

The PhotoMode



ISSUE 16
Cover Image by
BillyGunn



Featured Artists



Issue 16
Oct 2021



[BillyGunn](#)
[theonlyjess_vp](#)
[Senua_s](#)
[CapturesKh](#)
[frankenlim3](#)
[UntitledSmithy](#)
[SidequestVP](#)
[NattyDread011](#)
[mawharr](#)
[Matt_Virtual](#)
[Catukoi1](#)
[abstrak_louhena](#)
[JaceGamesNStuff](#)
[j3ecci](#)
[chelestra](#)
[bibpanana](#)
[Photoingame](#)
[fayethejust](#)
[Naiukroan_vp](#)
[Rimaeternax](#)
[JaykeKirbee](#)
[GSmind89](#)
[RobRagiel](#)
[bencroftgaming](#)
[Urkinvp](#)
[IVWBK](#)
[hazelgreen_vp](#)
[dRomansc](#)
[adamc_vp](#)
[LUCEFER_DW](#)
[VP_S_H16](#)



[bittersweet_wonderful](#)
[__wastelander__](#)
[baked.bloatfly](#)
[vpbypics](#)
[rachelcasper.vp](#)
[jessies_vp](#)
[maxp3r](#)
[finaldrxxm](#)
[borges.vp](#)
[senua_s.vp](#)
[xocaptures](#)
[ingames. posts](#)
[virtual.photo.mode](#)
[tmco2](#)
[howdyarthur](#)
[fokalizer](#)
[gamescape.vp](#)
[shinuishi](#)

**The Fourth Focus
Kena Bridge of Spirits
PM Preview**

pages 30 - 35

**DEV Talk - sourabhhamigi
Grass On The Other Side**

pages 36 - 39

VP&ME - electricbskies

pages 40 - 47

VP&ME - MindJackedJimmy

pages 48 - 41

TPM GALLERY

page 59

Viewing The TPM Ebook

Although fliphtml5 looks good while viewing through mobile, a desktop or desktop mode on mobile will get you the highest quality possible.

Links that can be clicked will flash at the start of each page turn and are also underlined, double click or double tap screen to zoom in and out, pinch to zoom further on mobile.

Artists profile pages are found at the beginning of the mag and their names under the images throughout will take you to the original posts we asked for a statement from.

Remember if you like one of the features within the mag click the TPM  Logo next to the image to be taken direct to their Twitter / Instagram posts and drop some support.

We love the art form of Virtual Photography and we hope you can show as much support to as many of these talented artists as you possibly can.

Our Page Is Your Stage

This is our motto here at TPM, whether its our Instagram, Twitter or this Magazine we dedicate our pages to you the Virtual Photography community.

Our 2 main goals are...

To support you by getting your work shown on our socials with your words, we feel that helps people you don't know or don't interact with much to get to see a glimpse of the personality behind the work and connect with you in a different way.

To help push the art form in a direction so that those who do want to try and earn from VP at least have the chance to do so.

We Encourage

Building real community support around your page and that starts with YOU.

Search different community # once a day.

We recommend starting with...

[#VirtualPhotography](#)

[#ThePhotoMode](#)

[#VGPUnite](#)

Drop some love, uplifting comments and follow people you connect with, its the fastest way to grow your page and also thats how you build a real community support network.

TEAM



Curator - AltRealityVP

Deeply passionate about VP and involved in its community since 2014.
lover of B&W portrait captures.
"I can be a bit of a goof"



Editor-in-Chief -
PoachiiN

Intrigued by the rapidly expanding medium of Virtual Photography and its community of creatives. Loves sci-fi, landscapes and monochrome portraits. Likes to cook and eat all spanish food. In the words of Pat Benatar "Hit me with your best shot."



Twitter Community Manager -
VirtualTourism

A part of the community for 3 years, History nerd in my spare time, love games and everything VP.
"Say it how it is"



Insta Community Manager -
neovandalizam

Passionate gamer with desire to bring virtual photography closer to people outside gaming.
Loves tattoos, street photography, neo-expressionism, and contemporary art.
"Save them Zs for later."



Contributing Author -
The Fourth Focus

Owner of TheFourthFocus.com, Mik loves capturing compelling images and hopes to use his experience in both real and virtual photography to help others get the most out of their creativity. "Usally right."

BILLYGUNN_
- GHOST OF TSUSHIMA





__WASTELANDER__
- GHOST OF TSUSHIMA

"I wanted to portray Jin's abandonment and betrayal in this image by showing him alone, walking, in conjunction with a quote his uncle said in the game."



BAKED.BLOATFLY
- NO MANS SKY

"This shot was a bit of an accident. I was testing out some new upgrades on my jet pack. As I'm flying through space, I notice the planets rings in the background, and hopped into photo mode. I wanted to capture that sense of feeling tiny in a vast universe, that sense of being a pioneer, the first to go where none have been before."



THEONLYJESS_VP

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION

2



"I often find the most beauty in the imperfections. Seeing Arthur in such a raw state resonates with me.

Of pain, yet a fierceness to push through and overcome. Scars show that we actually lived our lives fully."



"What I like about this image is how the emptiness of the scene reflects the emptiness of my wallet, which is why it wasn't taken in Breakpoint."



UNTITLED SMITHY

- GHOST RECON WILDLANDS



SIDEQUESTVP

- HELLBLADE SENUA'S SACRIFICE

"Hellblade plunges the player into a state of unease, as well as directly into Senua's headspace."

The game provides some excellent filters and effects, which I used here to reflect the erosion of Senua's psyche."



BITTERSWEET_WONDERFUL

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION

2



"For this particular shot, I was reminded of my childhood, and the first idea that came to my mind was the image of a lonely crow."



"Just as there are two sides to every story, there are two sides to every person... One that we reveal to the world and another we keep hidden inside. A duality governed by the balance of light and darkness."

MAWHARR
- THE LAST OF US 2



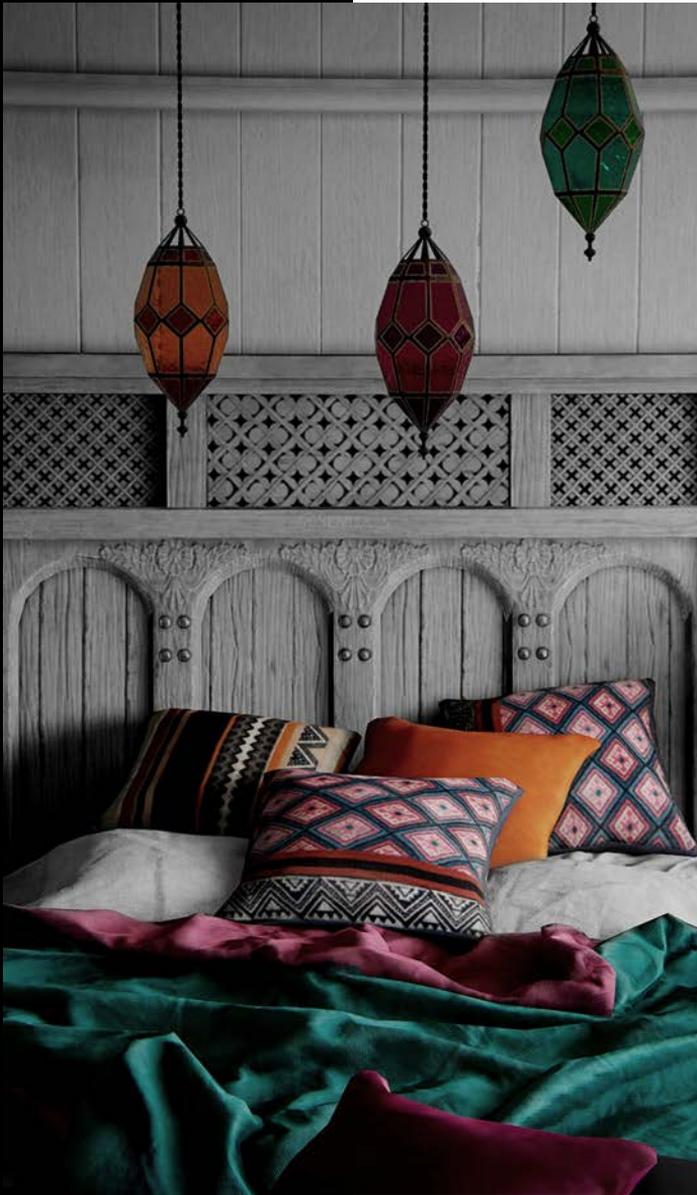
"I don't think too much while taking photos, I try to capture the scenes I like. Here i wanted to take a photo of that dead deer a lot of people may know but decided to snap the footsteps after i noticed them."

I3ECCI_
- THE LAST OF US 2



SENUA_S

- UNCHARTED 4



"Adore to do perspective-inspired photography. I was using vivid imagery and the muted background, to create of contrast that emphasize the idea of minimalism."



"I wanted to capture the more vibrant, daytime scene located in The Glen district and make it really 'pop'."

NATTYDREAD011

- CYBERPUNK 2077



MATT_VIRTUAL

- ASSASSINS CREED VALHALLA

"At the time the Altair outfit was only just added into the game. I wanted to create a shot that paid homage to the original AC whilst also looking badass as possible."



CAPTURESKH

- GHOST OF TSUSHIMA



"I created this wallpaper because I was in the market for a new phone background and decided to make my own. Instead of using the in-game logo options, I added the logo in post and decided to add a splash of blood to add colour."



"I wouldn't normally take environment shots like this but the VP community and especially the themes and challenges being set have been a great inspiration to try out or learn new things or rediscover old forgotten captures."

JACEGAMESNSTUFF

- FORTNITE



"Death stranding has been an instructive experience for me. I used ReShade for the first time in this game. I wanted to give it a try with canvas. "

CHELESTRA

- DEATH STRANDING



FRANKENLIM3

- THE LAST OF US 2



"The infected in this game are beautifully designed. They're so grotesque but captivating. I knew I wanted a shot of this specific enemy, I just didn't know what it would be. After a few deaths I was able to get this shot."



VPBYPICS

- UNCHARTED 4

"The more time passes, the more I realize how revolutionary VP can be for the videogames industry. And I'm proud to be part of it. Together we're creating it shot after shot. To anyone who has tried to use a photomode with a creative spirit, thank you."



RACHELCASPER.VP

- CONTROL

"Initially I thought of taking portraits of the protagonist but in the end I tried to immortalize the gesture of her throwing the torch. It took me a couple of tries to get the idea I had in mind."



CATUKOII

- STAR WARS JEDI FALLEN ORDER



"Growing up in a VP's community ready to share their knowledge with others is a very rewarding experience. I can only wish the same to someone who gets started because it's not always easy without a minimum of support."





BORGES.VP

- STAR WARS JEDI FALLEN ORDER

"When I arrived at the place where there was this mountain I already knew I would want to photograph it but I would have to climb somewhere very high to take the photo, my idea was to take the photo of the mountain but also show the sky a lot."



MAXP3R

- STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT 2

"For this specific shot I wanted to create something quite moody. Something dark but contrasting. The lifeless trooper lost in the dark forest brought just the right emotions I was looking for. The VP community is amazing, so much talent and inspiration out there."



ABSTRAK_LOUHENA

- SPIDERMAN MILES MORALES



"To me, photography is about finding something interesting in an ordinary place...I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them."

- Elliott Erwitt



FINALDRXXM

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

"The photo was planned, including the framing from below, waited for the sunrise to make the jump, and edited in Photoshop, etc."



JESSIES_VP

- ASSASSINS CREED ORIGINS

"Let the blue sky take away your blue feelings."



BIBPANANA

- HITMAN 2



"Aerial shots are always nice to look at, especially here because of all the contrasting lines that divide the beach and the sands.

And of course there's tiny 47 because why not."



XOCAPTURES

- CYBERPUNK 2077

"This photo/edit was completely stumbled upon as are most of my shots. I saw the sort of barren landscape and I thought it would make for a nice minimalist, silhouette type shot. I used Photoshop to add in both the moon and my V cause there wasn't really any subject in the shot before that."



SENUA_S.VP

- HELLBLADE SENUAS SACRIFICE

"I tried to convey the mental pain of Senua and the peoples enslaved by Surt. Virtual photography allows you to capture really important moments in the game and it's cool."



INGAMESS._POSTS

- ASSASSINS CREED UNITY



"I didn't plan a shot like this.

It was pure improvisation.

When my character was on this tower, I wanted him to take a leap of faith so that I could capture the assassin during the jump at close range, but then I moved the camera away from the character in the direction of a small alley full of NPC. I liked this angle, then I just adjusted colors, DOF and FOV as I needed and got this picture."



VIRTUAL.PHOTO.MODE

- WATCH DOGS LEGION

"Watch Dogs Legion is an underrated game in my opinion and I wanted to highlight the beauty of the world. Their interpretation of London is Fantastic and super realistic.

I dedicated some time to take art photos of the city and landscapes. When I saw this building, I knew it was photo worthy. I drove there and found the best angle to capture it."



TMCO2

- INFAMOUS FIRST LIGHT

"I took this during one of many hour-long sessions simply wandering and playing the role of a street photographer. I'm sure I'm not alone in enjoying fleshed-out environments in games among the vp community and I was very glad to have come across Infamous' rendition of Seattle."



RIMAETERNAX

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2



"My passion is to photograph portraits, expressions are very important to conveying emotions and that's what I try in every shot. With RDR2 this is possible even with NPCs, as realism abounds in this game."



"In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago."

FAYETHEJUST

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2



PHOTOINGAME

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

"I wanted to show the mystical side of Red Dead Redemption II and all its legendary secrets that we can discover in the game."



GSMIND89

- THE LAST OF US 2



"Each time you bring a shot to life, you give a little bit of yourself. No matter how experienced you are, there will always be a bigger part within you that will live forever in your creations."



"The Santa Barbara location in this game has always been my favorite for taking b&w shots like these. Ellie becomes more vulnerable throughout Santa Barbara and her pain visibly shows through her expressions."

NAIUKROAN_VP

- THE LAST OF US 2



"Shadow of the tomb raider with the right lighting can be a brilliant selfie simulator with flash."

JAYKEKIRBEE

- SHADOW OF THE TOMB RAIDER



URKINVP

- SPIDERMAN MILES MORALES



"This shot was my first experience in vertical portrait which I started practicing thanks to the amazing artists of the VP community. Thanks all for the inspiration, attention, and support.

And remember - be yourself"



"The first PM I used was in Forza Horizon 3, with its incredible cars and landscapes. And from there, if I'm playing and I see something that I like, I try to take a shot, it's my way of expressing I like what I'm playing."

ROBRAGIEL

- LIFE IS STRANGE 2



"I really enjoy taking detailed images of character's gear! Ellie's backpack is one of my faves, as it has so much of her character and it's literally her lifeline."

BENCROFTGAMING

- THE LAST OF US 2



A character with dark hair in a bun, wearing a blue and white outfit, stands in a glowing blue, ethereal environment. The character is holding a glowing staff or weapon. The background features large, dark, horned structures and a large, glowing blue sphere. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and magical.

△ THE
FOUR
THFO
CUS □

KENA: BRIDGE OF SPIRITS

PREVIEW

KENA: BRIDGE OF SPIRITS

PREVIEW



The Fourth Focus



Title: Kena Bridge Of Spirits

Developer: [Ember Lab](#)

Publisher: [Ember Lab](#)

Initial Release: 21 September 2021

Well, that came out of nowhere! After a couple of vague mentions that they would hope to be able to include a photo mode in Kena: Bridge of Spirits, Ember Lab had been very quiet on the subject while work continuing on finalising the game over the last few months.

With still no word right up until the day before launch, it was starting to seem most likely that the addition of a photo mode would be something to look forward to in a later update, that was until a quite spectacular reveal with a dedicated photo mode trailer.

In case you missed it, you can check out the full video here now:



Created by an independent studio making their debut in the video game world after having gained notoriety for their award winning CGI animation work and character-driven storytelling, Kena: Bridge of Spirits was always going to be a fascinating project.

The prospect of talented animators and motivated storytellers turning their talents to video games is the sort of disciplinary cross-over that brings the potential to produce hugely immersive and engaging experiences, and ones that can surely be inspiring for players on a creative level.

Drawing on very evident influence from traditional Japanese culture, the game world centres on rich forests and mountain shrines that look like concept art come to life, while the wonderfully rendered characters, ominous wandering spirits and adorable companions are about as photogenic as it gets. It goes without saying then, that it is exciting to finally learn that the game includes its own bespoke camera tools, so here's a quick look at what was revealed and how the photo mode feels to use...



Key Photo Mode Features:

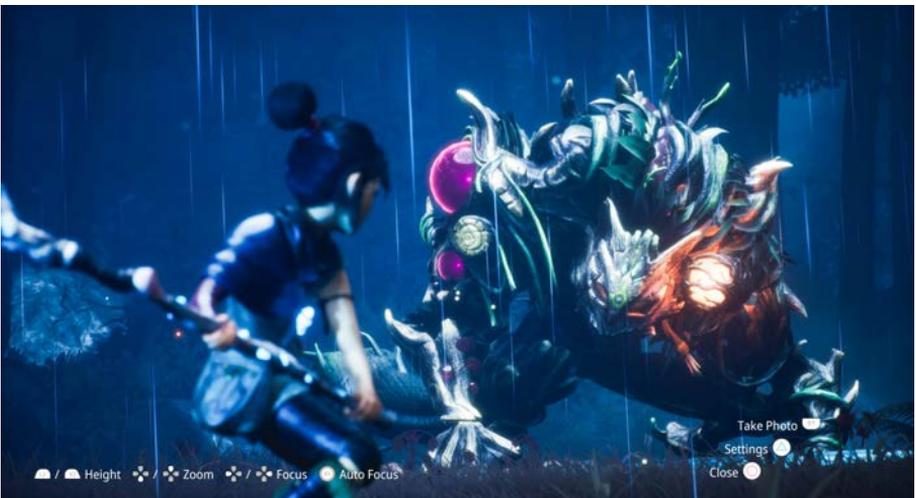
- **Action & Freeze modes**
- **Cheese! button for natural posing**
- **Authentic depth of field through manual focus & aperture control**

Hands-On:

The first thing evident in the trailer was a seamless transition from gameplay to a beautifully minimalist photo mode UI, revealing the always welcome presence of a shortcut button binding. Strangely, there is no way to fully hide that UI, minimal or otherwise, meaning that captures via the Create button will always include the button legend and necessitating the inclusion of R1 as a virtual shutter release, but the photo mode is indeed quick to access with a single press of up on the D-Pad.

What's more, this shortcut can actually be remapped to any individual controller button for a little customisable convenience.

With similar user friendliness, controls are natural and intuitive as the camera moves around any frozen scene with uninhibited truck & dolly, vertical crane, and a full range of pan & tilt adjustments for compositional freedom. Camera roll is notably absent though, so full-resolution portrait shots and even a little Dutch angle on action shots are out of the question for the moment.



- KENA: BRIDGE OF SPIRITS //

PHOTO MODE -

None of this is the big news here though, take the game out of the combat and Kena has something much more innovative in store.

Being especially focused on the story and personality of their characters, Ember Lab seemingly wanted to really make that show in the photo mode and so have included the ability to unfreeze the scene and let the animation resume.

While this may sound similar to other concepts that we have seen before, the key difference here is that for the first time to my knowledge, the characters actually become aware of the virtual camera and switch their attention to it in a wonderfully natural way. Hit the "Cheese!" button and they will even smile and strike one of their various poses to make an experience that is more akin to photographing friends than virtual subjects.



OK, this is still within certain predetermined confines when it comes to the number of possible actions, but it is a brilliant innovation and one that seems perfectly suited to showcase the skills of the animators at Ember Lab while also giving glimpses into the "off-screen" personalities of the in-game characters. Simply put, it looks delightful and maybe even makes you wonder why it hasn't been done this way before.

Beyond the clever innovation, there are also a more traditional set of static character poses for Kena to be found in a photo mode that seems to have the fundamental aspects covered. A host of colour filters and optical effects such as vignette, film grain and chromatic aberration are included for post-process tweaking, while the optional square and portrait aspect ratios include an enhanced background defocus effect, maybe going some way to make up for the lack of 90° captures.



For more manual setup, the likes of exposure bias can be used to tweak the natural light, and either centred auto or fully manual focus is paired with f-stop aperture controls to ensure that it is always possible to create an authentic photographic or cinematic look.

Of course, it appears that the game will help a lot there with CGI cinema-quality character models and what looks like an abundance of personality (and cute hats) in a stunningly presented environment. Kena and the Rot are surely going to be posing for rather a lot of photographs, and I can't wait to see how the creative potential provided by Ember Lab manages to inspire the virtual photography community.

Subscribe to the fortnightly [newsletter](#) for all the latest features from [TheFourthFocus.com](https://www.thefourthfocus.com)

[Kena: Bridge of Spirits reviewed on PS5 with a digital copy provided by Ember Lab]

△ THE
FOUR
THFO
CUS □

THEFOURTHFOCUSVERDICT
RECOMMENDED



△ THE
FOUR
THFO
CUS □

VIRTUALPHOTOGRAPHY
NEWSLETTER





DEV TALK
WITH

sourabhhamigi



Ryan / Poachiin
TPM Editor-in-Chief



sourabhhamigi
Game Developer



Explore a hand-crafted, gorgeous island with your camera and a cute doggo companion. Your world, your camera and your story to tell.

We talk to sourabhhamigi creator of 'Grass On The Other Side'.

How and why did the project come to be?

The Last two years have been crazy for everyone. Not being able to go and travel has been one of the aspects I missed the most in the pandemic. Grass on the Other Side started as a vision to create a world that anyone would love exploring. Taking a stroll and capturing the beauty of nature at its best. That was the inception of a project dedicated to creating a gorgeous explorable island that players can capture through a lens.

GOTOS will have some personalised features?

One of the pillars for the project is that I let the player feel like it's a world that can be crafted to their experience. For example, when the game starts, players will be asked simple questions such as whether they like the smell of rain or the color of clear blue sky. Depending on the answer, the world is crafted to be dynamic to those conditions. Players have the control to unlock camera lenses and parts in any manner they want, customize the appearance of the dog companion to their heart's content. Yes! You have a dog companion.

The world through a lens

If it's a game that encourages players to take photos, the world should be also crafted to enable that. The world of Grass on the Other Side is hand-crafted to have interesting, variety of areas to capture at every corner. I also want to enable players to capture details as minute as the seed of the sunflower basking in the morning sun. Or the reflection of the world mirrored in a water drop after a heavy rain.



Your dog companion

What's better than capturing moments on a gorgeous island with your camera? Doing the same with your best friend – a Doggo.

What's next?

The project is still in early stages but very excited to show the state of it so far. Be sure to follow [@GOTOSGame](https://twitter.com/GOTOSGame) for updates about the game.

Is the core concept behind creating a game that's primary feature is using an in-game camera a response to the rise in popularity with virtual photography?

Virtual photographers are definitely the most ideal player-base for this experience. I have been following more and more virtual photographers over the past year and it blows my mind the images they capture and the talent out there. Virtual photography has been an inspiration for this project.

Given that capturing shots is a big part of GOTOS, have you looked at the photo modes that other studios have built for inspiration?

One of the first games that I tried photo mode on was The Last of Us and I spent hours playing with the controls and tweaking all aspects of the camera. Games like Spiderman, Ghost of Tsushima have had an impact on how I design my camera system in-game.



As a photography game, could there be wider applications for GOTOS?

Yes and No. Currently, the camera in-game is not completely physically based, like in real-life. Changing aperture will not affect the amount of light hitting the camera sensor or tweaking shutter speed will not affect the motion blur of the shot. There are still aspects like the depth of field, focal length, distance and sensor type that I mimic in-game. I would say that the world of Grass on the Other Side creates a great opportunity to capture shots and learn compositions in natural moments. The world has a lot to offer and it's your canvas!

How much of your ambition to create this game came from the prohibition of travel during the pandemic?

Being confined indoors definitely spawned the idea of Grass on the Other Side. The project started as a result of me missing going outside or travelling. So I decided to create a beautiful virtual world that players can explore.

What can you tell us about environmental customisation?

This has been a very important design thought for me as I want players to have a say in some aspects of how the world of Grass on the Other Side is created for them. For example, when the game starts, players will be asked simple questions such as whether they like the smell of rain or the color of clear blue sky. Depending on the player choice, the game will change the state of the weather to be more cloudy, overcast or clear sunny days. This is one such example of several choices that I will give the player.

Can you pet the dog?

YES!!

You can also customize your dog with their own apparels like different hats, collars and so on. Dog customizable apparel are one kind of unlockables that you will find throughout the game.

[Follow](#)



VP&ME
WITH

electric skies



Ryan / Poachiin
TPM Editor



electricbskies
Virtual Photographer



Describe the process of getting your virtual photography into a museum of contemporary art, was this a new thing for the curators? Did you have to explain what virtual photography is?

For the museum curators and for the majority of the visitors, virtual photography was an object of mystery. They thought I was bringing a screengrab from Super Mario World or from Pacman with some sort of fancy and artful post-production. This is probably due to the fact that here in Italy we have a long tradition of “Game Art” where painters and comic book artists bring their vision of gaming through their personal work of art, but this was the first time that they had to deal with “the real thing” and since I try to have a really creative approach to gaming photography, they were doubtful that my captures were coming from actual video games and were taken in real time through Photo Modes. But in the end the exhibition happened and I also had the honour to have virtual photography labelled as “ready-made” art, as made famous by Marcel Duchamp in 1913.

What sort of reception/feedback did you get from the public who saw your virtual photography in the gallery?

My personal experience taught me that a large share of adult people, at least here in Italy, still have a very partial knowledge of gaming. I had to go through 3 interviews with 3 different people (one lecturer of the Accademia Carrara in Bergamo, one museum curator and one IRL photographer) before my pitch for the exhibition was accepted and none of them had a clue of the scope and capabilities of photo modes in modern games. During the exhibition many parents actually asked me for information about children's safety and violent content in modern video games. Most of them let their children play, of course, but they actually don't know the mechanics or the history or the rules of the Minecrafts and the Fortnites

They just hope those games are able to keep their children entertained. There's a lot of ingenuity still today and our collective work of spreading gaming culture in its different forms still has a long way to go. Let's put it this way: there's a bubble of tens of millions of people that know everything about modern gaming, follow E3 live streamings, read and comment in forums and watch youtubers and essays on gaming. You might think gaming has reached the masses because "tens of millions" is actually a huge number and you also see the world through your personal lens, as an active part of the large gaming community. But there are billions of people out there, outside the bubble, that don't know, don't care, don't have the money or the time to enjoy the beauty of gaming. There's also a huge share of adult people in positions of power in this modern and cultured part of the world (see the museum curators I had to deal with) that resemble the billions we don't see, instead of the millions we are alongside.

To answer your question, I clearly saw two different kinds of people at the exhibition: gamers appreciating my personal take and taste for virtual photography, and regular lads with girlfriends and family observing my prints unsure of what they were. Something fresh, exotic and vibrant hopefully, yet most of them were probably unable or uninterested to spread the message outside that room.

But I had my personal return, later, because last year's exhibition was a real breakthrough in the Italian history of virtual photography and I was later contacted by some authorities in the field of art and photography that seemed interested in my work, so my effort paid off in the end.



Which game is your favourite to shoot in?

I think that open games with large, lush vistas and landscapes can provide a huge array of inspirations to virtual photographers as they are full of NPC's to portray, animals at large, different weather conditions and ever-changing lighting. At the same time, I think that the best virtual photography comes from transcending the game using its very assets to forward your personal vision to your public.

I was recently able to capture the Playstation 4 game Ghost Of Tsushima in a very unique way, blending historic IRL photography and virtual photography, capturing the lifestyle and clothing of in-game NPC's and main characters without any single reference to the game, its story or its combat. The idea was to use virtual photography and Ghost Of Tsushima as a tool, to deliver a trip through 13th century Japan like I was an IRL photojournalist. Of course, I'm aware that there are similar projects by other fellow VPs, but those specific games had photo mode filters that hinted to that direction and also lacked the necessary realism in character-design that is the true edge of Sucker Punch's game.



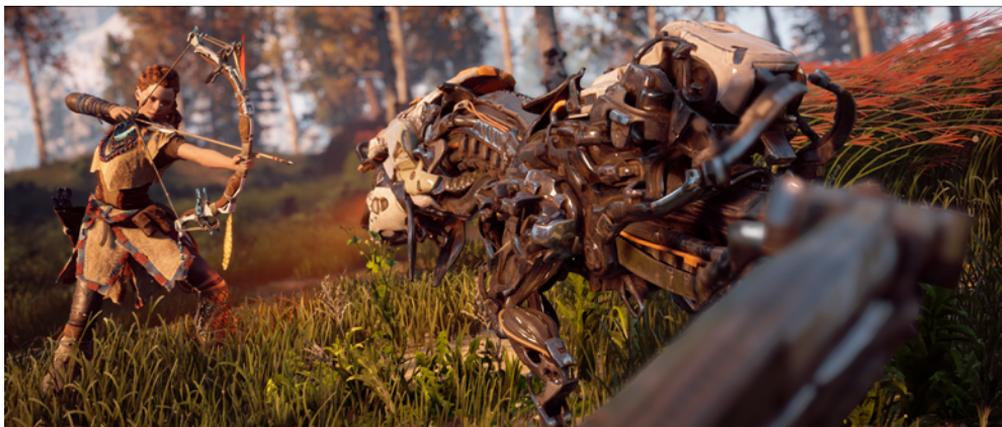
What is the next step to realising Virtual Photography as an art form?

We have to bring VP outside gaming, to other media. Nowadays we post on social media for ourselves, our fellow VPs and the studios. We feel happy, satisfied and appraised if a publisher retweets our work; And that's fine because VP is not the same thing for everyone. For many of us, virtual photography is just a hobby and nothing more. But how many times have you tagged some entities outside the gaming world? For example the NY MOMA or your local museum or some art authorities or even some radio stations in your IG posts or tweets? I do it every single time I think I did a good job, and it's paying off. Believe me when I say the world of art is more inclusive and friendly than you might think and nobody should feel ashamed to promote their work to local museums or art galleries. The worst thing that could happen to you is complete radio silence but that's the normality, the most important thing is to keep trying and believing in your work.

What are the biggest misconceptions about Virtual Photography?

I think that there is one main big misconception about VP coming both from inside and outside the gaming community: that **virtual photographers just exploit other people's work.**

If our screenshots are beautiful, it's only because that specific game is beautiful. I can agree on one thing: there are many screenshots on social media that are not evocative, inspired or breaking convention. But those are the captures of people enjoying a game and sharing their experience. You just have to accept those screenshots for what they are and for what they represent: a declaration of love that -most probably- will go unheard. But for the most part the work of VP's can't be touched by this kind of criticism. Some talented Virtual Photographers can actually work on a very bland and generic game and get some inspired and unique captures that reimagine and transcend the game itself to the point of being something completely fresh and new. The point is: anyone IRL can take a screenshot of nature or do portraits but only a few will be remembered as Salgado or McCurry. It is not the subject that makes a good screenshot, it's the person behind the camera, and the same goes for VP



Should virtual photographer's have the option to monetize their shots?

I consider myself very lucky to be a virtual photographer in Italy, because there is a huge attention towards game art and virtual photography. In 2014 I was contacted by Debora Ferrari and Luca Traini, two museum curators that embraced the cause of gaming as an art form promoting through the collective name "Neoludica", with mine and other game artists' work hosting exhibitions all over Italy sponsored by big names of the gaming industry. Thanks to them, I was able to sell some of my prints as if they were art prints, all according to Italian laws and without any complaint from the copyright owners of those games. So yes, I think that virtual photography deserves all the possible attention and to be monetized and it's not fair that something I was able to do is not yet accessible to many skilled fellow VP's. But I also think that since the daily production by the community is so high in numbers and random in quality, we still need time to set some rules and figure out how we can bring professional VP to the attention of the possible buyers. On this subject matter, I really appreciate your study and work on NFTs.



What is the wider significance of Fondazione Alinari per la Fotografia acknowledging your work?

Fondazione Alinari per la Fotografia (F.A.F. TOSCANA), established in 1852, is the oldest Italian authority in the field of IRL photography. Until 2020 they never acknowledged virtual photography as some form of art or even as simple “photography”, but after my achievement of bringing virtual photography into an actual museum they probably reviewed their opinions about that specific subject matter.

A few weeks after my exhibition they contacted my friends at Neoludica asking to provide a screenshot from a game set in Italy and sporting some nice Italian architecture or landmarks. In no time, I loaded a PC copy of Assassin's Creed II and took some captures from Venice and Florence. A screenshot of Florence (in this case “screengrab”, because ACII has no proper photo mode) was first exhibited in the real Florence on the 28th of June 2021 among 74 other beautiful IRL photographs by some of the best photographers in Italy, and soon will travel through Minsk, St. Petersburg and Berlin sponsored by the Italian Minister Of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (follow me on IG [@emalord](#) for regular updates).

The wider significance is that a door between similar yet different arts has been finally opened, that virtual photography is acknowledged by authorities outside the gaming circuit and hopefully very soon, Italian and foreign authorities might open their doors to other fellow virtual photographers following the example of F.A.F. Sometimes the hardest step is the first one, and I would be honoured to be remembered as one of the early pioneers that paved the road to the NY MOMA for virtual photography in 10 years from now. Thanks to your magazine and everyone listening to my story, this dream might become true.



Can you give any advice to someone who is looking to take the same route as yourself with their Virtual Photography?

I started as a Virtual Photographer in 2010 but only 4 years later came national recognition and only 8 years later international recognition. It means I had a lot of patience and I went through many moments of frustration. My first advice is: be patient and don't expect success to come in a matter of weeks or months.

As a second piece of advice, remember that everyone gets better with time and practice. If you check your production every 6 months and you don't despise at least a small part of your older production, it means that your taste and abilities are not growing with you and that's a serious problem if you want your production to be always improving and evolving.

If you don't know how to start as a virtual photographer, start by mimicking the best VPs out there, try to understand what makes them great and once you get it (is it the framing? The use of negative space? The use of filters? The project behind their work? The love that shines through their work?) put the lesson to work and try to find your personal way of talking to your public.

Remember: ego is overrated. It brings a huge boost in determination and helps a lot, but sometimes it makes you truly blind and arrogant. So handle it with maximum care. And also remember: there are a lot of VPs out there that are better than me and than you but nonetheless, I'm here telling my story. In your darkest moments you have to believe the old adage saying we all can have our 15 minutes of fame. Sometimes it happens even twice.



ELECTRICBSKIES



VP&ME
WITH

Mind Jacked Jimmy



Ryan / Poachiin
TPM Editor-in-Chief



MindJackedJimmy
Virtual Photographer



Jimmy is an exceptional VP, his portraits always present characters strongly, and his work is really easy to get lost in!

What was the first game that sparked an interest in virtual photography, and what was it that got you interested?

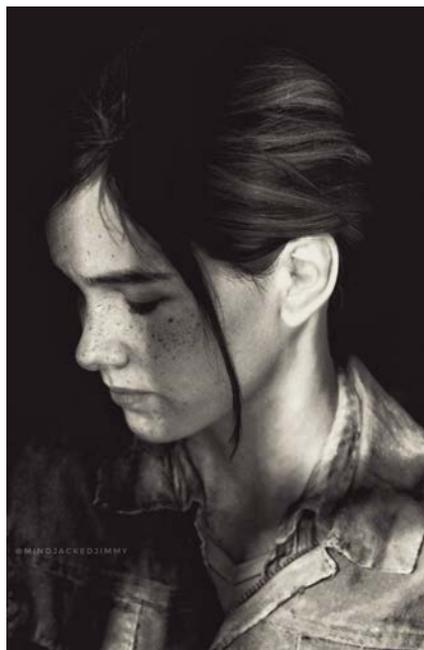
I think the first game was Infamous Second Son as it had a pretty good photomode early in the PS4's life, but I don't think I was fully hooked until Horizon Zero Dawn and Driveclub.

I think I've always had an interest in photography but confidence has always held me back, so virtual photography scratched that itch!



Your Portrait shots are incredible, what is it about this type of shot that speaks to you?

I never expected to become a Portrait VP to be honest, it kind of just evolved. I love capturing the eyes and making my subjects feel as alive as I possibly can.



As the creator of Abby Wednesdays, what is it about the character that you have a soft spot for, what with Ellie being much more popular in the fan base?

Abby felt unique as a character for me.

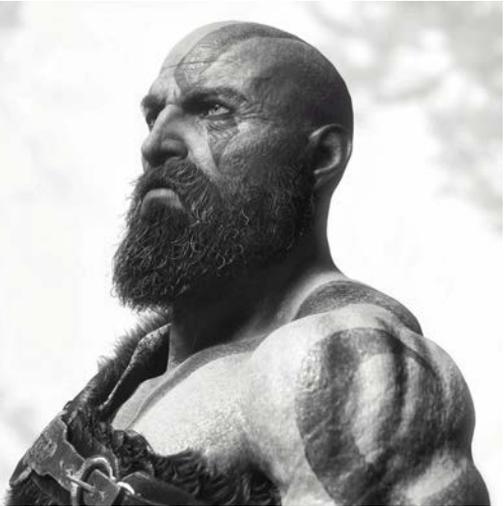
She wasn't your typical video game character and I found her very photogenic and I really tried to show her beauty with my portraits. Naughty Dog gave us some fantastic characters with some very expressive faces.

Who in the gaming community (VP or not) inspires you and why?

@evegamephoto: her shots are always beautiful and I think she carries a lot of emotion in her work (especially with TLOU2).

@jules_vp_ and **@Chris25551:** Their landscape shots are fantastic and I've been trying to capture more scenery because of them.

@Huldera1: I don't think I'll ever be able to be this creative but her work is fantastic.



Should Virtual Photography be considered an artform?

I think so, it's amazing to see people's take on the game worlds we explore and there are a lot of people who take VP to the next level and create some amazing art pieces.

Which upcoming games are you looking forward to playing/shooting?

I'm looking forward to the next God of War and Horizon Forbidden West, but before that I think it'll be Kena, which is looking fantastic!

On Abby's uniqueness as a character, what are your thoughts around the controversy around her being a playable character that murders a previous playable character early on in Part II? Is she misunderstood as a character?

I personally had no issue with Abby killing off a previous playable character. It was definitely a shock but the world of TLOU isn't a nice one and as much as I liked that character, they were not perfect.

It's clear that there is no good guy in this world and the game makes us look at the harsh realities of what trauma does to people. Abby and Ellie have a lot of similarities but because we loved Ellie so much in the first game I think people took to her side more.

It was a gut punch from Naughty Dog and a brave one at that.

Do you have any advice for people who might be considering taking shots for the first time?

Don't be afraid to use the tools you are given in these games. Because I didn't have a photography background I was afraid to play around with the settings but I think they really helped me find my own style in the end.

IVWBK

- SPIDERMAN MILES MORALES



" In short, I see VP as a form of art and a great way to express yourself creatively. I love the fact that if done right, you can make people feel something because of you, your shot, your creation. And that's beautiful. "



FOKALIZER

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

"Here, the background is flattened by using a long focal length, and thus seems very close to the subject or at least gives the impression that the subject is rather small compared to the behemoth that is the snow covered grizzlies.

The overall idea behind this shot is simply to show that man is insignificant against mother nature's creations."



HOWDYARTHUR

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

"I always try to show an emotion with my shots. I really like the VP community, I've met some great people and I found my fiancé from here."



HAZELGREEN_VP

- DAYS GONE



"O'Brian was such an interesting and mysterious character. I was always looking forward to meet him and find out something new. I wanted to capture this moment of him waiting for Deacon as natural as it appeared to me."



SHINUISHI

- HORIZON ZERO DAWN

"My shots are almost never planned. With gaming I take great pleasure in the exploration of the worlds, while trying to keep an eye out for anything interesting to me.

This particular picture was taken while I was going through some hard times, so I immersed myself in the game. A view of those mountains left me with the feeling of peace, but also loneliness. Called it 'breathe' as a reminder."



GAMESCAPE.VP

- HORIZON ZERO DAWN

"This was an unplanned, rather simple capture. I liked the pose, the weather and the armor Aloy's wearing and once I had all that I only had to do the editing and find a quote that fits the gloomy vibes of this shot. HZD is a wonderful game and you don't even need outside tools to capture the beauty of it."



ADAMC_VP

- RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2



"Photography is the story I fail to
put into words."



"I'm gonna find... and I'm gonna kill... every last one of them. Camera with flash."

DROMANSC

- THE LAST OF US 2



"In this shot, I wanted to demonstrate water, land and air space in equal proportions, thus creating a tricolor and a car rushing along with the elements!"

LUCEFER_DW

- FORZA HORIZON 4



VP_S_H16

- ASSASSINS CREED VALHALLA



"I am honored to be in the VP community. You are all amazing and inspiring, I really appreciate your support."

TPM GALLERY

**WE WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE OUR 1ST
VIRTUAL GALLERY IN THE METAVERSE AS
OPEN!**

WE ASKED YOU TO SHARE YOUR BEST BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOS.

**WE SELECTED SOME OF OUR FAVOURITES AND THEY ARE NOW UP ON THE WALLS
OF OUR CRYPTOVOXELS GALLERY.**

**THE GALLERY ACTS AS OUR HQ, THE GROUND FLOOR BEING A VIRTUAL
REPRESENTATION OF OUR WEBSITE.**

**WE HAVE SOME PRETTY COOL THINGS PLANNED FOR THE GALLERY! WE WILL
HOLD THEMES TO FEATURE YOUR WORKS, AND ALSO HAVE PEOPLE IN TO DO
TOURS AND TALKS ABOUT THE ART FORM OF VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY.**

**HEAD OVER TO OUR PARCEL AND EXPLORE THE WORLD AROUND YOU,
EVERYTHING IS OWNED BY SOMEBODY, AND THERES SOME BEAUTIFUL ART
THROUGHOUT THIS WORLD. YOU MIGHT BUMP INTO SOMEONE YOU KNOW!**



CLICK OUR LOGO TO EXPLORE



(YOUR IMAGES DISPLAYED IN OUR GALLERY ARE NOT NFTS)

