

peer pressure

Our pick of the best reader submissions sent to us this month

Peer Pressure has once again been inundated with a volume of great artworks. The chosen entries this month offer an array of insights into the creative mind, sharing and revealing individual approaches and skills. We always include your email and web address, so interested parties can get in touch.

All you have to do is send us high-quality TIFFs or JPEGs (RGB or CMYK) at 300dpi, which can be printed at a minimum size of 15 x 15cm. Send us low-res versions to advancedpshop@imagine-publishing.co.uk – we'll get back to you for higher-resolution work if needed. Alternatively, log on to our forum at www.advancedphotoshop.co.uk/forum.

We cannot provide individual image assessment.

Each issue we select one image to be 'Best in Show', and that lucky person will win a fantastic prize, courtesy of The Illustration Source (www.illustration-source.com), which is a great way to get your work seen. So, what are you waiting for?

Natural selection

NAME: Ryan Forshaw

EMAIL: info@ryuneo.com

WEB: www.ryuneo.com

Ryan was introduced to digital imaging a few years ago after buying a computer magazine that had a 30-day trial of Corel's Paint Shop Pro.

"I still remember my very first tutorial," he says. "It was replacing the sky in a holiday shot by using the Magic Wand tool. I used PSP for around a year until a friend recommended I try Photoshop V6. I bought as many books as I could afford, and leased some books from the library on PS until I felt comfortable enough with the program to start doing my own experiments."

Being self-taught hasn't hindered Ryan's progress at all. "My first commission was for a cover for Motorworld car supplies. I got this through a website online – www.worth1000.com."

His work has been seen in a couple of Photoshop-related design magazines. He also enters plenty of online competitions to improve his skills. He advocates the use of online guides to enhance any designer's knowledge of digital imaging: "For learning software packages I find Lynda.com great. I am also a member of many online forums where you can chat to other designers and post examples of your work for people to critique, which I think is great to grow as a designer."



**BEST
IN SHOW**
Advanced
Photoshop



REGENERATION: "Once all the images are prepared I put them all in the main document and make sure that all the lights and shadows are the same direction"



THE SUMMONING (ABOVE): "I would say my style is surreal/fantasy-based with a touch of sci-fi here and there. I absolutely adore the work of M.C. Escher and Salvador Dali. Who knows what they would have been capable of creating, should they have had Photoshop at their disposal"

WATERLEAF (LEFT): "At the moment I'm working on a few clients' websites and entering designer battles hosted on iStockphoto.com. I work at my best when competing against other designers"



PORTRAIT OF THE QUEEN (ABOVE): An emotive portrait of the Pirate Queen, Amber's alter ego on her deviantART web gallery

INVITED (BELOW): On her deviantART site, Amber says: "A special thank you to Silvano (www.pbase.com/silvano) who through his kindness has allowed me to use some of his photography to create this artwork through Photoshop and painting, and place it in my gallery for sale. All proceeds from the sales go toward a rescue farm for abused horses and other animals"



Pirate queen

NAME: Amber and Lynn Jackson

EMAIL: tearsofperal@yahoo.com

BUSINESS NAME: Enchanted Photography & Art

WEB: <http://pirate-queen.deviantart.com>

AMBER'S MYSPACE PAGE: www.myspace.com/skulls_n_stars

LYNN'S BOOK PAGE: www.myspace.com/the_vampire_logan

Enchanted Photography & Art was created by Amber and Lynn Jackson, and is run as a family business. Both Amber and Lynn have always had a love for photography and art, and through their talents they create unique and inspiring artwork and photography of all kinds.

Amber is the main model that's used in their artwork. She's 19 years old and has been modelling since the tender age of three. Through Amber's skill with Photoshop, she's able to create original characters with a touch of enchantment.

Lynn Jackson is also a published author of a newly released novel, *Logan The Birth of A Vampire*. She also writes fantasy poetry and children's stories.

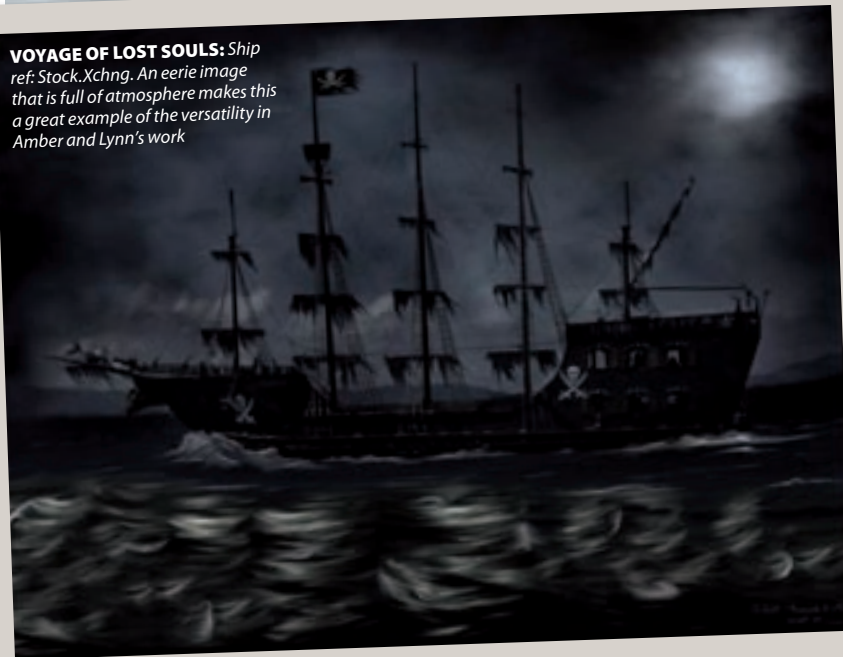
Together as a family, they also run a rescue farm for abused horses and other animals. They have done this for the last 11 years, and all proceeds from the sales of their artwork and Lynn's book go towards the feed and care of the animals.

Photoshop has opened a door for them to create a world of fantasy through their photography and art. They use their cameras, Photoshop, Wacom tablets and imagination to create their enchanting works.



CLONONEEN ARD RI: Meaning 'High King'. On deviantART, Amber says, "I would like to say a special thank you to Troy & Linda who allowed me to paint their beautiful stallion Clononeen Ard Ri, who was imported from Ireland"

VOYAGE OF LOST SOULS: Ship ref: Stock.Xchng. An eerie image that is full of atmosphere makes this a great example of the versatility in Amber and Lynn's work



Out of space

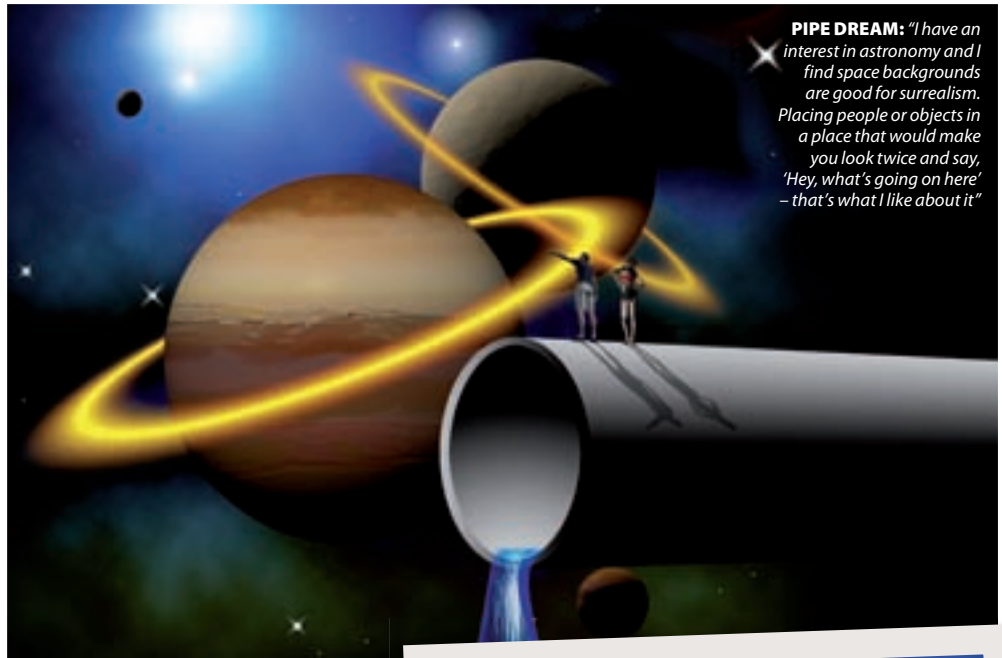
NAME: Anthony McAvoy
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AP WEB: www.advancedphotoshop.co.uk/user/anthonymc

Anthony is a photographer and digital artist from Adelaide in South Australia. His surreal artworks on the *Advanced Photoshop* website caught our eye, and we had to find out more about the man behind it all.

Anthony is modest about his work, saying: "I don't believe I have the 'flair' that many artists have, but I have a good sense of composition, shape and form. I'm attracted to surrealism; I love making eye-catching contrasts."

While many of the images on his website are photographic, Anthony is finding himself using Photoshop more regularly: "Having become proficient at CS3, I find myself dabbling more and more in the digital imaging side of things."

Anthony believes that there is more to creating great artwork than simply talent: "Having a dry sense of humour also helps the creative process. For me it's all about having fun. If you can lighten somebody else's day with your art, it's a bonus." We can't help but agree, and Anthony's work certainly raises a smile in our books.



PIPE DREAM: "I have an interest in astronomy and I find space backgrounds are good for surrealism. Placing people or objects in a place that would make you look twice and say, 'Hey, what's going on here' – that's what I like about it"

FOREIGN OBJECT (RIGHT): Anthony came to our attention on the *Advanced Photoshop* website. This image was submitted for our web competition, which meant that he had to use at least one of three images supplied to create a unique composition. We think he's done a great job with the task



BEACH WEATHER: "The idea came to me from my work as an advisor in the retail energy business. 'Green' is now the buzzword in our industry, with global warming and the greenhouse effect. The image is made up of an iStock photo of the Antarctic ice sheet, several beach scene photos from the Microsoft Clipart and Media Homepage, and photographs of an old portable TV at home"

Retouching reality

NAME: Amy Read

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WEB: www.amyreaddesigns.com, www.flickr.com/photos/amyread
and www.myspace.com/amyreaddesigns

Amy is a third-year student at the Norwich School of Art and Design, studying Visual Studies. Her work is, in her words, "About the effects that retouching can have on women, damaging confidence and changing our perceptions of what is beautiful."

She has only recently starting using Photoshop in her work: "During the second year of my degree course, I realised I was using it on a daily basis and absolutely loving it. I started to look at beauty retouching, as it fascinates me that models are selected for their tall, slim bodies and beautiful faces, but are still retouched to perfection. It influenced me so much that when I had to decide on my dissertation subject, there was no question of what I wanted to write about."

She continues: "Over the past year I've developed my own style of retouching, mainly through being self-taught. I definitely think it's the best way to learn, supplemented by clear professional tutorials. As my third year started, I began to push myself by getting into the photographic studio and using models. At first I found directing hard and I went away from the first shoot with a mix of embarrassment and anxiety. Then I saw the pictures and I loved them. I was so proud – I thought I must have done something right and just wanted to show them off."

BEFORE

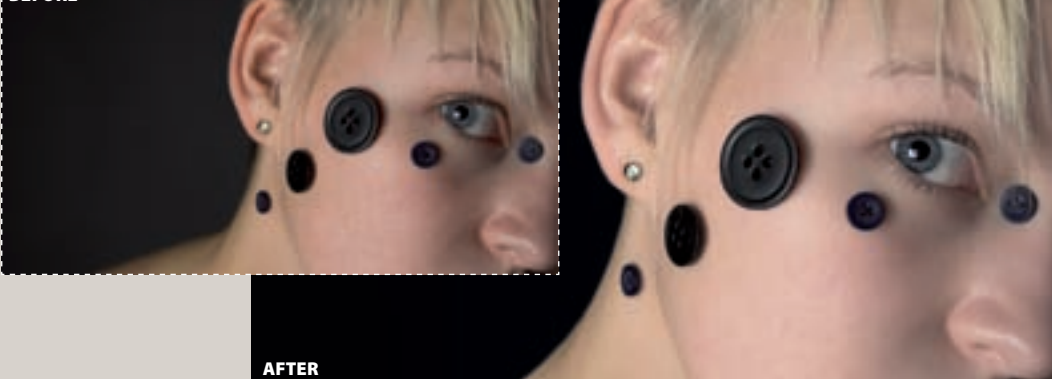


AFTER

ALISON (LEFT): "This image started life in a bit of a bad way. It was from the shoot where I felt lost and had a hard time directing the models. I used the Healing Brush to clear up some lines on Alison's neck, forehead and mouth areas. The next step was to sort out the low contrast and flat tones. That was easily remedied using an auto Levels adjustment layer, followed by a Curves adjustment layer. I then used a solid Color adjustment layer (#cc9966) and set the blending mode to Overlay"

BUTTONS ARE THE NEW BLACK (BELOW): "Initially I didn't like this picture, for two reasons. One is that her eye has a worried, anxious expression to it. The second was that because Rekha was leaning forward, her shoulders looked hunched, making the image slightly awkward to look at. To correct the eye's expression, I used the Liquify tool to push down the top right-hand corner. I picked out the detail of the eyes with two Curves adjustment layers. The final stage was to make the background darker to contrast better with Rekha's pale skin, as grey was just draining her"

BEFORE



AFTER



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Not only is Ryan Forshaw this month's Best in Show, he has also won a year's full Option 3 membership to the Illustration Source, worth £150 and Featured Artist slot for January. The Illustration Source Ltd is the newest source of original art, freelance illustrators, photographers, artists and designers on the net. Visit www.illustration-source.com for more information. If you'd like to stand a chance of winning an Illustration Source portfolio, send your images to advancedpshop@imagine-publishing.co.uk.

Image requirements

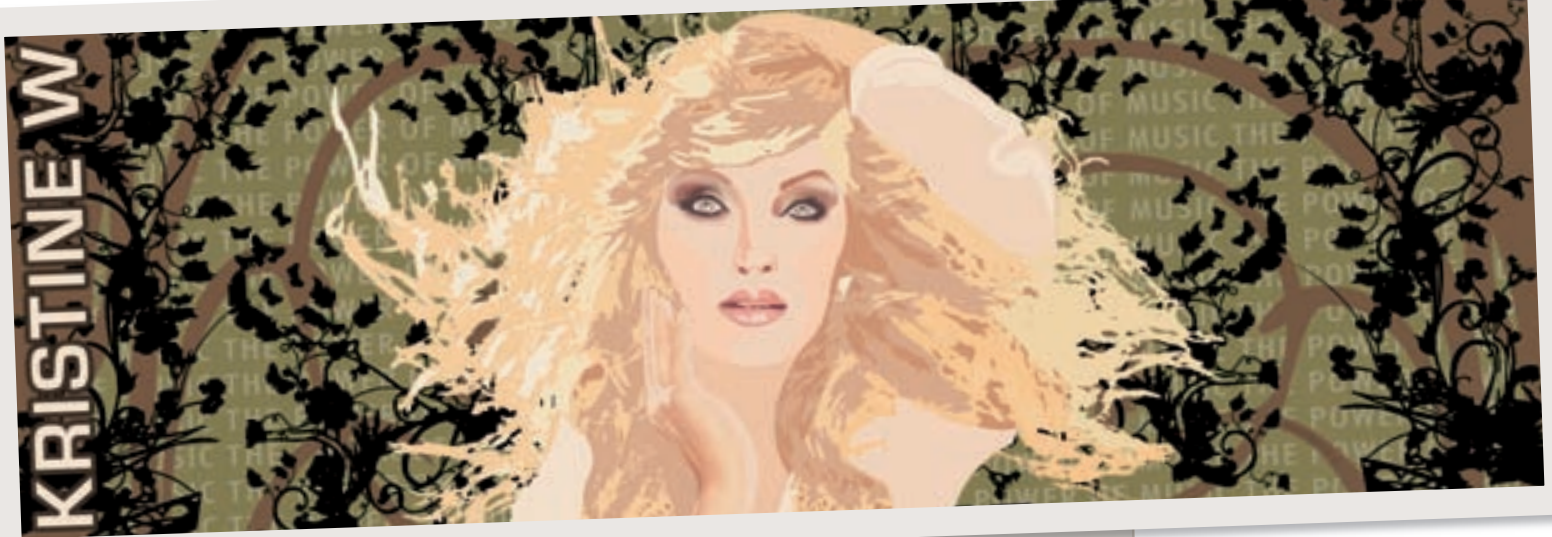
You'll stand a better chance of seeing your work in print if you adhere to the following criteria: make sure that your images are high-quality TIFFs or JPEGs (RGB or CMYK), 300dpi minimum, and can be printed at 15 x 15cm minimum. Don't forget to include a small text file detailing how you created your work as well.

Terms and conditions

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THE PRIZE: Check out *The Illustration Source's* website to see the portfolios of previous winners of Best in Show



Maximum impact

NAME: Mauricio Pinetta

EMAIL: mpinetta73@aol.com

WEB: myspace.com/ninelivesgraphicstudio

These vibrant, graphic designs are the work of Mauricio Pinetta. Born in Guatemala City, Guatemala and relocated to Orlando, Florida, Mauricio has extensive training in various forms of art and design.

He now specialises in 'maximalism' artwork for a more decorative approach to design. You will notice how silhouettes and botanical motifs are taking over from rigorous, simple lines and muted tones – a profusion of colour and luxury, brimming with excess, is stating the case for a return to sensuality.

Mauricio is a former designer of Grey Worldwide, where he designed for such companies as Proctor and Gamble, Corona Beer, Americatel, Agua Salavavidas, Sol Beer, as well as others. He is now the owner of NineLives Graphic Studio based in Orlando, where he designs advertising for businesses and organisations throughout the United States and other countries.

His images use loads of layers to get the intricate look, and they use a plethora of patterns and textures for a truly unique finish.

THE POWER OF MUSIC – KRISTINE W CD INTERIOR (ABOVE):

"Working with the original picture and using the Magic Wand tool, I was able to create the gorgeous hair-blowing effect. I used a different layer for each colour and tone of the hair. As for the butterfly background, I used a small picture that I found online, adjusted it to greyscale and used a Stamp filter"

AMUKA CD COVER (BELOW LEFT): "As I do with all my design/artwork, I began by using an original picture. I recreated every element in a different layer. For example, just the cowboy hat that Amuka is wearing is made in four layers. You can only imagine how many layers it takes to recreate an eye (eyebrow, eyelid, eyelashes, eye shadow, eye globe, iris, pupil, etc)"

DON'T CHA – DANIELLE HUNTER (BELOW):

"This portrait was designed for Danielle Hunter's 2006 calendar. I started with the original picture and then recreated every element. I used old Victorian floral wallpapers as patterns. Once the main image was obtained, I created the rest by adding more floral designs, text and silhouettes, finding a perfect balance of style and elegance"

