

SHARP

CASE STUDY

Photorealism: displaying photography in a new and exciting way



The Photographers' Gallery in London required an innovative digital display solution to showcase guest curated projects and artists' commissions on The Wall. **/This is Why** Sharp's PN-V602 60" high brightness video wall monitors were selected. With their sharp image reproduction, deep blacks and vivid colours, they provide an exciting and versatile way for photographers to show their work in stunning clarity.

Installation Overview

The internationally renowned Photographers' Gallery, London's largest public gallery dedicated to photography, recently reopened after an 18-month, £9.2 million refurbishment.

The exterior of the seven-floor building mixes brickwork with a black render to stunning effect, appearing like a piece of industrial art in London's Soho district. A two-storey extension has doubled the size of the previous exhibition space, providing the gallery with higher ceilings and dynamic spaces to showcase large-scale and moving image works. And a new environmentally-controlled floor allows the gallery to show temperature- or light-sensitive works from archives and museum collections. With huge wrap-around windows on lower and upper floors, complemented by extensive use of wood and exposed brick, the gallery is an atmospheric space to appreciate photography.

A highlight of the gallery's reopening is its new digital programme. In response to recent trends, the programme features projects which raise questions about the changing status and circulation of photography in today's digital culture. The centrepiece of the programme, referred to by the gallery as the The Wall, is a digital display on the gallery's ground floor. The Wall features guest-curated projects, artist commissions and work produced in collaboration with the public.

After an extensive review of how best to display digital projects on The Wall, the gallery deployed Sharp's PN-V602 60-inch high brightness video wall monitors. The displays – which were selected for their exceptionally sharp image reproduction, deep blacks and vivid colours – provide an exciting and versatile way for photographers to show their work in stunning clarity.



© Dennis Gilbert
Courtesy The Photographers' Gallery

“Screens present us with an exciting medium for displaying digital photography, and we were mindful of installing the right display technology. Artists and photographers are hugely passionate about how their work is shown, so we spent a lot of time looking at the options. When we saw the Sharp screens – with strikingly detailed images, vivid colours and deep blacks – we instantly knew we’d found the solution.”

Katrina Sluis, Curator, Digital Programme, The Photographers' Gallery



Born in 1987: The Animated GIF, May 2012
Courtesy The Photographers' Gallery

The installation: a 4x2 (Portrait) video wall

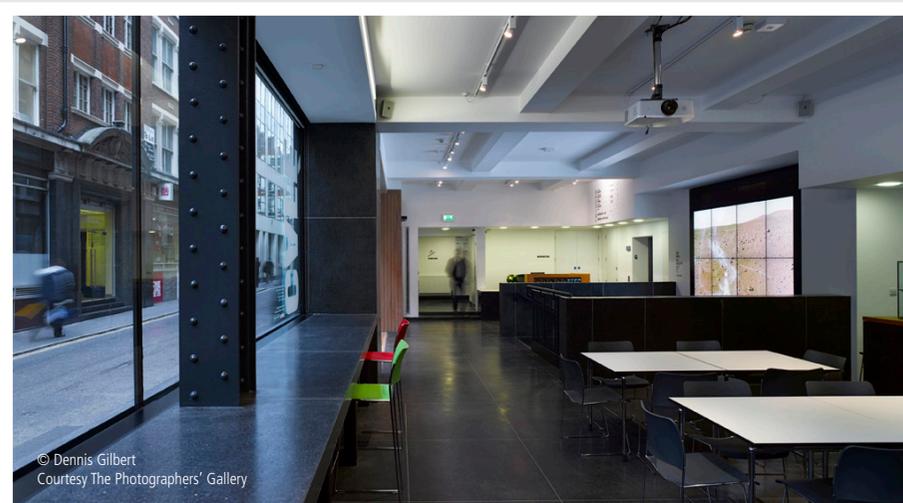
The gallery appointed Katrina Sluis, a Senior Lecturer in digital media at London's South Bank University, to oversee its digital programme. Katrina researched display technologies extensively and spoke to several providers of AV solutions before deciding on Sharp's PN-V602 high brightness video wall monitor.

"What struck me at once was the display's luminance and the intensity with which it could render black," says Katrina. "This is critical as photography is rarely produced in a 16:9 standard aspect ratio, so when an image is on screen there can be a lot of black around it. The black with the Sharp displays is so dense that you almost don't notice this and the images really stand forward, especially with the option to go up to 1,500 candelas in brightness."

The black performance is down to the PN-V602's local dimming feature. This shuts off specific groups of LEDs on areas of the screen not being used. As a result, there is zero 'light bleed' into the black areas and contrast is very high. In addition, the depth of the black is complemented by the matt finish on the display's glass which produces no reflection and adds a sense of depth to the screen.

Katrina observes: "The screens look like a slate canvas with a feeling of depth and space, and they encourage the viewer to look more closely at the work. From a technical viewpoint, this brings a new dimension to how photographs and related media can be experienced. We use the screens in a 1:2 ratio that, by chance, is similar to the aspect ratio of medium format photography. There's an added bonus in that the local dimming feature ensures the screens run efficiently. Keeping running costs low is important, as we are a registered charity."

The installation was complex as the space for the displays was predetermined and not ideally suited for hanging large LCD panels. Custom-made mounts were used to align the 4x2 screens perfectly flush to the space and fix them securely. Scala InfoChannel 5 software was installed to drive the video wall. Katrina Sluis uses the software to load, manage and schedule exhibition content. Solid-state storage is used to run the content and an HP professional workstation with high-end ATI graphics card runs the Scala system.



© Dennis Gilbert
Courtesy The Photographers' Gallery

Visual impact

To date, two very different shows have run on The Wall. The first, Born in 1987: The Animated GIF, displayed low-resolution image files of the type initially created to be easily rendered by an early web browser. The GIF has come back into fashion, and over 40 artists plus the public were invited to submit GIFs they had created. The second show, Studies in Stillness: Motion Capture Portraits, by Susan Sloan, combines motion capture technology with 3D modelling to create hyperreal animated portraits. Both the motion capture process and the finished portraits of people were shown on the displays.

"The two shows underline the flexibility of the displays," says Katrina. "Against the blacks, the GIFs almost had a luminous quality – the colours really sang as they moved across the screen. With Susan's work, the level of detail on the faces of her subjects is quite haunting and the images look almost ghostly floating against the black of the screens. Susan and other artists that have seen The Wall have been amazed at the screens' luminous quality."

The Wall plays a key role in the gallery's objective to investigate how the digital image is used, disseminated and consumed. Katrina concludes: "Photography is changing and with the Sharp video wall we have fantastic technology to help us explore the medium's development in more depth."

COUNTRY: [UK](#)

CUSTOMER: [The Photographers' Gallery](#)

EQUIPMENT: [Sharp 60-inch PN-V602 high brightness LCD video wall in 4x2 \(Portrait\) format](#)
[HP professional workstation](#)
[ATI graphics card](#)
[Scala InfoChannel 5 software](#)

This is Why

SHARP ELECTRONICS EUROPE
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT:

The SHARP logo is displayed in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are thick and closely spaced, with a slight shadow effect behind them. The logo is centered within a white rectangular area that has a small white triangle pointing upwards from its top edge, resembling a speech bubble or a callout box.