this week, and opening up the competition to a wider audience in the town, so I'm looking forward to judging this theme after close of entries **mid-day on May 11th**. Given that this was to be the date for the opening of the St James Centre, it would be tempting to photograph ladders and paint pots in the unfinished building – but that won't win now that I've suggested it!



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