

Bitesized Review

By
John Hallett Photography



Bitesized Review: Manfrotto 553 Angle Bracket

If, like me, you have a tripod with a horizontal arm (such as my Benbo 1) you may also find that getting a landscape-oriented shot is particularly difficult because tripod head bases aren't really designed to be mounted vertically. Of course, you can add a ball & socket head but I still find that it constrains me, particularly when working close to the ground doing macro work (I generally use the Benbo for macro work because it is so versatile and heavy, so it stays rooted to the spot).

I have been struggling with this for some time but then found a solution - the Manfrotto 553 angle bracket.

Basically it is what it says - a right-angle bracket that screws onto the end of the horizontal arm so that the tripod head is put into a horizontal alignment when screwed onto the other plane.



The bracket is extremely well made and very solid. A knurled knob allows a secure purchase onto the tripod but a large-bladed screwdriver is required to attach the tripod head.



Bitesized Review

By
John Hallett Photography



With a large-based tripod head additional grub screws are available to lock it in position - my Giottos MH1302-652 series 2 ball head has a base too small to utilise them but it seems solid enough anyway.



The bracket also comes with a handy bubble spirit level on the base plate.



**** Important**** both the male and female screw threads are 3/8" and so you must make sure that both your tripod - and tripod head - can accommodate this larger size thread. Fortunately the Benbo has a 3/8" thread at one end and a 1/4" thread at the other - and the Giottos MH1302-652 series 2 ball head has a 1/4" adapter that can be removed to reveal a 3/8" screw thread. Check before you buy.

Bitesized Review

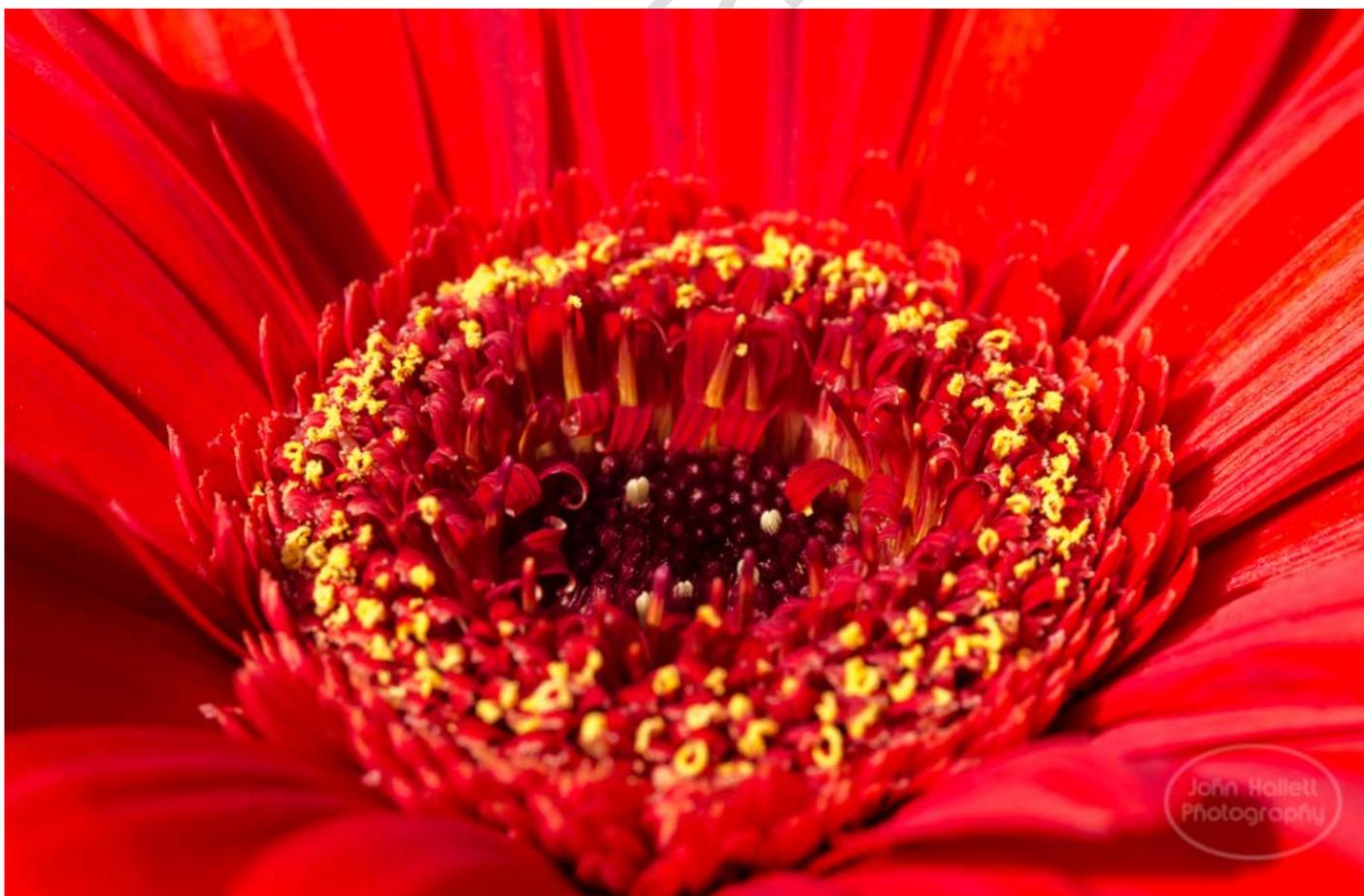
By
John Hallett Photography



In practice it works extremely well and is very sturdy – in fact it feels like a permanent part of the tripod.



This is the resulting image from the set-up above:



Bitesized Review

By
John Hallett Photography



With a recommended retail price of about £65 this is not a cheap option although I've found it for about £47 online (Sept 2016) - but as a means of getting more use out of a horizontal-arm tripod and for easier alignment of macro shots it is money well spent. It is marketed for use with certain Manfrotto tripods - but as you can see it works with others too.

Pro's

- Gives greater versatility to a horizontal-arm tripod.
- Robust & well-made.
- Easy attachment to the tripod itself.

Con's

- Screw threads are all the larger 3/8".
- Expensive for what it is.
- Tripod head removal/attachment requires a screwdriver.

Similar products from other manufacturers may also be available.

If you found this review useful please let me know by leaving a comment on my Facebook page (or just 'Like' it) at <https://www.facebook.com/johnhallettphotographs/> . Thanks