



# COMPOSITE IMAGES

Tony Stringer – January 2024

# WHAT ARE COMPOSITE IMAGES?

Images that are created by combining elements from two or more photographs.

# COMPOSITES HAVE A LONG HISTORY



William Mumler c. 1872

Mary Todd Lincoln And The Ghost Of Her  
Husband, Abraham Lincoln.

# COMPOSITES HAVE A LONG HISTORY



William Notman 1899



# COMPOSITES HAVE A LONG HISTORY



Frank Hurley 1917

# WHY USE COMPOSITES TODAY ?

- Enhancing an image
- Removing unwanted objects from a scene (for example people or cars)
- Creating images that are physically impossible (for example an image depicting one person several times in the same image)
- Creating images that are technically difficult or impossible to achieve in a single shot (this covers a lot of scenarios including overcoming the limitations of depth of field, dynamic range, shutter speed and synchronisation of action)
- Creating complex fantasy images (for example a person inside a light bulb, on another planet .... the limit is your imagination)
- Photocollage
- And...

# HOW ARE COMPOSITES CREATED?

It is still possible to create multiple exposure images in camera and lots of digital cameras also allow you to create Panorama or HDR images in camera

- Many image editing software packages also allow you to do the above in software.
- More complex composites require the use of “layers” in software such as:
  - Affinity Photo 2
  - Capture One
  - Corel Paintshop Pro
  - Photoshop
  - Snapseed
  - The Gimp

# COMPOSITES AND LAYERS

## THE BASIC CONCEPT





# COMPOSITES AND LAYERS

## THE BASIC CONCEPT

Layer 1



# COMPOSITES AND LAYERS

## THE BASIC CONCEPT

Layer 2

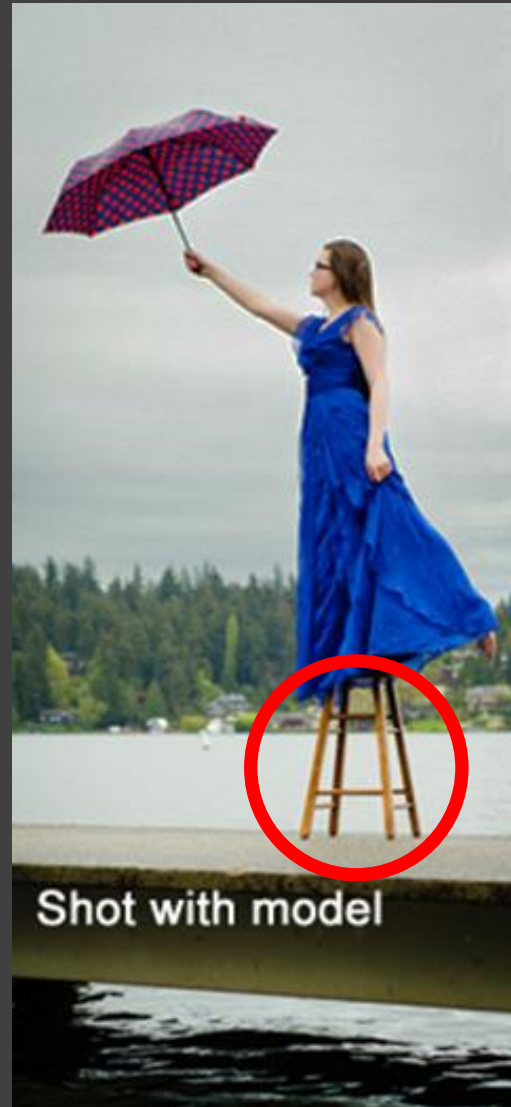


Shot with model

# COMPOSITES AND LAYERS

## THE BASIC CONCEPT

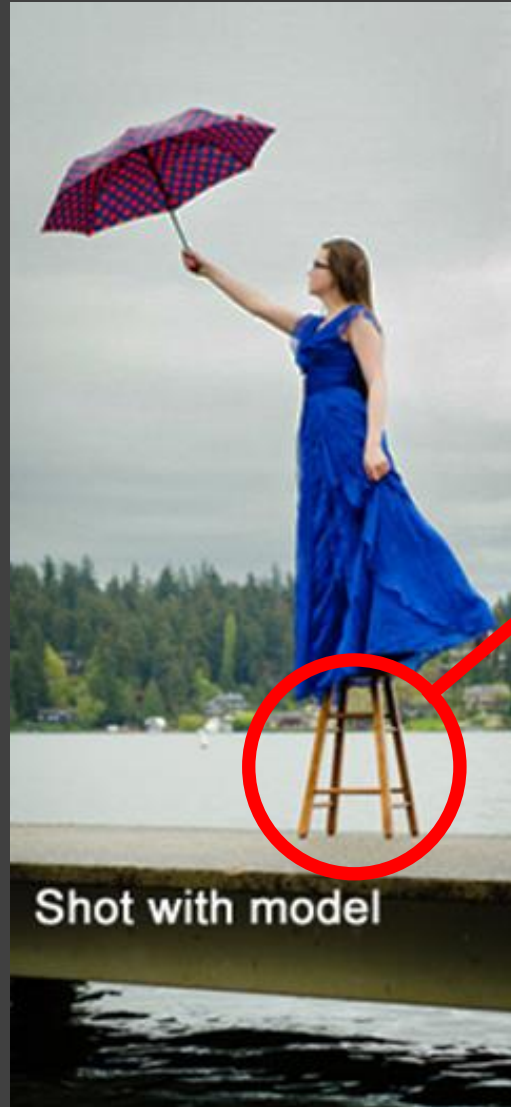
Layer 2



# COMPOSITES AND LAYERS

## THE BASIC CONCEPT

Layer 2

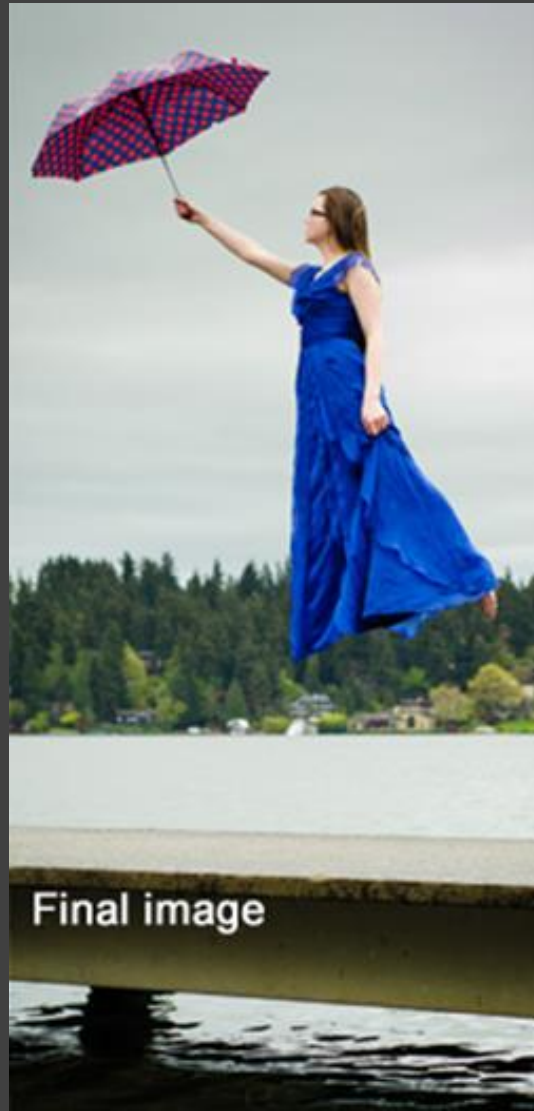


Erase or mask

# COMPOSITES AND LAYERS

## THE BASIC CONCEPT

Combination of  
Layers 1 and 2



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



<https://photodoto.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/95-levitation-photography-levitation-tutorial.jpg>



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Ray Best Flickr



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Mark Stace Flickr

# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Paul Nash Flickr

# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



<https://i.pinimg.com/originals>

# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Rikard Rodin



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Adrian Lines – The Making of Impish video <https://fb.watch/piGQr9d-bG/>



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES

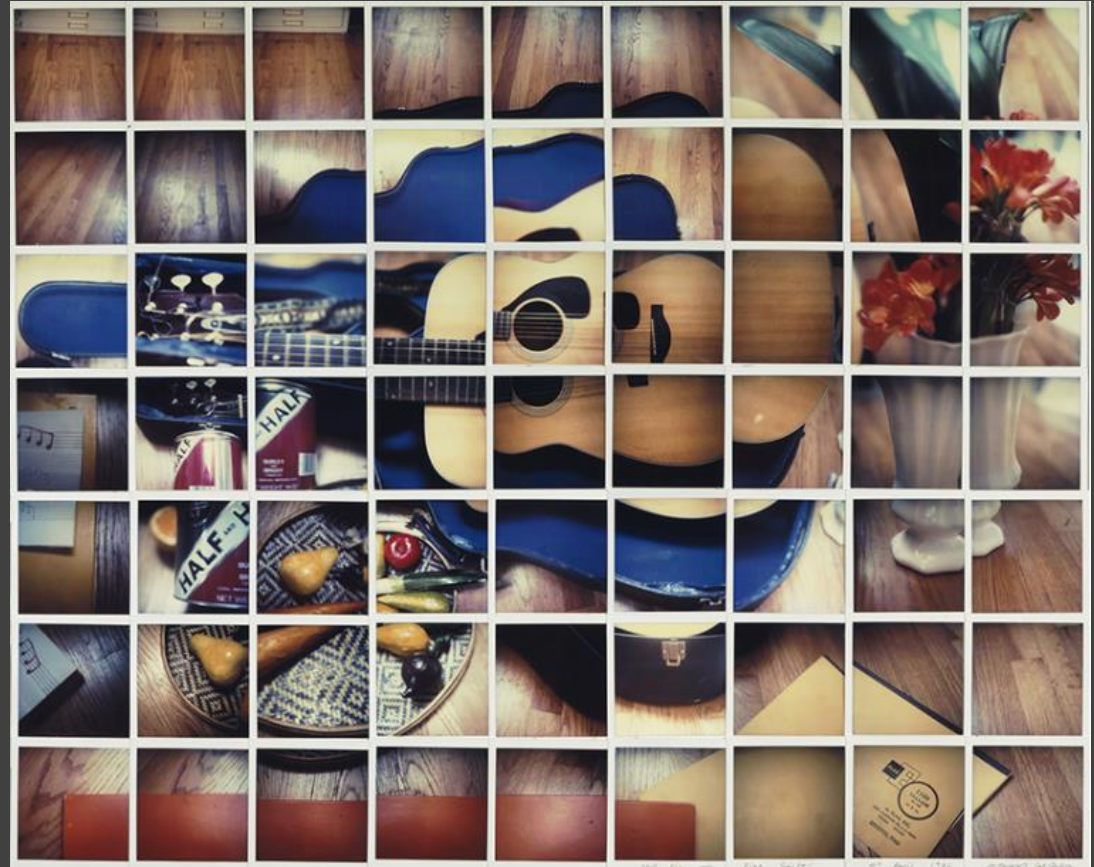


Photo collage

SOME MODERN EXAMPLES

And...

# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



David Hockney



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



David Hockney

# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Carousel de Cannes from *Carousels In The Round*



All Aboard! from *Urban Sculptures*

Pep Ventosa



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Thomas Vanoost



# SOME MODERN EXAMPLES



Glenyss Garnett



Cherry Larcombe



Janey Lazenby

Check out <https://www.camversation.co.uk/> or <https://myphotoclub.co.uk/>  
if you would like to attend zoom presentations by the above

NOT ALLOWED FOR  
NATURE, REPORTAGE OR  
DOCUMENTARY

# GREEN SCREEN PHOTOGRAPHY



<https://www.canva.com/learn/green-screen/>

# GREEN SCREEN PHOTOGRAPHY

- Makes it easier to isolate subjects or add a background in post processing
- Works best if:
  - Green screen is evenly lit
  - No greens in model/subject
  - No light overspill (green light reflecting onto model/subject)
- Light your model/subject to match the lighting in your planned scene

# BLACK SCREEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Can be used to combine images in a similar way to overlaying negatives to create a single exposure.

Requires use of layers and “lighten” blending mode in software.

To test the concept I dropped this into some water and photographed it.



Then I photographed my camera.



# BLACK SCREEN PHOTOGRAPHY

These are the shots I got:





# BLACK SCREEN PHOTOGRAPHY

These were then loaded into photoshop as layers with the camera shot on the bottom.

The top layer blend mode was then set to lighten



# IMAGE CAPTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Plan your shoot and how you will create the composite in software
- Will you need a backdrop?
- Tripod
- Lens choices
- Perspective/angle of view
- Area of focus/depth of field
- Lighting
- Colour temperature
- Image resolution

# THE STUDIO EVENING

- 6 Stations:
  - 2 Green Screen
  - 2 Black screen
  - 2 Other
- Equipment to be provided:
  - Stands and backdrops
  - Continuous lighting
  - Flash and remote releases in case required (best if you can bring your own)
  - Some spare tripods for members who do not own one
  - Furniture (as available in the hall only)

# THE STUDIO EVENING

You need to bring:

- Camera and lenses
- Remote release (can use camera time if you do not have a remote)
- Tripod if you have one
- Flash if you intend to use flash for your shoot
- Props for your own ideas
- Black clothing and gloves may be helpful with some black screen work



# THE STUDIO EVENING

Some ideas you could try out:

- Ghosts
- Levitation (people or objects)
- Multiple shots of subject person
- Impossible reflection
- False Reality (for example a person stepping out of photo frame)
- Impossible scale (for example person walking amongst chess pieces)
- Transformations (one thing morphing into another)
- Dice toss/Card scatter
- Experimenting with abstract images using tabletop subjects of your choice

Or something else of your own – lets talk ideas later

# FURTHER READING

It would help if you could read up on some of the techniques you will have to use before the studio evening. The list below includes articles and utube videos that might be helpful:

## Composite photography:

<https://expertphotography.com/composite-photography-photoshop/>

<https://shotkit.com/composite-photography/>

<https://shotkit.com/levitation-photography/>

## Green screen photography

<https://www.theschoolofphotography.com/tutorials/how-to-use-a-green-screen>

Continued on next slide...

# FURTHER READING CONTD.

## Using Affinity software:

Using Layers and masks

<https://digital-photography-school.com/layers-in-affinity-photo/>

Making selections

<https://lenscraft.co.uk/photo-editing-tutorials/make-selections-affinity-photo-2/>

Layer blending modes

<https://affinityspotlight.com/article/blend-modes-explained/>

# FURTHER READING CONTD.

## Using Photoshop software:

From the members area of the club website:

[How to use PHOTOSHOP LAYER MASKS + 7 TRICKS with masks – YouTube](#)

[how to combine and blend photos in Photoshop - YouTube](#)

[How to perfectly match colors in Photoshop when combining photos. - YouTube](#)

[5 most useful LAYER BLENDING modes in Photoshop – YouTube](#)

[Layer Blend Modes E book – Photoshop cafe](#)



OPEN DISCUSSION