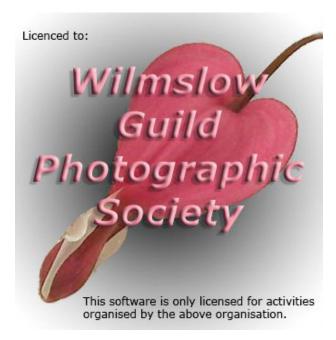## DiCentra - Our new PDI Software

The *DiCentra* software that we have licensed from Wilbur Imaging
http://www.wilburimaging.com/wisoftware/software.htm allows us to create and run
projected digital image competitions, for events organised by Wilmslow Guild
Photographic Society.

*Part of our splash screen with a DiCentra flower, commonly called Bleeding heart, or
Dutchman's breeches.*

It is versatile, and handles four different kinds of event:

- club competitions;

- inter-club competitions;

- portfolio events; and

- major exhibitions.

The design reflects a real experience and understanding of typical practice at all these
kinds of event, at all levels from club to national.

DiCentra is based on the concept of a *competition* (as an event), with its own name and
set of rules. The rules are flexible and can be tailored to suit the needs of a particular
event. The options available vary between the four kinds of event to meet typical needs.

DiCentra vets the entries and images submitted for the competition to ensure that they
meet the rules, or that it can modify the images to comply if the rules are set to allow
this. It then loads the entries into this competition, perhaps in several batches.

Once all the valid entries have been loaded (noting that some might be have been rejected), one asks *DiCentra* to *Make* the competition is created. The running order of the images is arranged either systematically or in random order, as determined by the rules that were selected. A log of all the entries is produced, and a score sheet, arranged in the actual running order.

DiCentra can also produce a set of images to send to the judge for preview, again arranged in actual running order, along with a run sheet with all the titles.

On the night the competition *DiCentra* provides excellent facilities to help check the setup and focus of the projector.

It provides for a quick optional preview of some or all of the images as a slideshow, with image titles displayed briefly, to give a taste of what is to come.

Using the main view the projectionist then works through the images one by one, at a pace determined by the judge. The image title is displayed briefly as each new image is shown. Marks for each image are usually keyed-in as they are announced, and displayed briefly on screen on the right hand end of the image title bar. Any image can be held back for the judge, and reviewed with other 'held-backs' as a group or individually at any time. Medals (places) and/or certificates can be awarded.

There's also a light-box view so that any particular image can be selected visually if needed.

At the end of the competition *DiCentra* can display the results, and the scores, in a very attractive tableau.

The show can be interrupted at any time for an interval, and it can be resumed afterwards at the same point, or at a different one if needs be. One can also include a program of notices for projection during the interval, which might be useful at a major event.

Our licence allows us to run the software on several machines so that the preparation of competitions can be shared among a team.

For example, a competition might be created by one member at home on a desktop and exported, say on a USB stick. The competition can then be imported into another machine, say a laptop to run it on the judging night. Then, after the judging and marking, the competition will includes the results. It can be saved and then be exported again, and perhaps be imported to a third machine, so that the competitions secretary can consolidate the results with those from earlier competitions.

DiCentra demands that entries are presented in a sensible, consistent, but simple format. This is essential to allow the software to undertake so much of the task of creating a projection competition with its associated documentation. Later it supports running the competition, working flexibly with the judge, and recording and presenting the results. The format is explained in *PDI Note 7: Folder and File Names for Club PDI Competitions.*

DiCentra is full of goodies, though this note barely scratches the surface, and hardly does it justice.

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