

The PhotoMode



LIAM WONG

ISSUE 8

Cover Image By
RedhadesFFXIV

Urban Virtual Photography



Liam Wong

x

Virtual Photography

Featured Artists



February 2021

Editor-In-Chief AltRealityVP

Guest Editor Liam Wong

Contributing Author The Fourth Focus



RedhadesFFXIV

Yuric83

SpecterOwl

merqury_city

Voldsby

Comput ART

shinobi_space

TheFourthFocus

BrokenOpus

paperdaydreams2

dystopiancats

YouSpoonyBardd

Sch mit z

Ash Gamer95

altergraphics

Philt43 Yewone

OfficialCABBAC

Lady_SnipeShot

AjGamingPics1

p0nsy

IliasFeizidis

wintermut e

Raider Warrior

neovandalizam

marka_game

Stef Gallery

sparkling_Port9

Spiggy_Smalls

pastol11

MrPurnama69

The Fourth Focus
Liam Wong X VP

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Community

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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 a different community # once a day.

We recommend starting with..

[#ThePhotoMode](#)

[#GamerGram](#)

[#TheCapturedCollective](#)

[#VGPUnite](#)

Drop some love, uplifting comments and follow people you connect with, it's the fastest way to grow your page and also, that's how to build real community support network.

Early November we reached out to Liam Wong and asked if he would be interested in becoming a guest editor for an Urban Virtual Photography theme.

Knowing his background in the video game industry and being extremely well known for his own skills and accomplishments in urban photography, we couldn't think of anybody else better to approach for such a theme.

He agreed and we held the event from 8th-15th January on our Twitter account using the tag

#LiamWongVP (Click To View All Entries)

We were all stoked to see 500+ amazing entries in the week long event, sadly we can't fit them all here but inside this mag you will find some of Liams favourites.

We would like to thank Liam for getting involved with this incredible community and also ask the community to continue using the tag on any urban shots you take.



LIAMWONG



LIPAVIWORKS



LIPAVIWORKS



LIPAVIWORKS



LIPAVIWORKS



I would choose the first image as the cover.

I really love the choice of the scene with the structure in the background and the lighting overhead. It makes me want to jump in and play the game.

- Liam



REDHADESFXIV



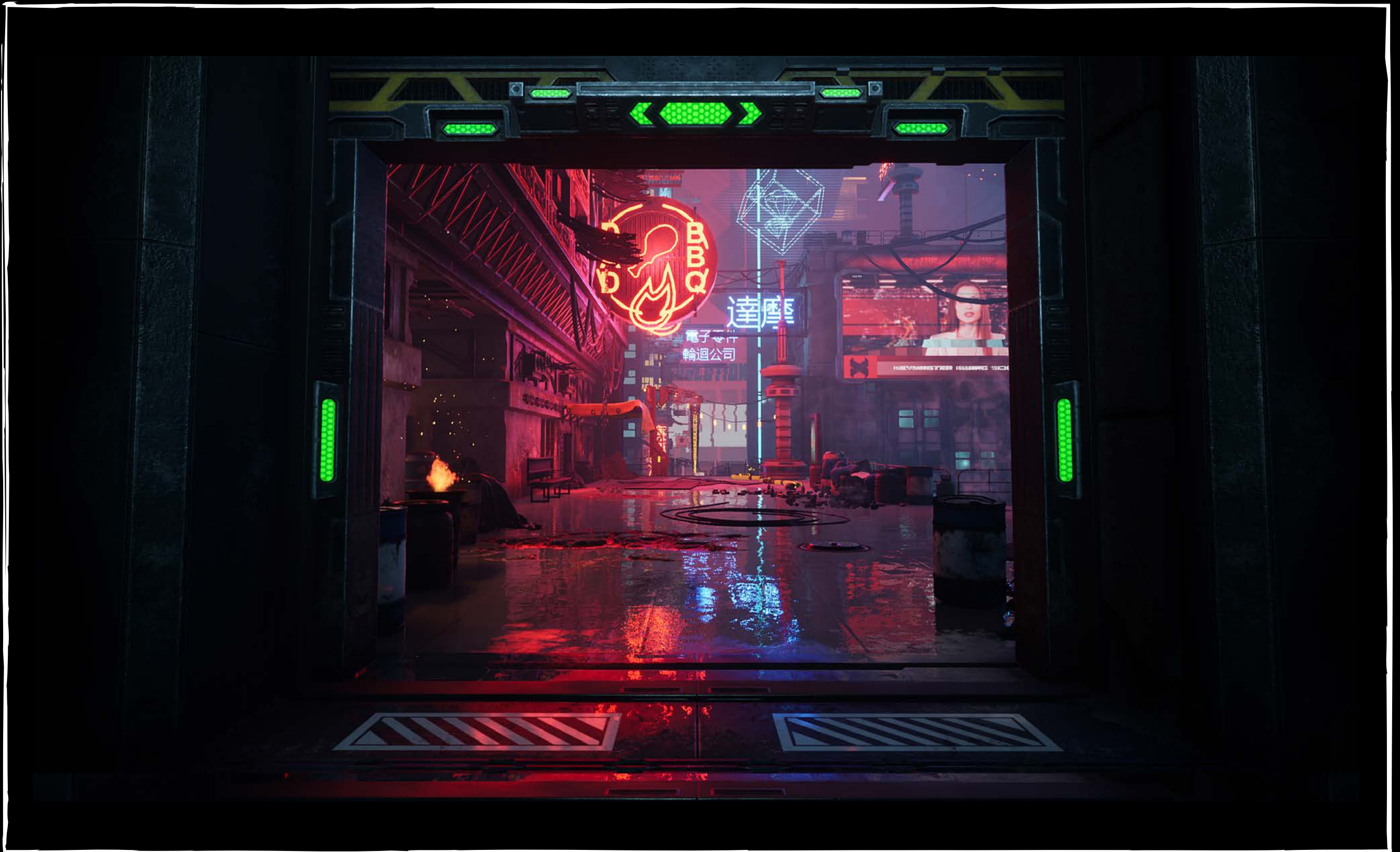
Love the colours and
composition.

- Liam

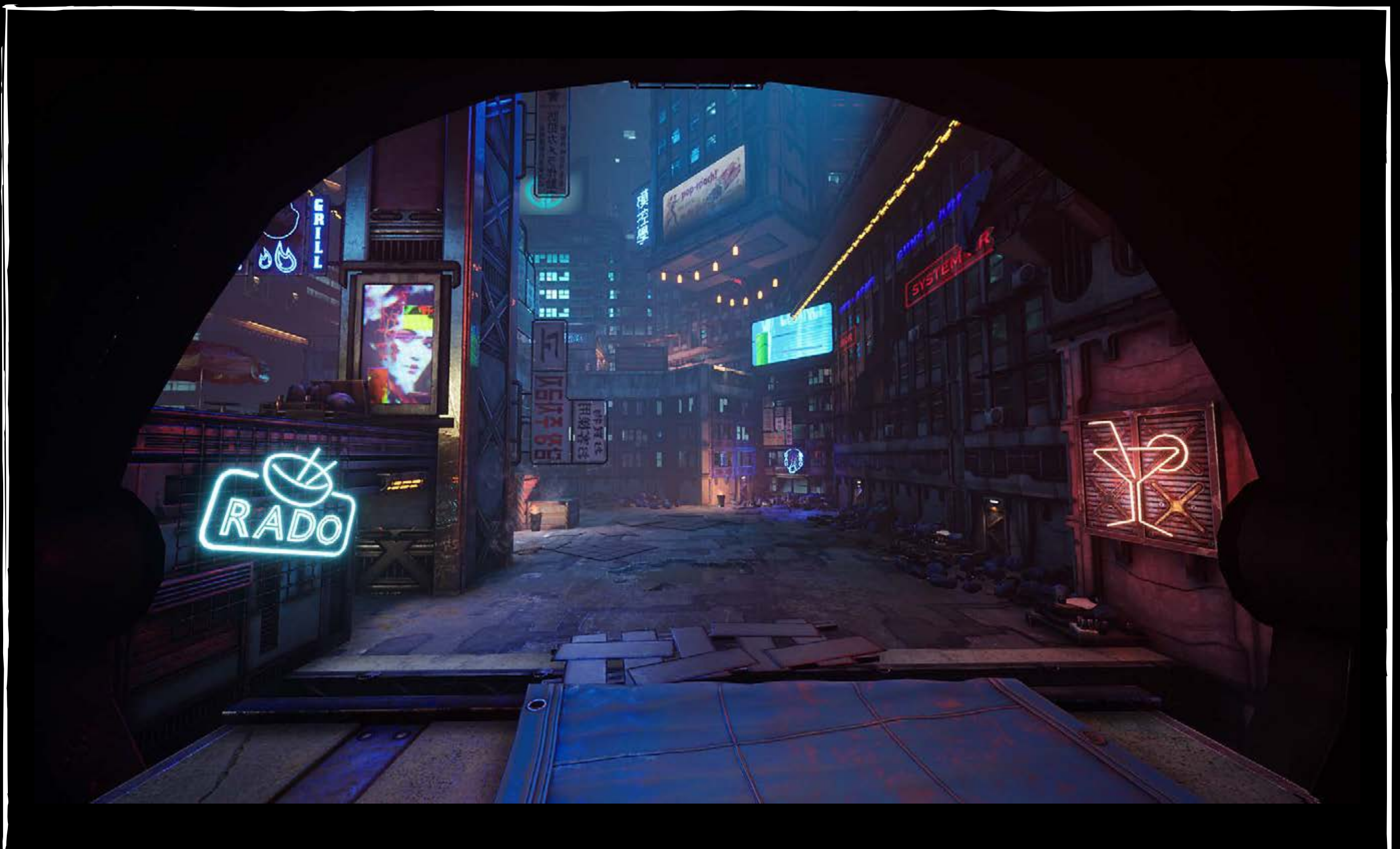
YURIC83



SPECTEROWL



Good composition - nicely framed through the entrance.



Similar to the previous image I chose, it is well composed and feels inviting.

- Liam



MERQURY_CITY



Love the moodiness of the street in the rain -
reminds me of a scene in the movie Prisoners.
- Liam



THEFOURTHFOCUS



I just liked the 'slice of life' feeling -

I feel it captures it well and at first glance
could be a real photograph.

- Liam





@VOLDSBY

VOLDSBY

I love how it shows off the vast scale of the empty environment.

- Liam





SHINOBI_SPACE



I'm an obvious fan of framing subjects in the center of my shots, to show off the sheer scale of architecture and so these stood out to me.

The first shot is outstanding.

- Liam



A good 'slice of life' capture, perhaps a conversation at midnight between friends. I like that NPCs are given a spotlight.
- Liam



BROKENOPUS_



PAPERDAYDREAMS2



I like the framing of the shot, and the silhouettes of the buildings in the back. It feels like something from a movie.

- Liam



PHILT43_YEWONE





I liked the framing and the mood through the color of the environment.

- Liam



SHINOBI_SPACE

Good composition.

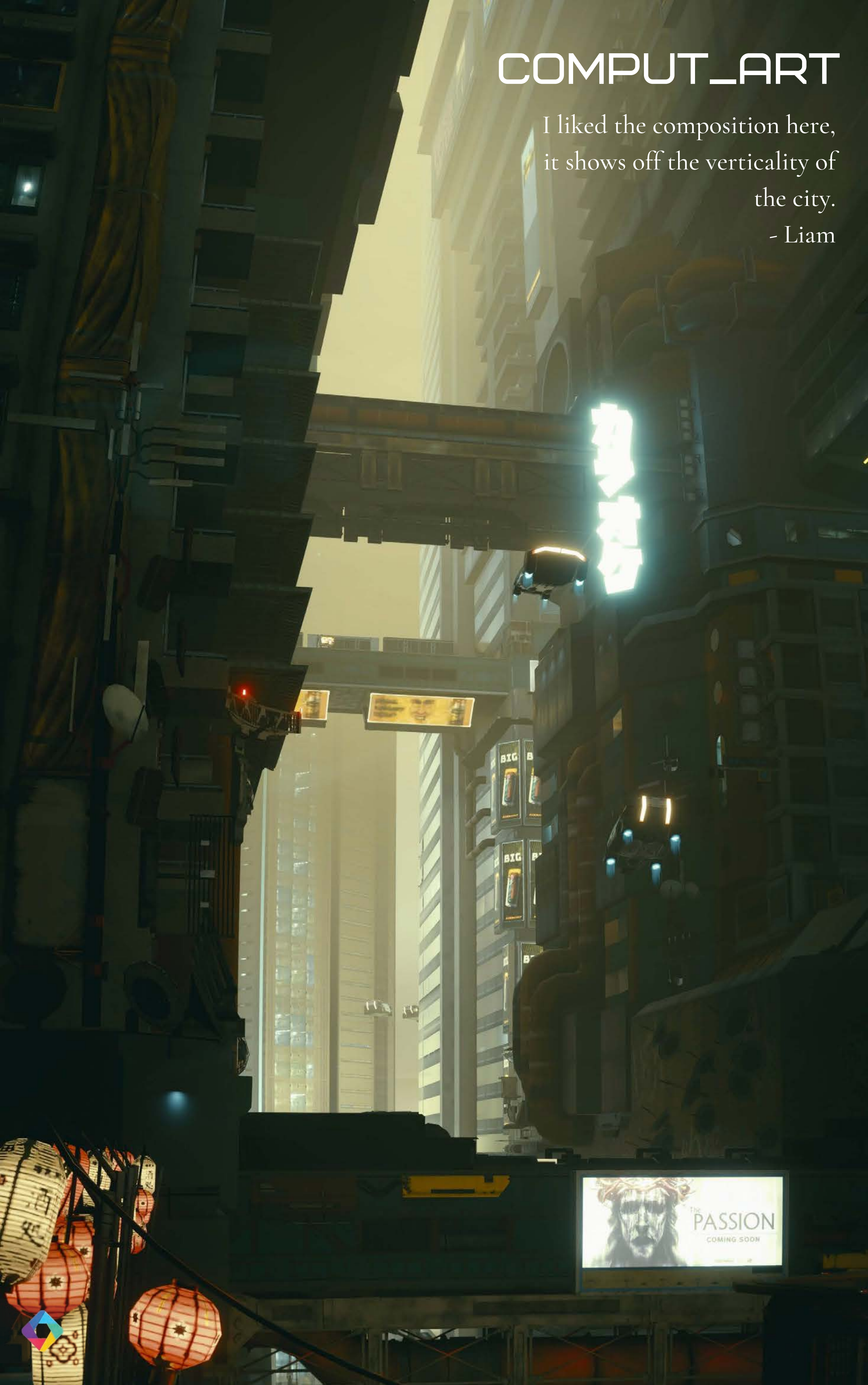
- Liam



COMPUT_ART

I liked the composition here,
it shows off the verticality of
the city.

- Liam



DYSTOPIANCATS



Without even looking at which game it was, I knew which city it was because I've been here in this street in real life. I liked that the virtual photo brought back memories - but it was well shot and has a calmness to it through the colours.

- Liam





SCH_MIT_Z

This is a well-framed shot!
- Liam



COMPUT_ART

A well-captured landscape shot.
- Liam



Solid composition and framing.
- Liam



ASH_GAMER95



Really loved the silhouette of this shot, the darker areas of the surrounding buildings and structures lit up by the neon glow and the singular figure at the bottom. Perfect!

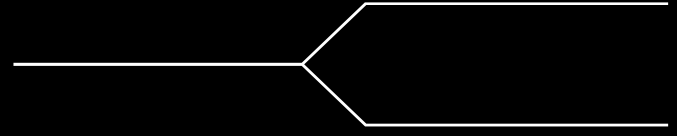
- Liam

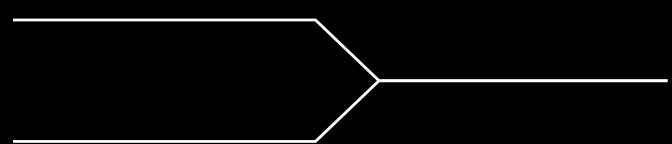


MERQURY_CITY



YOUSPOONYBARDD





I'm a fan of wider cinematic frames and I really liked this one.

- Liam



RAIDER_WARRIOR

A good 'slice of life' shot, the color of the umbrella and the autumnal leaves in the rain with the glowing lights is a good match!

- Liam



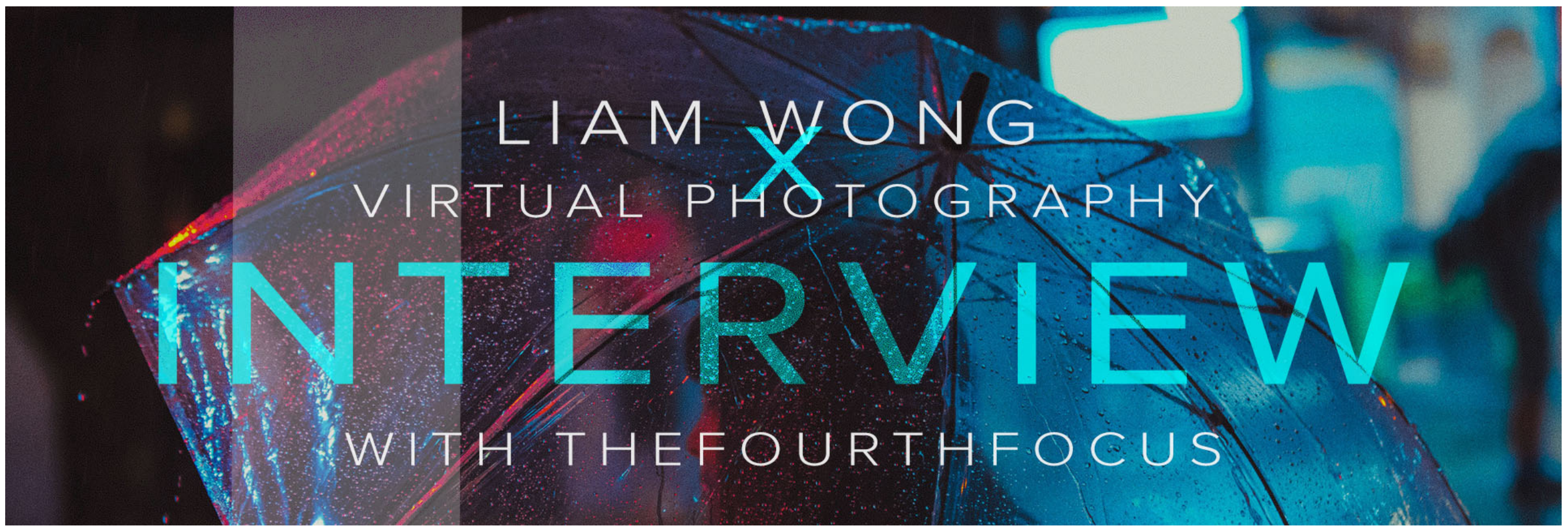
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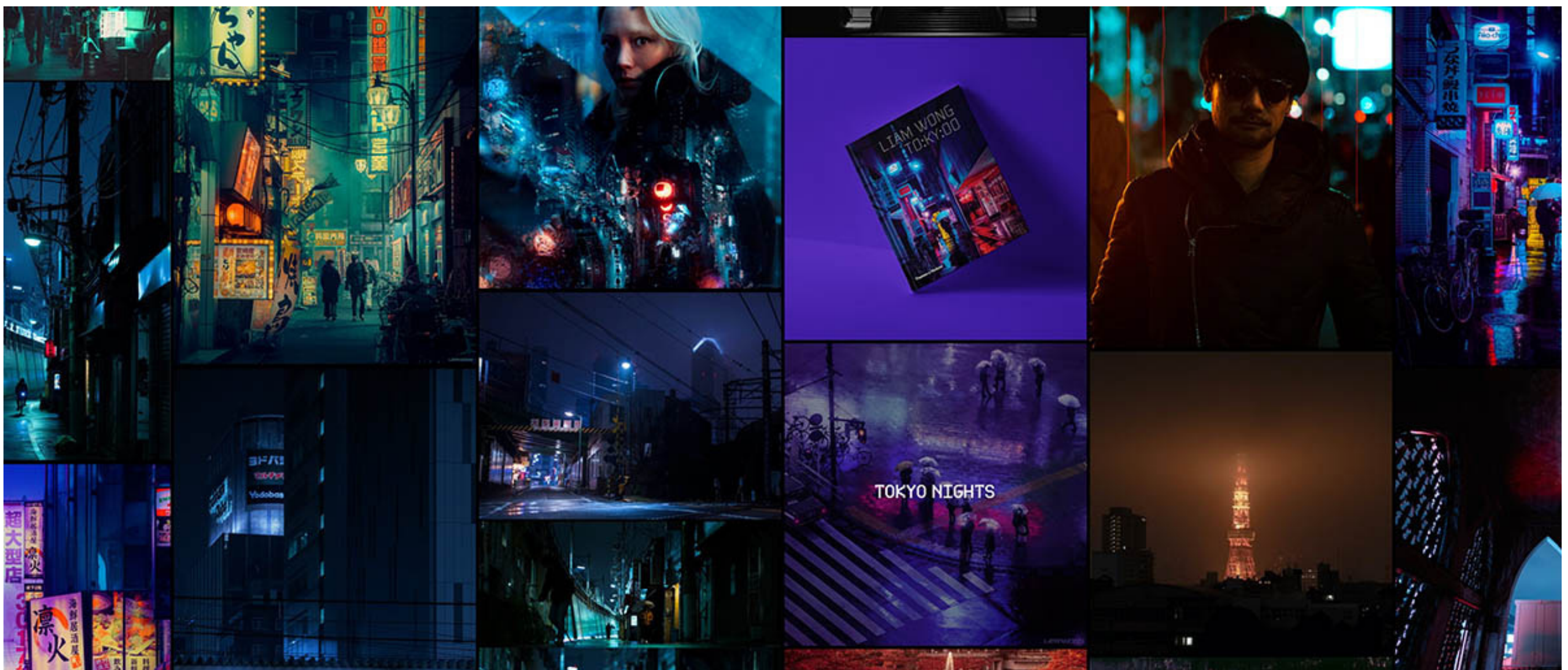
VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY





There can be little denying the increase in popularity that virtual photography has enjoyed amongst video game players in recent years, with photo modes getting more attention than ever before, but it is also now becoming an established art form that is recognised across other creative disciplines. Much more than the promotional tool from which it grew, virtual photography fosters just as much creativity and artistic expression as its real-life counterpart, and is undoubtedly an important part of the future of the gaming industry.

It's a great pleasure then to be able to chat to someone with experience from both sides, the influential and highly-acclaimed urban photographer, Liam Wong. Once the youngest art director at Ubisoft and highlighted in the 2017 Forbes 30 Under 30 list, Liam is now well known for his neon-noir and cyberpunk-inspired photography series, 'Tokyo Nights (TO:KY:OO)', and recently sat on the executive judging panel for The VP Awards. Let's find out more about him then and how virtual photography appears in the eyes of a successful artist.



Thanks for joining me Liam; first of all, tell me a bit about yourself and what influences have helped get you to where you are now:

I'm born and raised in Scotland and lived a stone's throw from Rockstar North, developers of Grand Theft Auto, so I feel it was inevitable for me to become interested in video games. Funnily enough, it was The Sims which got me interested in digital art and that then led to me making graphics, banners and my own videos for games like Counter-Strike and World of Warcraft. That passion kept me going into university where I made my first game.

After graduating, I worked on the Crysis series as a Lead 2D Artist and then a couple of years after I became Art Director at Ubisoft Montreal, working on Far Cry. In parallel with video games I became interested in photography.



- NEO TOKYO // LIAM WONG -

Photography seems to have been a later interest for you then, and yet you are now best known for your TO:KY:OO series. Those photographs have become a hugely successful art book with words from the likes of Hideo Kojima and Syd Mead; what do you think has been the secret to that success?

I would say my background and expertise in video games is what helped me enormously. I always felt photography had to be a certain way, that everything had to be 'as is'. The moment I began seeing photography as art was where it became interesting for me. Developing a photographic style, with my experience of building artistic styles for video games became my passion project.

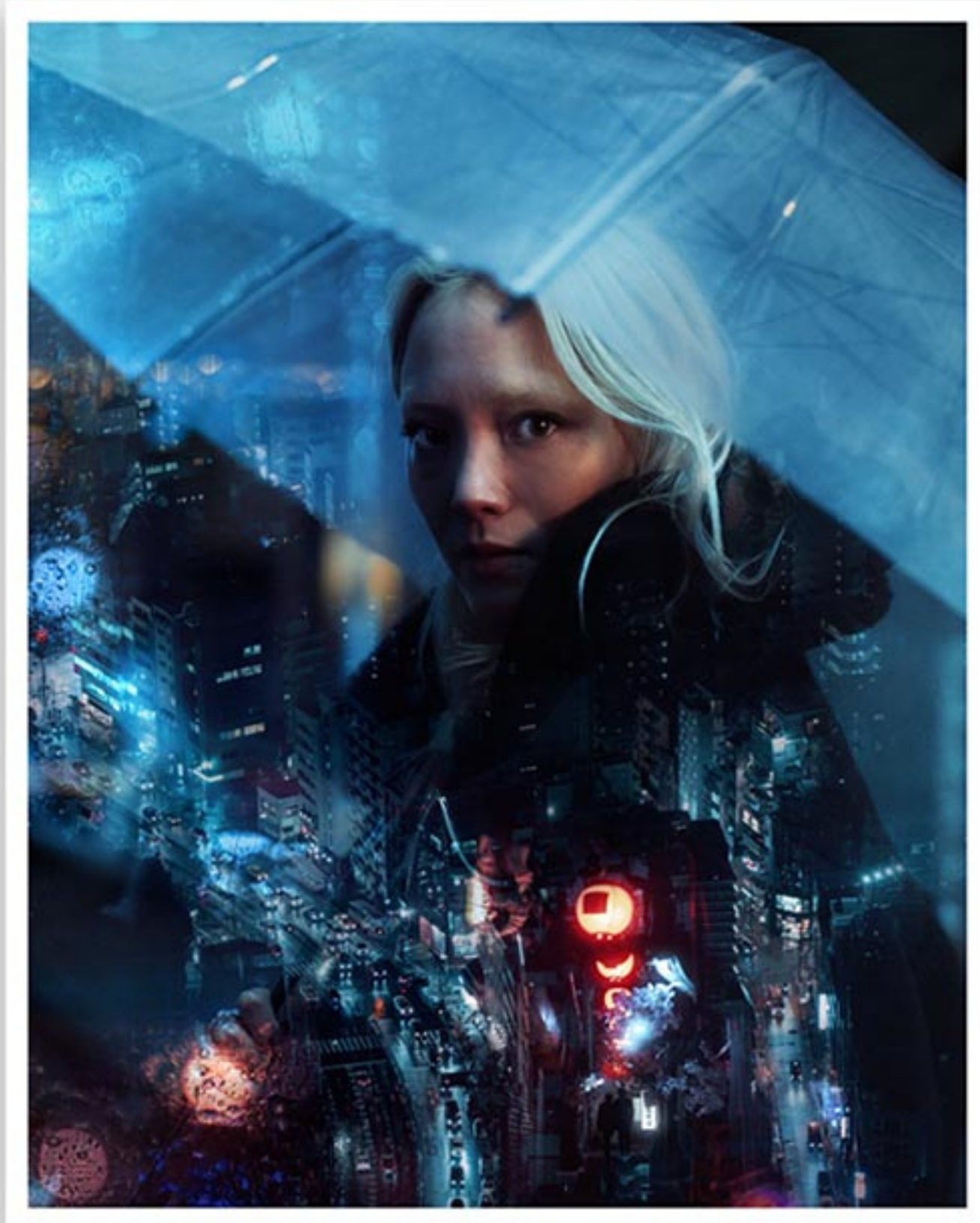


Having only bought a camera in 2015, that still gave you a lot to learn, what techniques did you have to master in that time to help your urban photography style?

When I started I was an absolute newb, barely knowing how to manage all of the different settings. After my work picked up, I asked people at work for their advice and tips - friends who had been shooting for years. We would go out at lunch time and practice different techniques and ways of capturing images from landscape, to street, to macro. Ever since then, I often gather other photographers in different cities to roam the streets. You always learn faster when working with other people, especially seeing how they work.

You mentioned that you practice other styles of photography, what is your favourite shot that is not part of the TO:KY:OO series?

I began learning more about portraiture in the last year - it's something I'd like to spend more time doing. My favourite shot would be of Pom Klementieff (Guardians of the Galaxy), or perhaps one I took with Hideo Kojima...



LIAMWONG

The shot of Pom Klementieff really stands out to me too, it has an ethereal quality to it, though there is no doubt that seeing Kojima-san is something that will always resonate with gamers.

As a former art director in the game industry then, when did you first become aware of capture art, or virtual photography as it is now popularly known?

I worked on a lot of screenshots for marketing purposes over the years and also worked with capture artists. I would say the first time I was made aware of it in a professional environment would be on Crysis - where they had outsourced some screenshots and I was reviewing them.

On Far Cry, I pushed to add the toggle UI option at the time on the camera. I always wondered why a game which had a camera (for spotting enemies) as a feature - didn't in fact have a functional camera. A programmer implemented it in about 5 minutes and at the time it meant a lot of screenshots and videos were made by the community since.

I guess you deserve a little credit for helping to nurture the development of virtual photography then. Would you say that modern photo modes can be used to photograph in-game environments in the same way you would take shots in the real world?

Absolutely - open world games are becoming incredibly detailed and people deserve to see the smaller details that developers are working hard to create whether it's from artists, designers or programmers.

What's your favourite virtual city?

I can't pick just one but these are the ones that come to my mind:

- . Los Angeles, L.A. Noire.
- . Kamurocho, Yakuza series.
- . Seattle, Infamous Second Son.

What do you think are the most important things for anyone looking to improve their urban photography, whether real or virtual?

To me there are three components which make up an image: content, composition and colour.

Content: Always think about what is in your frame and more importantly, what to leave out. I'm inspired a lot by film and so I try to achieve a level of clarity and simplicity in my shots which means waiting for the right moment.

Composition: My main advice is to turn on a grid overlay on your camera or your phone or your computer and make very conscious decisions about where the content is placed.



Colour: Lighting will make or break your image and so it helps to find strong and interesting light sources and pay attention to how the light is bouncing. If there isn't enough, then find a way to introduce light.

Outside of those, experiment a lot and don't be afraid to mix it up and try different approaches. Sometimes looking through the world with a different lens is all it takes to find new inspiration.

Finally, you have recently been involved in judging The VP Awards as well as selecting shots for 'The PhotoMode' Magazine. Have you been impressed by the standard of work you see from virtual photographers and have you been inspired to start any new projects yourself?

Absolutely - it's always amazing to see what people can capture - and in most cases, better than the developers themselves.

In the last few years I think it is amazing that so many development teams are investing time into photo modes. We are in a period of time where not many people can travel and so virtual tourism (and photography) has been an escape for many of us.



- THE VP AWARDS // SEE ALL WINNERS -

The standard of work from the virtual photography community is impressive but I think there is still a long way to go for developers to bring the level of features that are necessary to really capture these worlds and I hope more teams will invest in their future releases.

I'm definitely going to be capturing more in-game photographs - Cyberpunk 2077 is first on my list.

It has been really wonderful to hear your enthusiasm for all kinds of photography, thank you so much for talking to me Liam, is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you for your time! You can find me @liamwong on [Instagram](#) & [Twitter](#).



- THE FOURTH FOCUS // NIGHTCITY_001 -

That wraps things up here then, I hope you have enjoyed hearing about the value of capture art from a game industry and photographic perspective, and can take some inspiration from what can be achieved with a creative motivation.

If you enjoy Liam's work then be sure to follow him on the social media pages linked above and of course check out [LiamWong.com](#) where you can find exclusive art prints and more.

Click through to read hands-on photomode reviews at [TheFourthFocus.com](#)

Subscribe to the [fortnightly newsletter](#) to keep up to date with all the latest features and posts.

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VIRTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY
NEWSLETTER



Love the scale of
the shot and the
warm color
through the haze.

- Liam



YURIC83

Looks like a shot I would take, haha! I like the abstract feeling of it and the reflection of the silhouettes.

- Liam



LADY_SNIPESHOT



SPARKLING_PORT9



Really good composition and the colors of the scene elevate it - great job!

- Liam



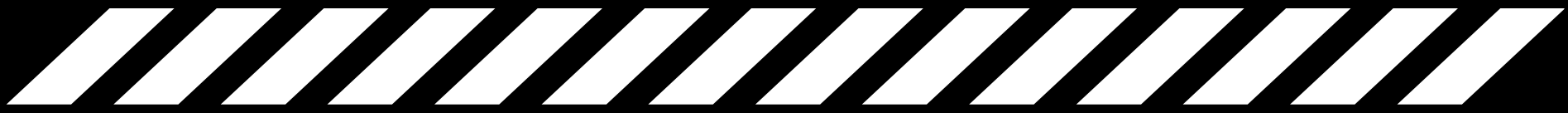


I like the angle choice of the shot to fit everything into the frame.

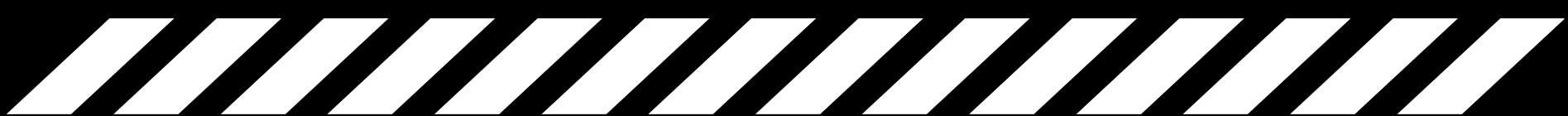
- Liam



ALTERGRAPHICS



OFFICIALCABBAC



Reminded me of 'Lunch atop a
skyscraper' - good shot!

- Liam





Nicely framed and shows a level of detail which most players probably just ignored and ran past - from textures and props, to graphic design to lighting.

- Liam

I liked the mood of the shot here.
- Liam



P0NSY





A clean composition and aesthetically pleasing to look at! Good job.

- Liam



WINTERMUT_E

NEOVANDALIZAM



A nice moody silhouette
in the rain.
- Liam



MARKA_GAME



I like the more abstract takes on urban environments that show off the details like this.

- Liam





Nicely framed and I liked the contrast in the darkness/light.

- Liam



STEF_GALLERY_

SPIGGY_SMALLS



I liked the framing of the shots, the reflection on the ground and the bouncing lights.

- Liam



ILIASFEIZIDIS





What I love about this shot is the framing and that despite never playing the game, I can see a great level of detail was put into the world and it makes me want to play it after seeing this shot.

- Liam

AJGAMINGPICS1



Captures the density of the signage in Kamurocho perfectly.

- Liam



MRPURNAMA69



I liked the framing of the shot - it makes you want to stop and look at the details to figure out what has happened through the visual storytelling in the environment.

- Liam





DYSTOPIANCATS



Beautifully framed shots of the environment.

- Liam





PASTOL11



It can be really challenging to frame in such wide aspect ratios but I think it's a great effort. I love the abstract feeling through the glow of the city with the silhouettes of people passing by in the rain.

- Liam



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Something spectacular happened, something truly inspirational and a huge leap for the Virtual Photography art form.

The first Virtual Photography Awards was held through December/ January and what will become an annual event not only to celebrate the PhotoModes the gaming industry giant create for us but also celebrate the Virtual Photographers who continue to push these tools to their limits.

We were stoked to be asked to be one of the 1st round judges for the event, along with VPContext and The Gametographers, we saw so many amazing captures entered and don't envy the final judges for having to choose the overall winners, must of been a tough call, but they made great choices.

Judges..

LIAM WONG

PETE ROWBOTTOM

LEONARDO SANG

We have The Fourth Focus to thank for putting this all together for the community, he's striving to make what we all love something that is recognised by more than just the gamer. and can't wait to see what he has planned for the next event.

Virtual Photograph of the year finalists..

PORTRAIT - QuasymodoXbox

LANDSCAPE - Fokalizer

ABSTRACT - GGMattt_

ACTION - FimBuiVinT3r

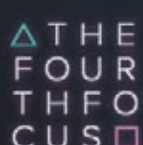
URBAN - AndrewCull

[CLICK TO VIEW FINALISTS](#)

THE 1ST ANNUAL

VIRTUAL
PHOTOGRAPHY
AWARDS

#THEVPAWARDS



BEST SUBJECT

NOMINEES



CLICK TO VIEW

BENCHMARK AWARD

NOMINEES



CLICK TO VIEW

BEST LIGHTING

NOMINEES



CLICK TO VIEW

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

NOMINEES



CLICK TO VIEW

BEST PHOTO MODE

NOMINEES



CLICK TO VIEW

MOST ANTICIPATED

NOMINEES



CLICK TO VIEW

#THEVPAWARDS
2020



*Back to Normal Features in
Next Months Issue*



Stay Safe

Virtual Photography Community Pages



The PhotoMode

<https://thephotomode.com>

We are an all inclusive VP community with members from all over the world.

We dedicate our time to **#ThePhotoMode** monthly magazine release. We devised the VP-NFT concept to help allow gamers to profit from their in-game shots while also supporting the developers through royalty fees. We featured VP's work in the blockchain world **Somnium Space** and we're working hard to take the art form in this general direction.



GamerGram GG

"What is **#GamerGram**?", the answer is - YOU are. GamerGram exists for one simple purpose - to support the VP community.

We wish to provide a safe and progressive place for the Virtual Photography community to thrive. We strive to make Virtual Photography a mainstream art.



VirtualPhotographyGamers

A Group of Like-Minded Individuals Who Share a Passion For Video Games and Virtual Photography, use **#VPgamers** for support.



VGPNetwork

A home for you & your VirtualPhotography. A place where we come together to celebrate and appreciate it ALL.

In the VGPNetwork, we **#VGPUnite**



Visual Moods

Post a photo, image-series, video or artwork with music you feel suites the mood.

Use **#TheMoodChallenge** and tag Visual_Moods. Dont forget to link the music, moments are created when enough entries has been reached.



SCRYN

<https://scryn.net/>

Scryn is a social network dedicated to video game screenshots sharing. Scryn is like an album of souvenir photos but for video games. An album for your memories spent in virtual worlds.



The Fourth Focus

<http://TheFourthFocus.com>

Your destination for virtual photography Features, News & in-depth Reviews. Find tips, guides & photo mode contests to get the best out of your creativity, plus free 4K downloads to enjoy.

#VPNewsletter (fortnightly) | **#VPChooseDay** (Tue) (Sun) **#VPArchiveHour**



The Captured Collective

"HUB supporting Virtual Photography, & Visual Arts. We provide community news and a new theme every Monday, and we share our weekly favorites on Friday. Use **#TheCapturedCollective** for support and checkout our feature page **Featured Collec**



VPChallenges

Organized as Moments, VP Challenges keeps you up to date with all weekly, monthly and on-going challenges from the whole community. Every week, we involve the community to honor a specific game with the intention of choosing four favorite shots from four different virtual photographers.

We call this the Game of the Week **#VPchallenge**

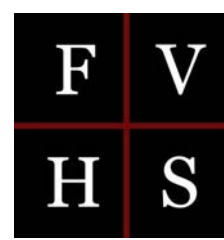


VPCONTEXT

<https://www.evpdstudio.com/vpcontext>

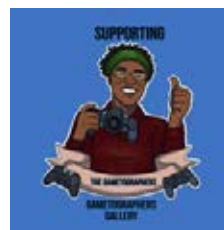
#VPContext wants to establish a culture in Japan where the VP culture has not yet taken root, and support great photographers!

And we will connect you with great communities and photographers abroad!



FridayVHS

Our goal is to share the horrible beauty that lives, in all its forms, in the virtual worlds of video games. An exhibition takes place every Friday. To participate, please use **#FridayVHS**. A Moment will then be created to share your work with the community.



Gametographers

The Gametographer's Mission: To provide a supportive and loving community that fills the need for a place of belonging to the unique creatives known as Virtual Photographers.

Use **#Gametography** for support.

