

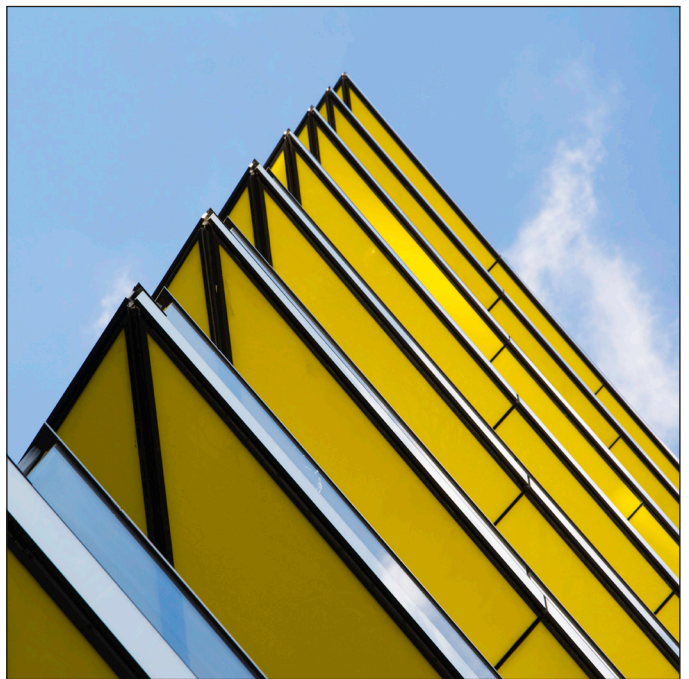
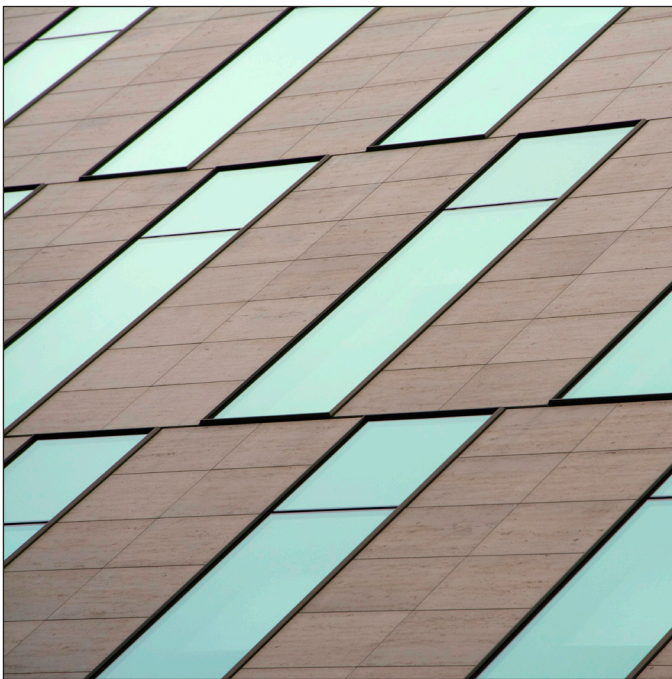
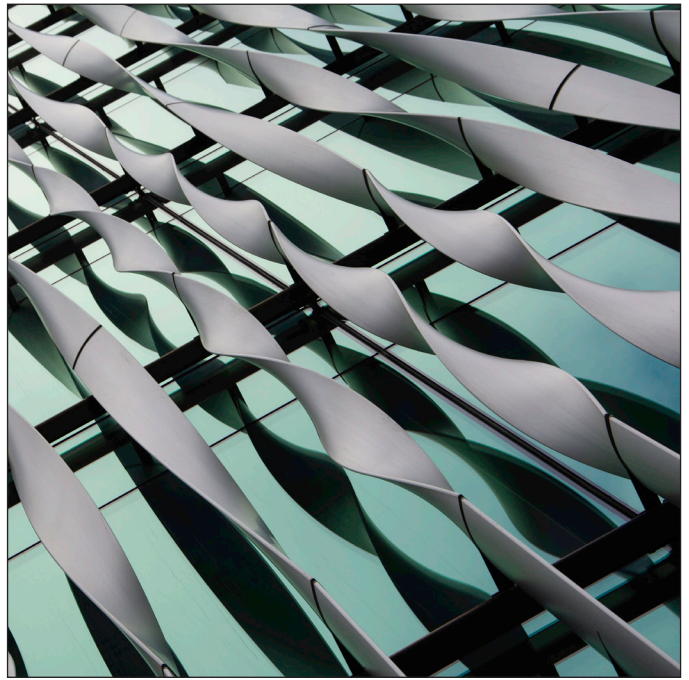
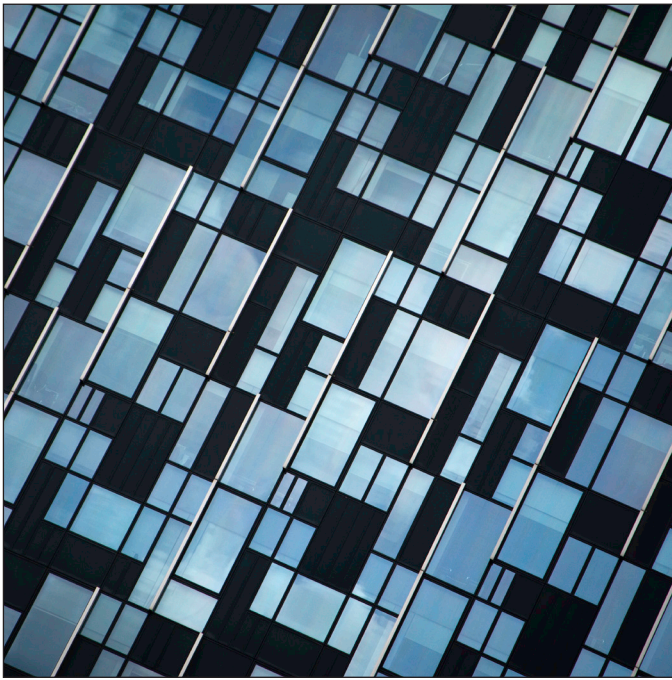
City Lines

City blocks

For most of us, the most hazardous aspect of a wander around town is probably the traffic on the roads. For PAUL BATHER ARPS, it brings a risk of neck injury because he is always looking skywards and spotting the patterns in the buildings around him.

There is no other way to put it, I love taking pictures of buildings, or rather parts of them. The different materials, textures and finishes can all

look fantastic under an array of different natural conditions at different times, day or night, rain or shine.



Clockwise from top left, Window Boxes, Twisted, London Bridge Angles, City Window Reflections

I like the appeal of a building be it the shape size or different materials used. Some of my pictures focus on the use of mirrors and windows within the building, whereas for others I'll use my lens to examine brickwork and interesting - and intricate - structures.

My photos are all about manipulating and showing buildings or part of buildings in a different way trying to showcase whenever possible shadows, movement of light, tone and textures, bringing a different dimension to the normal image of an office block or building development.

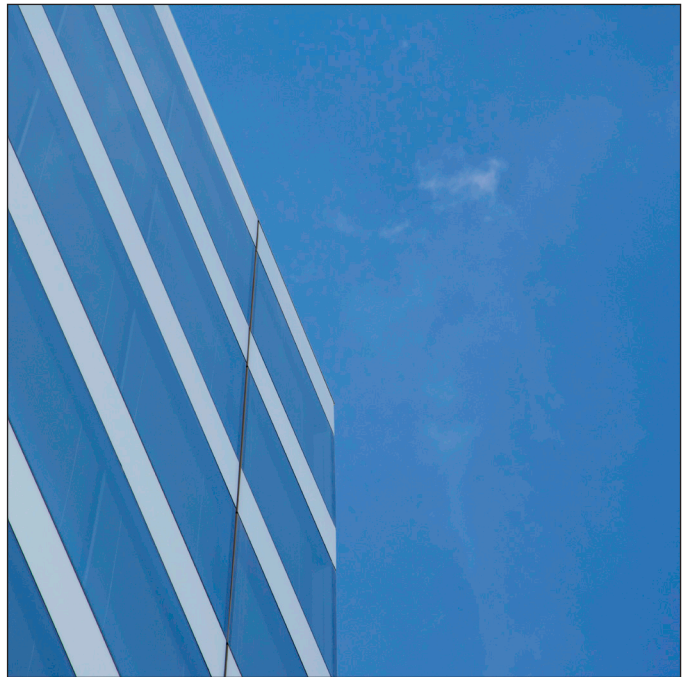
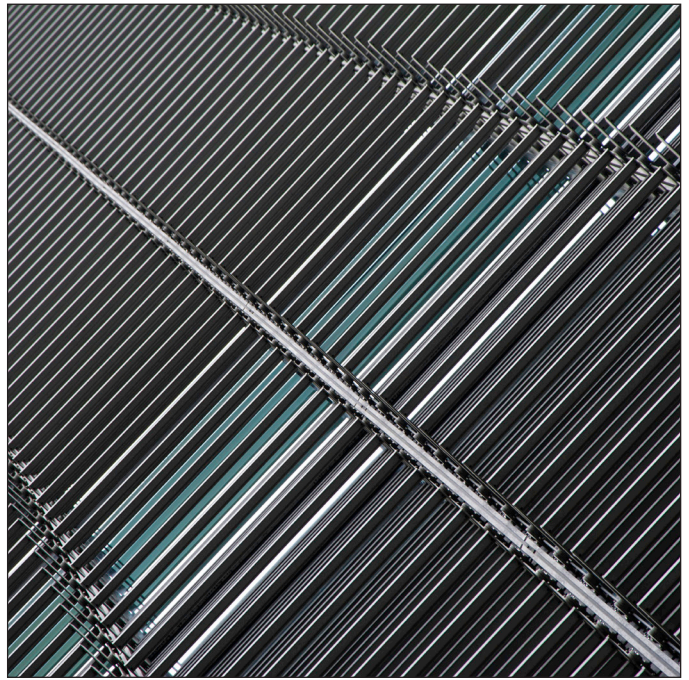
I am lucky to live on the south eastern outskirts

of London with good transport links into the centre of the capital where a large number of recent building developments have taken place including Bishopsgate, Greenwich peninsula and Stratford Olympic park. I love spending a few hours wandering around the city and finding new developments in order to capture different images.

The range of images that you can take of buildings are endless and can introduce an exciting range of abstract imagery to your photographic arsenal.

Achieving the look

To achieve the look I am after, I currently use a



Clockwise from top left, City Reflections, Window Bars, City Sky Light, What's the Point

Nikon 18-140mm zoom lens on my crop sensor Nikon D7500 or D7100. When I have found my building 'subject', I like to focus on a particular detail of a building such as a group of windows, and explore it using the lens to emphasize and highlight certain aspects.

I try to look around the whole external of the building and specifically look for horizontal or diagonal lines to draw attention to the subject. These different or unusual shapes can also add interest to the buildings. Once I have spotted an unusual or striking shape in a structure, I will use different angles and arrangements to draw attention to it looking whenever possible to highlight any specific details.

I shoot handheld as I find a tripod or even a monopod can attract unwanted attention. My posture and stance can attract some funny looks - but these unusual angles that I use to take my photos can really help to bring out certain light tones and building aspects.

I will try a variety different angles by leaning back and looking straight up or by adjusting the angle of the camera. I have not taken to lying on the floor yet but that may come soon. I am always looking for ways to showcase different and unusual elements of the structure.

I often use the Photographers Ephemeris app on my phone to assist with the direction of light

on a particular time and day and to indicate the path of the sun, although shooting in a city location with buildings often in shadow this is not essential. For me, I like to work more instinctively looking for how the light reacts and draws attention to areas of a building.

Light, as always, plays an essential role. A front-lit building can look flat, which is something I try to avoid, and I try to shoot with side light whenever possible. Using side lighting can add drama, and assist in revealing the surface texture and details of a building,

Time of day can also make a big difference in how the building is lit. By shooting early or late in the day you may be able to avoid direct overhead light, which can form hard shadows and high contrast, unless it is the effect you are looking for.

A polarising filter can also assist to give you the look that you are after. It can help darken the sky and can often eliminate reflections you decide that you do not want to have in your image. It will also help deepen the colours in your photos - emphasising textures and tone. I also find a lens hood is a useful accessory as not only will it help to reduce unnecessary glare it can also assist in protecting the lens from bashing against walls.

I shoot in RAW, and then using Lightroom I will add contrast, vibrancy and boost saturation if necessary. I will also convert to a square crop as I find this helps me in my final composition, although this is personal choice.

Shooting in RAW helps me to capture the full range of tones from highlight to shadow, I will occasionally underexpose in order to keep the detail in areas, especially with highly reflective buildings. For some of my images, I will add a slight vignette to further draw attention to aspects.

Screenshot 1 shows my usual settings including using an ISO of 400, an aperture of $f/8$ if possible, to ensure sufficient detail and speed of $1/640$ second, or sufficiently high to exclude the possibility of camera shake as I am not using a tripod or monopod.

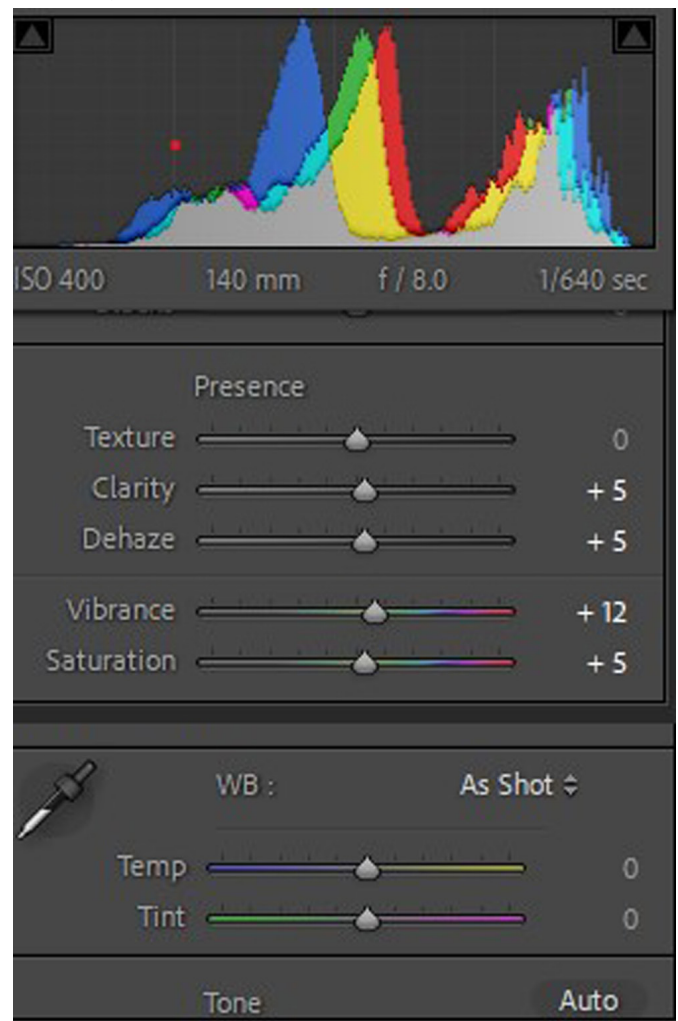
Screenshot 2 shows the addition of clarity +5, dehaze +5, vibrancy +12 and vibrancy +5. I will then add a dark vignette edge usually -7 before moving onto Photoshop.

These are the settings that I use, however,

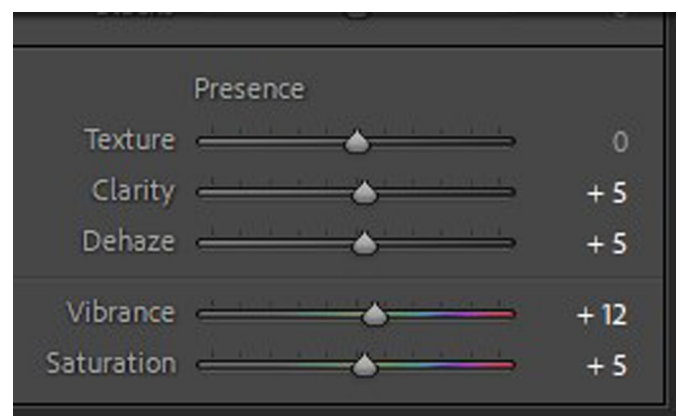
experimentation to find your own preferred finishing effect is highly recommended. I have spent many hours playing around with the settings to get the look I am after.

Once I am happy with the image, I will then transfer the image to Photoshop for cloning out unwanted details or dust specks and resizing the image for final printing if required.

While I am lucky to live so close to the capital, wherever you live I am sure that there will be buildings to explore - old and new.



Screenshot 1



Screenshot 2