

PAINTING WITH LIGHT

29th September 2009.

This will take place at Milton Abbey, in and around the Abbey buildings.

Local sunset is scheduled for 6.51 p.m. so if it is reasonably fine you may wish to meet there by say 6.30 p.m. to view and photograph it. There are superb views across the fields and golf course, with long shadows that time of day. You can include (parts of) the Abbey buildings as you wish, or you can go inside and photograph it with sunset lighting through the windows. Later, dark blue twilight sky will improve post-sunset pictures.

The actual PAINTING WITH LIGHT takes two forms, both executed in darkness.

1) This should be possible around 7.45 onwards inside the Abbey when it is getting dark. The general idea is that you set up your tripod and camera where you want inside the building, set the camera on time exposure – say 30 seconds or longer – and light the scene with a moveable flashgun (not fixed to the camera) making sure you do not stop anywhere long enough for you to register on your camera. And make sure no-one else does either! Any type of flashgun normally fixable to the flashsocket on a camera will do, but make sure the batteries are working. You don't need a flashsocket on your camera because you are not going to fix the gun to your camera.

With enough light, and spread of light, it will be possible to get shadowless lighting good enough to pass for daylight. Remember that flash light is set for daylight white balance so a standard daylight, even automatic, WB setting will be fine. It will also be possible to highlight various features– altar, organ, cross, flowers etc.- to emphasize them. This is all trial and error, so you need to record how long you set your time exposure for, and how many flashes of the gun you fire. Clearly that will only be useful for one given locality. Your best bet is to work in small groups and choose different areas in the building to avoid too much lightspill from other groups' areas.

2) Another exercise, better done outside but not necessarily if you have other ideas, is to set up the tripod/camera on time exposure as before, then to outline various features (gravestone, paths, bushes etc.) with a small torch moved closely around the feature pointing at the camera. This will outline the feature with a narrow band of light and even illuminate the face of it a little. Again – keep moving. You don't want your shape to be recorded - or DO YOU?

Have fun....

Norman