shutter

magazine



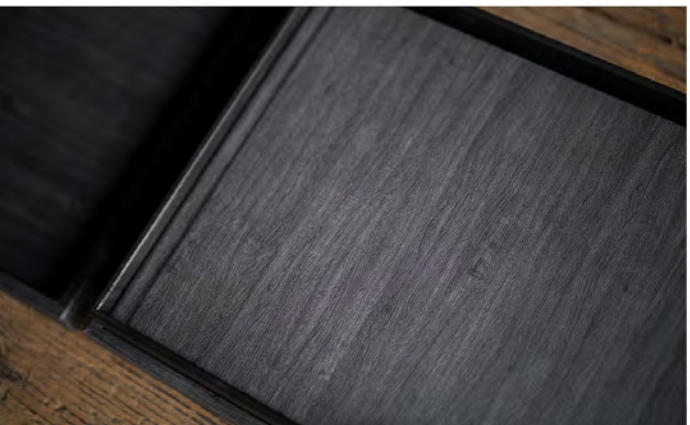
JUNE

2022

the Salvatore Cincotta collection by h+h color lab

LUXURY ALBUMS REDEFINED.

scalbums.hhcolorlab.com





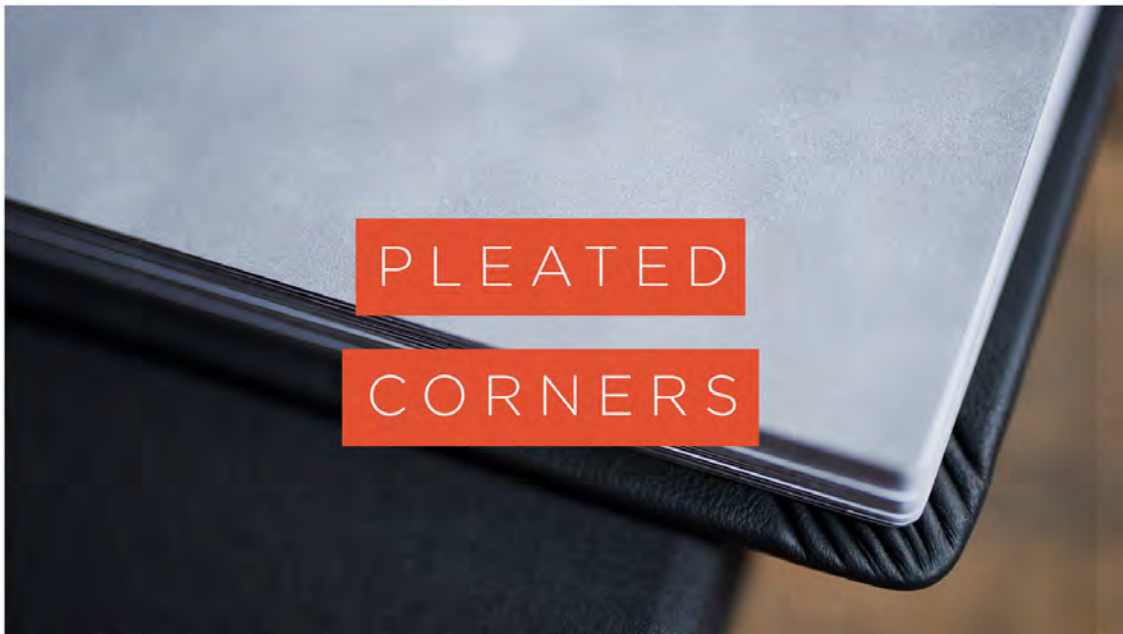





CRUSHED
VELVET LINER


49 COVER
MATERIAL OPTIONS




PLEATED
CORNERS

shutter magazine

JUNE 2022 | ISSUE 117

12 **Timeless Beauty: Photographing Women Over 70** with Alissa Cincotta

26 **Off Camera Flash Set Ups For Beginners** with Brandon Cole

38 **Quitting Your Day Job: Becoming A Full-Time Photographer** with Bethany Ellen

50 **3 Steps To Optimize Your Retouching Workflow** with Dustin Lucas

70 **The Ultimate Senior Portrait Experience** with Gary Box

80 **Adding Senior Films To The Photography Experience** with Garon Cooper

96 **Next Level Portrait Lighting** with Josh Russell

110 **Lighting for Sports Portraits** with Matt Hernandez

120 **Tips For Adding Men's Boudoir To Your Brand** with Pam Fields

132 **Inspirations** from Our Readers

158 **Easy Manual Camera Settings For Photographers** with Vanessa Joy

170 **Final Inspiration** with Felicia Schütte Portrait


12


26


70


38


170


120


96

FIND US.
FOLLOW US.

FOR **SPECIAL OFFERS** & **BEHIND THE SCENES** ACTION

BEHINDTHESHUTTER.COM

FACEBOOK.COM/BTSHUTTER

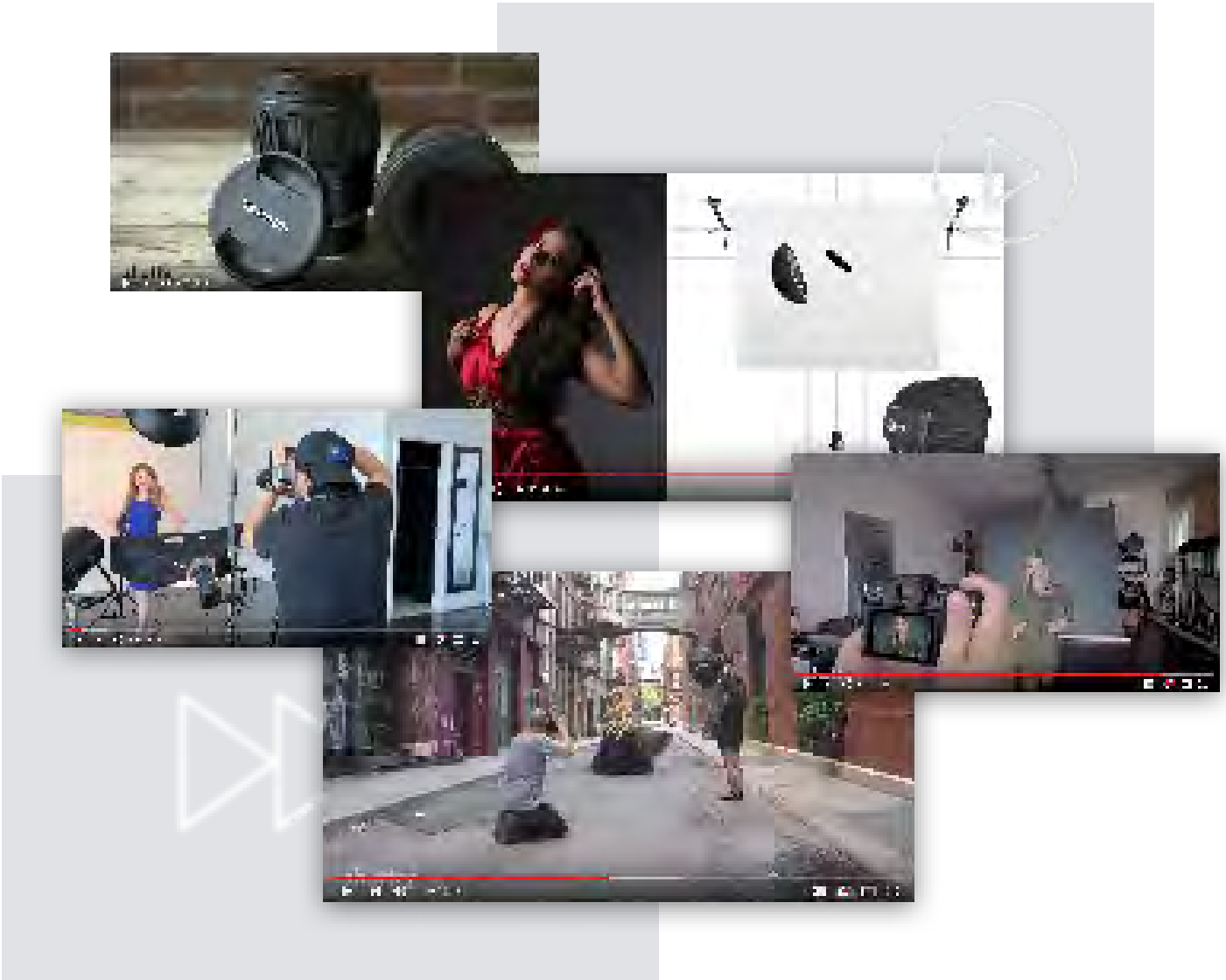
TWITTER.COM/SHUTTERMAG

PINTEREST.COM/BTSHUTTER

INSTAGRAM.COM/BTSHUTTER

VISIT US ON **YOUTUBE**

TO WATCH **EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS** THROUGHOUT THE MAGAZINE



YOUTUBE.COM/BTSSHUTTERMAGAZINE

shutter magazine

MISSION **STATEMENT**

Shutter Magazine's focus is on photography education. Our goal is to provide current, insightful and in-depth educational content for today's professional wedding and portrait photographer. *Shutter* uses the latest technologies to deliver information in a way that is relevant to our audience. Our experienced contributors help us create a sense of community, and have established the magazine as one of the leading photography publications in the world.

Shutter Magazine: By photographers, for photographers.

PUBLISHER
Sal Cincotta

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Alissa Cincotta

SENIOR DESIGNER
Ellie Plotkin

COPY EDITOR
Allison Brubaker

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Alissa Cincotta, Brandon Cole, Bethany Ellen, Dustin Lucas, Gary Box, Garon Cooper
Josh Russell, Matt Hernandez, Pam Fields, Vanessa Joy



THE **COVER**

PHOTOGRAPHER: Holly Lund Imagery | hollylundimagery.com
CAMERA: Canon R5
LENS: Canon 85mm 1.8
EXPOSURE: f/5.6 1/160 ISO 100
LIGHTING: 1 AlienBee 400, 5ft octa
ABOUT THE IMAGE: This image was taken during a 1:1 mentoring session where I guided my student to focus on the recipe of soft light, styling, posing & connection. In addition to the light, I brought the element of softness to her wardrobe, hair and make up, but balanced it with her intense gaze & oversized, structured flower. For post-processing, I accentuated the painted feel, reminiscent of a Renaissance cherub.
MODEL: Teagan Parker

Families can be so much more than mini-sessions.

*Family portraits allow you the opportunity to create **legacy** portraits for your clients. This month we explore some creative ways to do that.*

~Sal



message from **sal cincotta**

publisher



Image © Alissa Cincotta



TIMELESS BEAUTY: PHOTOGRAPHING WOMEN OVER 70

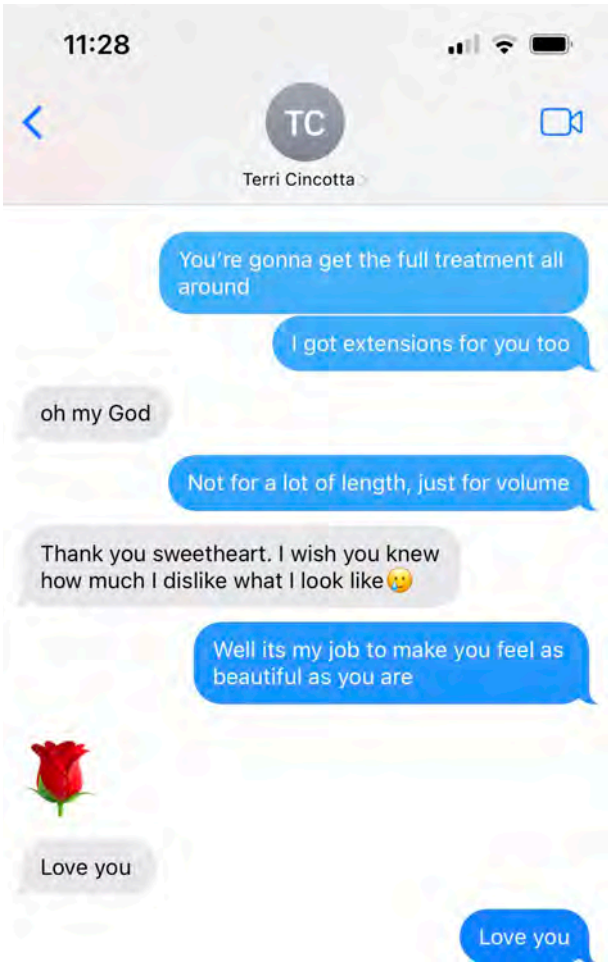
with **Alissa Cincotta**

There's definitely something to be said about letting yourself be vulnerable enough to step in front of a camera for a photo shoot. For women, especially women over a certain age, the ability to tear down your own walls and allow yourself to feel beautiful is a challenge. So many women are mothers, caretakers, homemakers, busy entrepreneurs, and so much more. Sometimes, all these women need is a little nudge to do a beauty session for themselves.

I had the honor of photographing my mother-in-law, Terri Cincotta, last week. While it may have taken more than just a little nudge (see the text message thread below), I am glad I strong-armed her into doing this shoot because now my husband and I have these images to cherish for the rest of our lives.

When Sal and I saw the first image come back from retouching (for all my post-production work, I send my images to Evolve Edits, evolveedits.com), we both got choked up. I knew this was going to be an incredible experience for Terri, but I had no idea the impact it was going to have on me and Sal. I am so thankful to have these images.







SO, HOW DID THE PLANNING PROCESS GO?

For starters, Terri has a nickname, TTG (Terri Tough Guy). She talks a big game. And talks a lot of trash. She's a New Yorker, what do you expect? She had been talking trash to Sal about how he photographs all these other people, but *she wanted her portrait taken*.

Well, I ran with it. I wanted to dial in my lighting skills a little more and wanted to push myself outside of my own comfort zone with the setups and styles I've always gravitated towards (ahem, natural light).

I started the whole process on a Monday for a shoot the following Saturday. This is proof that you don't need 30+ days to plan a photo shoot. It's all about using stuff you already have and getting creative (or ordering from Amazon Prime at the eleventh hour and praying it arrives on time). I did a little bit of both for this shoot.

WARDROBE & STYLING

When I am planning stylized shoots, I make sure to personalize every detail to my subject. Skin tones and color schemes are my starting point. Terri is Lebanese and has a gorgeous olive skin tone. Knowing olive skin tones typically look good with any color, I had a lot of freedom here. The only color you want to steer away from with olive tones is silver—it tends to clash with the warmth of the skin. Instead, I went with gold to enhance the warmth.

I find that 3 looks are perfect for an in-studio portrait session. It gives you enough opportunity to deliver a variety of looks while allowing you to complete a full session in two hours or less.

These were the three colors I decided on: olive green, gold, and powder blue (this one is my favorite color on Terri). Knowing the colors, I began my hunt for wardrobe on Amazon. We have a never-ending stash of jewelry I've been building over the last few years, so I didn't need to buy any of that. I went into my search knowing I wanted three styles: romantic and feminine with florals, confident and powerful glam, and a soft and sweet everyday look for the third.



Inspiration

HAIR AND MAKEUP

I say this every time I do a shoot: Thank you, Jesus, for bringing Brandi Patton into our lives. Brandi is our go-to hair and makeup artist and a personal friend. She always understands what I am looking for, even when I don't use English words to explain my thoughts.

When it comes to women over 50, you want to be very careful with the hair and makeup. Less is definitely more. Keep foundation on the dewy side vs. matte. Matte makeup and heavy powder tend to settle into creases and enhance the look of wrinkles (why would anyone want that?).

Keep eyeliner to a minimum and go with styles that give the appearance of an eye lift like a slight wing and eyeshadow done in an upward angle. Avoid undereye eyeliner and mascara completely if possible. Blush and contour should be slightly heavier than normal, and I recommend a lip color that can be seen, but not too dark as dark lip colors tend to make lips look smaller than they really are.

Here is what I sent to Brandi for inspiration. I trust her with everything she does, so I try not to be too heavy-handed when it comes to sending her inspiration. I like to let her do her thing, and she always amazes me.



LOOK #1: ROMANTIC FLORALS

For our first set of shots, I started with the romantic and feminine robe shot with florals (my signature shot). This series of images I like to do right out of hair and makeup because everything is perfect. The hair is curled exactly how I want it to blow in the wind, makeup is flawless, and there's a level of nervousness going into the first scene that gives women a look of innocence in their eyes. I don't know what it is, but it works.

Pro tip: *Have mimosas during hair and makeup, but don't let your subject have more than two glasses before getting in front of the camera. While it's nice to get them loosened up a bit, you run the risk of droopy and red eyes, and expressions that don't match what they really look like.*

I did my typical lighting setup for this scene: one single continuous light with a softbox. I love using the Westcott Solix with the 2x3 softbox for this look. By placing the light close to my subject, I was able to create a nice, soft light that evenly lit my subject and the flowers she was holding, while providing nice fall-off behind her to showcase the green of the background without having to add a second light. I used the Noelle Mirabella backdrop from Intuition Backgrounds in their fabric material for this shot.

This is everything I bought from Amazon for this shoot:
- Robe
- Pink foreground flowers
- Orchids held





I used a Manfrotto Nano Stand, clamped the smaller pink flowers to the top with a backdrop clamp, and placed the stand directly in front of my lens to shoot through the flowers. You'll need to maneuver either your body or the flowers around a bit to create a natural gap in the florals for you to shoot through. Adding an element like this is a great way to frame your subject and add a pop of color without having to do an elaborate set design.

I took a few test shots to make sure I liked the power and direction of light, then I started working with Terri on her expression. There is minimal movement needed from your subject in a shot like this, but expression will make or break your shot. I then added a box fan to get some movement in her hair—this always adds to the romantic feel of the image along with all of the other elements together.



Final Image

Image © Alissa Cincotta



Final Image

Image © Alissa Cincotta

LOOK #2: POWERFUL & CONFIDENT GLAM

For the next look, I wanted to glam Terri up and make her feel like the strong powerhouse she is. I have a black and gold Louis Vuitton scarf she always compliments and was just gifted a gorgeous pair of black and gold crystal earrings from Mark Ross that I knew would go perfectly for this look.

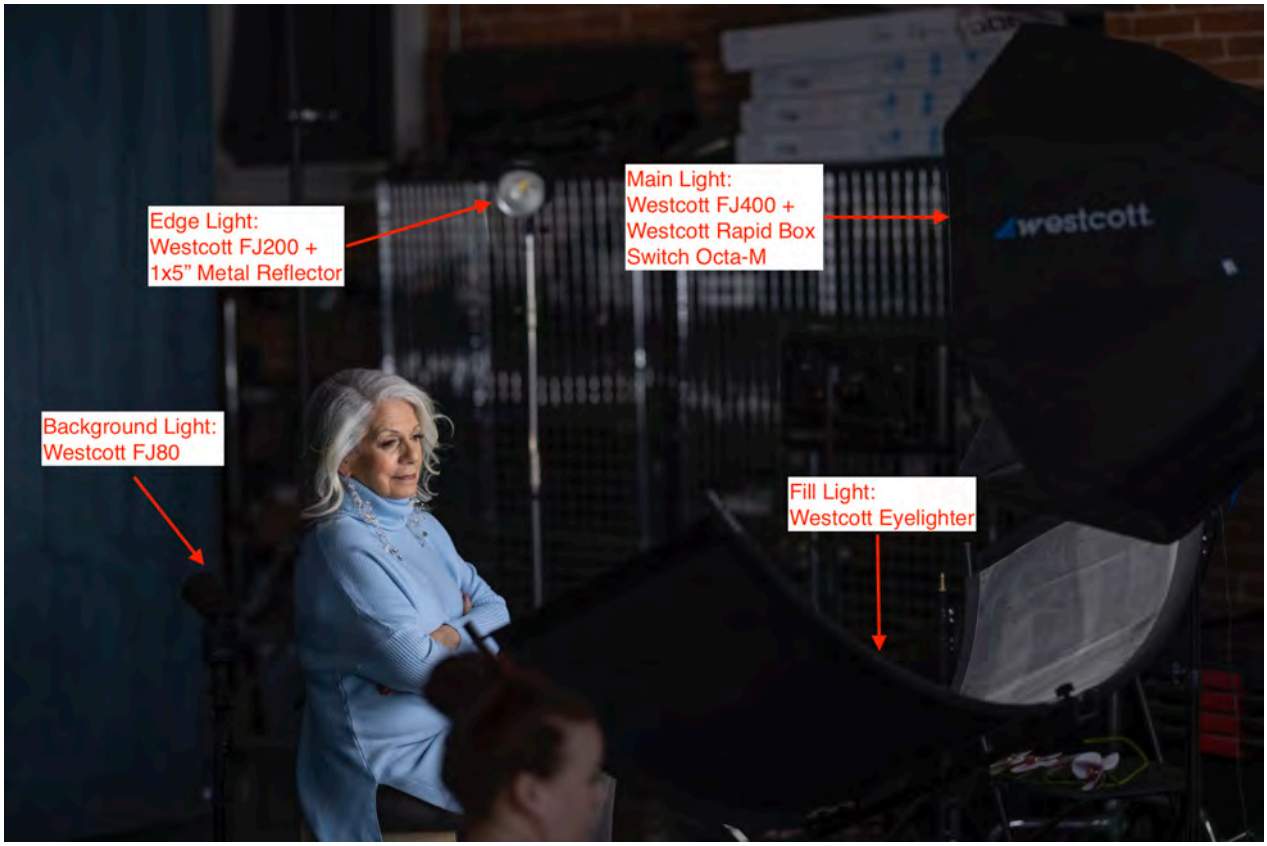
I needed a simple, form-fitted black dress for this shoot. On Amazon, I ordered a basic black dress and sized up so I would be able to clamp her into the dress and not run the risk of it arriving and being too small.

The lighting here got a lot more complex. I started by getting the main light dialed in on Terri's face. For the main light, I used a Westcott FJ400 with the Westcott Rapid Box Switch Octa-M softbox. I placed the light high and angled down slightly and used the Westcott Eyelighter to fill in the shadows being created by the directional light above. Because I chose a backdrop that matched the colors of the wardrobe, I needed an edge light to separate Terri from the background. I used the FJ200 with the basic reflector that comes with it, no additional modifiers for this, at a power of 1.5. This created a nice highlight along the left side of her body and hair (her left, camera right).

I used the Buffalo Bill backdrop from Intuition Backgrounds in their fabric material again for this shoot and chose to NOT light the background for this one because it would have been too orange in contrast with the subtle gold of the scarf. By not adding light to the background, it allowed it to become darker and not so distracting. I also had Evolve tone the background to blend better with the gold tones in the scarf.

For these photos, I wanted to showcase her personality a little more so it was all about getting her to really laugh and loosen up, not so much about having a soft and romantic expression—that just wouldn't work with this look. Fake smiles are always so obvious in photos, so figure out ways to make your subject really laugh and you'll capture some great expressions while they're laughing, and their smile will be real after the laughing calms down a bit.

Pro tip: *Make sure you take behind the scenes of every shot :) We all got so caught up in the second outfit we forgot to take pictures of the setup!*



LOOK #3: SOFT AND SWEET MOM

Who doesn't want photos of themselves in a more natural, everyday look? Most females love having pictures where they're all glammed up and fully stylized in clothes they would never pick themselves, but I believe that every shoot should have one outfit where they really feel like themselves. I like to end with this style because my subject is very warmed up on camera at this point and I can usually get the most realistic and natural expressions out of them at this stage of the shoot.

The powder blue sweater I also bought on Amazon and intentionally sized up because I wanted the look of her cozied up in a chair where she just exuded comfort—in her expression, in her pose, in her wardrobe. Powder blue is my absolute favorite color on her. It brings out such a softness in her and I was so excited to photograph her in this outfit. The long crystal and pearl earrings were part of our jewelry collection already, and I added those in at the last minute. Those were a perfect touch!

For the lighting here, I did two different looks: I started with strobes and ended with natural light so I could add in some prism work (you don't get the same effect with prisms when you're shooting with strobe).



For the strobes, I kept the Westcott FJ400 as my main light with the Westcott Rapid Box Switch Octa-M and had it positioned directionally camera right, above her and tilted down slightly. I had Terri sitting in a wingback chair with her body facing the light camera right and face square at camera. I needed to fill in the shadows again being created by the FJ400 so I moved the Eyelighter to a shorter light stand and placed that under the FJ400. I kept the FJ200 as my edge light to separate her off the chair. This time I also added the Westcott FJ80 on a Nano Stand directly behind Terri aimed at the backdrop to really make the blue tones pop and create a vignette around my subject.

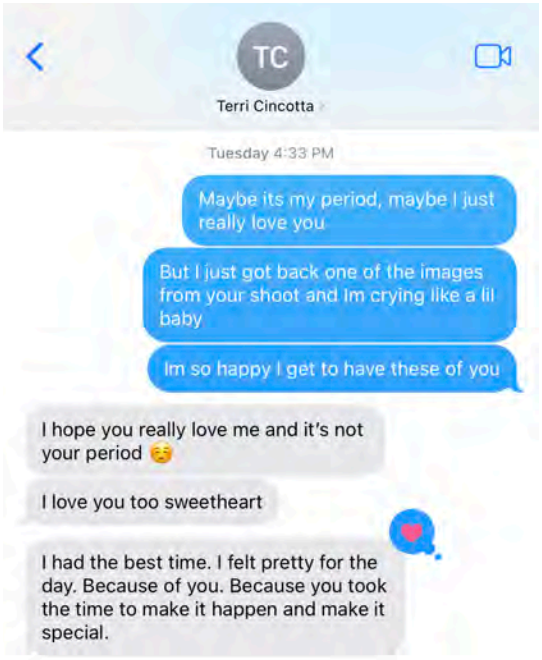


Final Image

Image © Alissa Cincotta

For this backdrop, I switched to the Poseidon from Intuition Backgrounds in their fabric material as well. These fabric drops are extremely simple to swap out when you don't have a lot of hands on set and need to move quickly. They are also very easy to store—just fold them up and put them on a shelf. They will get wrinkled this way, but I find that they are extremely easy to steam out and when I don't have time for that, I just have Evolve add a texture to the background in post-production to get rid of the wrinkles.

Once I got the shots I wanted in the chair, I moved Terri to apple crates again and took a few shots with strobes, then got rid of all artificial light. I added the Lensbaby prisms from the OMNI Deluxe Collection II to have a little fun by adding another unique element to the scene.





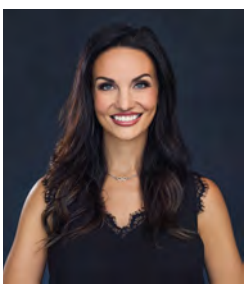
FINAL THOUGHTS

Photographing women at any age is such a fun job. We get to make women feel beautiful and see a smile on their face that is truly priceless.

There are three important things to note when photographing women over 70:

1. Go easy on the makeup. You want to enhance their natural beauty, not turn them into someone they are not.
2. Styling should be feminine and soft, and still conservative. These types of beauty portraits are supposed to be about your subject. Wardrobe should complement your subject, not distract from their experience and final images.
3. Lighting is so important. Don't create harsh light on 70+ skin. Learn and understand beauty lighting to soften wrinkles in-camera, and short light to create shadows in all the right places.

I hope this article helps give you some inspiration to get out there and practice with your family members. If nothing else, it will be a great way for YOU to get images of your mother, sister, aunt, whomever. Images that you and your family can cherish forever. And at the end of the day, here's what really matters: You get to make someone feel special for the day. ■



Alissa Cincotta graduated with a degree in television production and has been a part of the Salvatore Cincotta team since 2011. Today she is behind the camera regularly as Sal's second shooter and as the executive producer and camera operator for Salvatore Cincotta Films, Behind the Shutter. Alissa is the Editor-in-Chief for *Shutter Magazine* and serves as Sal's right hand, managing daily operations within the family of Salvatore Cincotta brands.

website: behindtheshutter.com instagram.com/_alissacincotta/



h+h color lab

25% OFF

ALL ALBUMS

USE CODE: **SMJUNE25**

EXPIRES 6/30/22

learn more **hhcolorlab.com**

OFF CAMERA FLASH SET UPS FOR BEGINNERS

with **Brandon Cole**



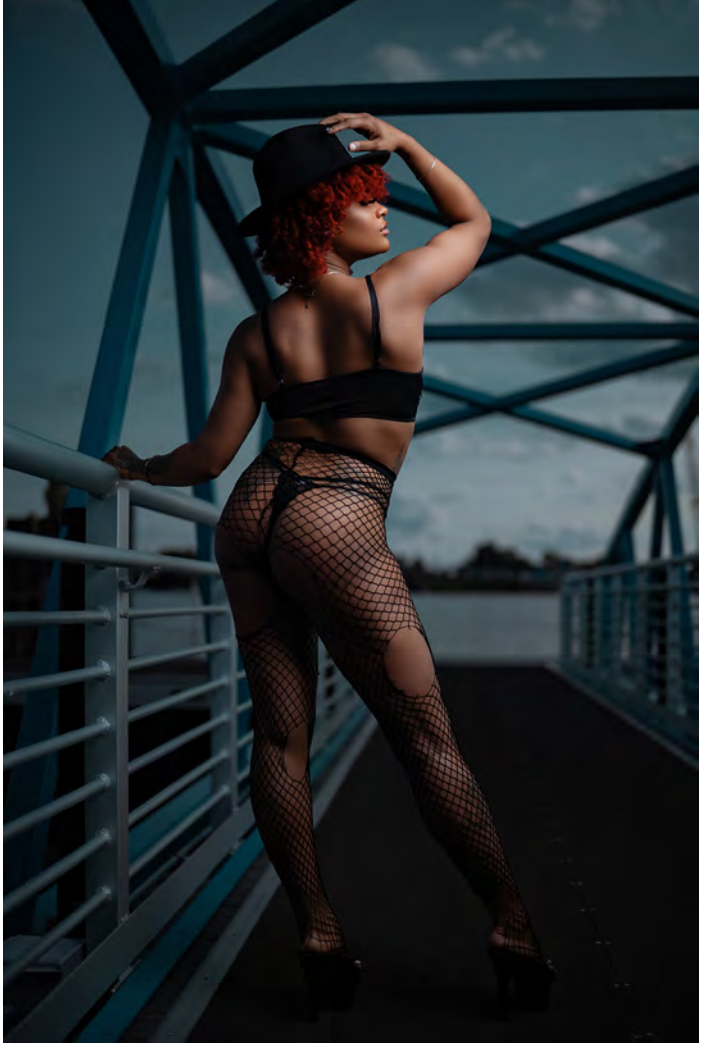
Image © Brandon Cole Photography

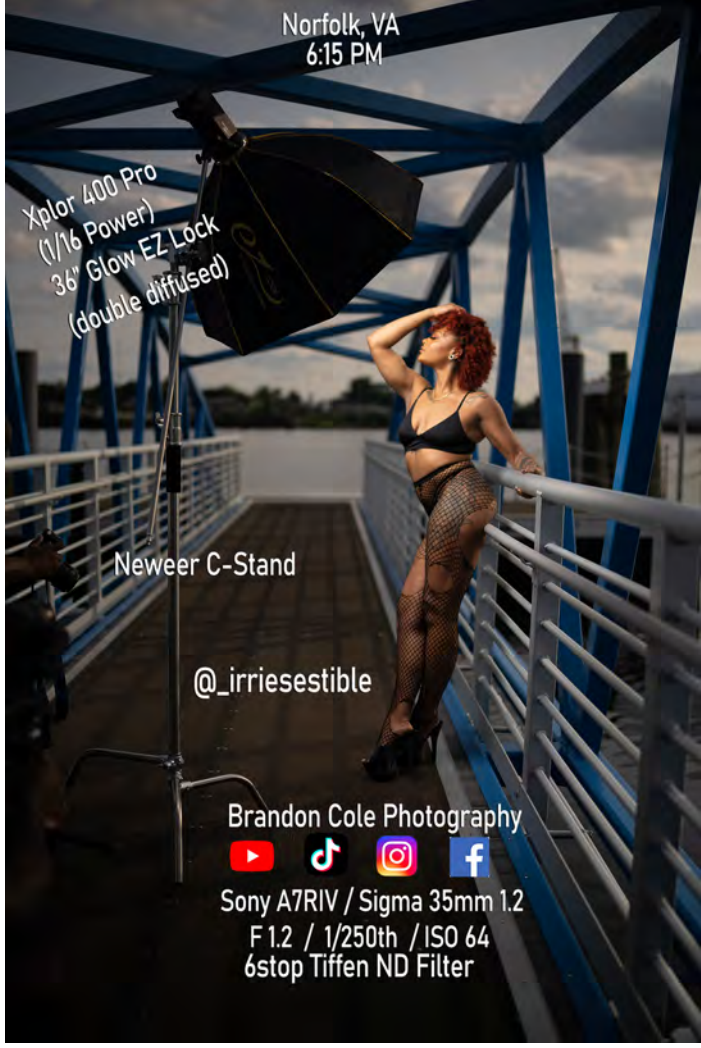
When I started on my journey into the world of photography, I didn't know what to expect or where to start. All I knew is that I wanted to create amazing images and create incredible art. I remember seeing numerous creative images online and in magazines and I would think to myself, "How was the photographer able to capture that image?" and "How were they able to produce such dramatic composition that completely captivates the audience?" These questions along with many more heightened my curiosity, driving me into the beginning stages of photography, not knowing that off-camera flash would become something I would master one day.



Images © Brandon Cole Photography

Images © Brandon Cole Photography









Images © Brandon Cole Photography

As a portrait photographer, it's extremely important to be aware of the lighting conditions that you face in natural environments. Whether you are looking to use natural light or off-camera flash when shooting outdoor portraits, understanding the effects of both will provide you with your desired result. Off-camera flash is like preparing an amazing full course meal. We all like a good steak, but when you really want to go all out, you add items to compliment the steak like a salad, seared red potatoes, asparagus and butter wine sauce. When you take a picture, that's just it, a picture; but when you really want to change the dynamic of a photo, add a little off-camera flash, maybe two lights, color gels, fans, smoke and much more. Off-camera flash opens up a new world of possibilities in the creation process of an image. It provides the photographers control over lighting conditions and creates opportunities for creative brainstorming and management. It allows you the freedom to capture images any place, anytime and anywhere using artificial lighting. Having the capability to control your own lighting and light output without having to rely on natural lighting is a game changer. The only restriction to off-camera flash is your imagination.





Images © Brandon Cole Photography

What are the benefits to off-camera flash? Imagine being a photographer and you receive a message from a potential client looking hire you for your services, but there is a particular look they require and this look involves a photo shoot under the cover of darkness, outside with a backdrop of the city. Because you are not familiar with off-camera flash and how to capture images without the assistance of natural light, that is a potential client lost. The benefits of learning and knowing off-camera flash not only expands the growth and possibilities of your photography, but it also helps put money in your pocket and expand your clientele base. The obvious benefits of off-camera flash, as mentioned previously, are the ability to travel anywhere with flash, a stand and a modifier and capture images anywhere your client desires, but it also gives you the ability to choose what you want your subject lighting to look like, whether it be soft or harsh. It also allows you to manipulate your composition as you see fit.

Additionally, creating the exact look of the light is another benefit as you have complete creative control to shape the light using light modifiers like softboxes, deflector plates and diffusion panels. There may be items or additions to your scenery you feel may add to the dynamic of the shot. By adding light in different areas or manipulating a scene using artificial lighting, the possibilities are endless with off-camera flash.





Images © Brandon Cole Photography









Images © Brandon Cole Photography









Images © Brandon Cole Photography

One of the major benefits to off-camera flash is the ability to control, manipulate and modify light anywhere you go and as you see fit. This is something that cannot be accomplished with natural light.

Every scenario can easily be enhanced with the addition of one or multiple light sources. The great thing about artificial lighting is that it's subjective. The way YOU choose to light your scene or subject is your vision and yours alone. Depending on the style of the photo shoot, it may call for harsh or soft lighting. With off-camera flash, not only can you choose the look of the lighting, but also how much ambient light you want in the photo. You may need a pop of color on the subject or in a specific area of the scene to enhance the overall look of the image: a big light source vs a small light source; a soft box vs a beauty dish; using LED lighting vs off-camera flash; whether to add color to a scene or not. Whatever your prerogative, you are the creative director. You are only limited by your imagination. As a photographer, you never stop learning. There is always something we can learn to enhance our work, whether it's lighting, equipment, editing or more. There is always something to learn and teach yourself, which brings us to my final thoughts.





Images © Brandon Cole Photography







Images © Brandon Cole Photography

Off-camera flash allows the photographer to open their mind to another world of possibilities and creativity you cannot achieve with any other "light source." I love natural light and LED lighting, but they also come with a lot of restrictions. The ability to shoot anywhere and anytime can only be achieved with off-camera flash. Learn to balance your camera settings with light and the possibilities are endless. Off-camera flash provides much more dependable and consistent results because of the freedom and creative management you have to maintain throughout the session. ■



Brandon Cole is a professional portrait photographer and Youtube content creator based out of Virginia, Beach, VA and a native-born resident from Indianapolis, Indiana, Unlike many photographers, Brandon's performing arts background and creative direction growing up plays a key factor in his ability to create dynamic incredible images.

website: brandoncolephotos.com IG: brandoncolephotography



QUITTING YOUR JOB: BECOMING A FULL-TIME PHOTOGRAPHER

with **Bethany Ellen**



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

When I started my photography career, a lot of people smiled and nodded and said, "Wow. What a great side hustle."

For a while, that's all I thought a photography career could be. A really nice side gig to fulfill some creative energy and make me an extra dollar or two. I had no idea this was actually how people sustained themselves.



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

I'm not alone in that sentiment, and there are good reasons why. People stay in careers that don't serve them for several reasons, the main ones being:

- We are addicted to stability
- We don't have adequate representation of success
- We are in a permanent state of analysis paralysis

But the truth many photographers forget is that they aren't pioneers in their field. Many photographers have overcome tons of external circumstances to support themselves solely with their studio. If you're looking to ditch the 9-to-5 cubicle life and fully embrace entrepreneurship, the great news is you aren't the first to do so! The better news is you can plan for long-term success while still in your safety net. Here's the how-to guide on maximizing your Weekend Warrior lifestyle.

Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

SETTING YOUR INTENT

Every morning I worked my 8-to-5 (had to arrive before 9 to account for my unpaid lunch), I would catch myself sitting in my car until the last possible second. It turns out, I was so exhausted and burnt out that I was arriving early just to sit in the parking lot for 10 minutes and get the strength to go inside. One day, I just started repeating to myself, "Quitting is coming. This isn't forever."

It's important to make your desire to quit your job known, even if it's just to yourself first. There are a lot of ways that people like to do this, and everyone who's quit their job will tell you their preferred method. Some will tell you to set a number that you'll earn to prove you have what it takes. Some set a date.

Personally, I set numbers and dates. Those numbers and dates came and went, each time with me paralyzed in fear. When I set hard lines on my initial intent, I would get spooked at the slightest inconvenience when I got close to hitting my goal.

What actually helped was repeating my mantra: "Quitting is coming." I would take a minute or two and visualize what I would say. Who I would say it to. How I felt when I was able to imagine getting to say "This is going to be my two weeks' notice."

Visualizing my dreams helped me understand that I could make them come true. But it wasn't going to be easy.

Eventually, my coworkers caught on that I was meant for something more too. Suddenly, it wasn't just me reassuring myself that I would be quitting soon. My coworkers were popping into my office to say, "Girl! When are you getting out of here?! When are you gonna do what you were meant to do?"

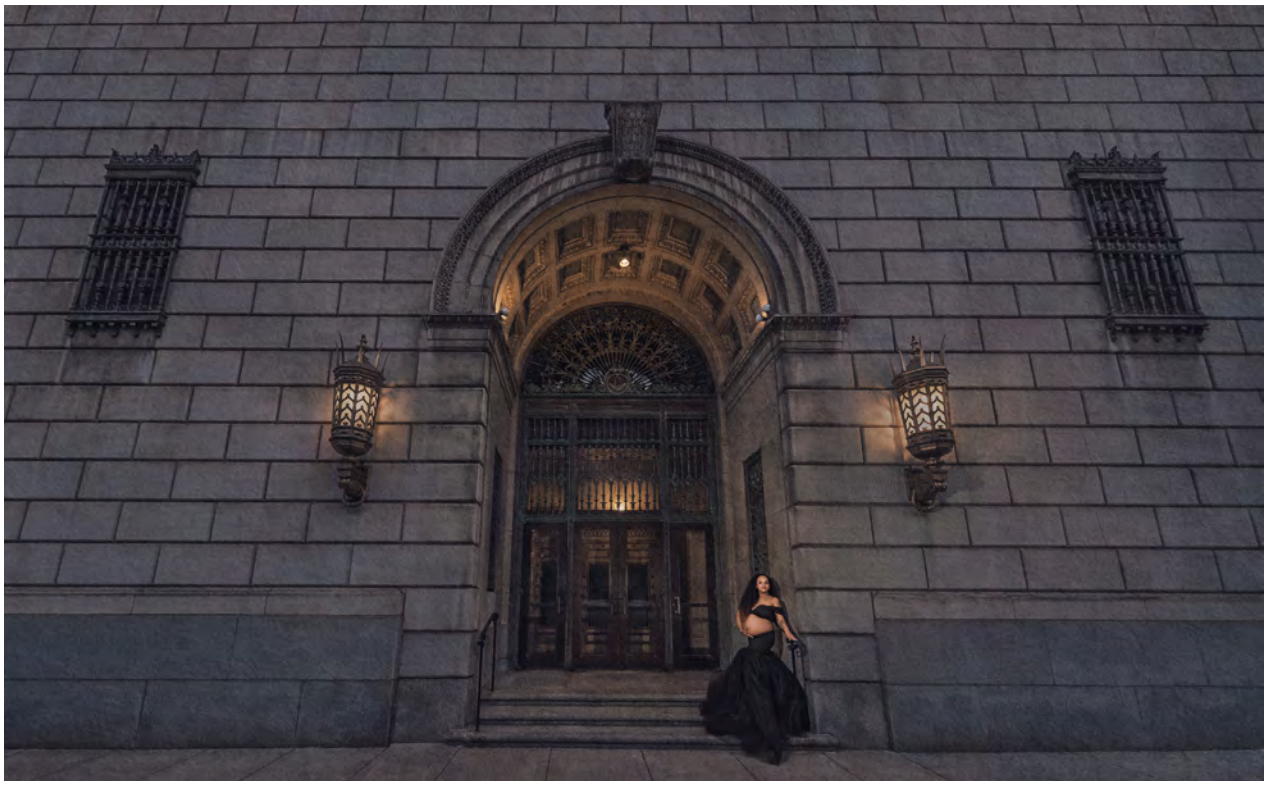


Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

IDENTIFYING YOUR BENEFITS

Creatives often intertwine the words "benefits" with "health insurance". In truth, day jobs offer all kinds of strengths and benefits. It's often hard to recognize all the strengths you have where you are when where you are kind of sucks. However, you have to be able to identify your advantages to win any fight. Take a look in your HR portal. Really comb through all your benefits you may not know about, like:

- Tuition reimbursement or continuing education credits
- Special discounts with certain brands or partners
- Discounted travel packages
- Vacation or sick time
- Counseling or therapy

You might be surprised. In digging through my benefits with my old employer, I found everything from continuing education reimbursement toward my Certified Professional Photographer credentials, to special insoles for my shoes to support my high arches, to reimbursement for my gym membership.

Even if you can't find hidden treasures in terms of dollars, think about the other benefits from the situation you're currently in. Do you benefit from a flexible or fixed schedule? Commission or steady pay? A positive environment? Coworkers who book with you?

Don’t go through these benefits with the idea that you’re finding reasons to stay at something that no longer serves you. Opportunities come into our lives when they’re right for us, but it’s also OK to move on when you have outgrown what used to be a “dream job.”

These benefits are what you use to work the system! Use your PTO to schedule an epic destination session. Continue your education with marketing classes! Use your free counseling to go to therapy and identify what fear is keeping you at that terrible job in the first place.

Identifying your benefits and strengths will also help you understand where it’s going to hurt when you leave. You can start budgeting for those changes financially and emotionally



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

IDENTIFYING YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

Admittedly, this step is easier. Obviously, when you're not happy in your current employment situation, it's easy to see the bad parts about your job.

However, if done correctly, identifying why you are currently unhappy will help you make the change you need to make in your own company. You don't simply want to run away from something, you want to run towards an opportunity that fulfills you both creatively and financially. What are you currently lacking, and how are you planning on bringing an abundance of that into your new life?

Is your business strong enough to handle operating expenses, support your current lifestyle, and give you a healthy nest egg for savings? Are you turning away clients because you don't have room on your schedule, or are you chasing your next lead? These are all opportunities you'll have to handle as you make that transition.



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

HANDLING DISTRACTIONS

Time Blocking
Time blocking is a super helpful way to provide structure within your environment. It's especially helpful as you're managing all kinds of responsibilities in your day job. When I worked retail, we were given specific "zones" to be in during the day. Time blocking is taking your calendar and "zoning" yourself to specific tasks you need to get done. It's easy for you to conceptualize how long you have to work on a project and what you're moving on to. That way you don't get stuck in an Instagram scroll break upon completion of one task. You have to use your time effectively as a Weekend Warrior.

Scary Hour
When we're juggling work/life balance, especially with two jobs, a lot of times the "scary" tasks get pushed to the wayside. We often say, "Oh, I'm too busy" to look at things like insurance, finances or taxes. In reality, sometimes we're just too scared to even look. Once a week I host Scary Hour, where I set my phone timer and accomplish all of the scary things I was too afraid to put at the forefront of my mind in the last week. Sometimes, it's not actually the scary logistics of entrepreneurship keeping me behind, it's just myself.

Important vs Urgent
Controlling chaos is not the easiest of feats! One of the greatest time management tricks I've ever learned came from my day job. When things get thrown at you, ask yourself if the task is urgent, important, neither or both. Chart it out. How important is this to advancing your photography business? Does it need to get done urgently? Put the goals you have on this chart. After a SWOT analysis, this is one of the most helpful things you can do for your personal development. Tackle the chart clockwise, starting with the most important and urgent tasks first.

AM I BEING PRANKED? NOPE. JUST TESTED!

Once you've set your goals you'll notice an abundance of distractions and "real world" factors that feel like a sabotage on your plans. Once you've internally set your intent to quit and come up with your plan, BOOM! New giant work project. Your house needs work done. An entire pandemic hits the world.

Personally, I believe this is the universe testing you. Are you ready to handle all of this while your business is your sole income? If you know how to properly pivot, you'll land in good shape.

Sometimes, when you land in a dark place, you'll think you've been buried. The truth is, you've been planted. These challenges arise to show you just how strong you are.



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery



Image © Bethany Ellen Artistic Imagery

REMEMBER: YOU CAN FIGURE IT OUT

Fear tells us we deserve to stay fulfilling someone else's dream because we cannot imagine a world in which we dare to earn what we're worth. It's important for every photographer to remember that they are not the first ever person to sustain themselves with income earned from photography. Everything can be figured out in due time, you just have to give yourself the chance to try. ■



Bethany Ellen is an award-winning photographer based out of Cincinnati, Ohio. Known for her dynamic, artistic maternity photography, Bethany seeks to create bold works of art. Her passion lies in helping other photographers realize their own potential.

website: bethany-ellen.com instagram.com/bethany.ellen/

3 STEPS TO OPTIMIZE YOUR RETOUCHING WORKFLOW

with **Dustin Lucas**




Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Type Select Filter 3D View Plugins Window Help
Fri May 20 12:50 PM
Adobe Photoshop 2022
Share
Layer
New
Copy CSS
Copy SVG
Duplicate Layer...
Delete
Quick Export as PNG
Export As...
Rename Layer...
Layer Style
Smart Filter
New Fill Layer
New Adjustment Layer
Layer Content Options...
Layer Mask
Vector Mask
Create Clipping Mask
Mask All Objects
Smart Objects
New Layer Based Slice
Group Layers
Ungroup Layers
Hide Layers
Arrange
Combine Shapes
Align
Distribute
Lock Layers...
Link Layers
Select Linked Layers
Merge Layers
Merge Visible
Flatten Image
Matting
Convert to Smart Object
New Smart Object via Copy
Reveal in Finder
Update Modified Content
Update All Modified Content
Edit Contents
Reset Transform
Relink to File...
Relink to Library Graphic...
Replace Contents...
Export Contents...
Embed Linked
Embed All Linked
Convert to Linked...
Convert to Layers
Stack Mode
Rasterize
Properties
Adjustments
Libraries
Pixel Layer
Transform
Align and Distribute
Quick Actions
Remove Background
Layers
Channels
Paths
Normal
Opacity: 100%
Fill: 100%

When it comes to post-production, you really need to develop a roadmap or workflow for how to get the results you want without wasting time. Many successful photographers have a secret: They outsource so they can focus on generating more revenue for their business. Even in those cases you might want to do a same day, down and dirty edit to get a few sneak peeks online for immediate social engagement from your client. Knowing how to edit isn't a deal breaker, but for me it's cathartic, why I do what I do. Everyone has their own reasons, but my point is there may come a time you need to turn an image fast for a client and no one is there to help you. In this article you will learn the three steps to make your retouching workflow better combining Lightroom Classic and Photoshop.

Starting out with the basics, step one is building a base level edit in Lightroom. We are going to apply a profile for accurate colors, adjust white balance, brightness and tonal density. Step two is using the Edit In Photoshop feature so we can export to Photoshop, apply basic beauty editing and save our un-flattened edit back in Lightroom. In step three it's all about attention to details to dodge and burn and apply custom profiles for creative toning. We got this!

1. BUILD A BASE EDIT IN LIGHTROOM

Editing all starts with good bones like lighting, posing, composition, color, exposure compensation, etc. After you import images into Lightroom and you have your sights on an image, it's time to dive into Develop mode. From top to bottom we will work our way through a simple edit. I will want to adjust profile, white balance, exposure, highlights, shadows, whites, blacks, HSL and lens correction. Starting with profile, I have already purchased the Color Fidelity pack because my Sony a7iii colors just don't look right with the Adobe profiles like Adobe Color, Adobe Standard. The camera matching profiles are worse so I did some research and found these. This brightens the skin, adds some warmth and magenta tones as well as helps with the clipped black point. (Fig. 1)



fig 1

Next, I need to make a decision on lens correction as this will affect brightness. Shooting with the 85mm I will have some pincushion effect where it looks like the center of the frame is pushing away from the camera. The technical fix is to apply a bulge effect to the center to correct this, but it makes the subject's face larger as well as removes our vignette—not a good idea. By turning this on we can remove the distortion easily by moving the slider to 0 while still removing the vignette. This is not a custom lens profile. You would not want to save this in a preset. (Fig. 2) Exposure is on point but looking at the histogram we lose a lot of white density as the right edge has a big gap. We can hold Shift and double-click whites to fix this, but it's just too much for the skin. (Fig. 3)



fig 2

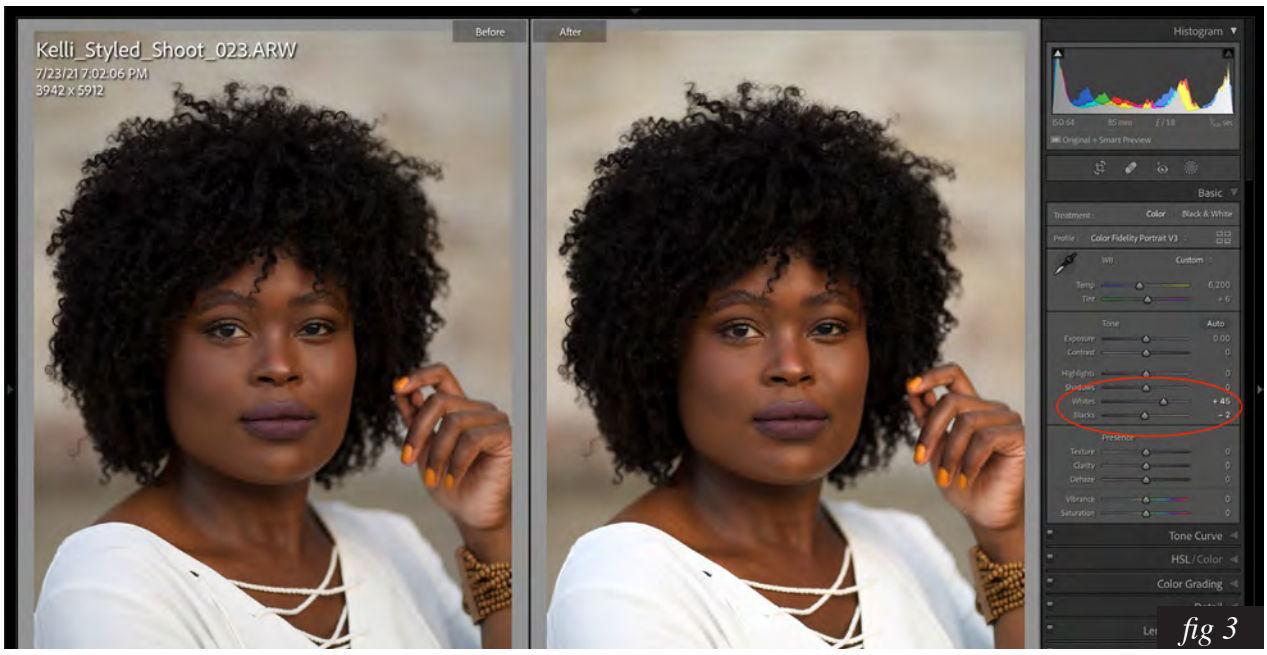


fig 3

So, we can dial that back in half, and to check on the black point we can turn on the clipping tool by striking the J key. We cannot control the density more effectively, but again this is corrective, not creative, so we don't want to do much toning in this stage. (Fig. 4)

I dialed in my white balance in camera with Kelvin so no need to alter temp and tint, but let's dive into a quick HSL adjustment to see if any color casts and saturations need attention. Since her nails are painted orange we don't want to pull down orange tones in skin, so we might save that for step two. We can remove blues in shadows easily using the target adjustment tool. (Fig. 5) This is a really good start and our base edit is ready to see some touchup work in Photoshop.

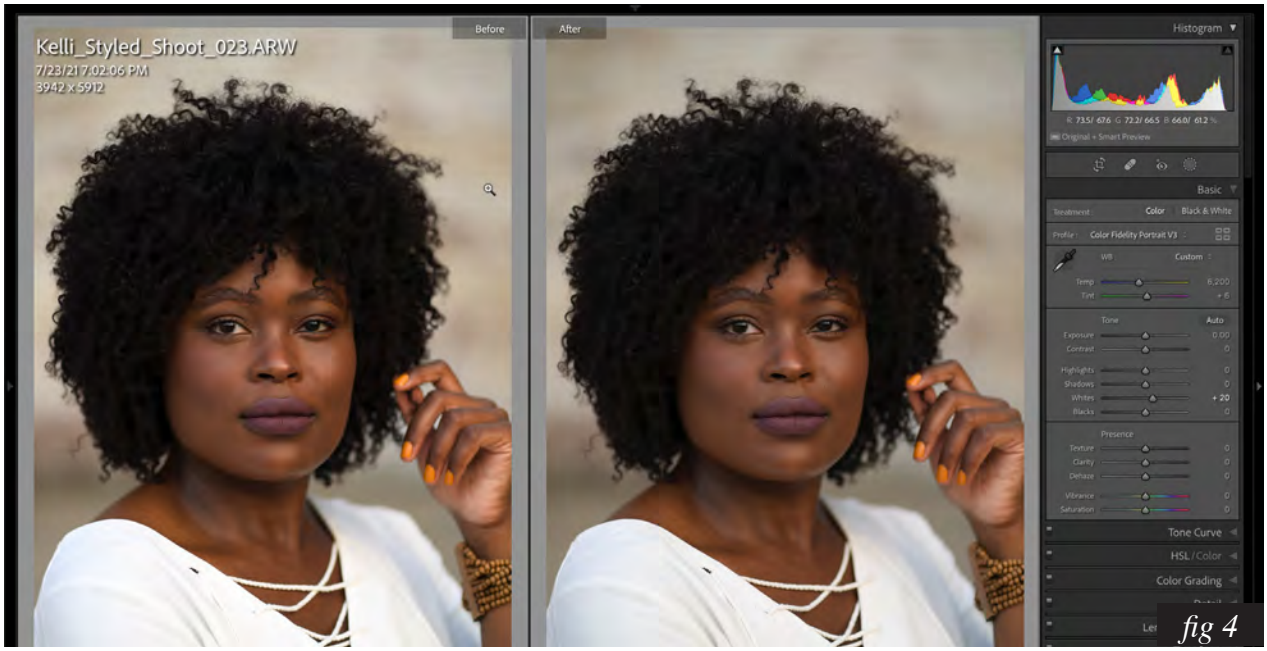


fig 4

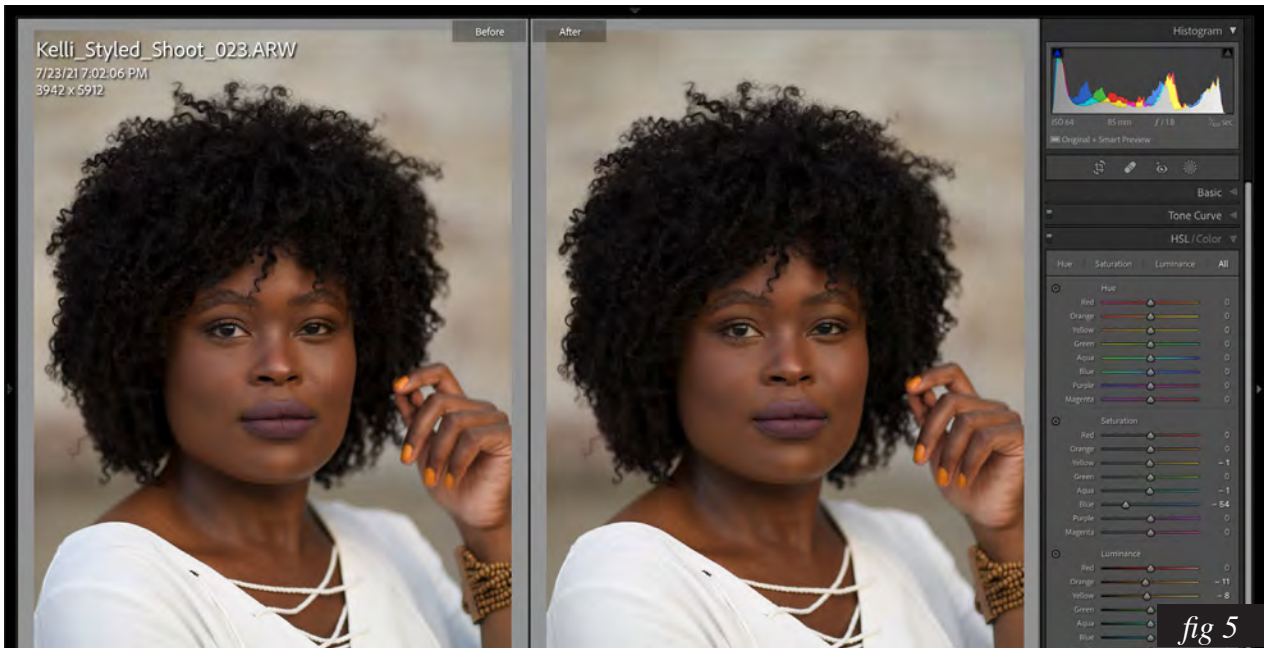


fig 5

2. EDIT IN PHOTOSHOP FOR BASIC BEAUTY EDITING

Before we hold Command and strike the E key to edit in Photoshop, we need to get Lightroom preferences in check. Holding Command and striking , (comma) opens Preferences so we can go to the External Editing tab. (Fig. 6) Now we've come to the great debate of file format, color space, bit depth, etc. and I gotta be honest, this stuff confuses me too! Starting with file format, I use TIFF since my files can stretch to 4 GB. PSD files are limited to 2GB. If I need a larger format Photoshop will for me to .PSB—that's easy. Color space is one of those things where you try to educate yourself and it can give you bad results when you go outside the defaults. I decided to render my image in all three options: ProPhoto RGB, Adobe RGB and sRGB. (Fig. 7)

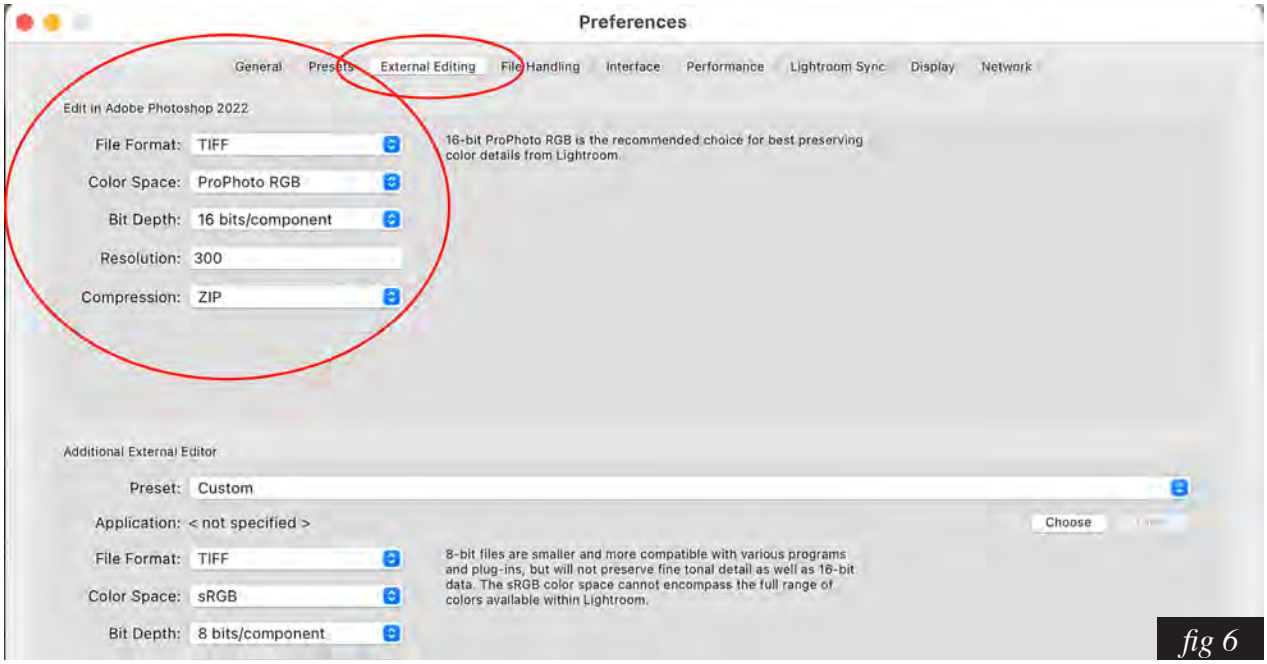


fig 6

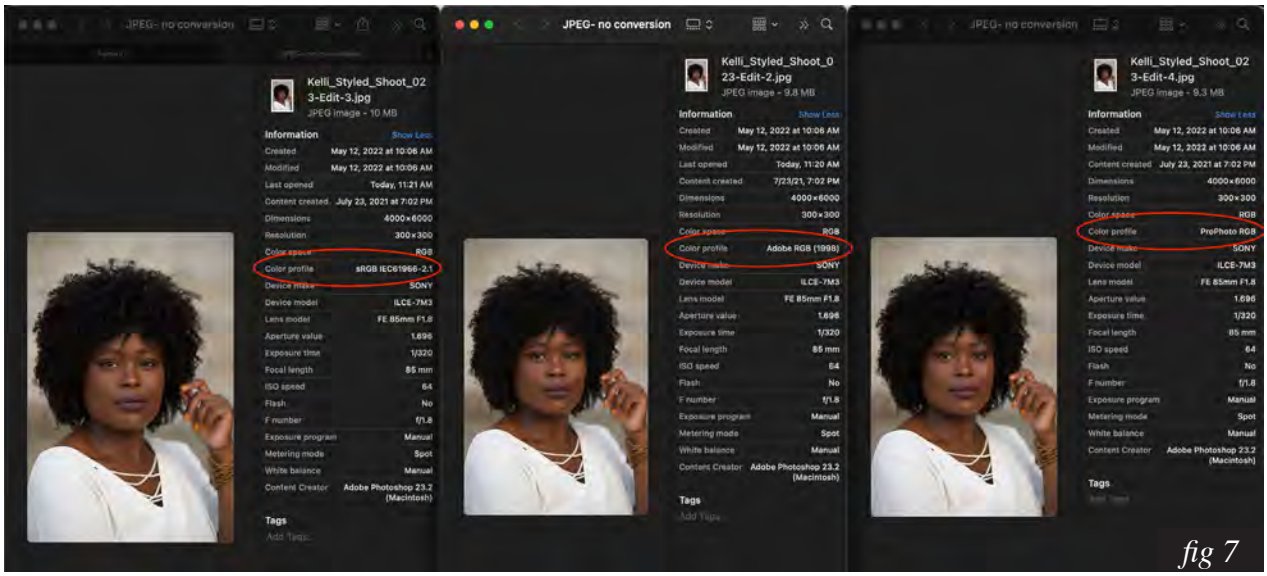


fig 7

These are subtle differences and I stick with the Lightroom defaults of ProPhoto RGB since Photoshop will assign the proper profile. (Fig. 8) If you get really bad color it's simple to assign the proper profile in Photoshop. For example, opening the ProPhoto RGB TIFF in Photoshop looks really dark and less saturated. (Fig. 9) I can change this in the top menu bar in Edit>Assign Profile and choose the proper Profile. Save the image and it's back to life. (Fig. 10) Take this with a grain of salt as you will likely convert to sRGB when all is said and done. Outputting files is another conversation and tied to the recommended settings per lab, web browser, online galleries, etc. Let's move into basic beauty editing.

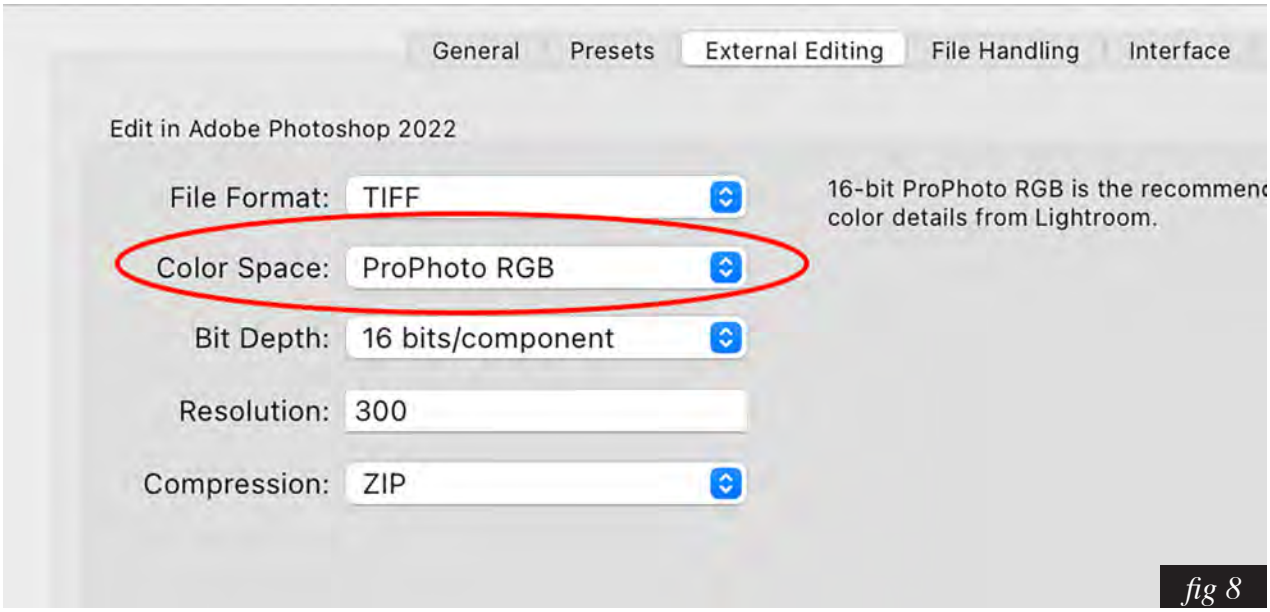


fig 8

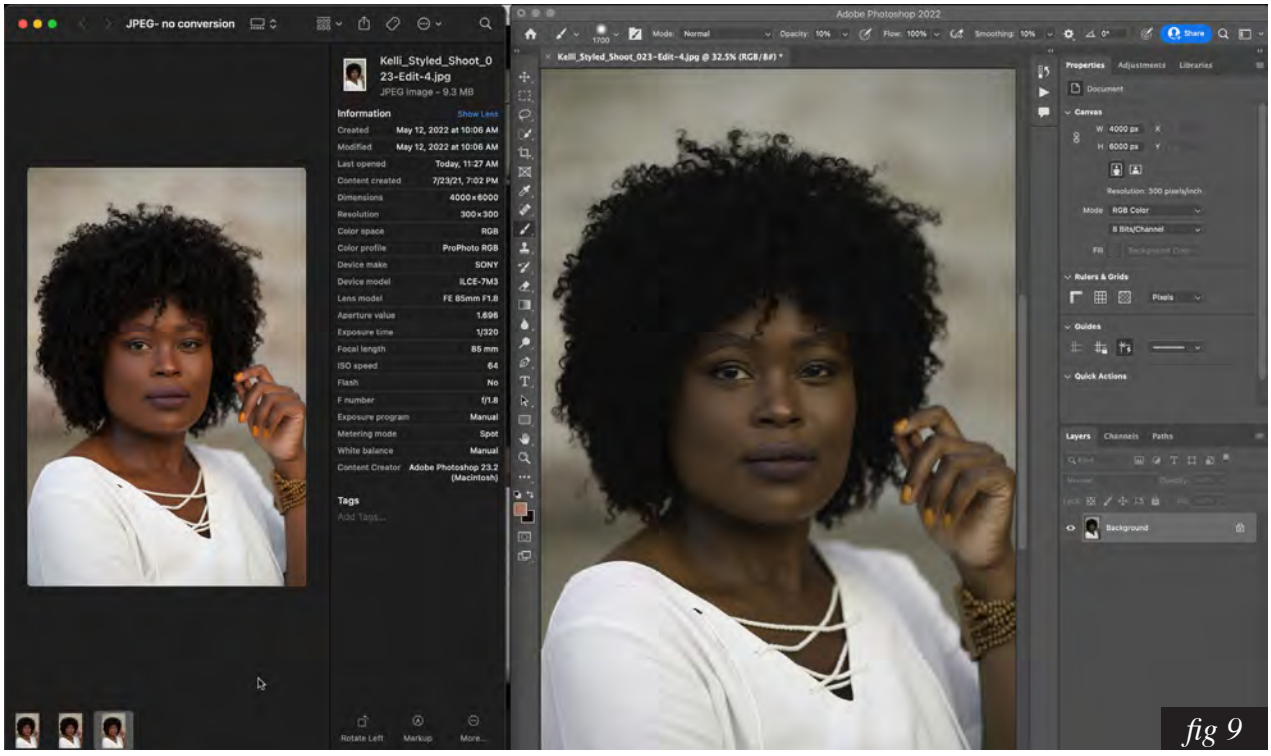


fig 9

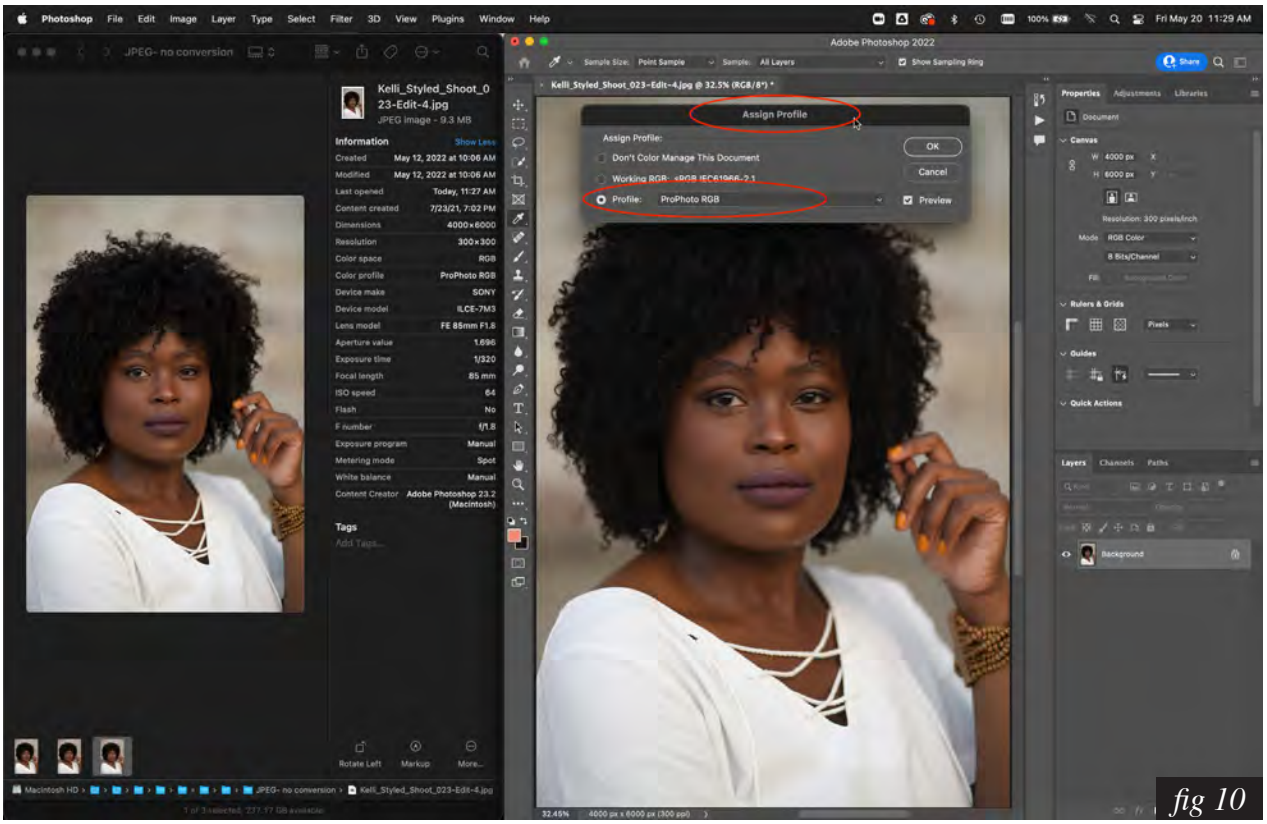


fig 10

In Photoshop, I want to work non-destructively by duplicating the background layer, creating multiple layers for removals, reducing casts in skin, etc. I recommend finding an action set online and buying one to keep things simple. (Fig. 11)

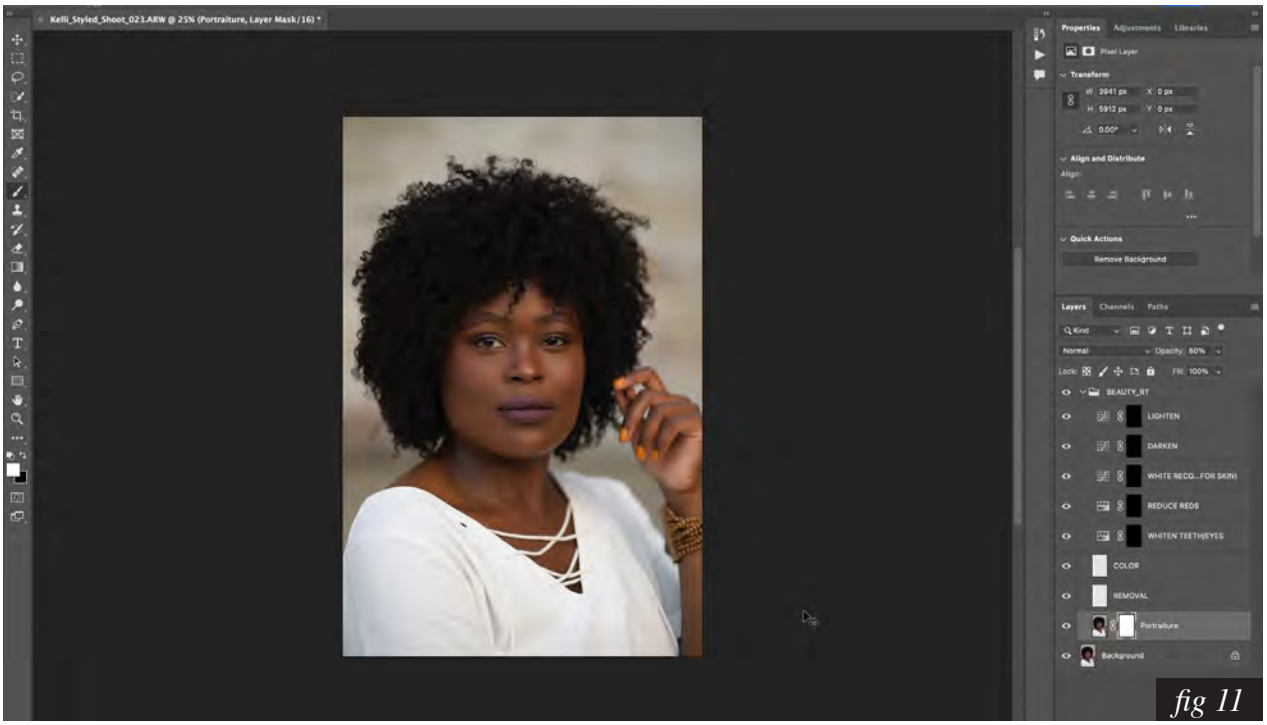


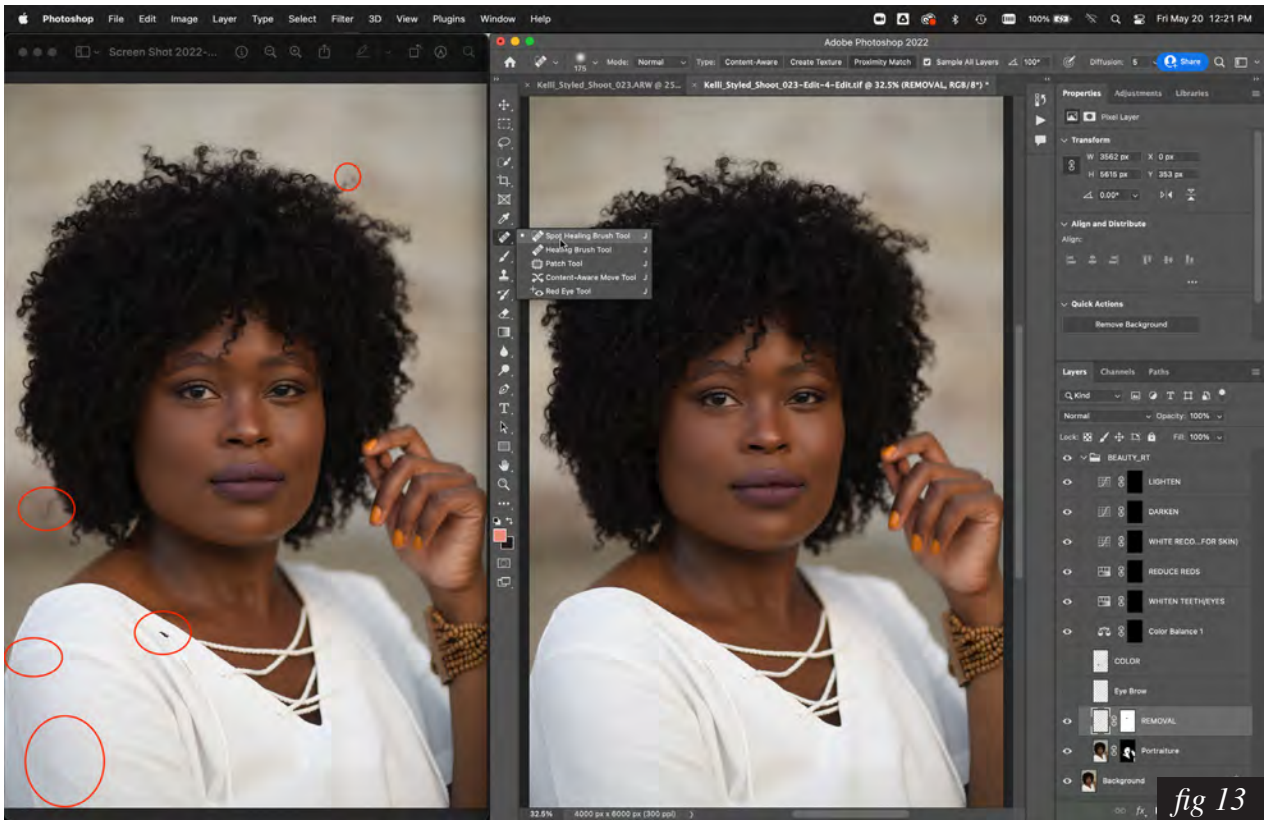
fig 11

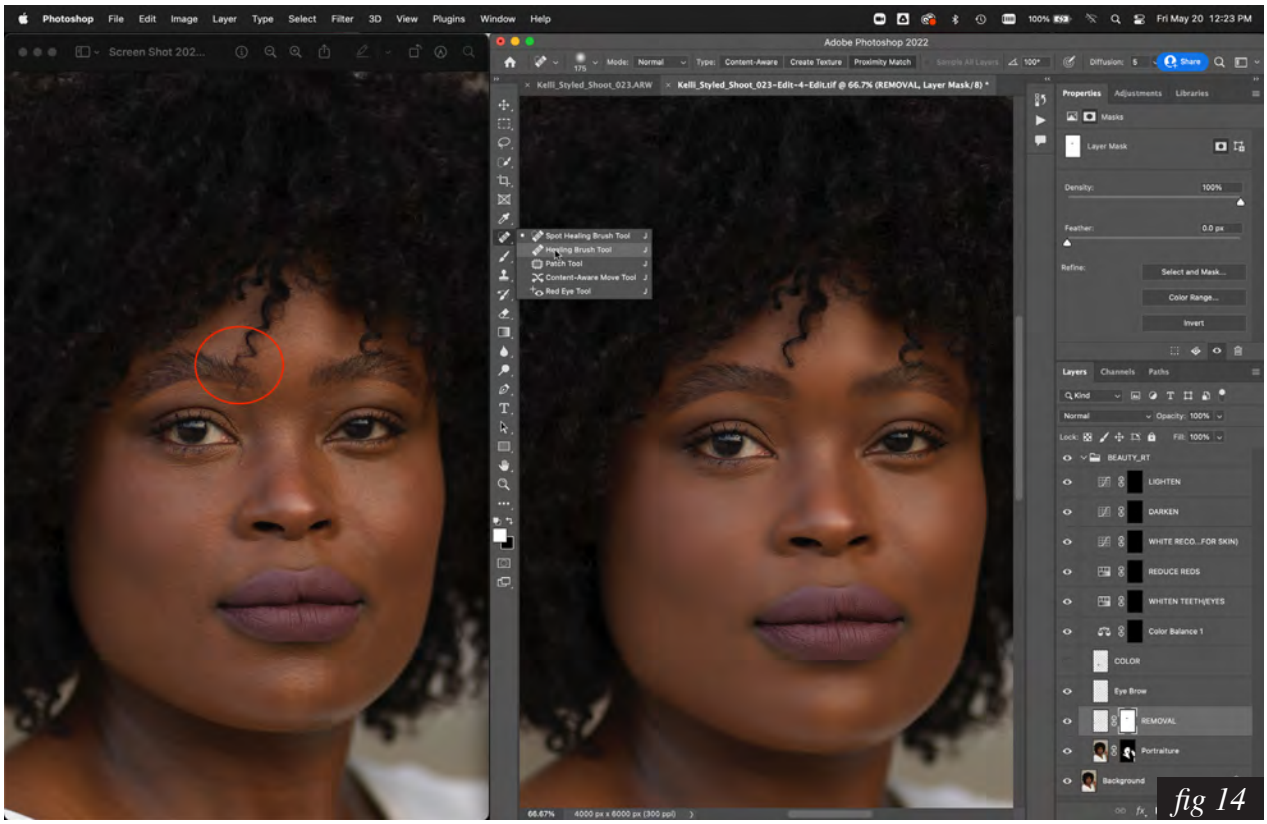


fig 12

That's what I did and learned how to use a brush to mask in and out effects along with removing blemishes with the heal/clone tools. In my action, skin smoothing is automatically applied with Portraiture 3 and set to 60% opacity. First we need to mask out all the non-skin areas by choosing foreground color black and painting on white mask. (Fig. 12)

Working my way up from that layer I can use the removals layer to remove blemishes, clean up hair, remove distractions, etc. You could separate these if you feel it's necessary for more complicated editing. Personally, I start with skin using the spot healing brush by striking the J key so I don't have to sample areas and can quickly click and go. (Fig. 13) When needed I can switch to other healing tools by holding Shift and striking the J key. For hair, I think the healing brush is a better option so I can sample where it is pulling from. Removing the flyaways and any hair getting too close to the eyes has gotta go. (Fig. 14)


Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Type Select Filter 3D View Plugins Window Help
Fri May 20 12:21 PM
Adobe Photoshop 2022
Spot Healing Brush Tool
Healing Brush Tool
Patch Tool
Content-Aware Move Tool
Red Eye Tool
Properties
Adjustments
Libraries
Layers
Channels
Paths
BEAUTY_RT
LIGHTEN
DARKEN
REDUCE REDS
WHITEN TEETH/EYES
Color Balance 1
COLOR
Eye Brow
REMOVAL
Portraiture
Background
fig 13


Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Type Select Filter 3D View Plugins Window Help
Fri May 20 12:23 PM
Adobe Photoshop 2022
Spot Healing Brush Tool
Healing Brush Tool
Patch Tool
Content-Aware Move Tool
Red Eye Tool
Properties
Adjustments
Libraries
Masks
Layer Mask
Density:
Feather:
Refine:
Select and Mask...
Color Range...
Invert
Layers
Channels
Paths
BEAUTY_RT
LIGHTEN
DARKEN
REDUCE REDS
WHITEN TEETH/EYES
Color Balance 1
COLOR
Eye Brow
REMOVAL
Portraiture
Background
fig 14

We will also need to paint back in some hair so it looks realistic, using a 2px brush sampled from her eyebrow. (Fig. 15ab) On the color layer I will use the brush tool, sample from a surrounding area and paint with 10% to remove discoloration in the shadows. (Fig. 16) I can also recover highlights on the shirt to cut down on the brightest part of the image pulling away from the subject. (Fig. 17ab)

Now that we are all done touching up the essential features, let's save our TIFF so it saves back into Lightroom Classic and continue in Photoshop for the detail work.

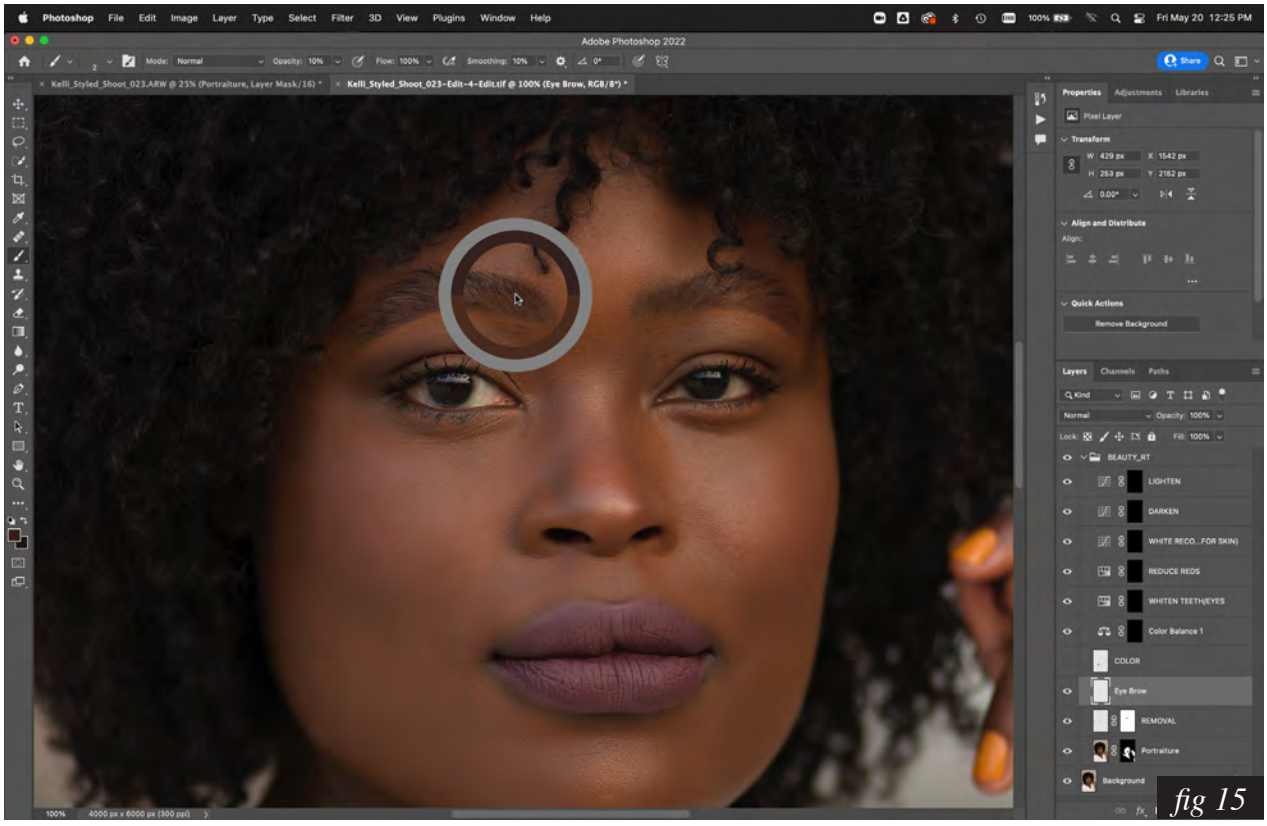


fig 15

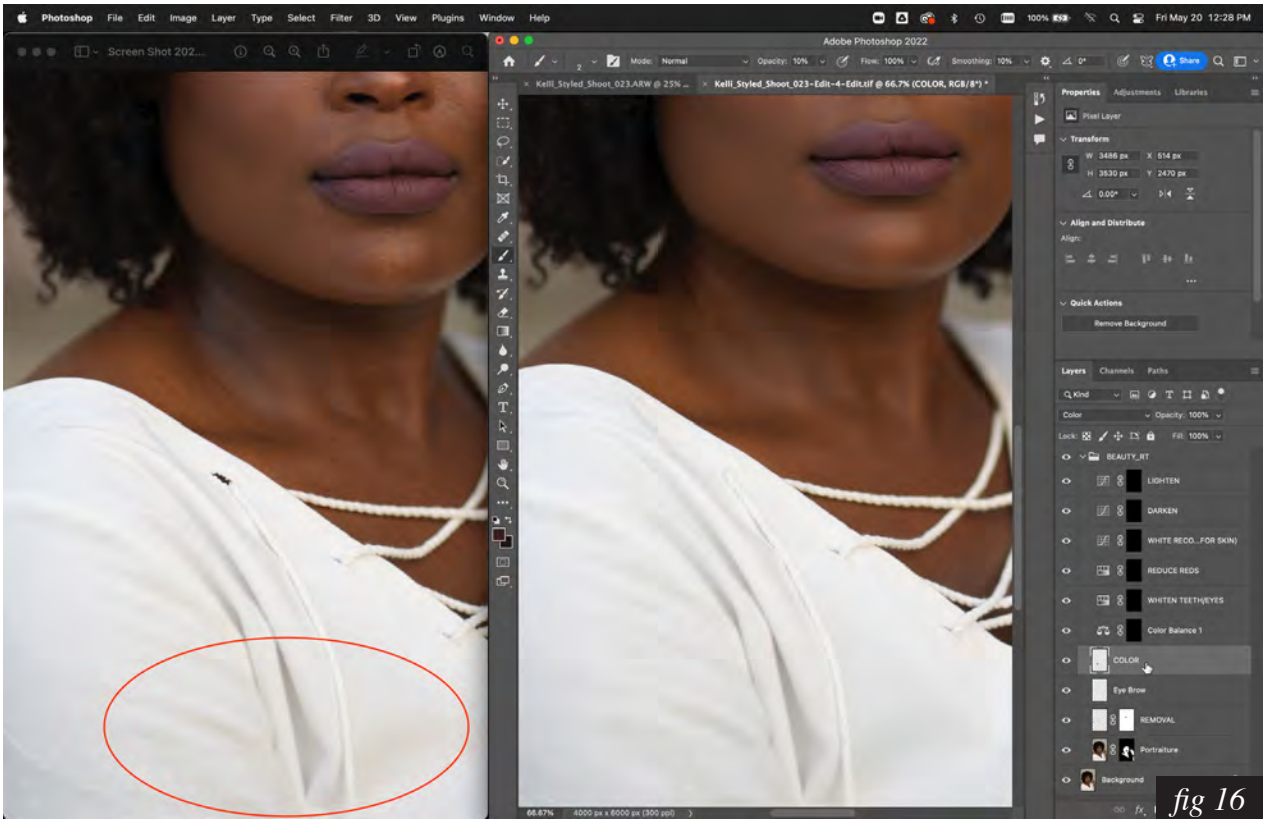

Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Type Select Filter 3D View Plugins Window Help
Fri May 20 12:28 PM
Adobe Photoshop 2022
Kelli_Styled_Shoot_023-Edit-4-Edit.tif @ 66.7% (COLOR, RGB/8*)
Properties Adjustments Libraries
Layers Channels Paths
BEAUTY_RT
LIGHTEN
DARKEN
WHITE RECO...FOR SKIN)
REDUCE REDS
WHITEN TEETH/EYES
Color Balance 1
COLOR
Eye Brow
REMOVAL
Portraiture
Background

fig 16

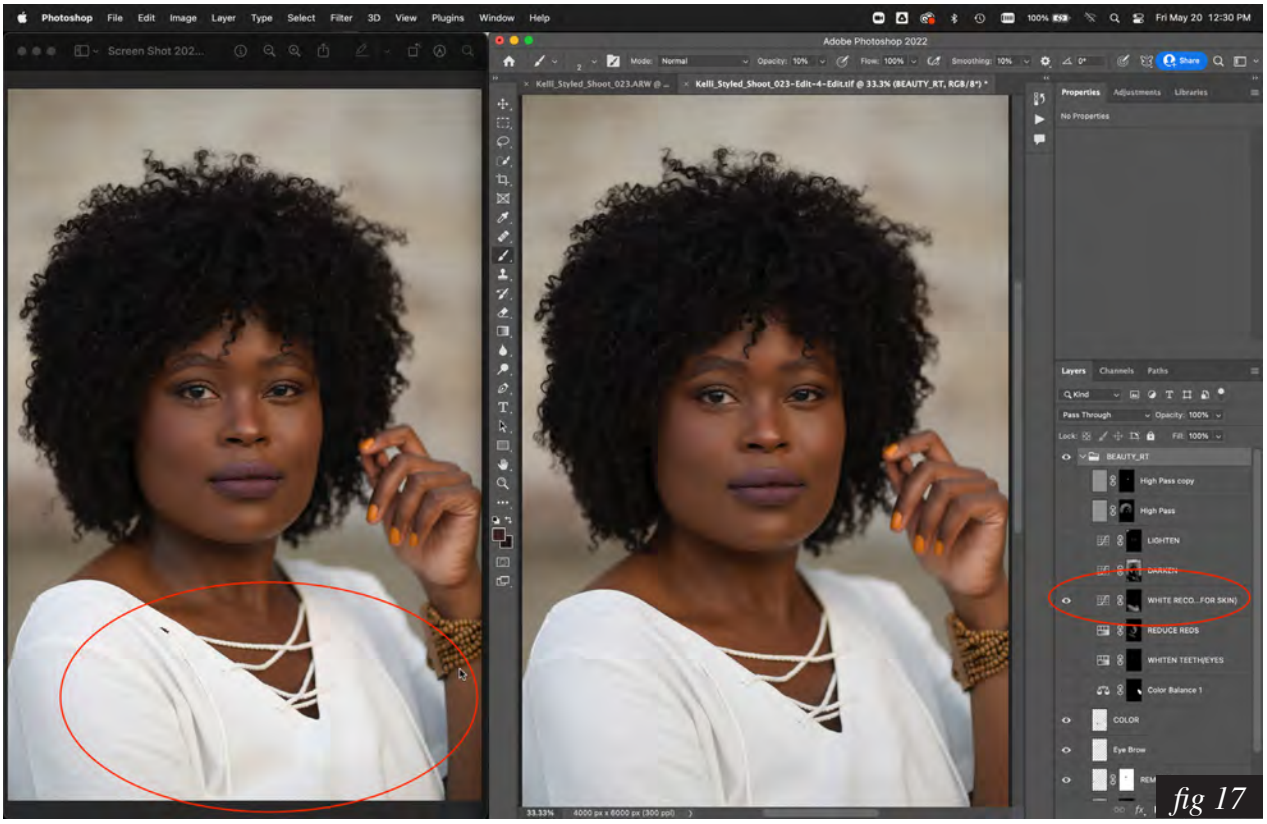

Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Type Select Filter 3D View Plugins Window Help
Fri May 20 12:30 PM
Adobe Photoshop 2022
Kelli_Styled_Shoot_023-Edit-4-Edit.tif @ 33.3% (BEAUTY_RT, RGB/8*)
Properties Adjustments Libraries
No Properties
Layers Channels Paths
BEAUTY_RT
High Pass copy
High Pass
LIGHTEN
DARKEN
WHITE RECO...FOR SKIN)
REDUCE REDS
WHITEN TEETH/EYES
Color Balance 1
COLOR
Eye Brow

fig 17

3. ATTENTION TO DETAIL

When it comes to imagery, details matter and the first thing we need to do is reduce the bright tones to not distract from the main subject. In this image, her shirt is taking too much attention and we need to burn this down. (Fig. 18) Next is sharpening and when zooming in to 100% I see her left eye, camera right is softer. We can apply a sharpening layer and mask her left eye specifically. (Fig. 19)



fig 18

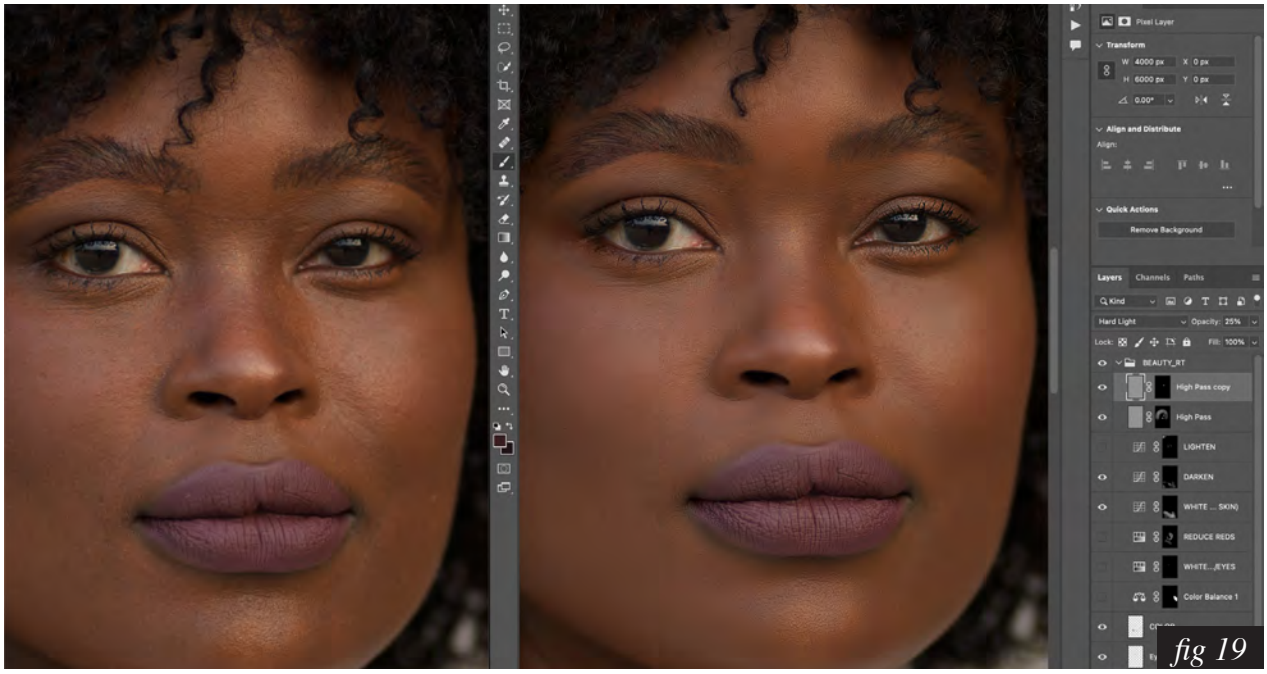


fig 19

Now we can jump to our Darken layer to paint white in the mask to burn down the background. With this same layer I like to slightly darken under the cheeks to accentuate some dimensionality on her face. (Fig. 20) Then we can lightly brighten her cheekbone and chin. This is pretty standard for me to do so I don't necessarily have to liquify her face. This creates a slimming effect and is natural. (Fig. 21)

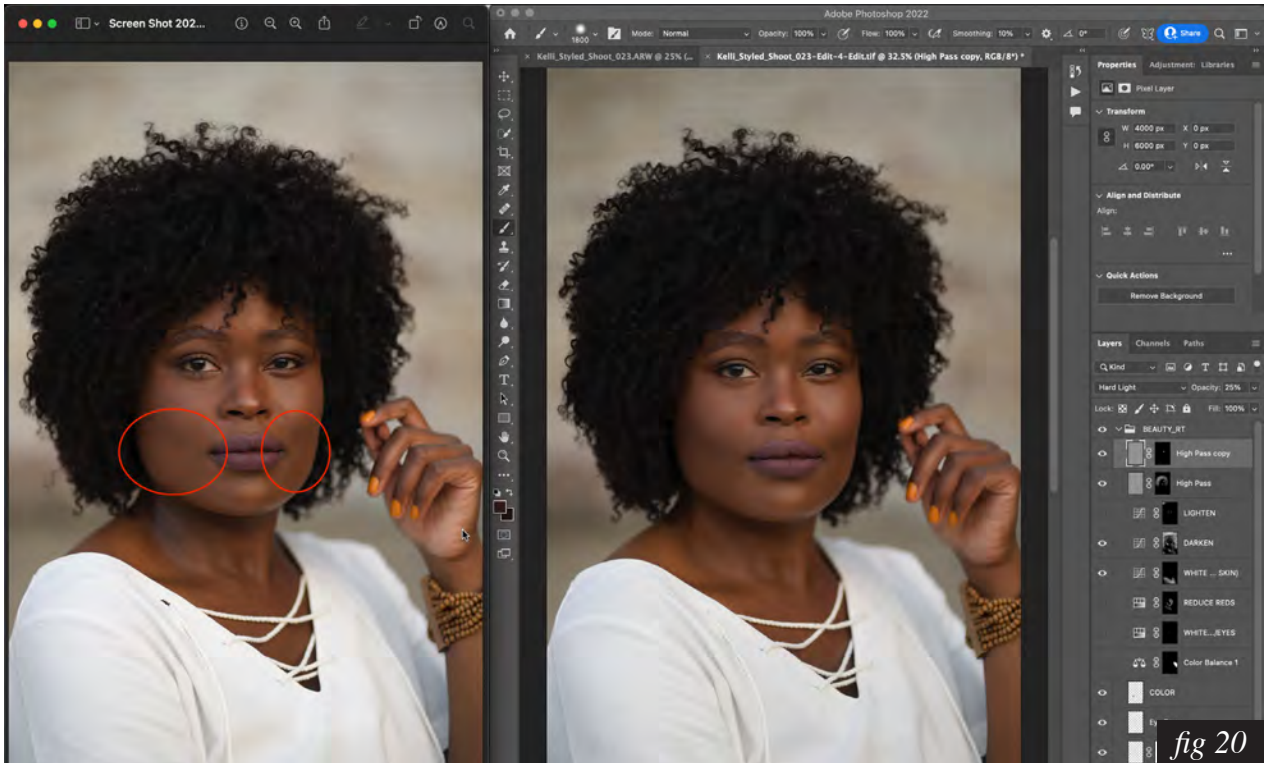


fig 20

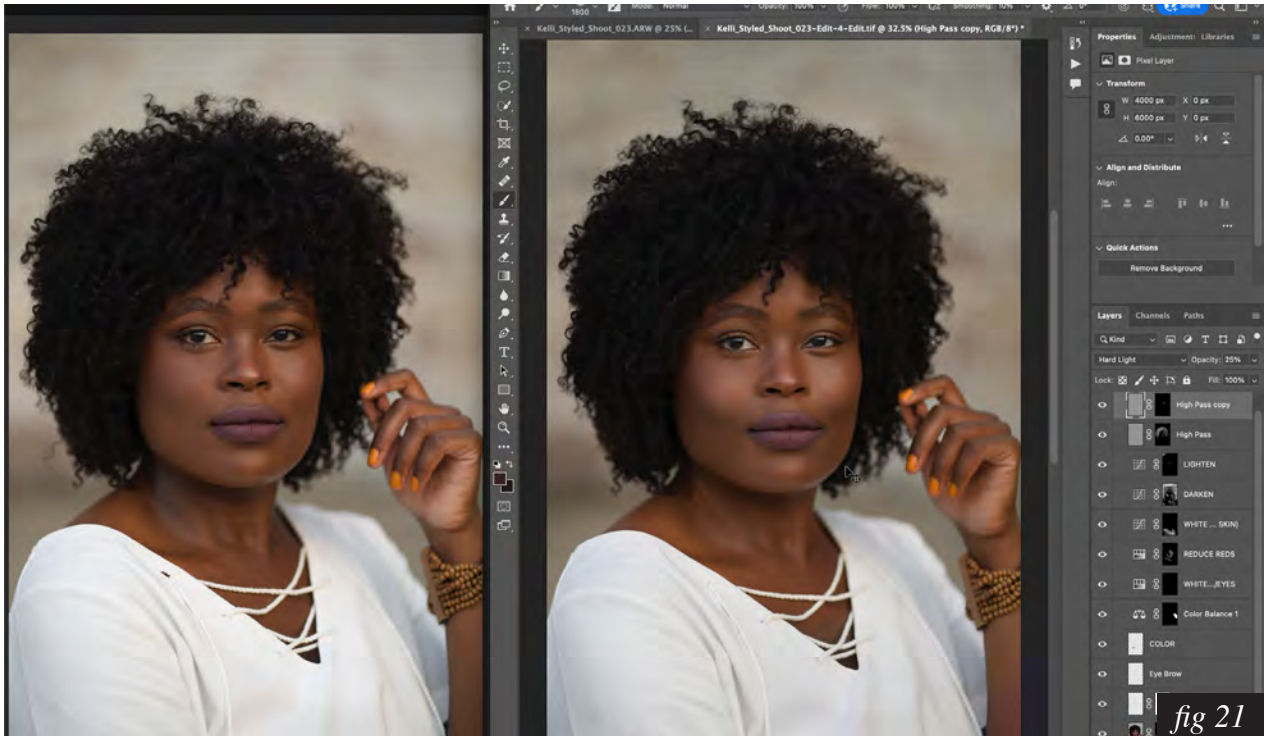


fig 21

Her clothing does need some minor attention to smooth the wrinkles and remove distractions. Moving to my Remove layer I can strike the J key to use the spot healing tool. This works quite well for wrinkles but when I need to manually sample an area I can hold Shift and strike the J key to get the healing brush. Sampling is easy: hold Option and click where you want to sample from and paint in areas with more control. (Fig. 22) I am also noticing some discoloration in her shirt as well. I can jump into the Color layer, strike the B key to get the brush, set opacity to 5%, sample in a neutral area and paint in where needed. (Fig. 23)



fig 22

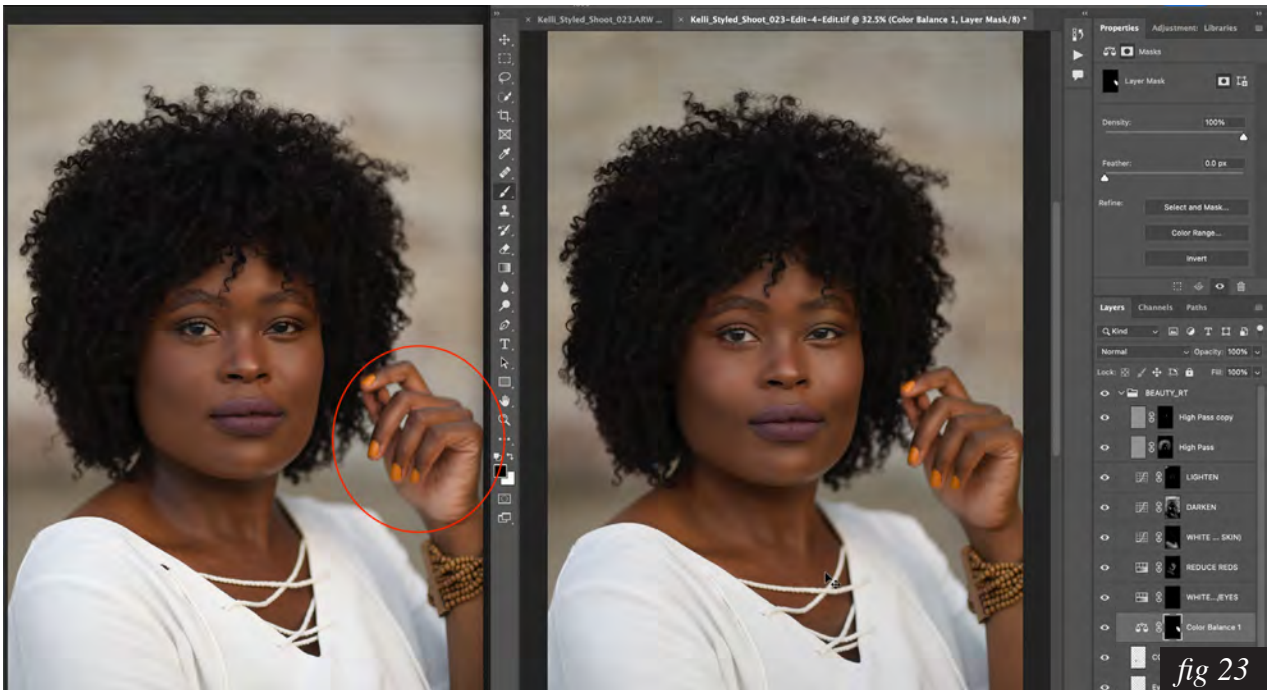


fig 23

Now we are ready for some creative toning and can apply additional dodge and burn techniques. Since I have a few actions put together I can quickly cycle between a few options to get that final look I was going for. I do not want to matte the dark tones because that is really distracting and takes away from her natural hair. (Fig. 24) Making in the sharpened affect to the heaviest on her eyes and face. (Fig. 25)

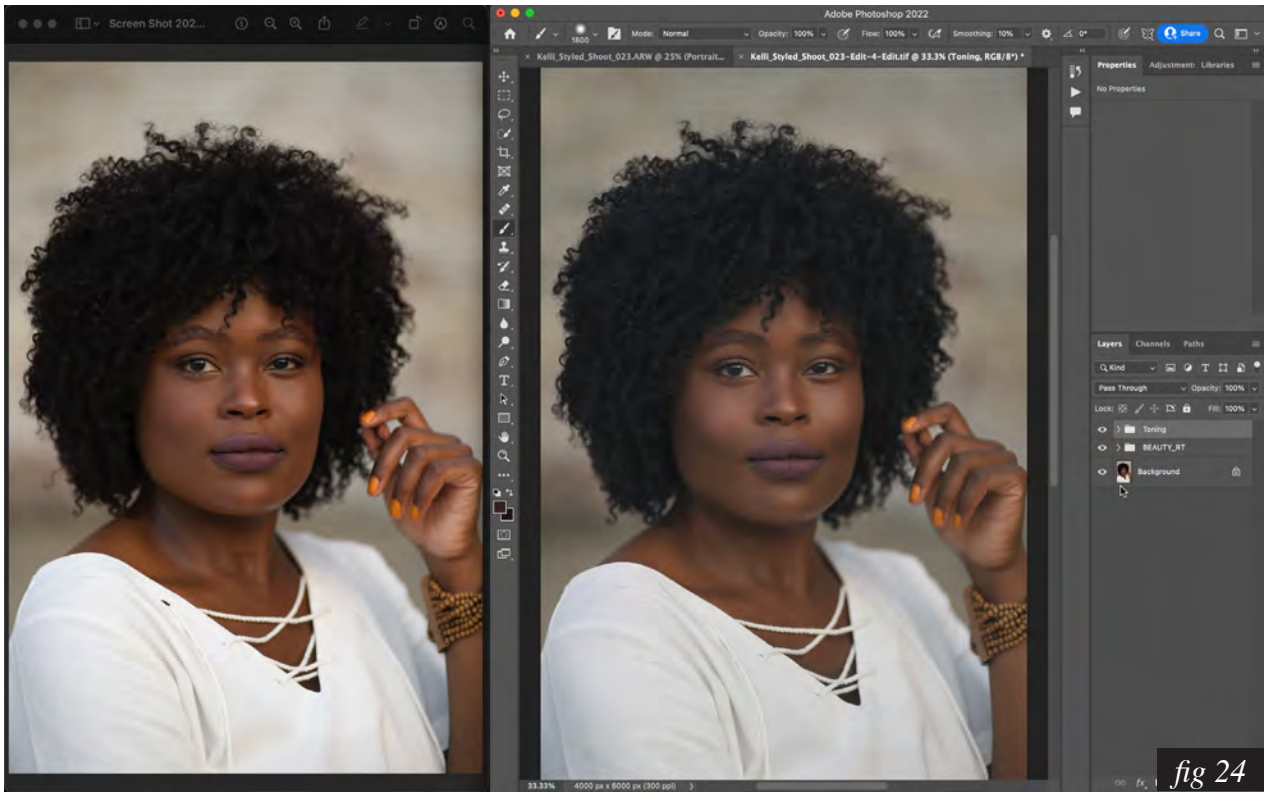


fig 24

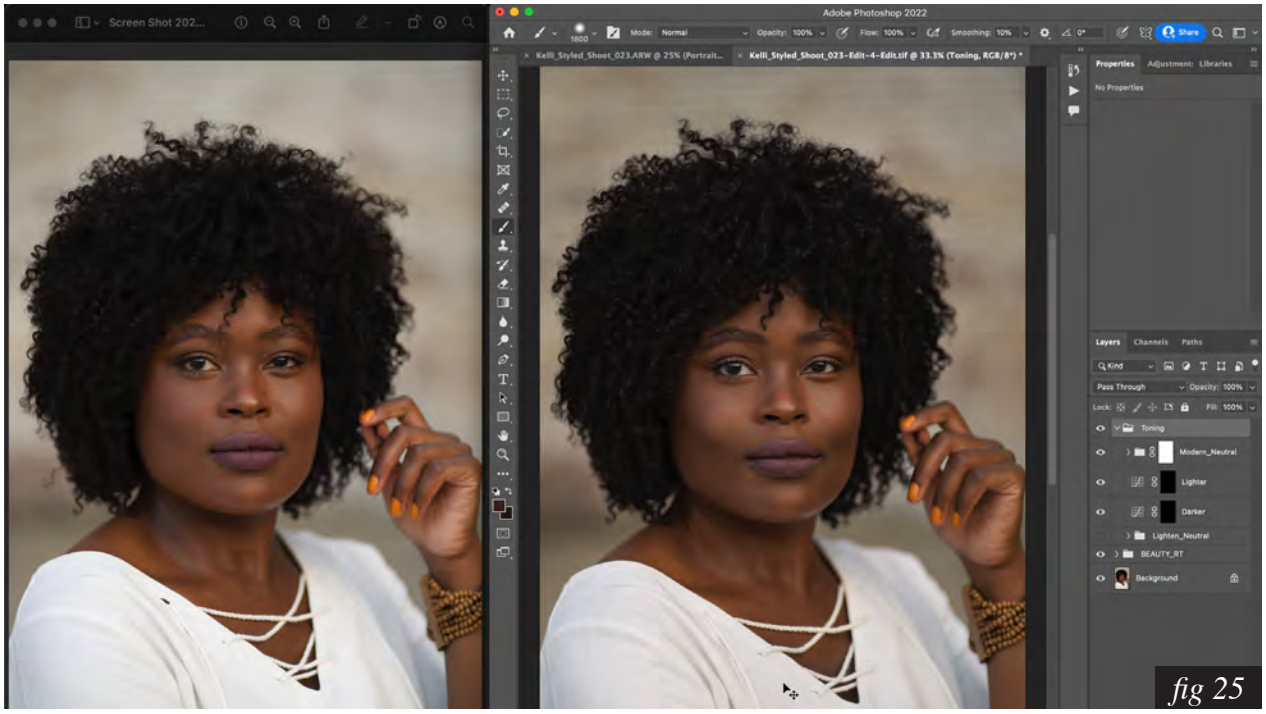


fig 25

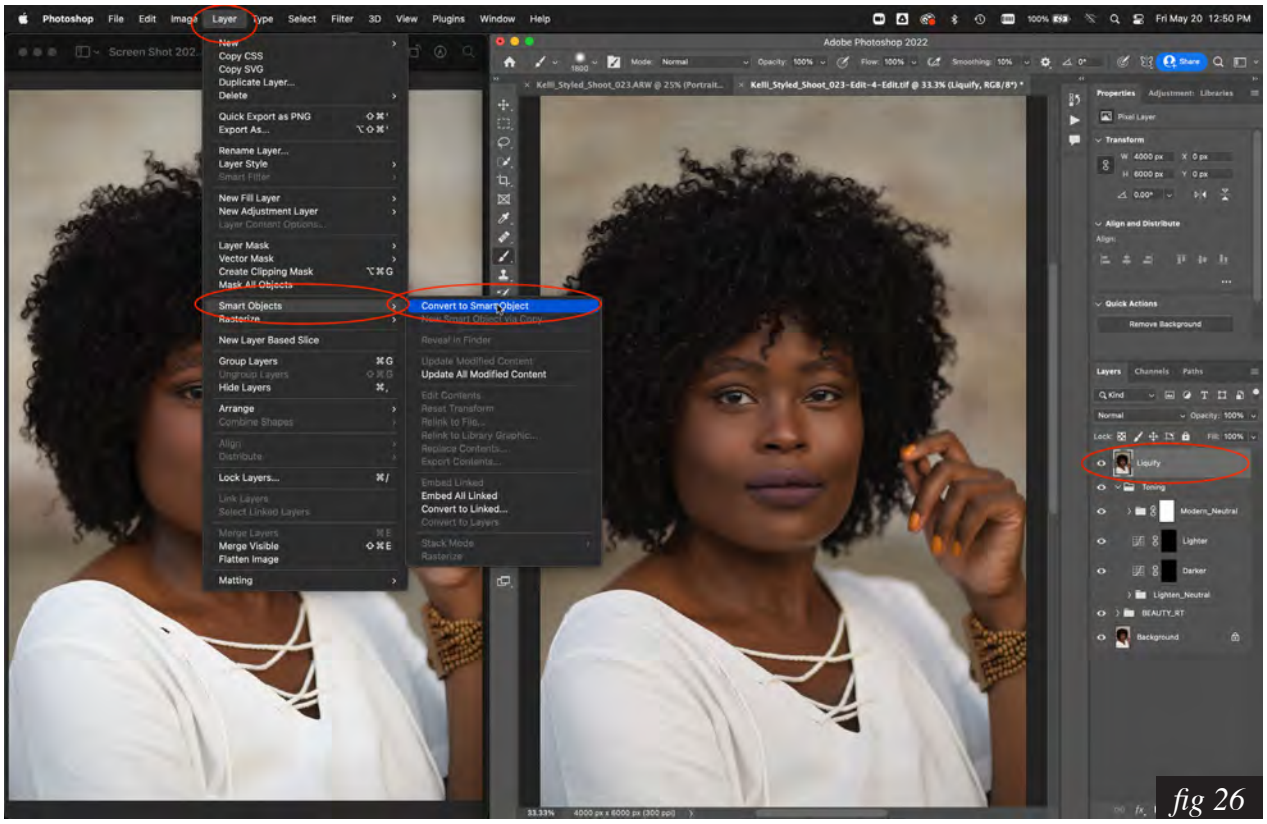


fig 26

Now, if you want to apply Liquify, I tend to do this last as it will be destructive to our beauty editing. There are a ton of workflows and ways to do this so take it with a grain of salt. This is how I work. Once I am happy with the details I will hold Shift, Option and Command while striking the E key to create a smash layer and rename it Liquify. Then I want to have the ability to make adjustments to my Liquify layer in the future so I need to convert it to a Smart Object. (Fig. 26) Now we are ready to jump into Filter>Liquify to lightly thin her face. Now I usually only do this per a client's request or if I captured them in an unflattering angle/pose. Using face-aware Liquify I can quickly thin her jawline and face by moving the points on her face. (Fig. 27)

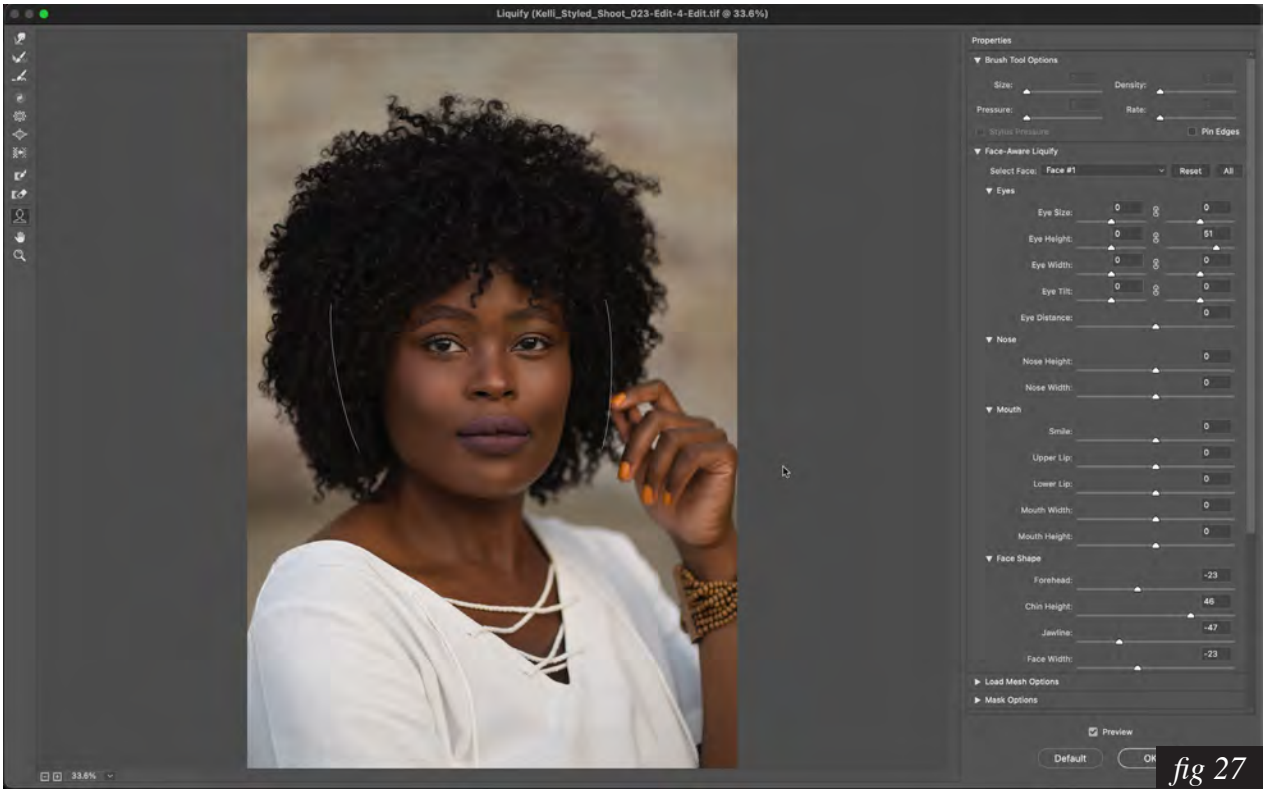


fig 27

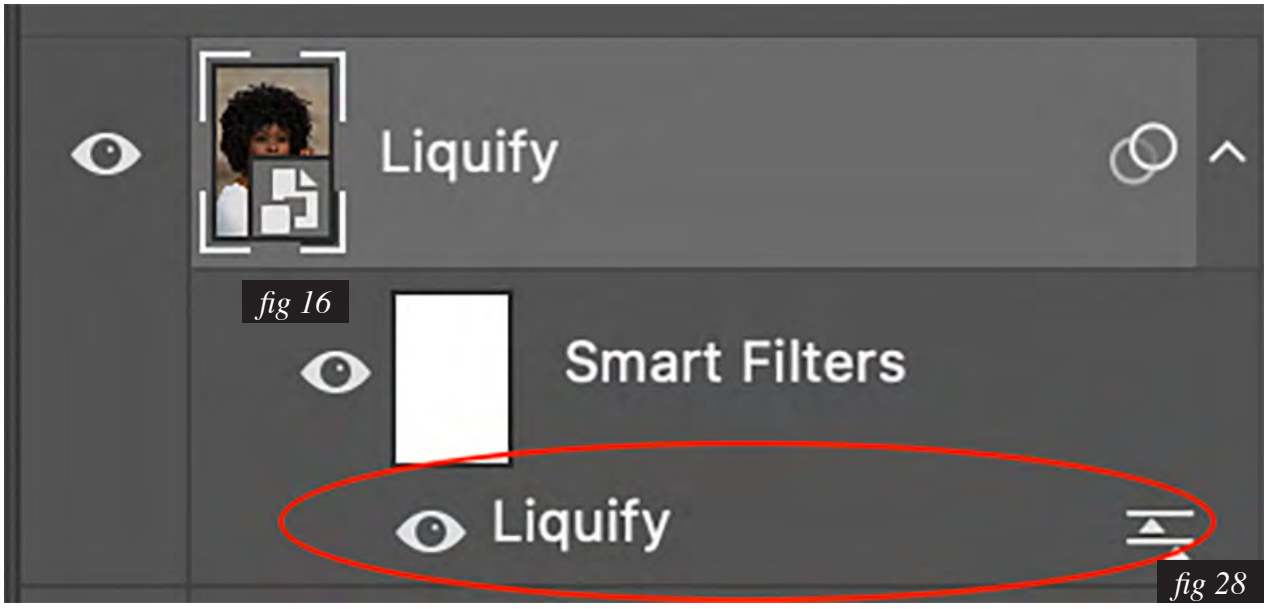


fig 16

fig 28

Last thing I need to do is enlarge her eye on the left as she was conscious of this during the shoot. Again, subtle goes a long way and you do not want your client to not recognize themselves. (Fig. Before and After)





Image © Jessica Lucas

THE RESULTS

Boom—I am really happy with the way this portrait turned out and that's what it's all about. Push yourself to edit better and using these three steps really lets you handle all the aspects of editing. Start out in Lightroom to get a base edit, move into Photoshop for beauty editing, removals, dodge and burn and creative toning. If you don't know where to start, I recommend finding an image you like of another artist and trying to match it. This is called a tear sheet, where you look at catchlights in the eye, depth of field, focal length, editing style, etc. You got this! ■

CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT THE VIDEO!



Dustin Lucas is a full-time photographer and educator focused on the wedding industry and the academic world. After achieving his Master of Fine Arts degree, a career opportunity opened once he began working with Evolve Edits. Through teaching photography classes and writing about photography, Dustin continues to expand his influence on art and business throughout the industry.

website: evolveedits.com instagram.com/evolveimaging/

evolve
create » edit » design

SPEND MORE TIME DOING THINGS YOU LOVE

YOU SHOOT.

WE EDIT.



SELECTION. COLOR CORRECTION. RETOUCHING. SPECIAL EDITS. AND MORE.

evolveedits.com



Image © Gary Box

THE ULTIMATE SENIOR PORTRAIT EXPERIENCE

with **Gary Box**



Image © Gary Box

I am photographing many high school seniors who I photographed their mom or dad's senior photos. I guess that's what happens when you've been in this business for over 33 years in the same town. I keep joking that the first kid that comes in and says "you did my grandma's senior photos," maybe then I should hang it up. I often ask many of my seniors' parents, "So who did YOUR senior portraits?" To the ones that say "you did!" I always ask how they look today. I get comments like, "They still look great, except for the hairstyle." Some say, "Oh, I don't remember." I think that's sad. I hope none of mine are saying that. I hope they remember the experience they had with me.

I keep adding new aspects to the senior expeience, trying to give them much more than just great photos that will last their entire lives. I'd love to share some of those with you!

It starts with the Studio Tour. We don't do "consultations"—that's not a fun word. It sounds like you're considering a medical procedure. Instead, we do a Studio Tour. OK, I'll confess, it's a consultation, and then some. We start by greeting them, offing them a soda or water. I shake their hand and introduce myself. My tour starts with a slide presentation, using an Apple TV on a large TV in the gallery. It starts with "Who are you?" I explain this is the most important question I will ask them. I want to know who they are, because I want to capture more than just what they look like, I want to capture WHO they are!



The presentation goes into their school activities first. I have images that illustrate not only football, cheer, basketball, etc., but also band, color guard, theater and more. The second section covers non-school activities. More photos to get them thinking! I show an image of a senior boy with a rope. I tell them he is a champion roper who came from near Houston. Their eyes get big, that's a seven-hour drive. I tell them I shot low and he loved how it made him look tall and strong. Other images have stories attached to them. Like the bowler who's throwing a ball and it's not yet touching the ground. I tell them how I stood in the middle of the bowling lane, which is slick as ice, and told her to throw the ball at me and how I captured it before it even hit the ground. I took the shot, jumped out of the way and she made a strike with that shot. So did I. I want them to relate to the stories behind the images and how they capture the person in them.

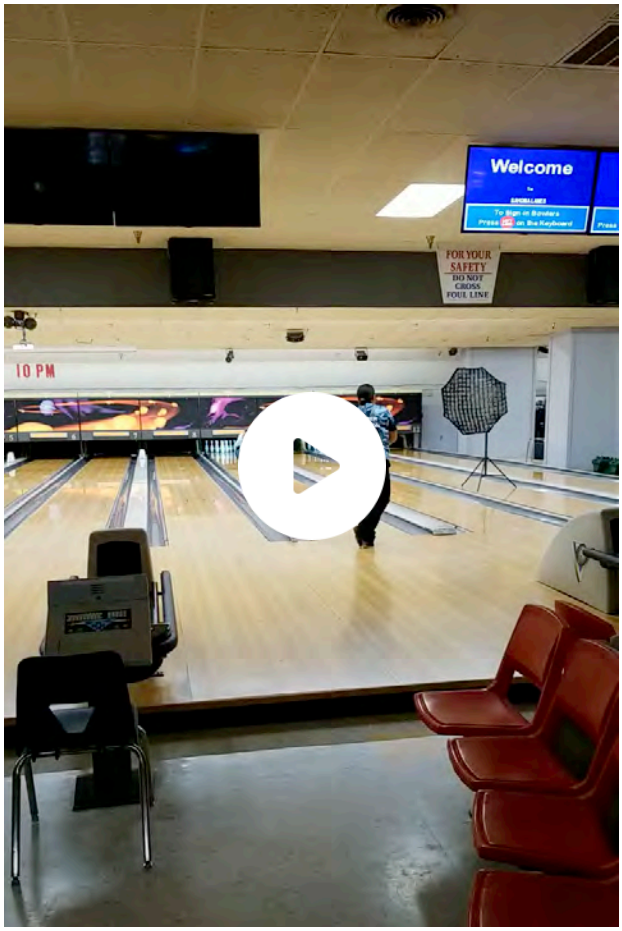
I also cover images that capture their hobbies, career goals, location options and more. I show them the portrait of a dancer on the Tulsa Performing Arts Center stage and how if we put forth some effort, it's amazing the places we can get access to. Often, we only need to ask! Or the senior boy who loves to play guitar and we were able to shoot inside the legendary music hall, Cain's Ballroom. At this point, they are realizing, this isn't going to be boring. There's a little psychology to it. As we talk about these ideas, more and more starts to be revealed about who they are and what they love.



We explain our Boomerang Sessions (I'll cover that more in depth in a moment) and how their album can cover their entire senior year. This is much more than a simple photo shoot. We follow that with a tour through our 6,000-square-foot studio. We show mom what products everone buys (the preselling begins!) and lightly cover the financial aspects of the process. If I can get them in for a tour, I have almost a 90% booking rate. We send the ones who book with us home with a style guide giving them all kinds of clothing tips, makeup tips and more.

The day of their shoot is all about fun! From the moment they walk in the door, we are catering to them. We take their clothes from their hands, put them in the dressing room and get them a cold drink. The girls have a stylist team they can opt into. Our hair and makeup artists come to the studio and meet them there instead of running to multiple places. They can look at their clothes and match the makeup and hair to their style. After the makeup is done, we start finalizing our plan, looking at clothing and reviewing their Pinterest idea board we ask them to build. This lets me know the style of images they like, so I can custom tailor my photography to their taste. They might like dramatic, whimiscal, playful or a mix. This is usually apparent in their idea board.







During their photo shoot, we pay close attention to every detail. Their hair needs to be perfect. If the clothing needs to be tailored, we might clamp it up for the perfect fit. Most 17-year-old seniors don't know how to pose themselves in a flattering way, so I coach them into the best angles for their body type. I've been told over and over how helpful it is when I show them the best way to stand. I joke with them and get them laughing. Even the guys that don't want to be there end up liking it. We typically start at the main studio and then go to the outdoor studio. This is where the experience escalates a little! Our outdoor studio is about four miles from the main studio and has airplanes, fire truck, old pickups, a VW van and lots of sets to choose from. We also have the Box Bus! It's a short school bus that was converted into a party bus. I turned the back into a dressing room, complete with mirror, makeup lights and more. It's air conditioned, has a refrigerator full of cold drinks and more. From there we can go on to any other locations they like.

If they have big ideas, I like to make a big production out of it. If it takes setting up multiple lights to light up an airplane because he wants to be a pilot, no problem! Like to scuba dive? Let's go to the lake. A rock climber? OK, I will hang over the top of the cliff as you climb up beneath me. I've even gone sky diving with a senior! No idea is too big if that's their passion.



After their main session, they come back to the studio in just a couple of days for their order session. We use room view and show their portaits on their wall for mom and dad to help them design their custom album layout. But their experience isn't over yet! We still have their Boomerang Sessions!

What's a Boomerang Session? What happens when you throw a boomerang? It comes back! I tell them they can come back as many times as they want throughout the year! A fall shoot or snow session, spring sports, prom dress or cap and gown! They can come back as many times as they want, adding to their album, to their senior year story. You might be wondering how that works. We put their album printing on hold. They get their individual prints and digitals now, and we print their book when they have completed their Boomerang Sessions. Some seniors do one, but we've had them do up to six! The more they come back, the better we get to know them and the more they spend!

By the end of their senior year, they are like family to us. We get invited to their grad parties and never show up empty handed. Some come back when they are a college senior and hopefully throughout their lives. After all, one day I want to photograph their kids and give them a great experience too. ■

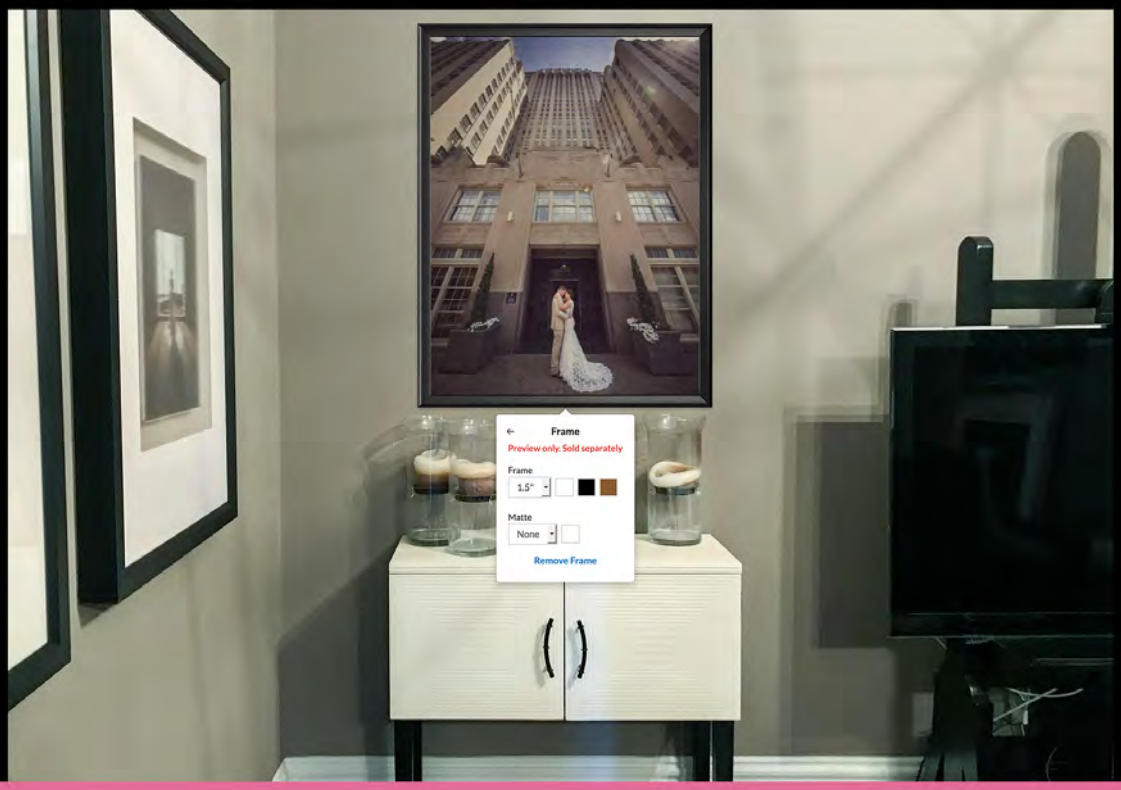


Gary has been preserving milestone moments of people's lives for over three decades. He is now photographing seniors who he did their mom and dad's senior portraits.

website: garybox.com instagram.com/garyboxart/

NO STUDIO? NO PROBLEM

Dual-Vu allows you to run virtual sales sessions with ease and is sure to wow your clients with a simple, clean interface.





learn more **power.n-vu.com/dual-vu/**

ADDING SENIOR FILMS TO THE PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE

with **Garon Cooper**

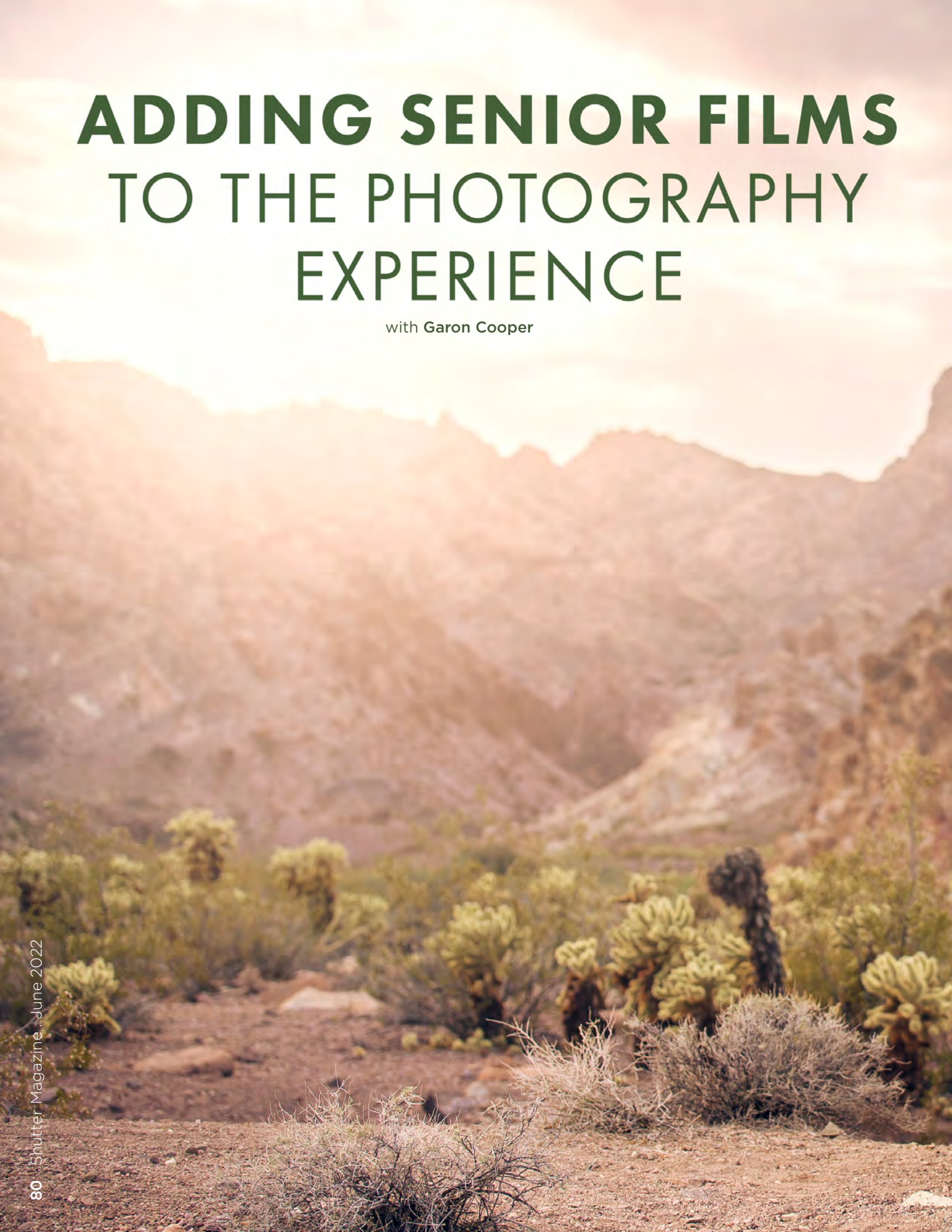




Image © Garon Photo & Cinema



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

Video is everything right now. TikTok. Stories. YouTube.

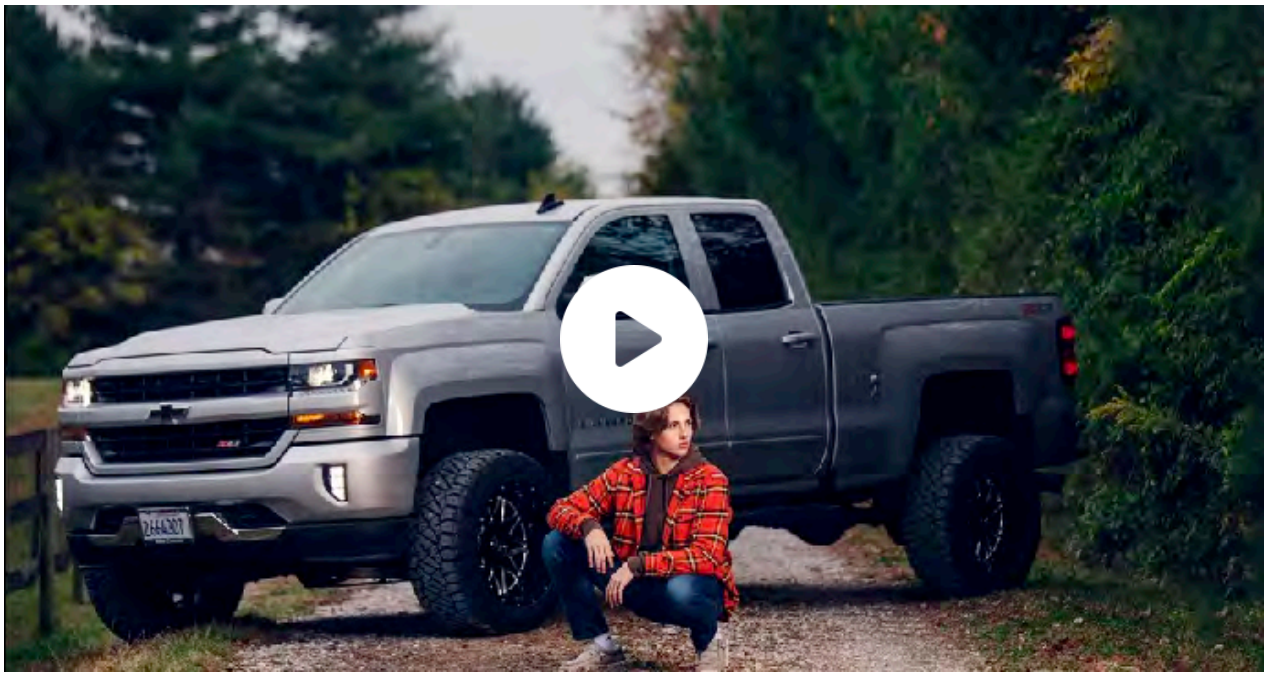
And video is everywhere right now. Phones. Billboards. VR.

This is the world our senior clients are growing up in and they're creating and engaging with video content more than any generation before them. This is a huge opportunity for creatives working with this demographic to craft next-level content in their sessions and expand their experience.

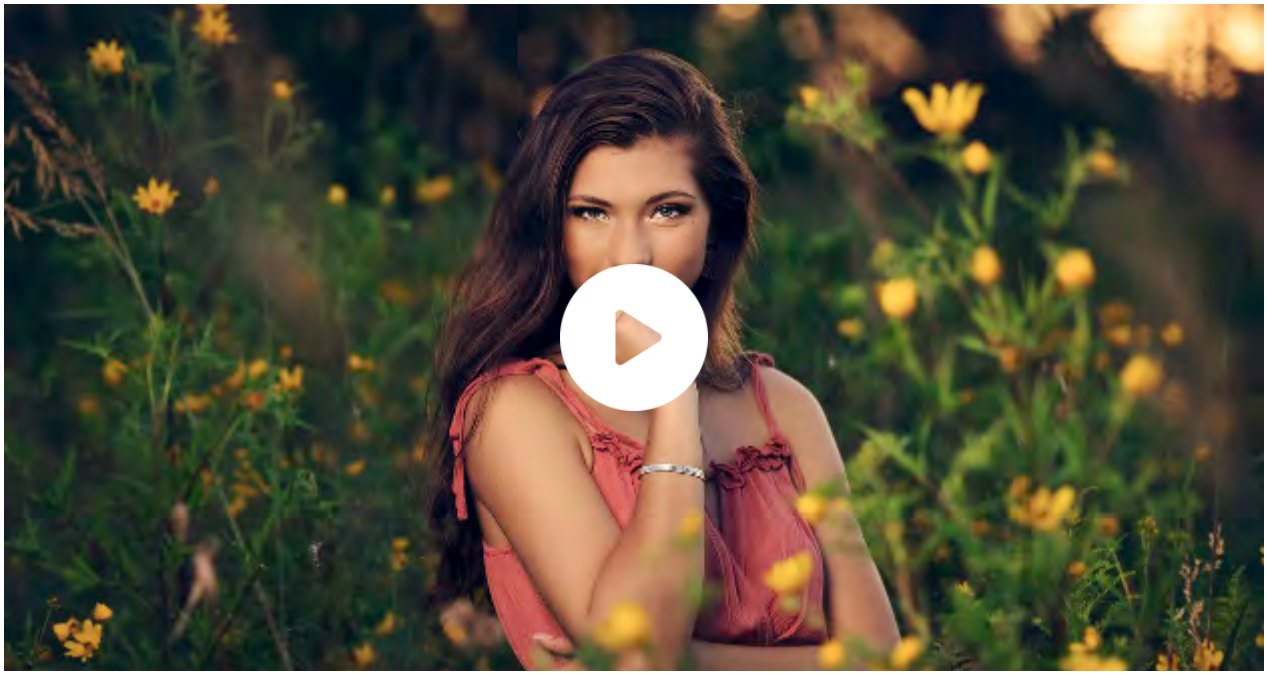
And it's easier than ever. The cameras we're shooting their stills on have had great video built in for years. Smartphones have become incredibly capable video cameras. Let's put these tools to work for our clients!

I've been offering senior films for a few years now, and they've been very popular. It's definitely something I believe most photographers should consider adding. Clients are booking them for a unique experience and finished product that complements their photos. And it's still something no one else is offering, so it'll stand out in any market.

Let's start checking out what a senior film looks like:



"What about seniors who don't have trucks, ride horses and play sports?" Not to worry:



If you're saying, "I'm a photographer, not a cinematographer. I don't know how to create videos like this"—let's break down some of the components of a senior film and see if we can simplify things.

STORYTELLING

Every good video has a storytelling element. This doesn't need to be complicated. We're not talking about scripting out a movie scene or storyboarding a commercial. This can be as simple as "walking from one location to another," "exploring a setting," "showing off an outfit," or "practicing their sport or hobby."

I generally keep the idea very simple for seniors, and base it off of what they give me to work with. What are the outfits, locations, and props or activities we have selected for the session? These are the same elements we're already using for the photo portion of the shoot, but now I'm thinking of a way to create a video around them.



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

Image © Garon Photo & Cinema



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

VARIETY

The main thing that matters when filming is to pack in as much variety as possible. My main critique of most videos shot by photographers is that they look like they're shot by photographers. We tend to think in terms of "portraits" and "poses" but I want to switch my focus to "movements" and "directions." We don't want every shot to be framed like a portrait or to capture static and boring poses.

The easiest way to start creating variety is by having your senior walk while you shoot a simple "wide, medium, tight" format. Wherever they're walking, back up and get a wide shot showing off the entire scene, then move in for a mid shot of your subject, and then get in for a face or eyes closeup. This mixture of shots will create a more compelling story than one long, boring shot.

Then mix in some creative details. Shoot closeups of their shoes, jewelry, hair, flowing dress or necktie, putting on sunglasses or a hat, etc. This will spice up your footage even more and start to give it more of a "produced" appeal.

And keep things moving—whether it's the subject, the camera or both! Play with angles, gimbal movements and directions for your subject.

POSING VS DIRECTING

When I'm shooting photos, I'm generally working to create static poses for stills. I don't usually need movement, so my instructions are something like "angle your body this way, put your hand here, chin this direction, eyes at me," etc. For video, I'm giving my subject something to do. "Walk toward me while looking off. Run your fingers through your hair. Slowly look into the camera. Twirl when I say 'action.'"

Again, what matters most is that movement. And we'll likely repeat each direction a number of times as I focus on getting that variety I'm after. My senior might walk the same line, do the same twirl, or play with their jewelry five times while I get my wide, medium, tight and creative angles.



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

Image © Garon Photo & Cinema



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

LOGISTICS

You're probably wondering how I make this work in a senior session. Here's a quick list of tips:

• Use a gimbal. I like DJI Ronins. This will keep your footage smooth and your workflow fast and nimble.
• Use a camera with a flip-out screen and video autofocus. Most new cameras have this.
• Use two dedicated cameras: one for photo and one for video. Trying to swap between both on one camera will slow you down too much.
• At each location and with each outfit, shoot all your photos first (posing). Then pick up the video camera and shoot all your video (directing). Don't try to flip between the two for every shot.
• Consider bringing someone to shoot video for you. This will add to your cost, but reduce your need to split your attention between both products.
• Add extra time to your sessions. You're adding a product and extra shoot time, so make sure to allow time for it. I add an hour when a senior books video.
• This takes practice. Learning the tools, how to use them efficiently, and creating quality footage may be a completely new skill for you. Expect some frustration while you figure everything out. But be patient and stick with it—you'll get there!

EDITING

Remember learning Photoshop for the first time? Editing software will have its own learning curve if you're new to it. The good news is there are TONS of resources online to get you up to speed. This is one of those topics that I could write volumes on, but let me break down the key concepts in a few more bullet points:

• Keep videos short. Mine are 60 seconds. Short enough for social media and teenage attention spans. Also short enough to make interesting edits with the limited footage I can get on a senior session.
• Pick (and license) quality music. And cut your footage to the beat of the music.
• Don't hold shots too long. It's tempting to hold that amazing 10-second shot until it's done, but resist that urge and CUT!
• Mix your angles up for visual interest.



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

What does all this look like from the client perspective?

My senior films are premium products that come at a higher price point. Clients who choose to add the films to their photo shoot will select it when booking and pay the difference—it's never something I try to add on during or after the session.

Many clients need some help visualizing what a video would look like for them. At the consultation, while we're discussing photo ideas, I'm also describing my ideas for their film as if describing my favorite scene from a movie. They've probably never seen a senior film before, so help them imagine what theirs could look like. And reassure them that they don't need acting talent any more than they need modeling talent for stills. We take care of that for them! And just like giving them a confidence boost by showing stills on the back of the camera, show them some killer video shots too!

When they come back in for their ordering session, their film is the first and last thing I play. It's like their own mini movie premiere! Their video then lives at the top of the custom app I make with their images, as well as a download link.



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

GETTING STARTED

If you're nervous about adding video to your sessions, the best thing to do is get some practice in first. Experiment with your kids, model team, relatives, neighbors, etc. Learn how to use the tools and put a cut together.

Once you're comfortable shooting, offer it to some clients for free. You'll get to practice your session workflow without the pressure of delivering on a paid product. Once you have the wrinkles ironed out and a handful of samples under your belt, it's time to add them as a paid option!

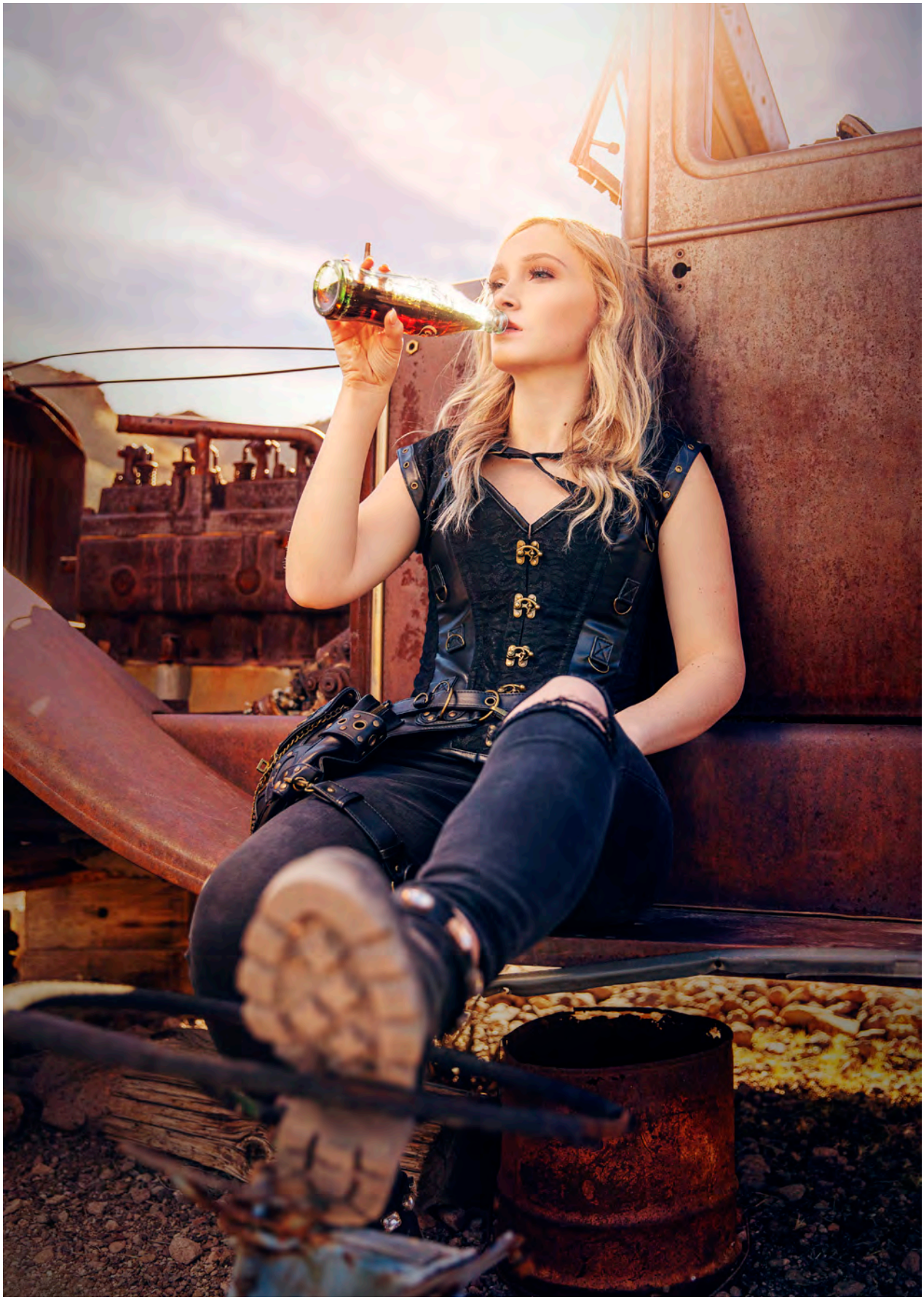


Image © Garon Photo & Cinema



Image © Garon Photo & Cinema

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT

Seriously. And don't let the feeling that it does stop you from trying it. It doesn't have to look like Hollywood to be something your clients will absolutely love and be willing to pay for. It's new and different and captures their child in a unique way.

Make it yours! My examples are created in a style that suits me. But just like we all have our own photo styles, cinematographers have their own video styles. There are a TON of ways to implement senior films. Have fun and play around with ideas until you have something that's unique to you and your brand. ■



Garon is a senior and commercial photographer and cinematographer in Troy, Illinois. He loves long walks on the beach, puppies, and creating kickass images and videos for clients.

website: garonphotocinema.com **instagram.com/garoncooper/**





NEXT LEVEL PORTRAIT LIGHTING

with **Josh Russell**

Image © Josh Russell Studios



Image © Josh Russell Studios

So many times I ask myself, "Is this what everybody else is doing?" Over the years I've really tried to see my portraits through a different eye. Whether it be adding in colored gels, lighting certain areas that often wouldn't be lit, using smoke bombs or even just "turning around" and shooting the opposite direction than what you'd expect. Portrait photography, especially "on location" portraits, really are the best place to get creative!

There are many ways to take your portraits to another level. However, I have created a simple workflow that has helped me create the BANGERS that have turned a hobby into a full-blown career.

Image © Josh Russell Studios









Images © Josh Russell Studios

The first and most important step to creating better photos is to SLOW DOWN! There are so many times I've left a photo shoot, gotten back to my studio, and said to myself, "Man, I wished I'd have noticed this at the shoot!" When creating a portrait, it's not about "run and gunning" and "spray and praying." You are setting the scene, you are often creating the lighting, and most importantly, you are telling the story through your camera. It's not about hurrying up. Take your time, move your lights, try other angles. Just because the first couple of photos aren't what you are looking for as your end result, slowing down will allow you to fine-tune and tweak each part of your process until it is just right!

I often was worried if I took too much time, I was going to lose the patience of my client. The truth of the matter is, as long as you keep them involved in the process, they aren't going to care how long it takes. Walk them through your process as you are doing it. Tell them why you are moving a light, or show them how excited you are when you catch a killer shot. Another great thing to do is SHOW THEM THE BACK OF YOUR CAMERA! The model or client doesn't know what the photo looks like from your perspective, but showing them what you are doing will get their creative juices flowing just as much as yours are.



Image © Josh Russell Studios



Now this next step might be more of a personal opinion, but if you aren't using off-camera flash (OCF) or LED lighting for your portraits, you are missing a vital piece to taking your photos to the next level. Movie sets do not rely on natural lighting or practical (ambient) lighting, so why should a photographer? Using OCF or LEDs will allow you to light your subject while still mixing in practical lighting. Then, by adding in more lights you are able to fine-tune exactly what is properly lit, what is lit for effects, and what stays dark. I often say, the more lights, the better! Even in the brightest of days, you can find me using lighting with high-speed sync to get those bright blue skies and what I call "Toy Story" clouds. By using high-speed sync, you are able to shoot above the 1/250th shutter issue that used to hinder so many photographers. By doing this you are able to bump that shutter speed up to expose for your background and then properly light your subject with your off-camera flash.

Image © Josh Russell Studios



Image © Josh Russell Studios

Another valuable step I've added to my workflow over the years was to "always try to see the entire picture." What I mean by this is, instead of worrying about just your subject, start thinking about every aspect of your photo. Think about your background, the foreground, and all of the little details that are going to make your photo stand out from the rest. Often I find myself pulling over in the middle of a drive just to snap a quick picture on my phone. Why do I do this? Because at some point in the future I may be looking for a location like this and if I didn't keep my eyes open, I may have completely missed an opportunity. Yes, this does annoy the heck out of my wife, but sometimes you have to pull the car over before finishing the trip! The difference between a good portrait and a great portrait is making sure every part of the photo looks good, is properly lit, and makes sense in the photo. If you're taking a photo in an urban setting, a trash can in the background makes sense, a pretty arrangement of flowers does not. Think about "why" something is in your photo, and if it doesn't make sense, take it out!



Image © Josh Russell Studios

The final and one of the best parts of this entire portrait process is, get out there and try new things! Whether it be booking some trade for print (TFP) sessions to experiment, or putting your camera on a tripod and throwing yourself in the shot. Like I mentioned in the beginning, use some colored gels and create some sweet color concepts. Another fun thing is smoke bombs or atmosphere aerosol cans. This can create smokey scenarios that add real drama to a photo! With the help of my friend Erik, I also created my own mobile fog machine by taking a backyard bug fogger and switching it out with a mixture of fog solution and glycerin. This portable fog machine can create a haze in a sunset session that resembles something directly out of your favorite Disney story.

As bad as it may sound, some of my favorite photos are the ones I didn't even plan. So, even if every part of the project planning is perfect, you have to remember that we do this to have fun, to be creative and to make art. Don't be afraid to step outside of the normal "tilt your head and smile" and get down and dirty sometimes literally. I am not afraid to get knee-deep in a body of water to get an angle that isn't often seen. To me that is the best part about what I do, trying to make a photo that has not been often seen.



Image © Josh Russell Studios

The final step to my process of taking next level portraits is the editing. I know to so many eyes, "if you can't get it in camera, then you're not doing your job." I personally believe the real "art" starts when the SD card is inserted in my computer. I always retouch skin blemishes and use frequency separation to make skin look amazing. I also absolutely love bringing out detail in the eyes. Getting the eyes as sharp as possible is important because that is where you want to draw your viewers' eyes first in a photo. I am also notorious for boosting the vibrance. I love bright colors in my photos (see above about the "Toy Story" clouds). Even in my dramatic grunge photos, I want the colors to be vibrant. The most important part of the editing process, and often overlooked, is color grading. Going back to the movie production scenario, they do not film and release the movie, they color correct and add custom colors to every scene, so, why aren't you doing it to your photos? By using Lookup Tables, or LUTs for short, you can really add custom color grades by laying your LUTs and tweaking the opacity of each layer, you really can create some epic photos.

Image © Josh Russell Studios



Image © Josh Russell Studios

Overall I simply think the most important part of creating a "better portrait" is having fun and slowing down. As long as you are pushing yourself to be a better photographer with each photo you take, you will notice your photo skills growing with each push of the shutter. I personally try to outdo every photo I've ever taken with each new session. Of course, there are times I leave a session and think to myself, "Man, that could have gone way better than that," but the more you practice and the more you think about your shooting process while in the moment, the amount of "let down" sessions will be fewer and farther apart. Yes, sometimes you can't always create a perfect photo. Sometimes just circumstances work against you, but as long as you have fun, and really think about what you are doing, and be willing to try new things, you should be able to get those epic BANGERS that will make your momma proud! ■



Josh Russell is a portrait and wedding photographer from Kaukauna, Wisconsin. With no formal schooling, Josh prides himself on the knowledge he has gained over the years from resources such as YouTube and online classes. Josh was once a troubled youth, who went from being homeless to now owning a six-figure photography studio. He is the true definition of "success story." Josh is currently sponsored by Westcott Lighting, AfterShoot, and CamRanger.

website: joshrussellstudios.com instagram.com/iamjoshrussell

westcott®

FJ WIRELESS
FLASH SYSTEM



NEW!

FJ80™

UNIVERSAL TOUCHSCREEN 80Ws SPEEDLIGHT

Navigating a speedlight menu system has never been easier. The first round head touchscreen speedlight with integrated radio transceiver that provides revolutionary multi-brand camera compatibility like the FJ-X2m. Use on-camera as both a speedlight and transmitter for controlling FJ Wireless and Canon RT flashes, or position anywhere off-camera.

$329.90



NEW!

FJ200™

200Ws STROBE

Intelligently designed for photographers that need a portable flash without sacrificing power, this 200Ws strobe with round head features an industry-leading 0.5 to 1.3 second recycle time and fits in the palm of your hand. Comes standard with tilter bracket, reflector, grid, and gels for additional lighting control.

$399.90



FJ400™

400Ws STROBE WITH AC/DC BATTERY

The first portable 400Ws AC/DC strobe with less than 1 second recycle time at full power, 480+ full-power flashes per charge, and unrivaled color consistency across its entire 9-stop output range. Includes a free Rapid Box Switch light mount insert.

$569.90



FJ-X2M

UNIVERSAL WIRELESS TRIGGER

Pair the FJ-X2m with virtually any camera to maximize the full potential of all FJ flashes. It's multi-brand compatible with many Canon, Nikon, Sony (with adapter), Fuji, Panasonic Lumix, and Olympus cameras. With a large display and user-friendly menu, controlling TTL and HSS has never been easier.

$99.90

Unrivaled performance. Revolutionary compatibility.

FJWESTCOTT.COM/FJWIRELESS

Visit fjwestcott.com/4705 for FJ-X2m and FJ80 camera compatibility. Trademarks listed are property of their respective owners. ©F.J. Westcott Co. All rights reserved.

LIGHTING FOR SPORTS PORTRAITS

with **Matt Hernandez**



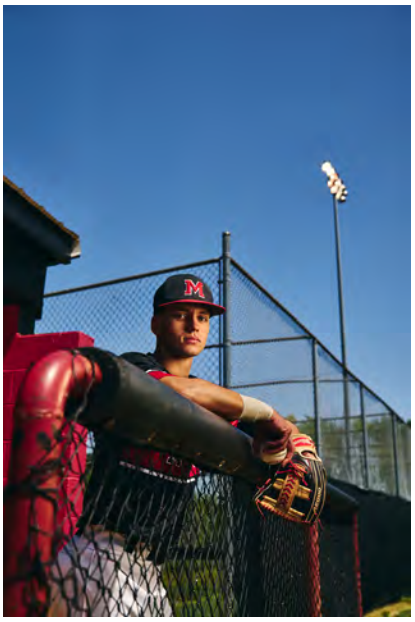


Image © Matt Hernandez Creative



When anyone approaches me requesting advice for photography and how to build a business doing it, the first thing I tell them is, "You better LOVE it and you better be willing to work REALLY hard. It's a lot harder than it looks, and it's not nearly as glamorous as it looks either." Most of the time people only see the end product. Not many get to see me lying in the dirt on a 90-degree day, getting filthy and sweating until my shirt is soaked to get "the shot." They only see the final image on the wall in my studio or on Instagram that makes them say, "WOW… That's AWESOME." Sometimes the shot you think is going to turn out as your "wow image" is what you think it will be on the shoot, and sometimes it's one you never expected. The take from the shoot almost always looks different once you have it on the computer than it does while you're shooting, and I guess that's my point as I ramble on at the beginning of this article… Don't be lazy. Get as wide of a variety of shots as you can, and don't ever say "I'll fix it in post" or "We can come back and get that shot later" because "later" will probably never come. If you need to lay down in the mud to get that hero shot, DO IT! I promise your clothes will be OK once you wash them. Getting your hands dirty is just part of it sometimes and not everyone is willing to do it. If you want to be different, that's just going to be part of it!

So let's go back to the topic of variety to start. My first big tip would be to maximize every setup you do. Tip #1: shoot "tight, middle, wide" on everything you can. For example, if you are using a 70-200 lens, get your setup and light right, then shoot one full body at 70, zoom in about halfway and take a second, then go all the way to 200 for a third. If you use this technique both in landscape and portrait orientation, you can walk away with six different shots from the exact same setup/pose. Believe it or not, getting into that habit is easier said than done. I personally have a bad tendency to take the same shot a few times, but when I remind myself to shoot tight, middle and wide, it really helps cut down on shoot time and deliver a lot of different images in less time. It seems like it never fails: if I don't shoot something full body or tight, the client asks for it after the fact. Once you've shot your setup all three ways horizontal and vertical, try moving to a new spot while leaving the subject and your lights in place. For example, in the images here





Images © Matt Hernandez Creative

The first shot is with my player inside the dugout fence with me outside and the lights camera right. After I got that shot I took two steps inside the fence to my left, had him square his shoulders with me, then look over his left shoulder to get the second image, a profile shot of him looking out onto the field. Now not only did I get six shots of the first look, I have six more in virtually the same spot. Now that's maximizing your time!



Image © Matt Hernandez Creative

That brings me to tip #2: always always always bring a wide-angle lens for sports portraits. Sports images are not only about the player and their athleticism, but it's also very much about their environment and the field. When I have an athlete shoot I always try to carry two bodies, one with a 70-200 and one with a 14-24mm lens (when I had my old Nikon gear), and I go with the 70-200 and 24-70 now that I've made the switch to Sony. The difference in 24mm and 70mm, or better yet, 200mm is pretty extreme. So, it's a good idea to shoot both as much as you can. You never know if something you think might look better at 200 will actually end up being that epic "wow" shot if you shoot it super wide, like say around 24mm (or sometimes even wider if you have that ability).

You can see here I used the same technique as before by moving myself, not the lighting or the subject. I shot the super wide, symmetrical shot first, then took a step to the left, had him look toward the light and took a profile of him zoomed in to a more compressed 42mm, and again in the second two images of the subject batting. I shot the first image at 24mm and made sure to get full body of him batting, then zoomed in to get a much tighter shot at 47mm to capture his intensity. This created two totally different feels from the same exact spot and it's as easy as simply zooming in. I did this again with his football shots in the stands. The first at 24mm, and the second at 57mm from the same spot.

Images © Matt Hernandez Creative

Image © Matt Hernandez Creative



Shooting posed shots of the athlete looking at you is always great, but another great thing to do for filler is ask the athlete to go through their normal routine and see if you can take anything away from that. I will typically ask them to show me how they'd walk to the plate and get ready for an at-bat, what they do when they walk out to the mound, or what they do before they serve in volleyball. I put the camera down for a moment and just watch without actually shooting, which helps me see any key moments that might be perfect for a shot. Here you can see I got some great images of him sweeping the dirt around home plate and then him calling time while he stepped into the batter box.

I take a lot of senior pictures and the kids and parents always want that epic action shot, or a nice portrait of them in their uniform looking right at the camera. I don't know about you, but I sell a senior book to almost every senior I shoot, so these kinds of pictures are great fillers for just that!



Image © Matt Hernandez Creative

Now it's time to talk about lit action, which is what really draws athletes to my photos. They all love them and want a really cool shot of them flying through the air making a play, looking like a superhero in the process. I guess that's why I call these the "hero shots." I always warn them beforehand there is a chance it may not work out depending on the difficulty of what they want to do. Even though it almost always does, I want to make sure they know that may not. I also save the hero shot for last just in case. I want to get as many other great images as I can beforehand to be 100% sure the shoot is a success. I've seen it happen before where an action shot isn't working and I'm too stubborn to give in because I want it to work so badly, and I waste too much time at the beginning of the shoot trying to get something that isn't working. Make sure you get enough solid images first!





Image © Matt Hernandez Creative

Another great tip is to shoot the action shot natural light first so you can see where their body looks the most athletic. Remember, everyone is different and two kids might both be great athletes, but they look their best at different times during a specific movement when they are playing. Once I shoot the action in natural light, I position my light where it needs to go based on what I just took, dial in the power and start shooting for real. I also have the athlete do the movement several times in a row, sometimes as many as 10 to 15 times. I don't want to waste time chimping every shot, and this also helps them get into a rhythm and halfway forget they are taking pictures and not really playing or practicing. That helps them look more natural and fluid, which translates into better photos!

Once you've got "the shot," make sure you show them so they know it was a success. That way you end on a high note and everyone goes home happy, which will hopefully translate into more sales once you've got the images ready to order. ■



Matt is a portrait photographer based in Kentucky who specializes in on-location creative lighting focusing on athletes and seniors. He has won multiple awards including the People's Choice Award at the 2012 Google+ Photographer's Conference, and the Most Creative Award at the 2013 Las Vegas Photoshop World Westcott Shootout. He has represented FJ Westcott since 2013 as one of their Top Endorsed Pros.
website: matthernandezcreative.com Ig: @ matthernandez

TIPS FOR ADDING MEN'S BOUDOIR TO YOUR BRAND

with **Pam Fields**





Image © Pam Fields Photography





Images © Pam Fields Photography

As a genre of photography, boudoir is heavily female-run and even more so female-focused. But the boudoir industry is changing. We are seeing more and more men wanting intimate portraits. In the photography world, there's lots of chatter about the terminology of "boudoir." Is it just for women and just for the bedroom? Really, not anymore. Traditionally, the boudoir is a woman's dressing room, but this is no longer the meaning of the term when it comes to the genre of boudoir photography. Boudoir photography can be with any gender and in any location, even outside. With that said, there is also the term "dudoir." You can feel free to use that but just be aware, dudoir started as a parody of men doing cheesy boudoir poses with the intention of creating silly photos. For this reason, it's not a term that I personally love using as it sends the wrong message about the work I create.

Whether you are just starting out or are already an established boudoir photographer wanting to work with men, there are a few things you can do to position your brand to appeal to male and male presenting clients.



Image © Pam Fields Photography

Images © Pam Fields Photography





1. PROFESSIONALISM

Start with professionalism. Adding sessions for men to your brand may not be for everyone. I get that and it's OK for you to be a boudoir photographer and only work with women. There are lots of photographers that specialize in boudoir and work with women only, just like there are lots of photographers that specialize in working with seniors or babies only. Some photographers have no interest in expanding their services and that's fine. What's not fine is to be disrespectful or make shame-evoking comments when men inquire about a session for themselves. Not only have I seen some harsh and negative comments from boudoir photographers that are clearly not interested in sharing (and selling) this experience with men, but I've had conversations with many of my male clients about their experience in seeking out a session for themselves. It's a wonder some of them continued their search. Please don't jump to the conclusion that just because a man is inquiring about a session then they are automatically creepy or dangerous. In all things, especially when dealing with an inquiry, if it's not something you are comfortable with or it's a service you don't offer, then remain professional and offer a referral. There are a growing number of photographers that do work with men, so politely share their information.

After you have your male client, when you are planning the session and working with them, don't make it weird. Just like our women clients, men want and need that positive reinforcement in their session! Show them the back of the camera! Let them see for themselves the magic you are creating with them. It's OK to give a man a compliment just as if you would your friend. Keep it at that level and point out the details such as their arms, their shoulders, their butt, their hair, smile, etc. Men want to be told that they are hot!

While planning your sessions, just as male boudoir photographers have to be comfortable and professional discussing women's bodies, women's lingerie, and women's health and sexuality, female photographers (and male photographers) should also be comfortable having these conversations with male clients.

2. KNOW YOUR CLIENT

As a photographer, it's always great to have an understanding of your client base. We can do this with men by learning why men want sessions. I am thankful to those men who have opened up with me and been vulnerable. Many clients, both men and women, share their stories with me. I have learned from these conversations that men often have the same concerns surrounding body image and self-confidence as women do. They worry about what society and friends will say. Some want to share their images and experience while others are doing sessions as a way to memorialize where they are currently. So many men fear judgment surrounding their outward appearance, just like women. There is the "dad bod" shame when media often features six-pack abs and fit and trim bodies. Body acceptance and self-love are something that men deserve to experience, just like women. Some men, just like women, are celebrating milestones like weight loss or turning 30, 40, 50, 60, etc. Some are starting their new life after a divorce or breakup. Some men want this experience to help boost their view of themselves and build their self-confidence. They take the courageous step, just like women, to get in front of the camera. After doing their sessions, I ask how they feel and what they thought. Even before they see their images, they experience an array of thoughts and emotions and after they see their images, I talk with them again as they are viewing themselves so differently than they ever have.



Image © Pam Fields Photography



Image © Pam Fields Photography

So, I guess you may see a trend: Male clients are like female clients. Since childhood, society sends many messages about the different genders. I mean, really, guys are not made of puppy dog tails. It's OK for a man to show weakness and to cry. It's also OK for a man to explore his sensual side. Men are people too with emotions and desires, fears and hangups. It's OK for a man to be vulnerable. In our culture, oftentimes the messaging is that it's not OK for men to express themselves and talk about their feelings and fears. I think that as a society, we've lost sight of the fact that men, just like women, need to be seen and heard when they are wanting to express themselves, build their self-worth, and embrace the body they have. Just like women who reach out for sessions, men don't want to be faced with judgment. They want acceptance and compassion. They want self-love and self-discovery.

In getting to know your client, you will be able to find out what best represents them and create a unique experience that is tailored to their needs. Storytelling and themed sessions for men are often a great way to connect and help them get comfortable in front of the camera. You can explore your client's hobbies and work them into a session. A recent client loved vinyl records and listening to music so we created a whole session around his story. Fitness themes are also popular with men. But just like our women clients, even with no storyline, other than a sexy boudoir shoot, you don't have to go with props and themed stories.



Image © Pam Fields Photography

3. APPEALING TO MEN

Here's where it can get a little tricky. Men, just like women, have ideas about what they want their session to be like. Men want to feel sexy and many times want to show off their masculine side. Some men are wanting to get in touch with their feminine, softer side. In my prep guide for men, I speak to this as I work to create a safe space for all clients.



Image © Pam Fields Photography

In positioning your brand to appeal to men, there are some areas that traditional boudoir photographers need to address. The overall look and vibe of your website can be a quick turn-off for your potential male clients. No, you don't have to redesign your entire woman-focused brand and brand voice, but please don't make your men feel like an afterthought. Consider setting up a page on your website that links from your home page. You can create a page that is appealing to male clients. Just as you do with women, speak to their unique experiences.

In working with men, inevitably, one thing will usually come up and that's the question of what about the penis. This is a question that men either ask about right away or it's something they are thinking about. Some men I've worked with have been nervous about "what if." Well, it's a different article to be written but you should address your boundaries and guidelines. Having this clearly stated on your website is a great way to set the tone for professionalism and to appeal to the right clients. If you do not shoot men nude, you probably should not shoot women nude either? I shoot both boudoir and erotica. Among other things, I differentiate the two with the basic guideline of not shooting genitalia in boudoir sessions, not with men and not with women.



Image © Pam Fields Photography

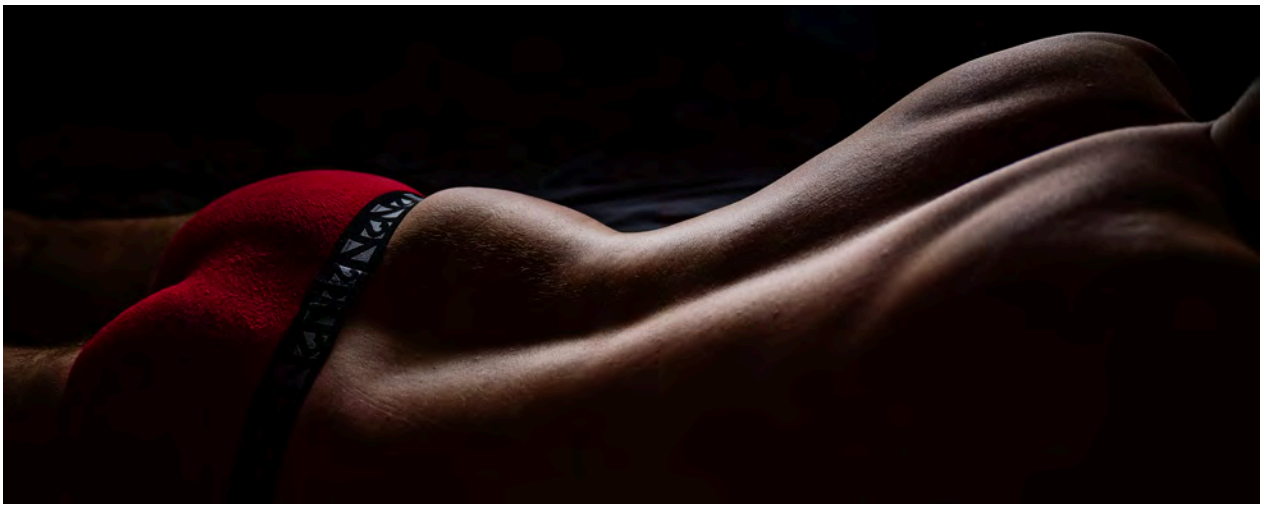


Image © Pam Fields Photography

Another thing to consider is your package names, your brand colors and your web copy. "Slay Queen," "Bombshell," and "Goddess" aren't suitable for most male clients. It's OK to still use this with your female clients if that's your brand voice, but with men you may want to consider how that sits with them. I opt to create package names that are inclusive and while I do have a bit of a different voice in my emails and prep guides, I've spent time working to set my authentic voice into my work and what I share with my clients. Another area to get more inclusive is with studio goodie bags. These are awesome for making your client feel a little special! Consider if a flowery sentiment is appropriate and consider if what you are offering is sized or styled for a female audience only. Again, you don't have to go gender-neutral and you don't have to create two separate brands, but you do need to find what works best for you and your brand in a way that isn't going to make a male client feel like he's an afterthought.

Professionalism and getting to know your clients will help significantly in setting up your brand to appeal to male clients. Just as it is with women clients, I've had *male clients report that their session helped them "see" their worth and that they loved their experience*.

Men deserve to be allowed to be vulnerable, to feel beautiful, to be sexy. Men want to be able to look at themselves and say, "Ah…beautiful." ■



Pam is an award-winning boudoir and erotica photographer and educator based in Las Vegas, Nevada. After attending her first ShutterFest in 2016 as a hobbyist, Pam is now a full-time professional photographer and educator offering mentoring and workshops. She's at home using both natural and studio lights, and she specializes in working with men and couples—something that can't be said of every boudoir photographer.

website: pamfieldsphotography.com ig: @pamfieldsphoto

INSPIRATIONS

BEST BABY/CHILD/FAMILY IMAGE

Inspiration can come when you least expect it. As photographers, we are visual artists. We express ourselves through our camera and the images we create. Inspirations represents a sampling of our industry and the vision of professional photographers from around the world.

Congratulations to all our featured artists. Be inspired and create something that is you.

Sal Cincotta, Publisher



Image © Monique Hoppe



Image © Christine Chambers Images





Image © Limboden Photography

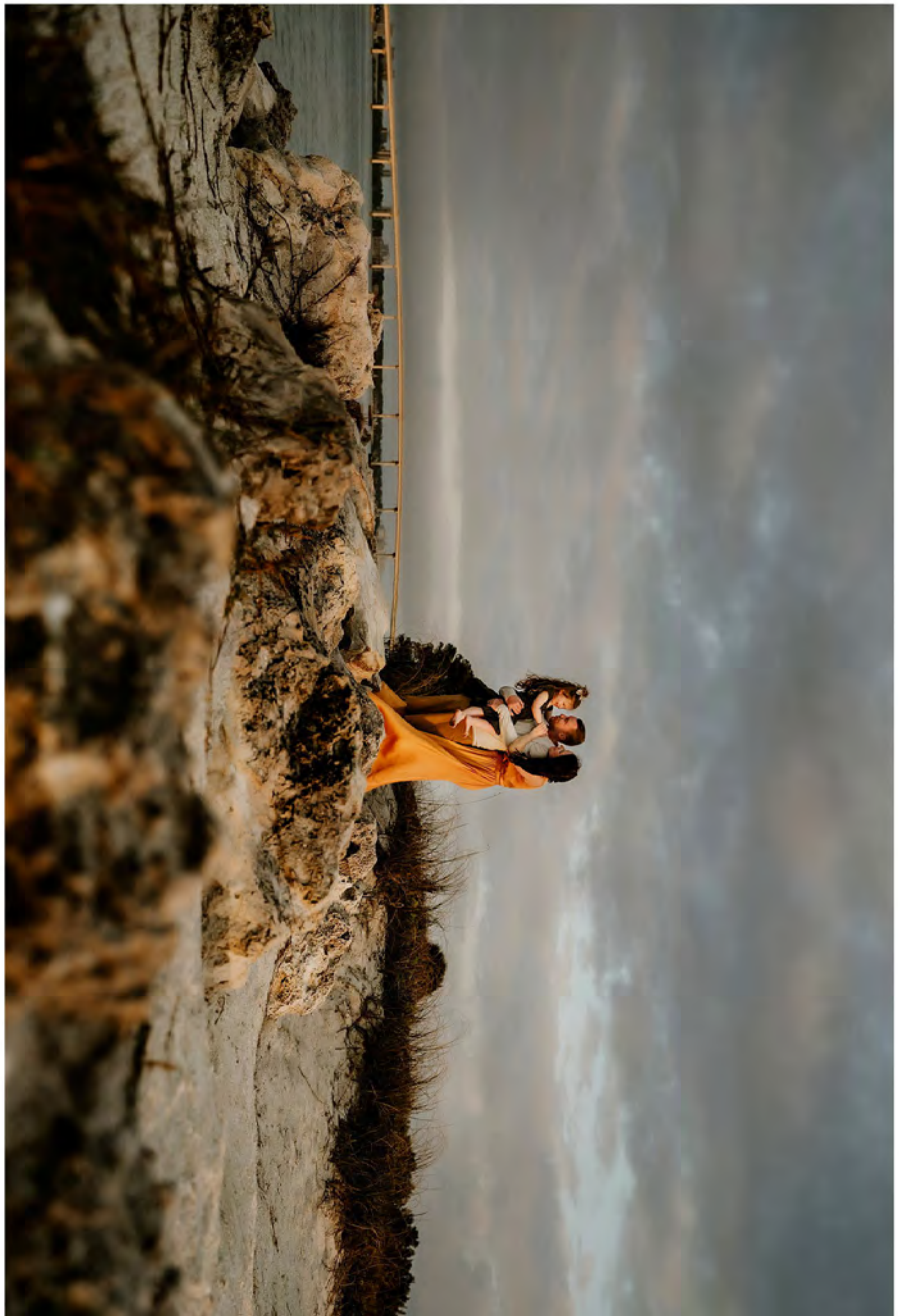


Image © Tessa Bailey Photography



Image © Roman Coia

Image © Amber Damour Photography

Image © Mary Greener Portraiture

Image © Joanna Booth Photography



Image © Tara Graham

Image © Amber Damour Photography

Image © Masha Parkhomenka









Image © Kortney Brook Photography



Image © Tara Graham



Image © Limboden Photography



Image © Casey Coscarelli Photography



Image © FELICIA SCHUTTE PORTRAIT


Image © David N Beasley Jr Photography





Image © Rich Taylor Photography

Image © Masha Parkhomenka

Image © Lucy Photography

Image © Holly Lund Imagery





Image © Rebecca Shepard Studios



Image © Sanguine Portraiture

Image © Christine Chambers Images



Image © Monique Hoppe



Image © John Wirick



Image © Amber Damour Photography



Image © Junebug Photography Studio



Image © darrenrussinger

Image © Holly Lund Imagery



Image © Stadtkind Photography



Image © Junebug Photography Studio





Image © Rebecca Shepard Studios



Image © Stadtkind Photography



Image © Giovanni Logrono Photography



Image © Jrsactionshots Photography LLC

Image © Lisa Jones Photography







Image © Genesis Photography



Image © Genesis Photography

Image © Jenny Pollitte Photography



Image © Monique Hoppe

Image © Rich Taylor Photography

Image © Primitive Visuals

Image © Gosia Smerdel, Lensberry Photography



Image © Casey Coscarelli Photography





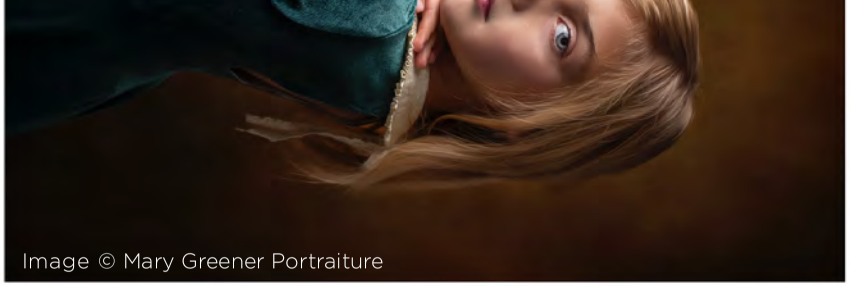


Image © Mary Greener Portraiture



Image © Jenny Pollitte Photography



Image © Lauren McKaythe Frotographer

Image © Junebug Photography Studio



Image © John Wirick







Image © Tara Graham

Image © FELICIA SCHUTTE PORTRAIT

Image © KCP Creative Imagery

Image © darrenrussinger



Image © Vanessa Joy Photography



EASY MANUAL CAMERA SETTINGS FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

with **Vanessa Joy**

If you're relatively new to the world of photography, manual camera settings may seem like an impenetrable mystery. What are they for? How do they work? How can they help you take better shots?

In this guide, I'll help you understand how to create easy and effective manual camera settings for your photos. Let's get started!

SETTING UP

First of all, you'll need to turn your camera's manual mode on (that's the "M" button on your mode dial). Then, in order to start mastering manual settings, you'll want to look for easy lighting conditions. I'm talking about lighting that's all around your subject, and (most importantly) isn't changing. Learning how to shoot manual can be really tough if your lighting is constantly fluctuating.

As far as gear goes, I really love the Canon M50 Mark II camera with the 32mm F1.4 lens. It's not super expensive compared to higher-end options, but it's a great camera and lens that both newcomers and professionals can use to amazing effect. And another really nice thing about the Canon is that it's a mirrorless camera, so what you see onscreen is what the end product of your shot will be.



Settings: f/4.5 1/160 ISO 100

Image © Vanessa Joy Photography

APERTURE

I typically set my aperture before I set anything else, since it's going to have the greatest impact on how your photos turn out. The lower your aperture number is, the wider the aperture will be. A wider aperture results in a soft, blurry background—so at 1.4, your subject's eyelash may be in focus, but not their eyeball! (Of course, with good eye detection, that shouldn't be a huge issue when you snap your photos anyway, but it's something to keep in mind.)



Settings: f/2.0 1/1000 ISO 400



Settings: f/2.0 1/1000 ISO 400

Images © Vanessa Joy Photography

SHUTTER SPEED

The second thing I set is shutter speed. Your camera's shutter speed determines not only how much light exposure is in a shot, but also how motion is portrayed. Your default shutter speed may start at 1/125 (that is, 1/125th of a second), but I typically raise that just a bit, especially since I move around a lot. (Plus, if your model is moving around a lot, built-in stabilization features won't make much of a difference, but a higher shutter speed will.) When dealing with adults, I usually keep it around 1/200, but with kids it may be better to raise it up to 1/500 or even 1/1000—because hey, kids move a lot.

ISO

Your camera's ISO is a measure of its sensitivity to light, and it works together with shutter speed to achieve certain effects in your picture. For instance, if your shutter speed is high and you're dealing with overexposure, you can lower your ISO so that you're not "white-washing" your subject. (Just as an example, you may want to lower an ISO of 400 down to 100 or 150.)



Settings: f/2.0 1/800 ISO 500

Image © Vanessa Joy Photography

HOW A HISTOGRAM CAN HELP

You can use your camera's histogram feature to determine how dark or light your photo is going to be (if you see spikes on the left-hand side of the histogram, then your picture may come out too dark, whereas if those spikes are on the right side, the picture may come out too bright).

Generally speaking, you want a nice, even histogram for your shots, but there are plenty of exceptions to this rule. For instance, a light-toned object that stands out prominently in the background may cause your histogram readings to veer to the right—but your photo could still come out amazing. The point is, your histogram is basically a graph of what is in the camera (especially in terms of light and darkness), and it can serve as a helpful guideline for your shots, as long as you don't rely too heavily on it.



Settings: f/3.2 1/160 ISO 400

Image © Vanessa Joy Photography



Settings: f/4.5 1/640 ISO 640

Image © Vanessa Joy Photography

WHITE BALANCE

If you're just starting out with manual settings, I recommend that, at least for now, you set your white balance to "auto." White balance is an important setting for removing or adjusting any color cast in your shot. However, manually adjusting white balance can get tricky if you're new to it, so keeping this setting on auto may be the best solution. (Then again, if you really like one of the white balance presets in your camera, like Cloudy or Sunny, then feel free to use it instead.)

TAKING PICTURES

Now that you've set up your camera features, it's time to start taking pictures! If you're shooting in natural light, then you'll probably want to identify natural reflectors, and either use them for increased lighting or work around them for increased contrast. For instance, if you want to emphasize certain facial features on your subject, or highlight the contrast between light and shadow, you can block the natural light from one angle while taking the shot from another.

For portrait photography, you'll typically want to only have the subject in focus. But what if you want to capture details in the background, too? Here's where your manual settings come into play:

• You'll want to change your aperture to a higher number (e.g., from f/1.4 up to something like f/5.6 or f/7.1).
• As you change your aperture, you'll notice that the picture gets a lot darker. Lowering your shutter speed will help brighten the shot a little.
• However, your ISO setting is key here. You'll have to really raise your ISO to get enough light for your shot. We're talking up to 2000 or more!

The ultimate effect of changing your settings in this way is that the background details will be super clear and crisp. Your photo may be a bit too "noisy" compared to its previous version, but if you're trying to make everything in the picture as sharp as possible, this is the way to go. If you want to reverse those settings, remember to lower your aperture (down to about f/2.2, or somewhere close to that), adjust your shutter speed as needed, and lower your ISO to a lower sensitivity level (maybe 400 or so).



Settings: f/3.5 1/640 ISO 200



Settings: f/2.5 1/1250 ISO 200



Settings: f/2.5 1/1250 ISO 200

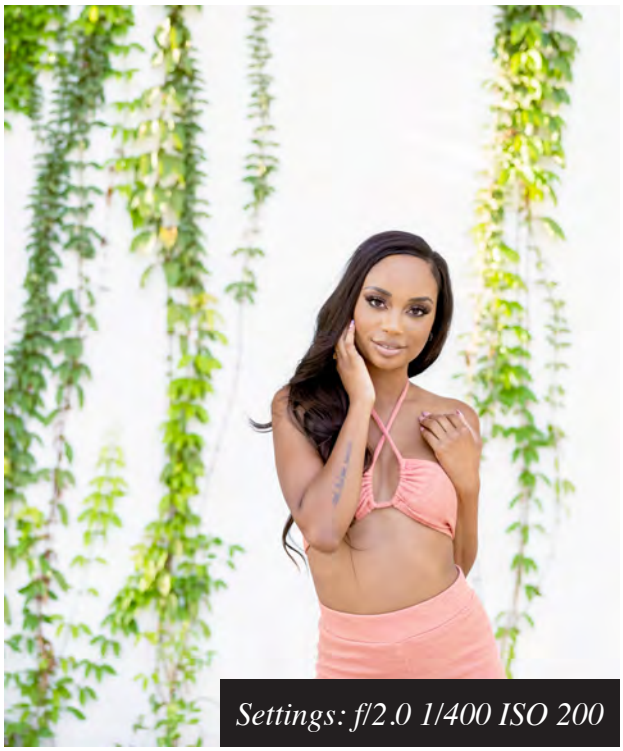


Settings: f/2.5 1/1250 ISO 200

Images © Vanessa Joy Photography



Settings: f/2.0 1/640 ISO 200



Settings: f/2.0 1/400 ISO 200

Images © Vanessa Joy Photography

SUMMARY

So to wrap it all up, here's what you should remember about each camera feature we discussed:

• Your aperture will have the greatest impact on your photos. The lower your aperture setting, the wider it will be.
• Your shutter speed and ISO work together to increase or decrease light exposure in your shot. (Keep in mind that the lower the ISO, the cleaner your image will be.)
• Your camera's histogram feature can help you to see whether your shot will be too dark or too light. However, the histogram isn't a rule, only a guideline.
• Your white balance is important for cleaning out any unwanted color tint from your picture, but it may be best to stick to "auto" or one of your camera presets when starting out. ■

CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT THE VIDEO!



Vanessa Joy has been a professional wedding photographer since 2002, and an influencer in the photographic community for years. She has taught photographers around the globe at almost every major platform in the industry (LearnPhotoVideo.com). Vanessa has been recognized for her talent and business sense at the renowned industry events CreativeLIVE, Clickin' Moms, WPPI and ShutterFest. Her peers love her informative, open-book style of teaching.

website: vanessajoy.com Instagram.com/vanessajoy/

MAKE YOUR NEXT SHOOT SOMETHING TO BRAG ABOUT

Enter to win a FREE BACKDROP

FROM INTUITION BACKGROUNDS

WIN THIS BACKDROP:
FLUSHED

A romantic backdrop that will entice you to tell a story with your subjects best used with scrims and cutlines.



ENTER NOW!

bit.ly/3L029WM

final inspiration

photographer	felicia schütte portrait
website	creativenvision.com

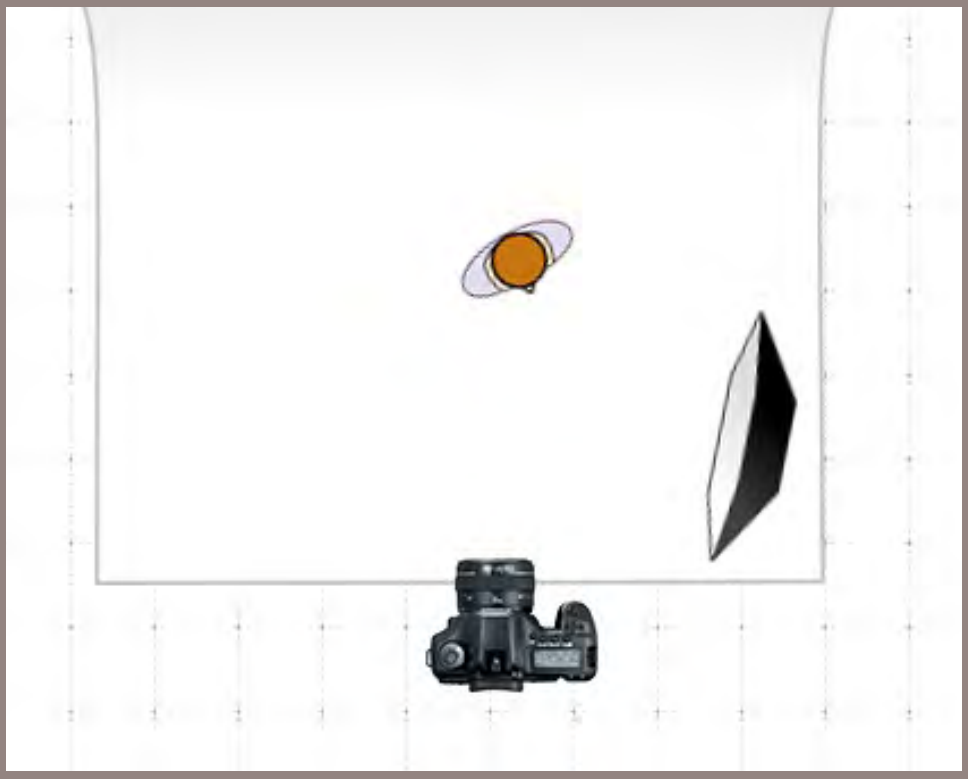


image title	mother goddess
exposure	f10, @1/100, ISO 100
lighting	1 neewer ms-400, neewer octa double diffused 1.20m
gear	canon eos 5d mark iv, ef24-70mm f/2.8l ll usm, @45mm
crown	diy tie straps, spraypainted in gold, artificial magnolia flowers
makeup artist	@makeupbyjeeva



Image © Felicia Schütte Portrait


h+h
color lab
Cut
COMING SOON
WHAT'S YOUR FLAVOR?
CREASED
VS CUT
Creased
learn more hhcolorlab.com