

THE PHOTOMODE

E-MAGAZINE



A PLAGUE TALE

VP&ME WITH
@SHINOBI_SPACE

THEFOURTHFOCUS
KENA:BRIDGE OF SPIRITS UPDATE

COVER BY @SHINOBI_SPACE

OUR PAGE IS YOUR STAGE

This is our motto here at TPM, we dedicate our pages to you, the Virtual Photography community.

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.

If you like one of the featured artists within the mag simply click their work and it will take you directly to their twitter profile so you can show them some support.

CONTENTS

Pages 1 - 40 #TPMAPlagueTale

Pages 41 - 50 VP&ME with @shinobi_space

Pages 51 -58 Kena : Bridge of Spirits update by thefourthfocus

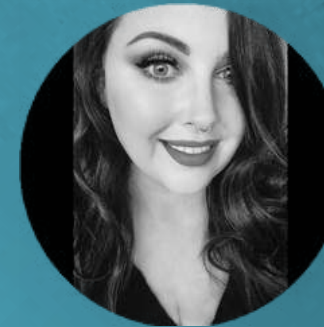
WANT TO BE FEATURED?

Tag us or use #ThePhotoMode

MEET THE TEAM



JACK/VIRTUAL TOURISM
- COMMUNITY MANAGER



CYNTHIA/CFF_PHOTOMODE
- COMMUNITY MANAGER



MIK/THEFOURTHFOCUS -
CONTRIBUTING AUTHOR





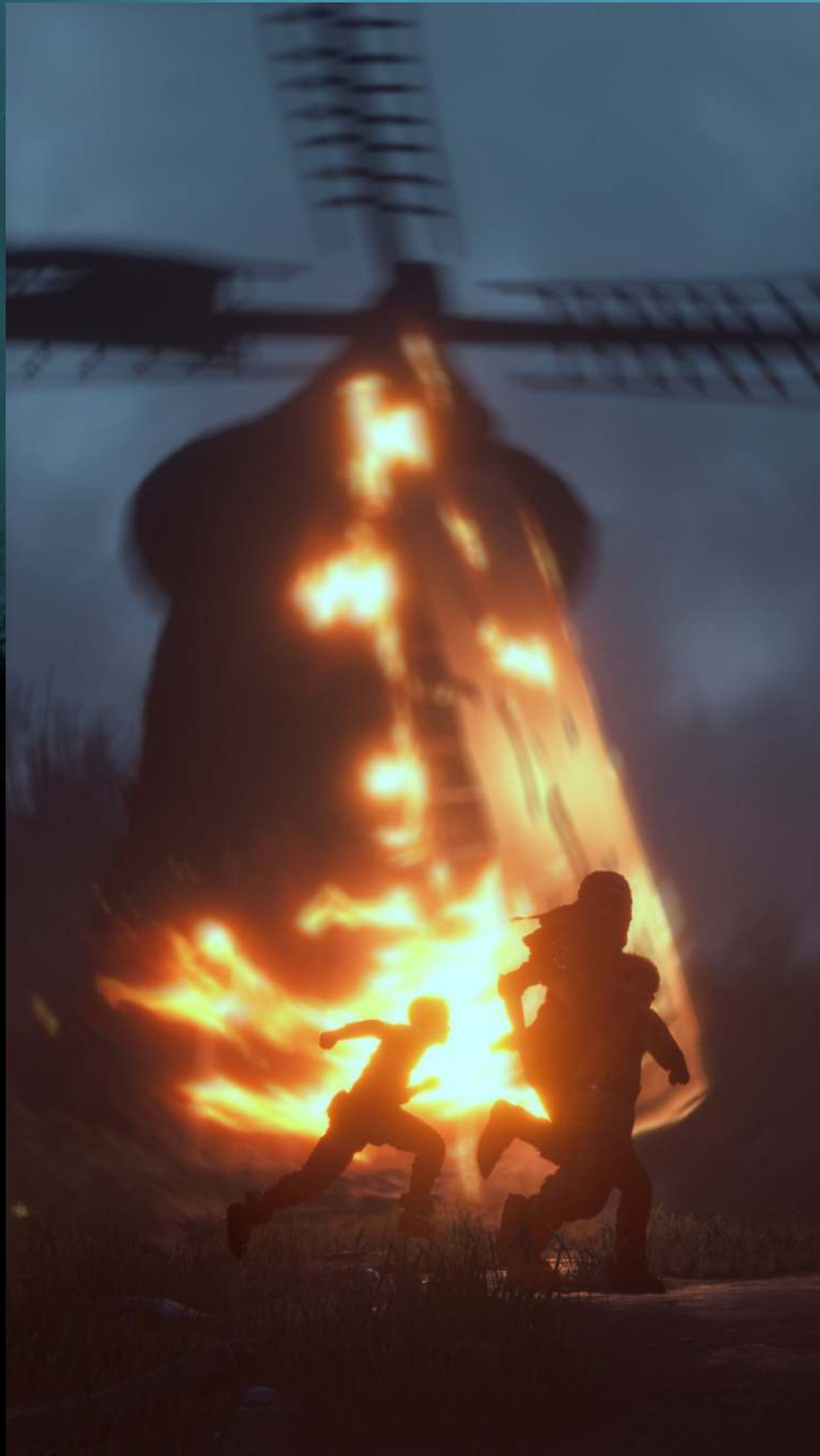


@MORPH__1





@LOAHNIS



@COMPUT_ART

"I see VP as an opportunity to showcase the hard work of the games developers that result in beautiful/cool worlds, designs and characters. And to emphasize them, I try to make pictures that reflect the mood or atmosphere of a particular moment, even if the viewer doesn't know the game, he can feel what this moment tell."





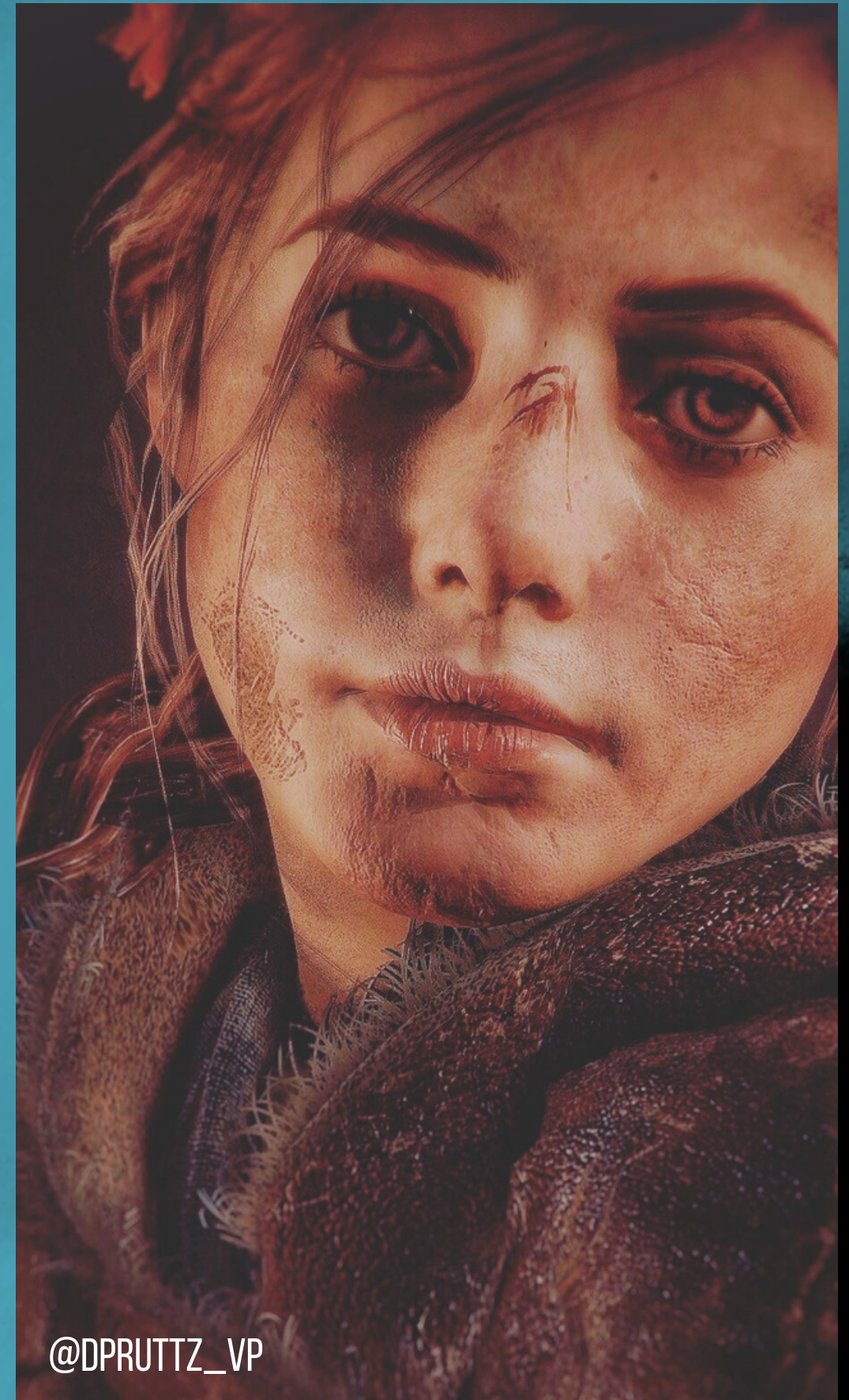
@EVEYGAMEPHOTO

"This game has a beautiful story and world. Amicia is very brave, and she would do anything to protect those she loves. I really resonated with that and I cannot wait for the continuation of their journey!"

@eveygamerphoto



@SCOTTOKA1



@DPRUTTZ_VP

@KENKENVEGA1





ORA_ZINHO.VP



@GRINDERMAN_VP



@PETANNI_

@MUJIRO00000

"So with this picture I tried to emphasise a sense of desperation. Hugo and Amicia running from their family's killers, deeper into the forest whilst becoming more desperate as they hear the footsteps become louder and see the lights shine brighter from behind them, indicating they are closing in on them."



@SORATHLUNA

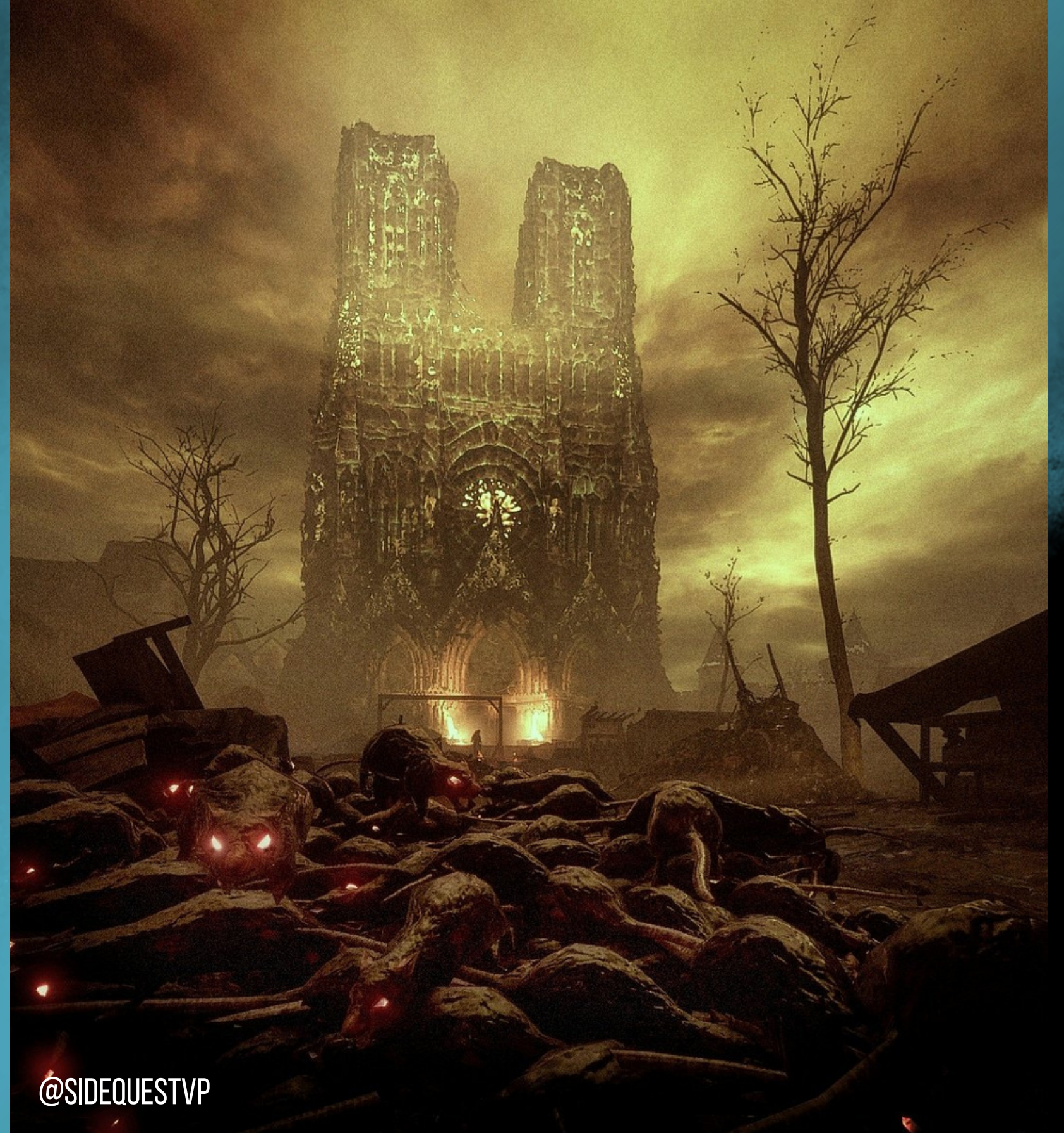
"I totally love this game, its photo mode is very basic but you can still achieve wonderful photographs, its story is moving and well, it's perfect."





@COALABR14

@EVO_PIXEL



@SIDEQUESTVP



@SAROKEYE

"For this shot I wanted to go with some isolating, Hugo isn't with Amicia but with Lord Nicholas. You can see he's slowly getting more sick and tired he's alone and I wanted to show that in this shot. It's really sad but he's a strong kid and he will always find a way to go to Amicia."

@MANINROOMV



@PLAYSTATIONSNA1





@__AURON__

"I took this picture when I was sick with the coronavirus. Now, every time I see hordes of plague rats from this game, I am reminded of that experience."

@9B75

"I was shocked by her appearance. I especially felt sympathy for the tear marks on her cheeks. But she was calm and strong. I could sense determination and resolve in her face. I hope that the highlighted light in her eyes and the tear marks convey these feelings."

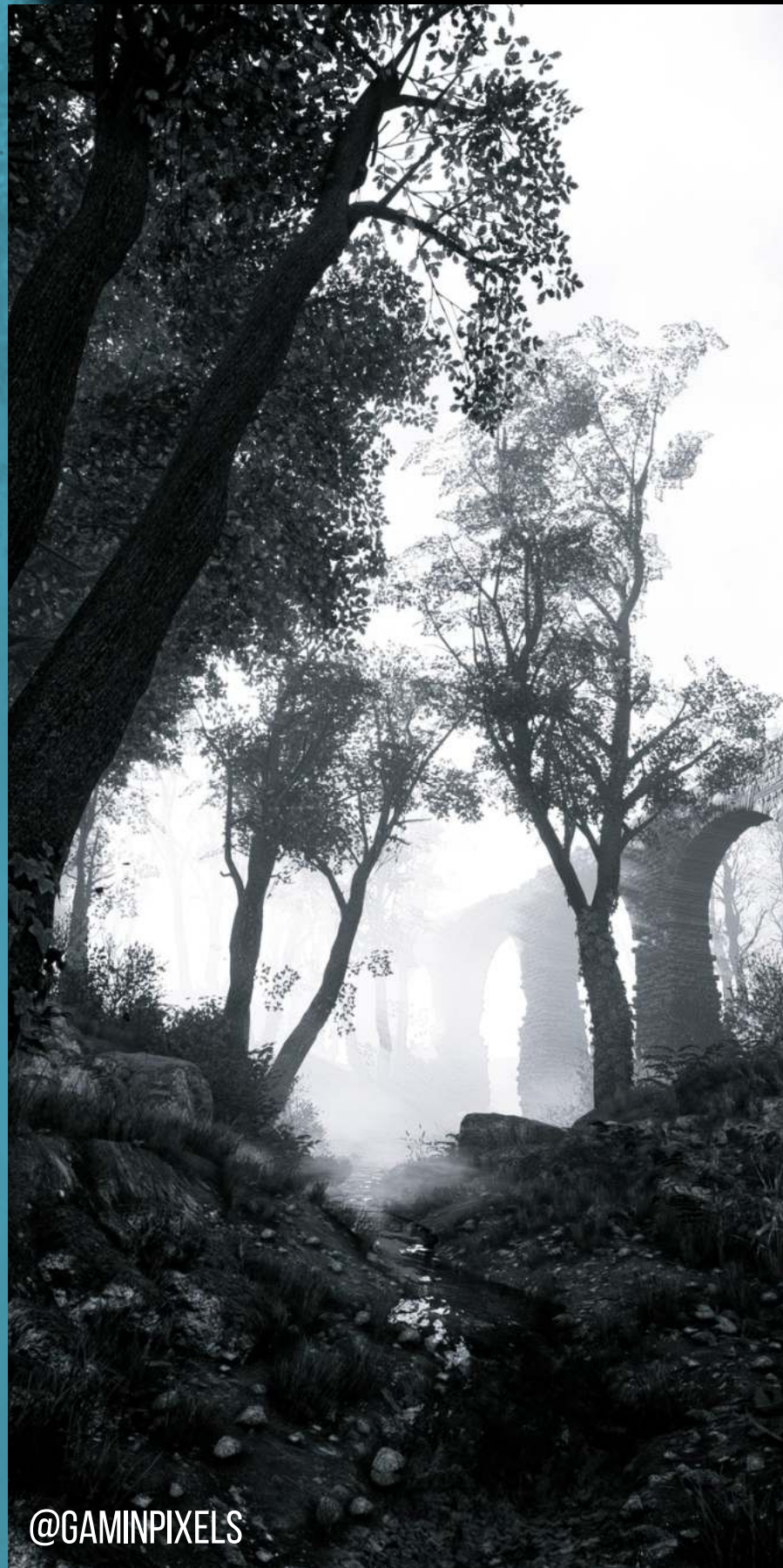




@BETWEENDPIXELS



@KHALDSX885



@GAMINPIXELS



VP&ME WITH @SHINOBI_SPACE

WHICH GAME GOT YOU INTERESTED IN VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND WHAT ABOUT IT STOOD OUT IN A WAY THAT MADE YOU WANT TO CAPTURE IT?

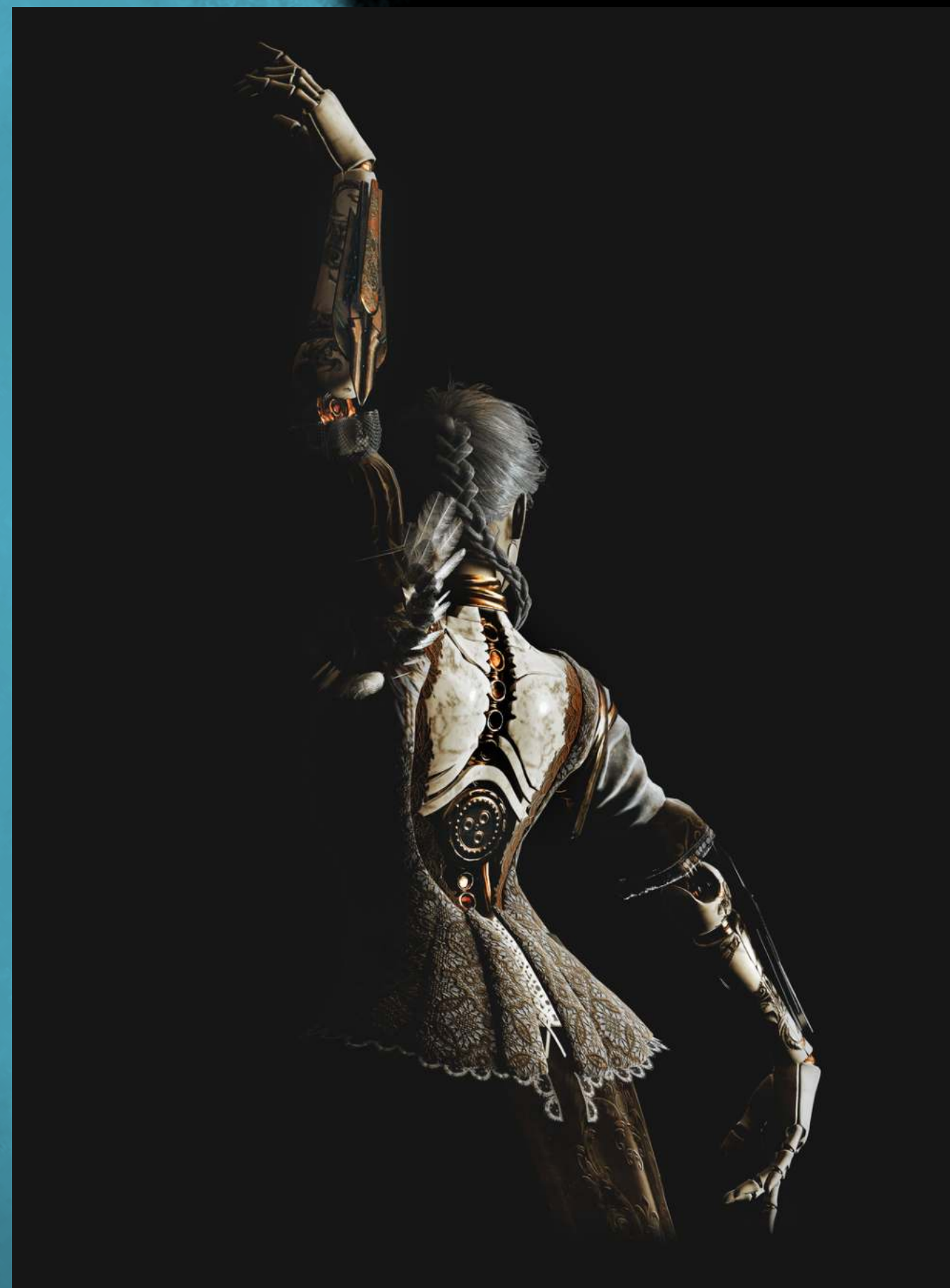
It's not really how things started. I used to play a lot of MMORPGs (Guild Wars 2, City of Heroes, Aion, Tera etc). I was always taking pictures (and doing video montages occasionally) of my characters after a reasonable amount of XP farming to just have fun in a different way. Then came Warframe. At some point, they implemented the Captura system, which is basically a photo mode. It became much easier for me to take pics of my characters, and I decided to create a Twitter account to share them.

That's where I found out about Virtual Photography. At this moment I bought Spider-Man PS4 and discovered Photo modes. It opened my eyes on the ones in God of War and Horizon Zero Dawn that I completely missed... that's how it really started and I began to apply myself, trying to get better, being already a lover of IRL photography.

AS A CONSULTANT OF SEVERAL PHOTOMODES INCLUDING DEATHLOOP AND MORTAL SHELL, WHAT FEATURES WOULD YOU SAY GO INTO MAKING THE PERFECT PHOTOMODE?

Well, first I wouldn't say a perfect photo mode can even exist, not should be the goal. For me the most important is to keep the developers team's vision and objectives with creating a photo mode. It has to meet their expectations, and being user friendly enough for people who aren't looking for making virtual photography art, and yet rich enough for more diligent photographers to be satisfied and express their creativity. You could always make a photo mode with every possible feature... it would just be daunting to use.

I do think some features are absolutely necessary, though, like free camera movements, coupled to a very long range, full tilt (not just 90°), a wide range of FOV out and in, a good DOF and basic editing features (contrast, brightness, saturation, possibly RGB curves). Nowadays everyone dreams about custom lighting, which is an amazing feature to have, but it's not always technically possible to implement, so I wouldn't consider it as an absolute necessity.



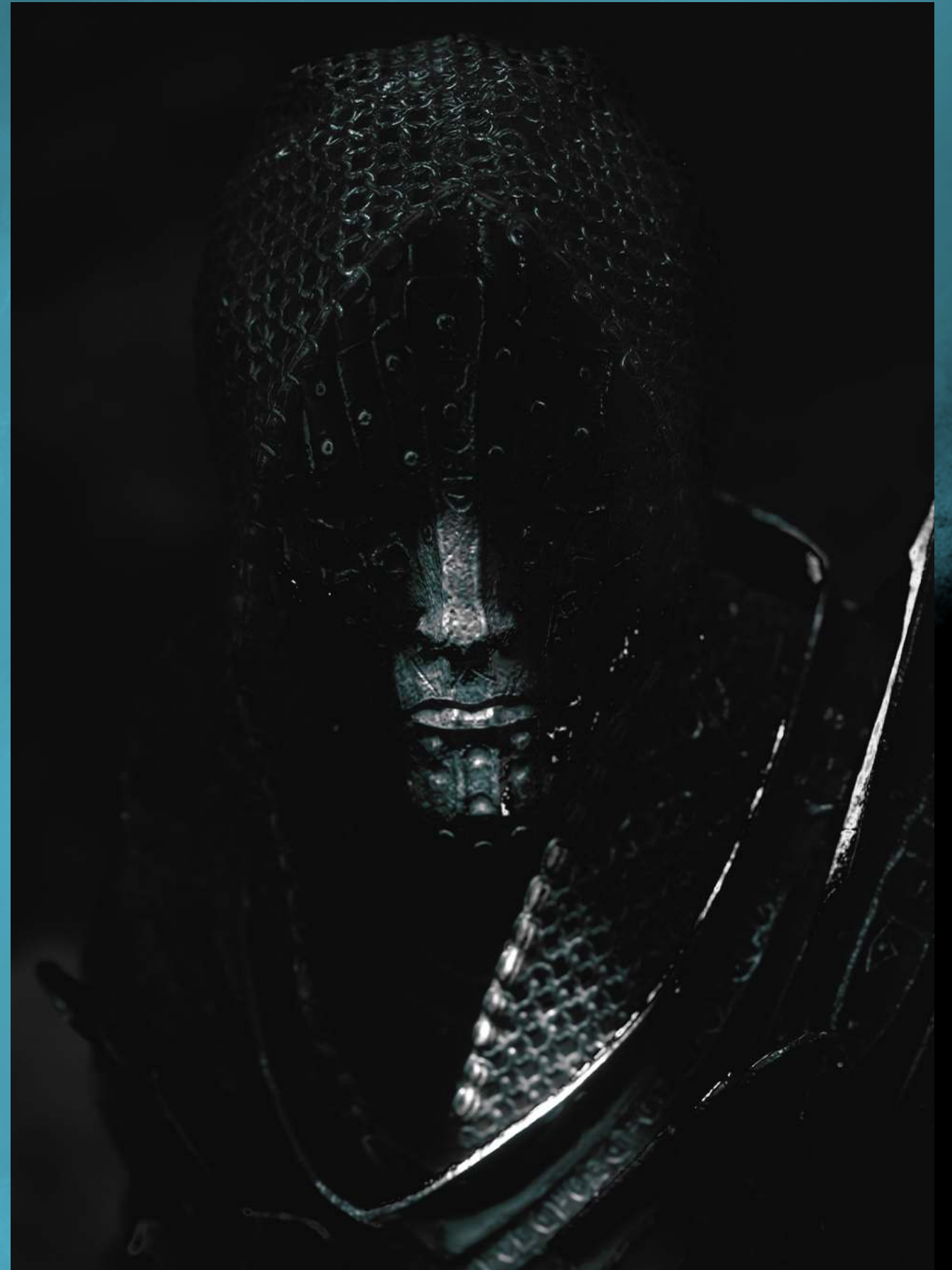
WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WORKING ALONGSIDE THE DEV TEAM IN CONSULTING THE DESIGN OF THESE PHOTOMODES?

It depends on the game and studio. I did consulting gigs for 3 different photo modes but my engagement was the strongest on Mortal Shell and Deathloop. An indie game on one hand, a AAA on the other hand, so the methodology was very different. Working with Arkane was much more scheduled, with regular deadlines between different builds and feedbacks. We had regular video calls to speak about specific questions, exchanging ideas etc. With Cold Symmetry on Mortal Shell, it was much more a daily exchange, only on a Discord DM group.

In every case, I was always working with a small group of people (2 to 5), and I was always stoked to see them really willing to push their boundaries, and actually care about what the community would need and enjoy, through my opinion, asking me a lot of questions. Obviously every single idea I proposed couldn't be implemented, but I was always glad to be able to put some important features in there. The best reward was to make them see their game in a way they never expected, and change their perception of what virtual photography was actually able to bring them.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT MAKES A GREAT SHOT?

It's a combination of an original composition, a great and surprising idea, and of course technical and artistic strong aspects. I think I value the same things in a song or a film. I need to be surprised, being brought to a place I didn't expect even existed, and ask myself "how the heck did they do it?"





DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR THOSE JUST STARTING OUT OR THINKING OF GETTING INTO VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY?

Don't satisfy yourself of one game ! Explore different games and photo modes, because you'll learn a lot faster. Also if you're naturally attracted to a style, let's say landscapes, or portrait, take time to look up traditional photography « rules », learn it properly and try to apply it in game. Then take another style that you're not naturally doing, repeat the process and you'll start being really interested in everything and develop your skills in a very satisfying way.

Don't ever think that this satisfaction will come from growing a number of followers on social. It's nice to have a wide audience, sure ! But more importantly, try to be that guy who made one shot that maybe 100 people saw and remembered, before being that guy doing tons of likes on shots that everyone already forgot.





"DEATHLOOP"

VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY HAS COME A LONG WAY IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, GAINING POPULARITY WITH BOTH THE PUBLIC AND DEVELOPERS, WHERE DO YOU SEE IT GOING IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

I'm sure photo modes will get better and better, I'm sure the community will grow bigger and bigger, and I'm sure quality of VP will rise up.

I do hope the reasons for that will always be the players and the developers happiness and creativity over the call for money or fame. Both can live alongside, nothing wrong at using PM and VP to get more players, more advertisement etc, but not to the detriment of creativity and respect of the artists.

I also hope virtual photographers will be considered more as content creators and will get access to games like YouTubers or Streamers do. I do think we have a capital gain in the artistry we put at the centre of our content, and it's greatly beneficial to a game representation.

Anyways, I'm excited to find out where it goes, and I'm sure it'll stay in my life.



KENA:
BRIDGE OF SPIRITS
UPDATE

△THE
FOUR
THFO
CUS□

KENA: BRIDGE OF SPIRITS ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

Whether it is birthdays, Christmas or even the anniversary of your favourite games, things that come around once a year have a habit of making you notice just how quickly time flies. It seems hard to believe that Ember Lab's delightful Kena: Bridge of Spirits has already celebrated its first anniversary, affectionately called "Kenaversary", but here we are.

Much like a birthday though, this is an anniversary that comes with plenty of gifts in the form of a free update that is available to all players right now. Kena: Bridge of Spirits v2.0 brings some significant changes that revamp many areas of the game. These include new gameplay features like New Game+, Spirit Guide Trial challenges, brand new upgrades and abilities to be equipped, as well as extra difficult levels and a host of accessibility options.



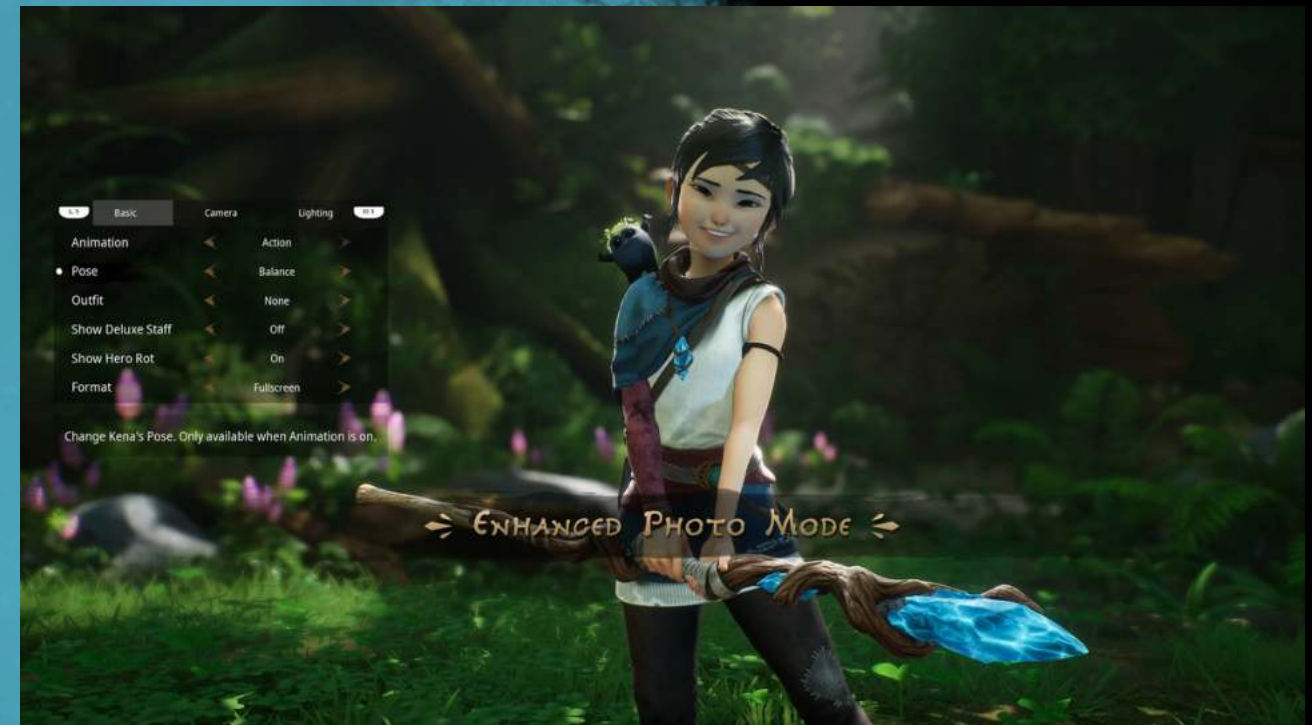
Take on the new modes and you can unlock in-game collectibles, more Rot hats, and a selection of lovingly crafted outfits for Kena herself. Naturally, these will be appealing to virtual photographers looking to add some fresh style to their shots, and once unlocked, are all accessible in the Enhanced Photo Mode.

- KENA // A NEW CHALLENGE -

If anything, that "Enhanced" title is underselling the changes that have been made to the photo mode as this is surely one of the biggest post-launch updates that any existing photo mode being treated to so far.

Along with the option to change outfits, select a staff variant, and toggle the visibility of the Hero Rot, there are now 19 poses to choose from for the main character. Much like the existing Cheese! function, each one is beautifully animated and perfectly suited Kena's personality.

It is also now possible to hide the UI, finally enabling PNG captures via the Create / SHARE button, and the camera itself has been given an all new Camera Path Mode that can be used to create a smooth and automated camera movement between two points. Think of it as something similar to the Tracking Shot feature found in Ghost of Tsushima that is great for creating cinematic panning shots, especially with the environmental animations activated.



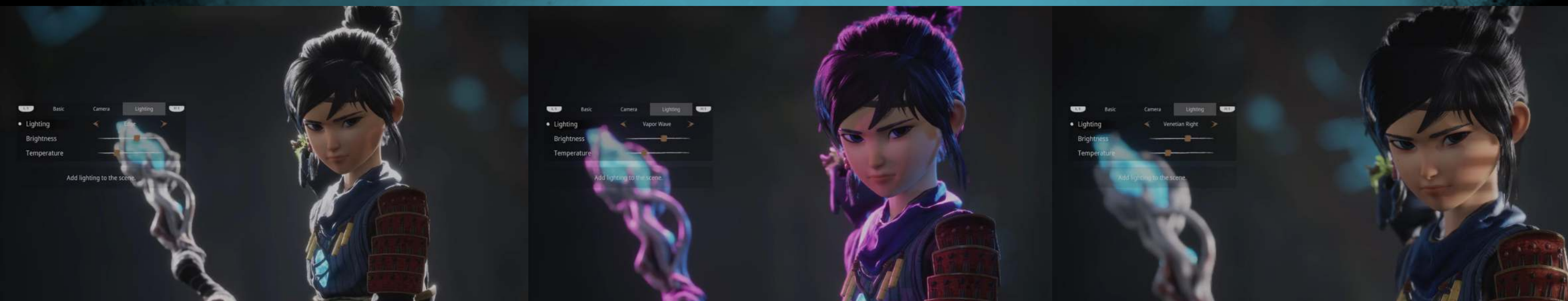
- KENA // LIGHTING -

Undoubtedly the biggest news though, is the addition of a whole new lighting tab found in the photo mode settings. Here, you get to select from any one of 11 pre-configured lighting rigs that are all trained on Kena to quickly add a totally new dimension to the shot. While there is control over the brightness and colour temperature, it is not possible to alter the lighting direction beyond that of the predefined setup.

This may not have the same flexibility of a fully customisable 3-point setup like those in Marvel's Spider-Man or The Last of Us Part I, but the configurations are excellent and show some of Ember Lab's cinematic pedigree and clever ideas, such as the slatted shadows of a Venetian blind and an animated disco effect.

Added lighting options always make a huge difference to any photo mode, and the same is true here, especially in the game's darker areas and caves. What sets Kena: Bridge of Spirits apart though, is how accessible these advance options still are and, what they lack in customisation, they more than make up for with appeal to photographers of all ages and abilities.

Kena has always been an easy game to recommend, and this update might just put it right back to the top of the list.



This article is provided by TheFourthFocus.com. Subscribe to the Virtual Photography Newsletter for all the latest features and updates

