

Roll: **20251129-60301**

Camera: **Canon EOS 5D Mark III**

Format: **Digital:Full Frame:33MP**

Year: **2025** Month: **November**

Subject: U3A Shot in the Dark.

Notes:

I had had it in mind for some time to do a shoot on a rainy night in a deserted urban environment. Broad Street in Nottingham's Lace Market I thought would be a good location. Tall Victorian mills, cobbled streets, little foot traffic? Ideal. This I thought would be the best time of year for the project too as it would be dark by four thirty or five o'clock time and, if I did it midweek it would be sufficiently early for there to be few, if any, revellers around.

I kept putting off the shoot for any number of reasons, until the last Saturday of the month came around. The presentation was to be on the following Tuesday so I was running out of time. I felt a little diffident about wandering the city streets on my own, in the dark, carrying expensive camera equipment. I know of a bloke who died after being coshed for his camera on the Hook in Lady Bay, which often gives me pause for thought. I prevaricated. I thought of moving the enterprise to Sunday, an intrinsically safer evening I think, but there was no rain forecast for Sunday, and that was critical the shots I wanted.

When I came to assemble my gear I found that the batteries for my remote camera trigger were dead. The rechargeable replacements seemed lifeless too, still, I could buy some new batteries from the Coop before catching the bus and so finally, at five thirty, when it was already dark, I girded my loins and set off across the park. Midway to Central Avenue I realised I did not have my wallet and therefore, I did not have my bus pass. Reluctant to return home and lose more time, I reasoned with myself that I could manage without the pass and pay in cash on the bus, ditto at the Coop for the batteries. Convincing as I initially found that argument, it proved to be easily refuted, as when I reached Bridgford Road, I noted that in addition to my bus pass and bank card, the wallet also held my cash. I returned home.

Back again at around six thirty, I bought four triple A batteries at the Coop, sat down and fitted them to the wireless receiver and remote trigger, which, helpfully, are not marked to show which way round the batteries should be inserted. When I tested it the receiver still did not work with any of the possible orientations. O.K. I remained undaunted. I would use the little infrared remote trigger which I keep hanging constantly on the camera strap. It would be difficult to use the infrared for including myself in the shots, as it is very short range and requires some accuracy in the aiming but it would be useful to avoiding camera shake, and the inclusion of myself in the images wasn't critical to a successful outcome.

By around seven thirty I was on the bus and heading, I thought, to Fletcher Gate. At Nottingham Midland, the driver stopped and announced that the bus would not be serving Fletcher Gate or Broadway but would be taking a detour to the Victoria Centre. On further enquiry I was told that no buses were serving Fletcher Gate at that time, "because of the cars". I disembarked and headed up to Fletcher Gate on shanks's pony. The obvious route, to me at least, to Fletcher Gate I discovered was for motor vehicles only once past the bus station. Unwilling to be further delayed I joined the traffic going up Middle Hill. There was little enough of it, perhaps a dozen vehicles in all before I found a pavement and was taken by the view up Garner's Hill to the Nottingham Contemporary and the High Pavement Chapel, now part of Marston's Pitcher and Piano chain of public houses. The weather it may be noted was now notably dry and almost all signs of precipitation from earlier in the afternoon, had gone.

Cursing the tardiness of Indra, I headed for Weekday Cross and High Pavement, where I set up my tripod outside the Museum of Justice and took some pictures of the street to include the Lace Market Hotel and its Cock and Hoop public house. I took a little time out to investigate a venue beneath the arches of the old Shire Hall which proved to house "Iberico World Tapas" which despite the lack of foot traffic proved to be packed.

I set up again at the foot of St. Mary's Gate to gather images of the gum splattered, brick lane looking toward Castle Rock's Kean's Head. As youngsters tottered out of the hostelry they spotted the camera and put on a show of adolescent high spirits, including performing cart wheels in the hope of their efforts being caught on camera, unfortunately I was not set up to capture such exuberant movements.

The only negative incident during the shoot, occurred when a member of a group walking toward the pub, peeled off to approach me, shouting rather aggressively to indicate that she did not wish to be

photographed. Why on earth she thought I might want to photograph her I do not know. My eyesight is poor I know, but I could detect nothing about her that might warrant such action, excepting perhaps, in order to gather evidence of a verbal assault. As her friends ignored her and walked on and I did much the same, other than to offer a faintly wan smile, the incident closed without much agitation on my part.

I stopped again in one of the [least known footways](#) in Nottingham; Kaye's Walk. The slabbed 19th Century path running between the "mansions" and the churchyard evoked something of the atmosphere for which I was looking. Sadly still no rain.

Finally I reached Broad Street. I had to stand a while as two young Islamic women were taking pictures of each other striking poses and walking to and fro from the phone box. They showed no embarrassment at my presence and took their time. Young people these days, on occasion, display such confidence and aplomb, do they not? It did occur to me though, that had I arrived first I would most certainly have invited them to play through. To my considerable disappointment not only was the street as dry as a bone but that which I had remembered as cobbles or sets, was in fact just coloured concrete bricks and resembled nothing so much as a suburban garage drive. The attempts to include myself in the scene were clumsy and worthless but I blame my tools.

Having finished the shoot I went in search of a decent pub and a lavatory. Everywhere I looked was packed, bouncers were on the doors and music was being played at deafening volumes. I found myself completely bemused by the notion that there is anything pleasant about sitting in a denuded old pub, drinking overpriced, fizzy muck, so deafened by the noise that the only communication possible is through images on the screen of a smart phone.

In desperation I went in the Turf Tavern, now owned by Patron Capital, and misleadingly called the Hop Merchant. After visiting the loo, I took a look at the poor selection of national brews available but after taking into consideration the total absence of available seating, upstairs or down, I decided to head for the Bell. As I stepped out the doorway and navigated around the bouncer, I was stunned to find that in my few minutes absence from the streets, there had been a deluge. The road was awash as the city drains had clearly failed to cope with what could only have been a ten minute downpour.

As I headed down Queen Street I realised that I could not throw up the opportunity to actually photograph streets in the rain as planned and so I pulled out my camera again, although not the tripod. From the junction with King Street I was able to snap two or three half decent shots of the busy street in the dark and wet, although the small aperture setting did mean that it was impossible to freeze movement. I do rather like the two, no doubt entirely innocent, hooded characters, who appear to be hurrying nefariously by.

Although not quite as loud as other venues, every bar in the Bell Inn was chocka and again I felt obliged to nod to the bouncer to acknowledge the brevity of my visit.

My last hope was the community operated Malt Cross Music Hall in St. James's Street. Before entering I took a couple of shots in the street where it was now raining steadily.

Despite ownership by the Potter's Trust and operation by the YMCA, the Malt Cross, it seems, is now in thrall to Nottingham's general hostelry modus vivendi. Although it seems to host a slightly older clientele, it's primary offerings appears to be keg beers and a deafening noise which might be thought by some, to resemble music. As I attempted to leave, three or four lost souls were sheltering, briefly, in the doorway, before being moved on by the bouncer.

Technical:

The camera was set to aperture priority, *f*22 with ISO on auto. This allowed the camera to push the ISO to 25,600 producing, to my eye, excessively grainy pictures with little contrast, depth or richness of tone.

I occasionally tweaked the exposure by one stop and from Queen Street, the pictures I have saved are at *f*16. The shots from Middle Hill, Queen Street and St. James's Street, were hand held while resting on railings or lamp posts. The rest were from a tripod using an infra-red trigger. If I were to try again, in the same conditions, I think I would have knocked the aperture down a couple of stops and restricted the ISO to a maximum of perhaps 8000.

Dates:

Times and dates are taken from the EXIF metadata. The chronology has been checked and I believe it to be accurate.

Frames:

F47B0364	2911	20:02	Nottingham Contemporary and Pitcher and Piano at night.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/5
F47B0370	2911	20:08	Nottingham Contemporary and Pitcher and Piano at night.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	0.5
F47B0373	2911	20:18	Cock and Hoop.	28	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/10
F47B0374	2911	20:18	Cock and Hoop at night.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/8
F47B0378	2911	20:29	Youths leaving the Kean's Head at night.	35	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/6
F47B0379	2911	20:29	Youths leaving the Kean's Head at night.	35	25600	<i>f22</i>	0.3
F47B0380	2911	20:34	Slabbed Alley at night.	35	25600	<i>f22</i>	0.4
F47B0382	2911	20:35	Slabbed Alley at night.	88	25600	<i>f22</i>	0.4
F47B0383	2911	20:40	Phone box in deserted street.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/5
F47B0386	2911	20:42	Phone box in deserted street.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/8
F47B0387	2911	20:43	Person in a deserted street.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/13
F47B0388	2911	20:44	Deserted street and a phone box at night.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/8
F47B0389	2911	20:44	Approaching man in a deserted street.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/8
F47B0390	2911	20:45	Approaching man in a deserted street.	24	25600	<i>f22</i>	1/8
F47B0392	2911	21:20	Shadowy figures in a busy street at night.	55	25600	<i>f16</i>	1/20
F47B0394	2911	21:20	Shadowy figures in a busy street at night.	55	25600	<i>f16</i>	1/20
F47B0398	2911	21:28	Going to The Roebuck Inn.	24	20000	<i>f16</i>	1/30
F47B0399	2911	21:29	Saturday Night.	24	8000	<i>f16</i>	1/30
F47B0400	2911	21:29	Saturday Night.	24	8000	<i>f16</i>	1/30



F47B0364.jpg



F47B0370.jpg



F47B0373.jpg



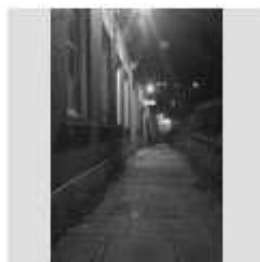
F47B0374.jpg



F47B0378.jpg



F47B0379.jpg



F47B0380.jpg



F47B0382.jpg



F47B0383.jpg



F47B0386.jpg



F47B0387.jpg



F47B0388.jpg



F47B0389.jpg



F47B0390.jpg



F47B0392.jpg



F47B0394.jpg



F47B0398.jpg



F47B0399.jpg



F47B0400.jpg



F47B0370 - Nottingham Contemporary and Pitcher and Piano at night.



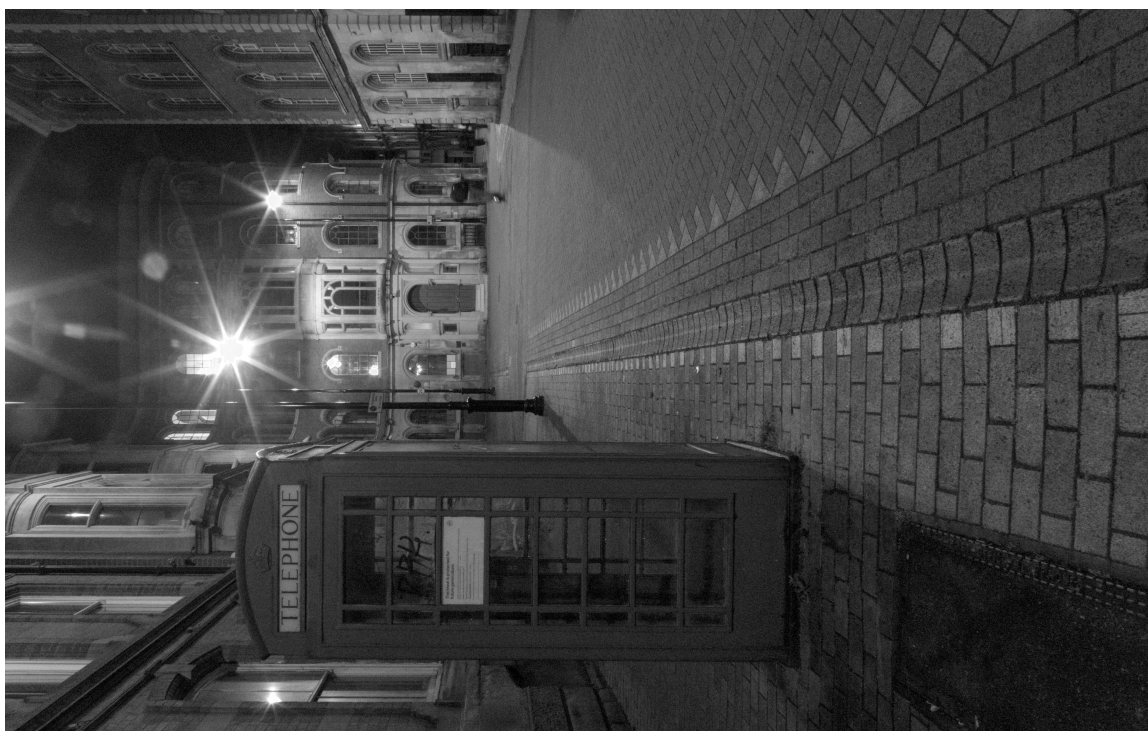
F47B0374 - Cock and Hoop at night.



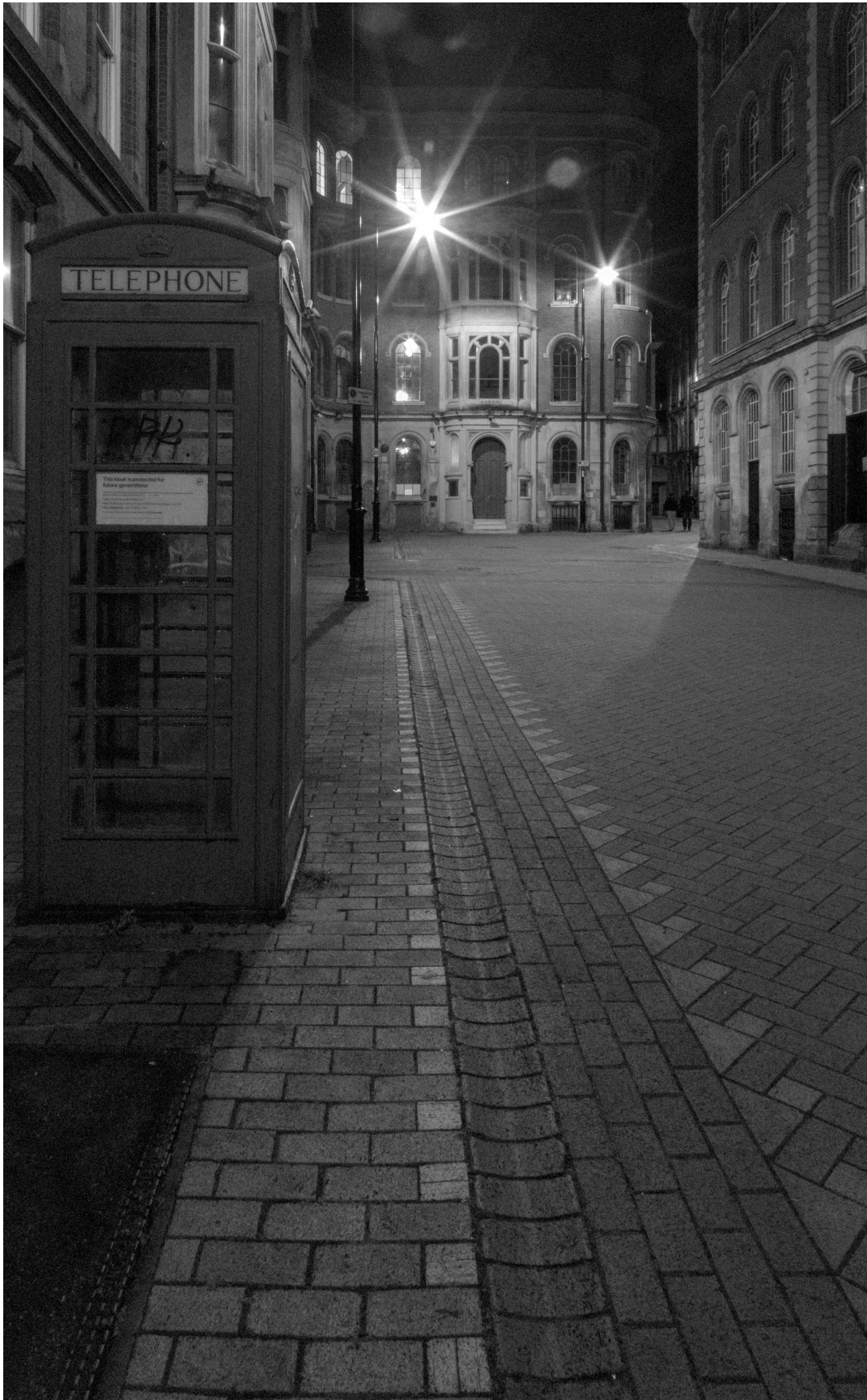
F47B0382 - Slabbed Alley at night.



F47B0378 - Youths leaving the Kean's Head at night.



F47B0383 - Phone box in deserted street.



F47B0388 - Deserted street and a phone box at night.



F47B0392 - Shadowy figures in a busy street at night.



F47B0394 - Shadowy figures in a busy street at night.



F47B0398 - Going to The Roebuck Inn.