

# The PhotoMode



DEATH  
STRANDING™

ISSUE 17  
Cover Image by  
[Simon0aVp](#)



# Featured Artists



Issue 17  
Nov 2021



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# 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."

D E A T H  
S T R A N D I N G  
D I R E C T O R ' S C U T

To celebrate the release of  
Death Stranding Director's Cut  
we held #TPMDSC event on Twitter and  
Instagram between 4th-20th Oct, inside this  
issue are entries from that event.

We want to send a personal message from  
the Virtual Photography Community to  
HIDEO KOJIMA and the  
KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS team.

Thank you from all of us for creating such a  
beautiful, thought provoking world for us to  
explore and thank you for the incredible  
photo mode you have built for us to really  
push our own artistic vision within your own.



ARTOFV.G 







HCDAVE1



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DIPPERSMOKE



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PHOTOMODEPURIST 



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THEINGAMEPHOTOGRAPHER





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DEATH STRANDING:  
DIRECTOR'S CUT

REVIEW



**Title: Death Stranding Director's Cut -**  
[ reviewed on PS5 digital copy provided by SIE ]

**Developer: Kojima Productions**

**Publisher: Sony Interactive Entertainment**

**Initial Release: 24th September 2021**



**The Fourth Focus**



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The dawn of a new era for famed creator Hideo Kojima and reformed studio Kojima Productions, *Death Stranding* arrived as one of the most original titles of recent times, one that has both engrossed and bemused audiences ever since those early teaser trailers. Having often transcended classification as one of a kind during that time, the self-claimed genre-defying experience is now back, expanded and remastered for PS5 in the definitive Director's Cut that adds new content & gear for a better experience, as well as competitive challenges that interweave with the game's trademark social strand system & shift towards a more fun-loving version of the game



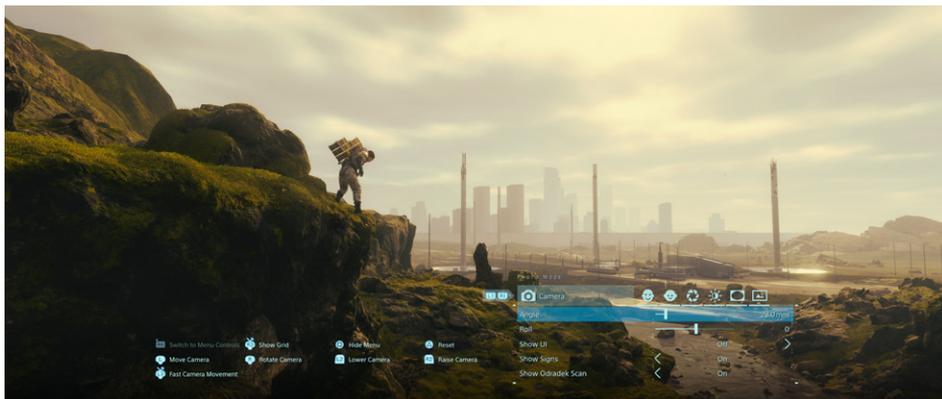
In a game that still wants you to find beauty in every detail and become entwined in the unique way it adds interest to the ordinary & mundane, virtual photography is easily one of the best ways in which to engage with the whole concept, and the new tools & leisure activities mean that there has never been a better time head into this absorbing virtual world with virtual camera in hand.

## Key Photo Mode Features:

- **Huge focal length range with manual & auto focus**
- **Extensive character pose options**
- **Staggeringly realistic landscapes**
- **21:9 cinematic widescreen mode**

## Controls & Implementation:

Let's get one thing out of the way first. The Death Stranding Director's Cut photo mode is virtually unchanged from that of the original game, but that does not mean that there is nothing new to report. In fact, one of the most impactful changes is found not in the photo mode itself, but in the game's Graphics Settings options where a brand new 21:9 Widescreen Mode renders the game with a wider field of view. This more cinematic look carries over directly into the photo mode to give a much greater frame width that leaves the regular 16:9 view looking narrow and cramped in comparison.



Optically, an incredibly versatile range of lens focal lengths range from a super-wide 10 mm right up to the extreme telephoto 1,000 mm, all complimented by auto or manual focus and full depth of field control via aperture settings of  $f/1.4 - f/22$ . Along with a highly effective exposure compensation range and the option to dial in noise to replicate higher ISO sensitivities, your virtual camera kit bag is well stocked and ready to tackle a wide variety of different styles.

With such versatility at your disposal, it is crucial to have the spatial freedom to put it to good use, and a control scheme boasting lateral truck & dolly movement, vertical craning, and a  $180^\circ$  centre-axis roll seems to suggest that the camera movement has been well thought out. However, the truth is that these functions are really just modifiers for the position of the third-person game camera and significantly, this means that the the RS still functions with an orbit rotation that is centred on the playable character rather than being truly free to move and look in any direction. The provided workarounds are admittedly useful though, it just means that fine tuning the composition can become unnecessarily frustrating at times.



Thankfully, the rest of the photo mode features excel much like its optical prowess, and two dedicated character UI tabs arguably still set the standard for virtual subject posing. A large range of preset body positions and characterful facial expressions for both Sam & BB-28 are impressive, but it is the turn-to-camera and manual body tilt & twist tweaks that really take things to another level, while BB's adjustable pod light is always ready to add a certain ambience to the scene.

Similarly capable of changing the mood are 14 varied colour filters and a highly effective contrast slider that can mask an image in flat greys or drench it in heavy blacks, while lens distortion and vignette options are ready to be blended in subtly or exaggerated for a more pronounced effect. 15 preset frames also include some of the game's more symbolic elements, although it should be noted that most of these have not been scaled to match the new 21:9 widescreen view.



## Photographic Opportunity:

Much like its creator, it could be said that a large portion of *Death Stranding* is made up of movies, and that focus on cinematics means that the majority of the game's talkative all-star cast are rarely encountered outside of a cutscene where original photographic composition is not possible. While it is a desperate shame that these otherwise iconic and highly interesting characters play no real part as photographic subjects, it does make it easy to focus attention on Sam and BB, and the game now offers more ways to mix up the time you spend with them for them.



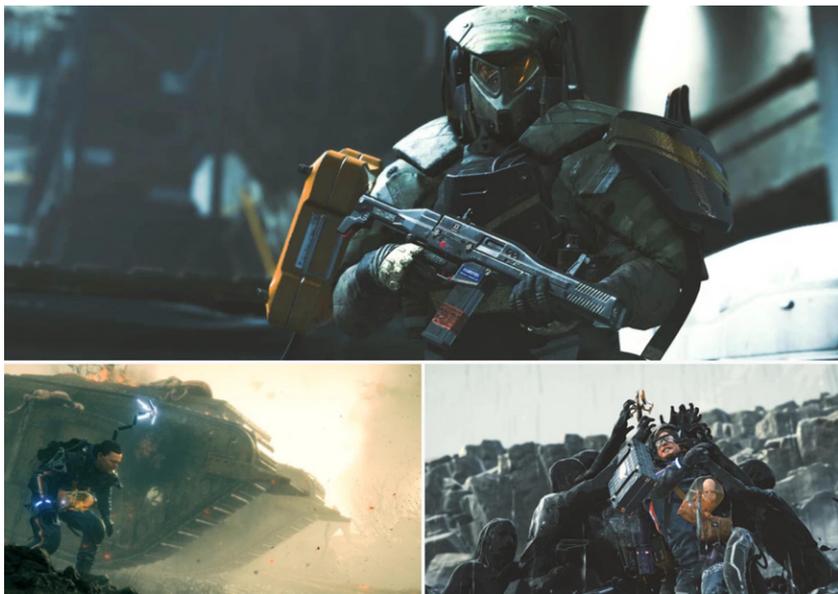
Whether that may be taking on the cargo-hungry MULE's with new shock and stun weaponry, heading out with a robot buddy in-tow, or burning some rubber in a roadster around the freshly constructed race track, there are simply more ways to get the popular duo in front of the camera.

It is a similar story with the ever-impressive landscapes too. With staggering realism, the deceptively varied environments transition from one to another in a totally convincing way, and the ability to use a wider field of view makes it possible to further emphasise the already tremendous sense of scale.



Time spent in the world is certainly not always a relaxing stroll though, and some form of threat is never far away. Whether the onset of rain or snow with its particularly ominous time-altering effects, haunting BT's in rippling pools of black tar and ruined buildings, or the various human-type enemies, these pace changes all carry plenty of photographic appeal.

It is true that many of these sections can be short, especially once you are better equipped and more proficient in combat, but the Director's Cut at least makes it easy to revisit key battles via Sam's plastic model collection found in any Private Room, meaning that their unique opportunities are always available to go back to.



### Verdict:

Death Stranding's labour-intensive nature and meticulous demands may not appeal to everyone, but the Director's Cut makes it easier for new players to get into the game while also upping the fun for those who are already hooked. Satisfying pop-culture nods and franchise references are sure to please fans, while a branching narrative ventures deeper into one of the main story's more poignant themes, if all too briefly.

I guess that is partly the point though; this Director's Cut is not intended to deviate or distract from the original, but to add variety and alternate takes. It keeps the fundamental threads such as the invasiveness of social media, or faceless figures linking life and death, and compliments them with more pragmatic entertainment. In the same breath, Death Stranding reminds us of the preciousness of human life, but also that it shouldn't be too serious all the time and, with a more cinematic presentation that will add grandeur to many shots, this is still one of the best ways to find eternity in an hour.

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A VIDEO GAME  
DEATH  
STRANDING.  
DIRECTOR'S CUT



BILLY\_NOMATES\_VP 



A HIDEO KOJIMA GAME

DEATH  
STRANDING.  
DIRECTOR'S CUT



THEWORLDSoft



A HIDEO KOJIMA GAME

# DEATH STRANDING

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MAIN TITLE DESIGN KYLE COOPER CHARACTER AND MECHANICAL DESIGN YOJI SHINKAWA  
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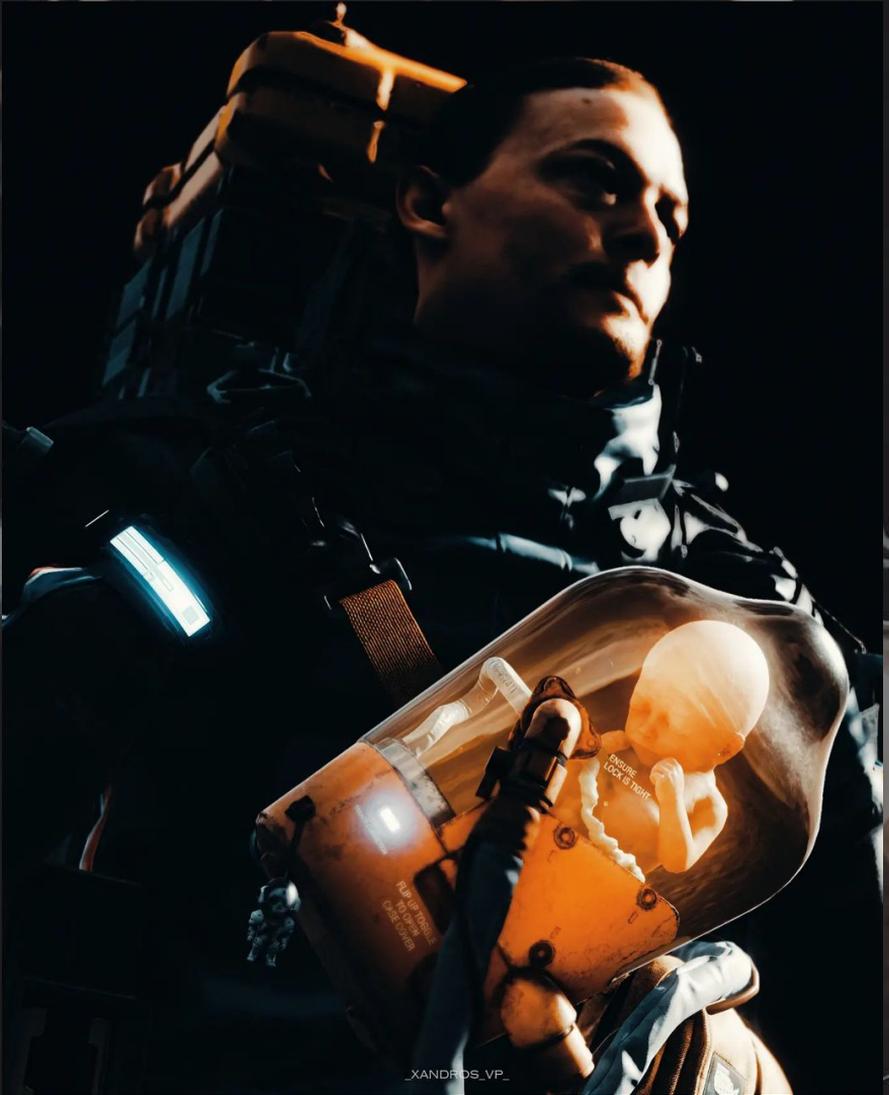


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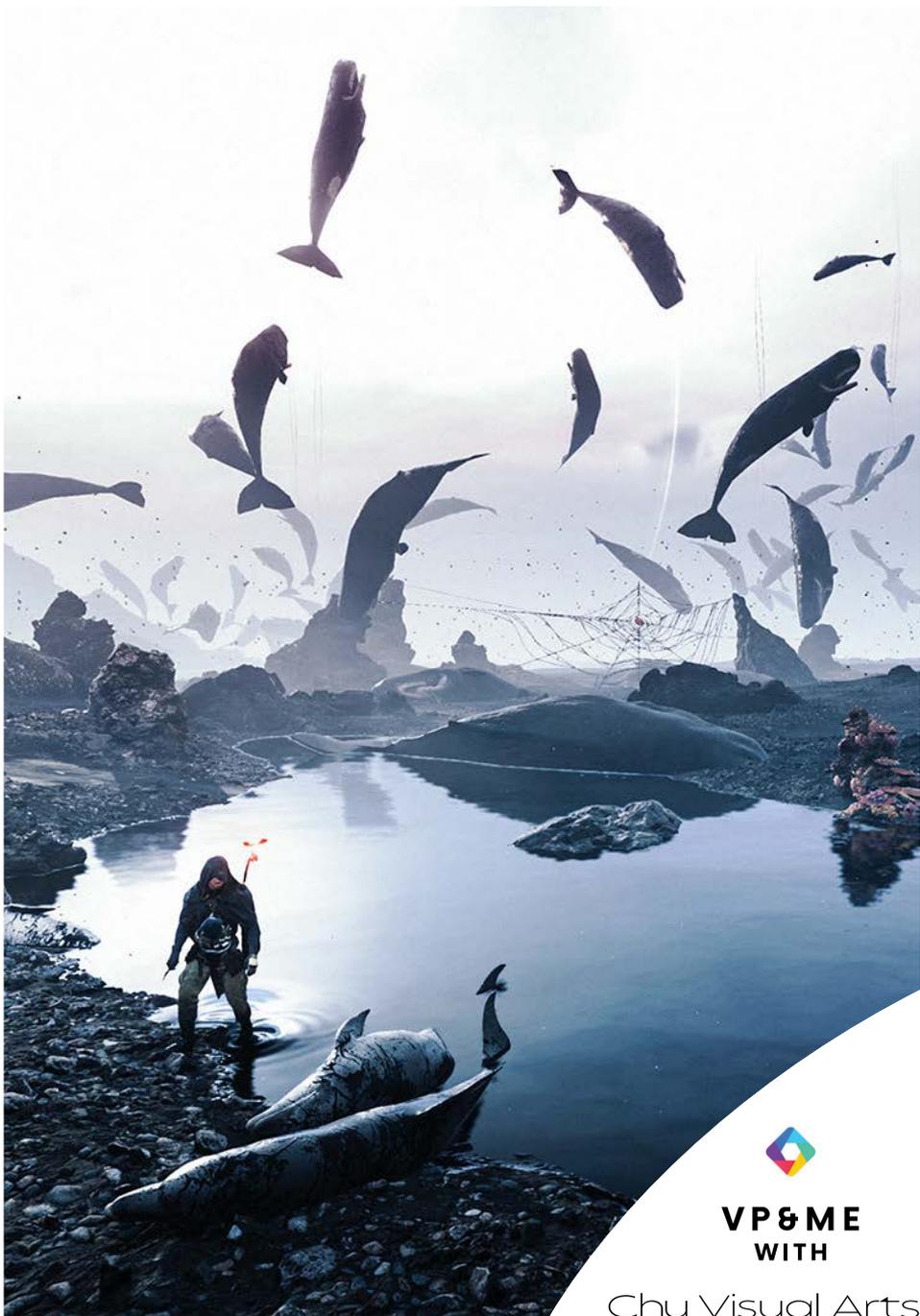
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WITH

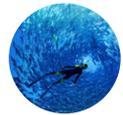
Chy\_Visual\_Arts



**Ryan / Poachiin**  
TPM Editor-in-Chief



**Chy\_Visual\_Arts**  
Virtual Photographer



## **What initially drew you to virtual photography?**

I'm a photographer IRL too, so I think the attraction to virtual photography came naturally to me. I probably took a few screenshots in games years before that, but my real introduction (& addiction, haha) to virtual photography started with GTAV. I now see VP as a wonderful creative hobby that I truly enjoy!

## **Who in the virtual photography community inspires you and why?**

Honestly the whole community inspires me. I will not single out just a few people. Yes, I know there are different levels of artistic, technical, & photographic styles from everyone in the community. Different approaches to creativity & personal visions.

But it's that kind of variety I find to be the most fascinating and inspirational part of the community.

## **Do you have any advice for a new virtual photographer starting out?**

Just do what you enjoy most. Focus on what you love and have passion for, without caring too much about what games or types of photos will give you more interactions on social media. Don't be too obsessed by technical details, and instead capture moments that feel right for you! It will always be more rewarding when you know you've accomplished the goal of your own creative path.



## **What makes Death Stranding an aesthetically satisfying playground for the virtual photographer?**

I feel Death Stranding radiates such a unique mood. The open world looks like a profound mix of Iceland, the Himalayas & the planet Mars. The long journeys you often will do on foot, gives you so much time to reflect on the raw beauty & enthralling atmosphere of the surroundings. For me it's impossible not to be inspired by photography almost all the time. Somehow, I'm glad there was no photo mode when I played the game back in 2019. The flow of the first playthrough would be interrupted too often to take photos. Now of course I can just enjoy taking photos freely.

## **In your opinion, how does accompanying music to shots enhance creativity?**

There is a certain magic within the fusion of sound & vision. Most will recognize this atmospheric vitality from

the world of cinema. Music & soundscapes in certain scenes are extremely important to set the mood & feeling you want the viewer to experience. I know it's not so common to combine still images with music/soundscapes, but I feel it has a similar impact. It's also a great creative exercise to search for a specific song to suit a photo or series. The process can also be reversed as well. You can already have the song in your head(or headset) & be in search of photographing the exact visuals you feel suits the soundscape.

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### **What tracks would an unofficial Death Stranding playlist feature and why?**

First of all: I love the OST of Death Stranding & all the included bands, but most impactful for me was Low Roar's songs & the original score by Ludwig Forssell. Anyway here's my unofficial personal playlist:

New Order - Elegia  
Lorn - I am a dagger  
Disasterpeace - Detroit  
Radiohead - Everything in its right place  
Wojciech Golczewski - He comes  
Biosphere - Poa Alpina  
Beach House - Space song  
Jean-Michel Jarre - Ethnicolor part 1  
Sigur Ros - Svefn-g-englar  
Laurie Anderson - Speak my language  
Moderat - A new error  
Massive Attack - Angel  
Aphex Twin - Stone In focus  
Cocteau Twins - Shallow then halo  
Múm -Khalf Noise  
Boards of Canada - Reach for the dead  
Vök - Waterfall  
Goldmun - Sometimes  
Tortoise - Ten day interval  
(I could go on forever, but will stop here)

### **Should virtual photography be considered an art form?**

Oh, absolutely! But I think it has a long journey ahead before it is viewed as a mainstream art form. Just look how much time it took photography to be truly recognized as a valid art form. Perhaps that's exactly what we don't want for VP? To be mainstream art I mean, haha! Anyway, just as any other type of art, I think it depends a lot on the individual artistic expression. It's impossible to just label everything created through a specific process to be true art. But something stunningly artistic, unique, beautiful and/or ingeniously thought-provoking, will always be recognized by larger audiences sooner or later. Remember that for example DiscPrimitive, BadGamerElite, Leopardsang, AltRealityVP in the VP community already have helped to create/host real life exhibitions with VP works from creators in our community. (sorry if I forget anyone else). It is people like that, and their inspirational effort, that helps VP become more recognized as an art form for a larger audience. Also a big shout-out to all the community VP accounts and the people behind them!



RECORD\_PHOTO 

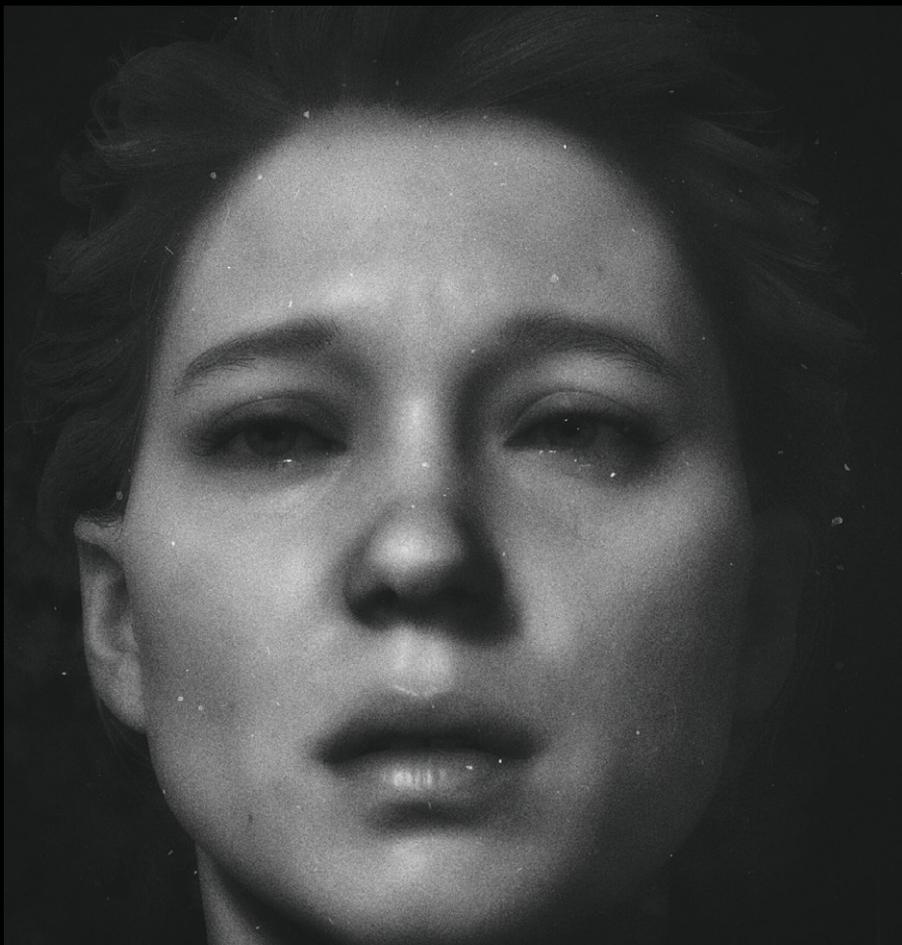
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**VP&ME**  
WITH

DeathStrandingL



**Ryan / Poachiin**  
TPM Editor-in-Chief



**DeathStrandingL**  
Virtual Photographer



**You shoot lots of games, but your Death Stranding shots in particular are fantastic. What is it about the environment and characters in this title that speak to you?**

Death Stranding is the perfect game for me. The story is so beyond anything I had ever found in the gaming world and every single character you encounter has such a sad, broken past - you feel real heartache from them! Empathising with believable characters is the epitome of great storytelling.

When it comes to the VP side of it, I like to switch to offline mode and experience the game in complete isolation. Then it's just me and this amazing world Hideo and his team

brought to life. The scenery is perfect for VP! Most of my shots are of Sam just standing there with this crazy big open area in front of him. Capturing that moment in a picture and making the viewer want to explore that is the ultimate achievement.

**What initially drew you to virtual photography?**

About 5 months back, I was using Twitter to follow companies like Kojima Productions and Naughty Dog. One day I logged in and saw the coolest picture of Abby, it blew my mind! It was actually captured by a fan and I instantly knew that I wanted to start using photo modes and creating shots myself.

(I later found out that the Abby portrait was by [Emilli96!](#))



**Your work has been recognized by Kojima Productions a couple of times, is this the ultimate compliment to your efforts? Why?**

Yeah that shocks me every time my shots get that sort of recognition, especially when Hideo does it from his personal account! The fact that his team and himself simply see the pictures is crazy, but to get a share from any of them is simply the greatest compliment imaginable! IT'S HIDEO KOJIMA!

**Do you have any advice for a new virtual photographer starting out?**

Have fun with it, even if they aren't great to start off with, you'll get there! Just don't copy people's work, be unique!

Also, don't be afraid to ask for some pointers. This was something that I didn't do, but I wish I had. I saw all these big names with thousands of followers and felt intimidated, but I wish I had asked for advice because they're all so lovely and encouraging.



## **Who in the virtual photography community inspires you and why?**

There are so many! But here are the ones that helped me find my own style;

@i3ecci made me concentrate on a good background environmental shot which in turn became the main focus of my DS shots. I can't praise her enough!

@Hyst\_Vpics definitely was the reason I tried out portrait shots a few times. CRAZY talent!

@Toringtino, like Becci, helped me with the environment shots. Everyone should see her RDR2 work, it's incredible!!

... There are so many amazing community members that I admire.

Sarokeye, Jimmy, Evey, VSpeedStar, Ryan, I love them all!

## **Why should virtual photography be considered an art form?**

It's a form of expression for a lot of us, no different to someone who writes music or paints!



AI1209\_VARIOUS 



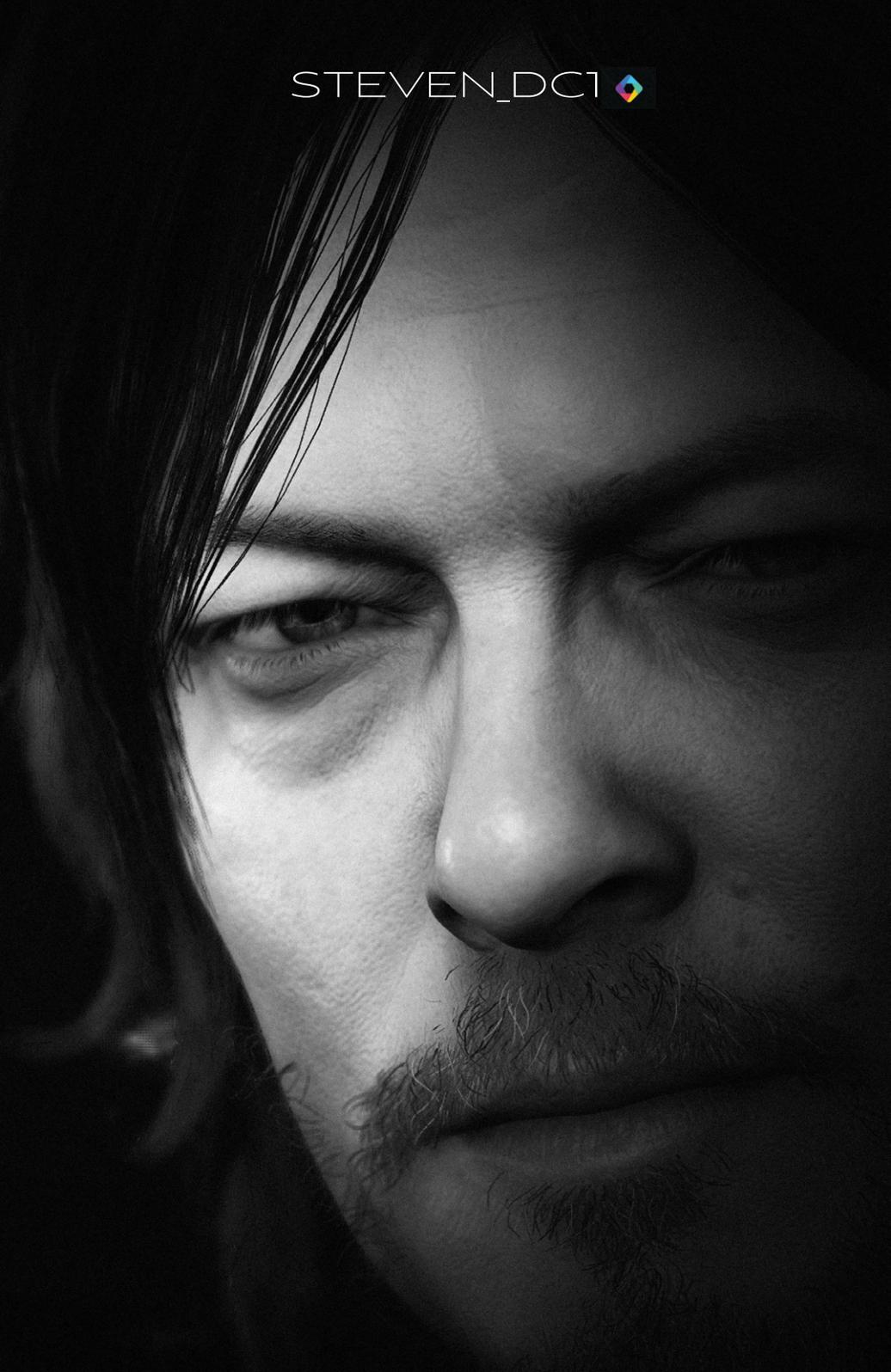
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