PORTRAITS

Damien Lovegrove

Portraits
by Damien Lovegrove

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Damien Lovegrove is an official Fujifilm X photographer and Fujifilm UK ambassador.

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About the Author

Damien Lovegrove is considered by many to be one of the world's most influential contemporary photographers. He is best known for creating portraits that make women look fabulous. He is a confident director and great fun to shoot with too. Damien's lighting style is distinctive and his picture composition unique.

Damien is an official Fujifilm UK ambassador and a renowned Fujifilm X photographer.

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If the light is good, use it. If not, modify it or make your own. Never settle for bad light.

Damien Lovegrove

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Thank you again for purchasing this book and I hope you enjoy it.

Best wishes,
Damien.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/8

I used a Speedlight on full power and zoomed right in to 105mm rigged high on a stand to capture this shot of Natalia at a beach lifeguard station in Spain. I had to use a x 4 ND filter to get the 18mm pancake lens from f/16 to a more sensible f/8.

The wind was blowing in the wrong direction so I asked Natalia to hold the bottom of her dress, and her hair from her face. I then put the hazy sun behind her and concentrated on my shot composition.

Introduction

The secret of making consistently good photographs is to stay inspired and be passionate about photography. Inspiration fuels the learning of new techniques, and passion generates the motivation needed to continually practice. The excitement of taking photographs has stayed with me for the past 35 years. I'm naturally a slow learner and it took me a while to get going at first, but I've never stopped improving. The photographs in this book are quite simple to take. Among them you will find shots with faults, a few with a poor choice of settings, and photographs that are not quite sharp. Despite their faults they all deserve their place here in my eyes. Two key things I have learned about this photography malarkey is not to be too hard on myself and to be wary of competition judges' opinions.

Being a good portrait photographer requires key traits like having integrity, fun, respectfulness and a personable character. It wasn't until I was in my early 30s that I began to get that all important confidence needed to hone these skills, and I shot my first portrait in 1996 at the age of 32.

Some of the leading photographers I met early in my career had confidence and craft skills in bucket loads, but somehow they lost the desire or focus to really push themselves to greatness, and they fell by the wayside. It takes continual practice and improvement to get the most from photography and there are many obstacles along the way to overcome, including boredom, lack of progress, lack of fun, distractions and back pain. I say back pain because many photographers get fed up lugging all the gear around and just give up altogether. That's one of the many ways the Fujifilm X system made a difference for me.

You don't need a Fujifilm camera to benefit from this book. It doesn't matter what camera or lenses you shoot with. Just remember that you are the most important element in your photography. Then comes the lens that converts the three dimensional scene that you have lit and crafted into a two dimensional image. Finally the camera just records the scene.

A great many photographs in this book were shot on the Fujifilm X-Pro1, a camera considered out of date and slow these days. It can be bought in near mint condition for just a couple of hundred pounds on the secondhand market. No-one will be able to tell what camera you used to take a picture, but they will notice the lighting, composition and connection with your sitter. Having said that it helps to have a camera that doesn't hinder your progress. So whatever you use to take your pictures, stay inspired, be creative and have fun.

Every photograph in this book was taken between 2011 and 2016 by myself, using Fujifilm X cameras and lenses. At full resolution, the JPEG files exported from Adobe Lightroom at quality 10 are usually between 6Mb and 14Mb for the Fujifilm cameras that I have been using. Although they are shown at a high resolution, the photographs in this book are well below 2Mb each. As a result there are several instances of heavy compression or edge artefacts in the files.

This body of work represents five years of my creative life and now it is time to move onwards. I love to keep evolving and finding new challenges in life. Photography is the catalyst that makes this possible.

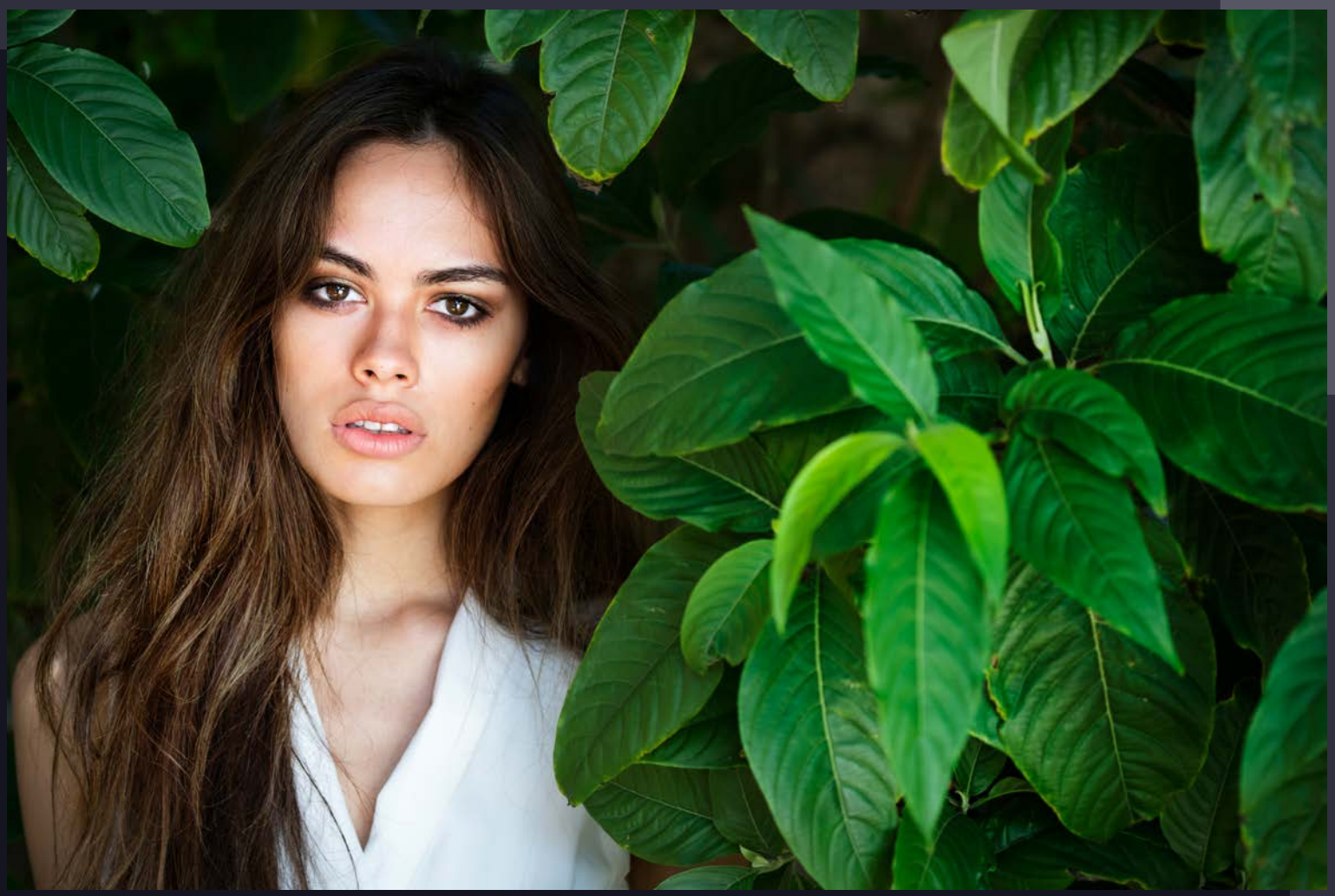
Thank you Fujifilm for supporting me on my photographic journey.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm •
ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/1.4

Sometimes it just all comes together when you least expect it. This shot of Margaux on a railway platform in Switzerland was taken while we sheltered from a torrential downpour. We used a pair of sunglasses as a make shift Alice band and I directed Margaux to grip her jacket collar tightly. The 35mm lens used wide open gave me that wonderful subject isolation. As you will read throughout this book, one of the most important parts in the process of making a portrait is to create a moment or an emotional connection.

“Everything I know about photographing people is in this book and I hope it helps you to achieve a lifetime of enjoyment from your photography.”

Portrait Foundations



Have a vision

Think things through and understand the mood that you want to portray in the image. Use this vision to choose a location and a lighting strategy. I work with either **complimentary environments**, for example a client wearing an evening dress in a sumptuous hotel after dark, or **contrasting environments**, like a man in a dinner suit in a rainy back-alley. I also use lighting to match the look. The softer the light, the more delicate the portrait and the harder the light, the more dramatic and intense the effect.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4*

In this ‘complimentary environment’ picture, Carla wears an underbust corset by Lisa Keating with a string of pearls. The oil paintings, gilded antique mirror, and styling set the scene with a hairstyle and make up to match. Starting each shoot with the final photograph in mind makes best use of your time and is a fun journey for the whole team. My vision for this shot was of a mildly eccentric English lady in her stately home, wearing very little but feeling completely at ease. The contre-jour lighting provided by a window is fabulous on Carla, and her reflection is rendered nicely out of focus by using the maximum aperture setting on the 35mm standard prime lens.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/80 sec • f/1.4

Victoria's clean, soft skin contrasts well with the rustic texture of this kitchen cupboard in the basement of an abandoned mansion. The colour of Victoria's simple dress harmonises with both the walls and her skin tone. Her hair is the visual crescendo in this calm, delicate scene.

I placed Victoria just right of centre and used the strong verticals on the right to hold the composition together. The bright wall on the left provides balance for the darker, heavier right-hand side of the frame.

This pose is all about peace and tranquility; revealing Victoria's graceful curves as the dress scoops on her plunging neckline and pulls in below her bust. The asymmetric shoulder line and elbow heights help to open up Victoria's upper body and face. Some of this posing comes from a natural process when I work with a professional model or actor, other elements I carefully direct myself.

Victoria's eyes are closed, and I've become fond of shooting portraits this way. As the viewer of the photograph you are drawn into wondering what she is thinking, and there is a voyeuristic overtone in that process. There are many photographs in this book with closed eyes for just the same reasons.

Great locations are key

Great locations are key to the success of a portrait. The good news is that great locations are all around us. City centres, recreational parks, abandoned buildings, the countryside, and even the home you live in all have pockets of opportunity for portrait making. Some of my favourite shots were taken with just a metre or two of background. There are times when a background can have unwanted clutter, and this can often be removed by letting it disappear into the shadows. You can achieve this by increasing the light on your subject, either by adding light artificially, or by moving your subject closer to a window or an open door when shooting inside.

You can also render a background out of focus by using a large aperture on a long lens. This is especially useful outside. I occasionally look for good lighting first and then decide what to do with the background. My other method is to find background textures and tones to work with and then add light as and if required.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/1.8

My background becomes part of the foreground in this shot. We were shooting at an abandoned villa once owned by a Khmer Rouge general in Kep, Cambodia. It was riddled with mortar holes and was gradually being overrun by the jungle. I wanted to make a feature of this wonderful texture and left just enough space in the frame for Yulia. My shots of her are completely natural and un-retouched as she was kind enough to let me keep them real.

The lighting is all natural, coming from the overcast sky and breaking through gaps in the jungle canopy. Notice the sheen on the glossy leaves. It's highlights like these that attracted me to this particular wall.

Fujifilm XT-1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f1.8

Camilla stands in an unrestored part of an old farmhouse in Norway. I was drawn to this background because of its colour palette and the contrast in the texture. I lit Camilla with a Speedlight in a Lastolite 55cm Ezybox fitted with a fabric grid, placing the flash about 3m away from her to provide a harder look to the light. The depth of contrast was kept high to make the shot a little punchier. I explain how I set the image contrast by balancing the ambient and flash exposures in the lighting chapters of this book.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 250 • 1/125 sec • f/3.2

I positioned Mischkah near the doorway of this abandoned farmhouse in Spain so that the correct exposure on her would ensure a dark background to the image. The further into a room you place your subject, the closer the exposure difference becomes from foreground to background. I swept a bit of the floor so that Mischkah could stand barefoot and scattered a few rocks for added realism. The low angle viewpoint coupled with the dress movement gives the shot a lovely dynamic quality.

Background in or out?

If the background is amazing, or adds to the narrative of the photograph, you might consider using a lens with a wide field of view to pull it into the shot. There is no such thing as a lens that is too wide for portraiture. I love using XF14mm or XF16mm lenses to make the most of a background. The other option, where space allows, is to step back from the subject and use a lens with a narrower field of view. Either way, if you have a fabulous background, make the most of it.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

Chantelle is pictured here on the edge of a poplar tree plantation in Southern France, and I chose to use the tight end of the 50-140mm lens wide open at f/2.8 to render the background out of focus. You can still make out what the background is, but it resembles an abstract oil painting.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 14mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/3.6*

This shot of Amber was captured using the 14mm lens to pull in the opulent room at Strawberry Hill House near London. Even though the lens is very wide-angle there is minimal distortion on Amber because I'm some way back and her face is turned away from camera towards the light.

The ethereal look is the result of two main factors. A Tiffen Black Pro Mist ½ strength filter on the lens, and a lot of red in the black and white mix in Lightroom. The filter gives halation where the highlights bleed into the shadows, (see the wall to the left of the far window), and the red dominance in the mono mix lightens Amber's lips and softens her skin.

Connect with your subject

Connect with your subject before reaching for the camera. Perhaps the most essential part of the portrait process is building a good rapport. Get all the technical preparation out of the way before the shoot so that you can give your sitter your undivided attention. Be relaxed and exude confidence. The trust and respect you develop before the shoot, perhaps over a coffee, will help to bring out the sitter's inner qualities in your portraits. Brides, families, children, actors, and models all respond well to some pre-shoot banter. I use the rapport process to quell any fears, build the excitement, and open up my sitter to reveal more of their personality.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

The intensity in Carla's look reflects the depth of connection we had at the time of capture. One way to achieve this is to pre-focus the camera, keep your head completely still, and swing the camera out of the way. Then make eye-contact and create the connection, maintaining this as you swing the camera back into place to capture the moment. This process takes practice, but it really does work. It's not easy to get a good connection with a camera in front of your face.

This shot was taken at an abandoned camel station on the island of Fuerteventura and was lit using natural light.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/550 sec • f/2.8

Natalia was studying to be an actor when we nipped off to Spain for a series of workshops. The contrast in her eyes, together with her pensive expression and soft, full lips arrest my attention. I love that her hair is tangled and her dress crumpled, as these elements are soon discarded as unimportant by the viewer.

The compression of perspective from the 60mm lens is wonderful and helps simplify the background. I shot this portrait using my X-Pro1 in Aperture Priority mode with +1 stop of exposure compensation dialed in. Although I usually work in Manual mode, there are still times where I let the camera do some of the work for me.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/3.6

There was a time in my life before my mid 30s when I found it hard to look someone in the eye and maintain a connection for more than a few moments. I've no idea what changed, or how it happened, but eventually when shooting weddings and portraits of children I developed the skill and the confidence to really work a connection. Get it wrong and it can be mistaken for flirting. Get it right and just about any emotion is at your command, from sadness through anger, to laughter, or a thoughtful but strong expression like this. Yulia stands under a canopy and is lit with natural light in this abandoned house on Bokor Mountain in Cambodia.

> *If you want an intimate, natural look you need to pull that look into the lens. This takes rapport, trust and respect on both parts.*

Intimacy

Intimacy in a portrait is partly a result of the shooter's proximity to the subject. The closer you are to your subject, the more intimate the portrait can appear,especially if there is eye contact. Too close and there will be distortion. For loose head shots I often use the 35mm or 56mm lenses, and I keep within 2m of my subject. For a more intimate portrait I will work as closely as 1.5m with a standard lens.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2

This high viewpoint on Mischkah gives her a slightly more sensitive, delicate look, the closeness of my lens creating a natural openness and informality. I illuminated her with the diffused natural window light coming through white net curtains in a Spanish hotel room.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 35mm • ISO 4000 • 1/400 sec • f/1.4

The intimacy in this photograph of Rina comes directly from my close proximity to her. Shooting from within her personal space has broken down any barriers. This takes trust on Rina's part and confidence in me. That confidence and trust can be earned really quickly with the right approach during the prep for a shoot.

Notice how three-dimensional this shot is. That is one of the fabulous characteristics of the original XF35mm f/1.4 lens. I often find this 3D look from lenses that focus by moving all the elements together. My previous cameras with this look were my Rolleiflex TLR, Hasselblad 500C with the 80mm Planar lens, and my Mamiya C330 with its 75mm lens. They were all good examples of camera/lens combinations capable of this kind of 3D look in portraits.

Create the moment

Create the moment or the mood. Once you've got the exposure and the technical bits sorted, take time to re-engage with your sitter. Put the camera down or to the side with the parameters still set and discuss the mood you want to create. Don't expect your sitter to be an actor; it's up to you to create the perfect mood for the reaction you want. The approach I take when working with children and adults is the same although the techniques are different. If you want an intimate, natural look then you need to pull that look into the lens. This takes rapport, trust and respect on both parts but when the mood clicks, magic happens. If you are shooting a heavy, sad or emotional portrait be sure to lighten the mood with laughter once you have the shot. I like to share my images on the back of the camera as I go. That way the sitter feels more involved in the creative process and is able to adapt their look as required.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 320 • 1/250 sec • f/3.6

Laughter is the best way to lighten the mood at a shoot. I'm always playful and joking around when I need the inner beauty that comes from a genuine smile in my shot.

Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 60mm •
ISO 800 • 1/160 sec • f/2.4

Zara was at my studio for a flying visit so, deciding to keep things simple, I lit her with one medium-sized soft box. I directed Zara to stand with the hem of her skirt in tension and to use her hands to grip the fabric. By bringing her hands together it rolled her shoulders forward, boosted her cleavage, and revealed her hourglass figure. For the moment to work, she needed to throw her head back and close her eyes. It's an attitude moment, the sort I'd associate with a young Debbie Harry. Simple, yet powerful.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm •
ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/2

I was shooting with Julia on the streets of Munich when I came across this wonderful doorway. We had just been told off for taking photographs so I had some fun by saluting Julia and having her salute back. We felt like naughty school kids and couldn't stop giggling.

Have fun

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 250 • 1/60 sec • f/2

Have fun at the shoot. I love to capture cheeky looks, laughter and energy. You get back what you put in. The process of shooting a portrait is exciting; the chance to connect with the person in front of you on a new level. I employ all my childhood banter, my verve, and my love of life to conjure a reciprocal spirit and energy in my sitter - only when it's called for of course, but even if I need a serious shot I make the shoot process fun.

Chloe-Jasmine and I were doing a spot of urbexing at an abandoned asylum when I came across this painted wall in a corridor. We stopped for a quick frame whilst evading the site security guards. Sometimes a bit of excitement can generate great natural expressions.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 55mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4

Laughter is a great asset for a shoot, however, not everyone looks great laughing. Sometimes the best moments are the ones that immediately follow the crescendo. In this photo, which I lit with a pair of Lupo LED spotlights, Chloe-Jasmine is holding the 1958 Zorki 5A made for the Russian market that I bought on Ebay.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 500 • 1/500 sec • f/2

Instafamous Iskra is such a great model to work with. I started this boudoir shoot with a pillow fight, just to get the energy up in the room. Sometimes it seems as if coming up with crazy ideas is what generates the momentum and the desire to create magic in camera.

I lit Iskra with a Lupo LED spotlight from the right rear of the shot.

Capture a narrative

They say that a photograph is worth a thousand words, and if your portrait is worthy of the front cover of a novel, or one that a writer could use as inspiration for a poem, then you have ticked that box. If the moment is a natural one unfolding in front of you, as children play in the garden perhaps, use reportage techniques. Let the action flow as if you were not there and capture decisive moments. This technique can also work well during certain parts of a wedding. If there is no moment to capture, you'll be required to create one. The trick is to have an idea, convey that idea to your sitter, and get them to act out the emotions; much in the same way as a film director works with an actor. For pictures with eye contact, start without the camera, as it can act as a barrier and alienate the sitter. Work together on building depth in the expression and get the sitter comfortable with that level of intimacy and intensity. Then introduce the camera, create the moment, and capture it.

> *"The trick is to have an idea, convey that idea to your sitter, and get them to act out the emotions.*

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 3200 • 1/1000 sec • f/2

The story in this shot is complicated but it goes something like this. Becky was kicked out of home at 14 and has been living a tough life, getting involving with drugs and prostitution. Now at 21 she reflects back on the tragic life she once led as she gazes through the broken window. Her future is more assured now that her determination has pulled her through the tough times, and her beauty will open doors to a new kind of life. Of course this is fiction. Chloe-Jasmine, the model here, has had a fabulous life supported by a loving family. The ability to tell a story with pictures can open doors in the commercial photography world shooting covers for novels and more.

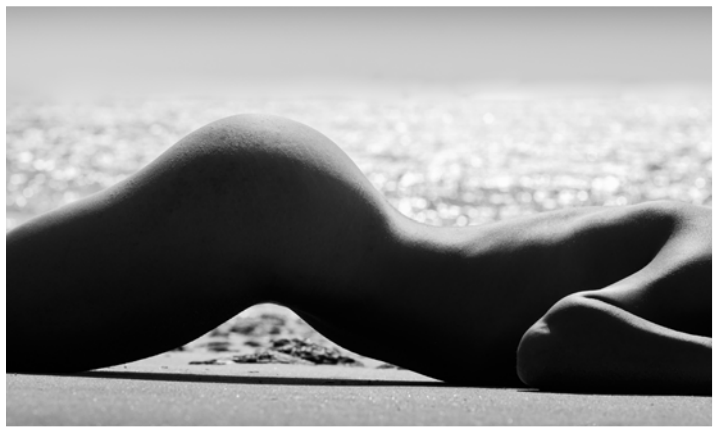
Did the ISO need to be right up at 3200? Absolutely not. This is a mistake on my part. I had the shutter speed set to 1/1000th second and not 'A'. I usually shoot my X-100 (now upgraded to X-100T) in Auto ISO mode with 1/80th set as my minimum shutter speed. I then set the shutter speed to 'A' and the aperture wide open to f/2 and away I go. After this I simply need to adjust the exposure compensation to taste. The lens on the X-100 is fabulous at f/2 so I leave it there when I'm shooting.

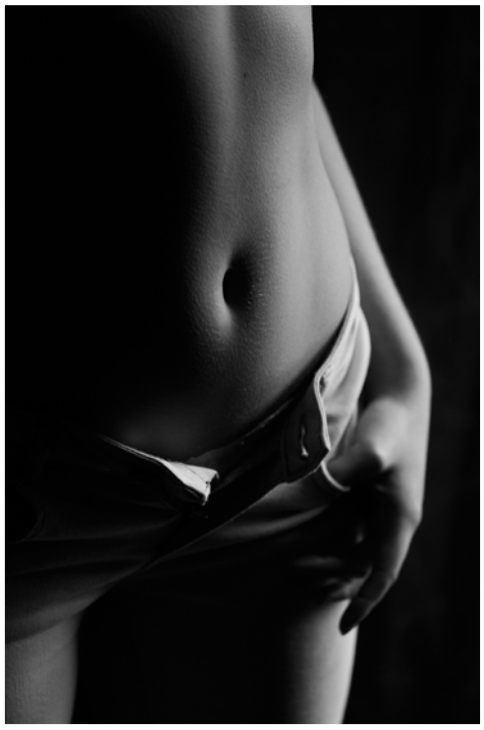
Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 3200 • 1/1000 sec • f/2

This is the close-up of Chloe-Jasmine that accompanies the previous story. The camera settings are the same, but the tight crop and deep stare make this shot one of my favourites from the X-100.

Crop for impact

Less is more - a few details often say it all. A portrait doesn't need to show everything. I sometimes use detail to express the moment or feeling in a way that would be overcomplicated by a wider view. I find a good medium telephoto macro lens is a useful tool for capturing details. Sometimes I shoot wide from behind, and I regularly shoot my portraits in profile. When I'm working for a client I like to get the obvious head shots and mid length portraits with eye contact out of the way first. After these I can move on to the more creative work which probably attracted the client to me in the first place.





"Action"

Direct the action and maintain control of it when working with movement. Get the person you are shooting into the perfect position for the peak of the action. Set the camera focus to manual and pre-focus, then set the exact exposure required. Finally, ask your subject to step back a few steps, and then cue the action. This is especially useful for running or jumping shots. You can leave the camera set up in position and even use a tripod. It's just a case of repeating the action until the perfect frame is captured. Set a shutter speed of at least 1/500th second.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 1600 • 1/500 sec • f/2

One of my favourite images of all time was captured high on the summit of Bokor Mountain in Cambodia. This, the last residence of the Khmer Rouge leaders until 1998, was once a casino. It became riddled with bullet holes and was re-plastered to cover them up, hence the patchy grey plasterwork. There are no windows or doors left in the building and the clouds roll right through, creating an eerie sensation. The cool temperature inside provides a welcome relief from the stifling heat in Phnom Penn.

I set Yulia's position so that the far left window (just out of shot here) and the windows to the right of the shot could act as a kick-light. You can best see the effect of these windows on Yulia's legs. The light coming from the window behind the camera was too strong, so I asked Yulia's partner Darren to stand in front of it and partially block it. That gave me the lighting balance that I wanted. Next, I set 1/500th second on the X-T1 and directed Yulia to kick the water. Enough of the movement was frozen and the moment was captured. I brought the gloves, tutu skirt, and top with me from the UK. The styling that I put together in my shoots is really important to me. The tilting screen on the X-T1 allowed me to crouch down conveniently and avoid lying in the water.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/1.8

This is a simple natural-light portrait. I pre-focused, then directed Victoria to flick her head from left to right, ensuring her hair was on the move. I just grabbed this frame at 1/180th second and that was spot on to ensure the extremities of her hair on the left of the frame were shown with motion-blur. This kind of shot can never be repeated exactly. Each time you shoot it the look will be different. Sometimes this kind of shot is great on the first go, at other times it takes quite a few attempts to get it perfect. Practice and experience help when steering in the near misses to make a masterpiece.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/4000 sec • f/2.8

Rosalinde was directed to run past the camera from out of the shot. This looks like a well timed, focus-tracked action shot, but we cheated. I initially asked Rosalinde to walk into the position that I wanted for the final shot. I pre-focused on her there with the camera in manual focus mode. Then, with the camera held still, I asked Rosalinde to go back to her starting position and get ready to run into place. I called "action", just like in the movies, and took the frame when she reached the perfect point.

The low viewpoint ensured I could see under her feet. Because the camera back was upright, the original shot featured a lot more of the pavement and the building, but this got cropped out. One option would have been to use perspective correction in post-production, but this can stretch the shot in unpredictable ways.

Fujifilm X-100T • 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/2.8

There's something 'rock n roll' about this shot of Carla. I asked her to stand slightly away from this wardrobe door, to throw her hip away from camera, and to rest her shoulders back onto the wardrobe. Her arms cross her body in a half-hearted attempt at modesty, and her open jeans suggest an intimate narrative. I can just imagine this shot was taken in a hotel room on tour with the Rolling Stones. Carla is lit with a Lupo 650 LED with a frost gel attached to the clips on the barn doors. Her hair was scooped up and tucked behind her to open up her face. Notice the classic cheek triangle of light on her unlit side.

Relaxed posing

Try transferring your subject's upper body weight onto surfaces. Unless you are photographing top professional models who have a well rehearsed ability to look fabulous standing in open space, use a wall, pillar, door-frame or piece of furniture for your subject to lean on, lean against, or lie on. By transferring their upper body weight onto a resistant surface your sitter will be far more relaxed. If I'm using a wall, I like to shoot at an acute angle to give the picture depth.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/4

Asking Katie to stand away from the paneled wall and lean on it with her elbow gave her a great line to work with. Her left shoulder came forward towards the camera, revealing her bust profile on the left of shot. She then brought her right knee in front of her left to maximise her hourglass figure. Trying to look this good free-standing in an open space is challenging as it can very easily look over posed.

I lit Katie with a Lupo 1000 and Scattergel. I forgot to switch off the room light and you can just make out Katie's shadow on the background.

Fujifilm XT-1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/180 sec • f1.4

Yulia was asked to rest her shoulders on the wall and stand with her feet some way in front of her. It's important to keep the subject's bottom away from the wall with a pose like this; it's far more flattering.

The window in the shot provides the only light source.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 500 • 1/60 sec • f/1.6

Alice's radiant smile punches right through this high key portrait. We were in an old mill in Sweden with a white floor and white walls. Using the black chair as a prop, I directed Alice into this quite hunched pose. Without the laugh it wouldn't have worked, but laughing gave Alice the motivation to double up like this. I regularly bring an elbow to a knee to create a pose.

Alice was lit with natural light, and the camera exposure was pushed several stops to render the dark scene on this wet, dull day as a bright and vibrant photograph. I never panic about seeing peak white in a shot and I keep my in-camera highlight alert switched off as well. The peak white reflections of the window show that the floor is shiny. If I were to expose the shot to avoid massive burnout, Alice would have been wearing grey clothes instead of crisp, white cotton.

“I never panic about seeing peak white in a shot and I keep my in-camera highlight alert switched off as well.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 35mm • ISO 1250 • 1/200 sec • f/2*

I slid the bathroom doors apart in this Pincofs hotel suite in Rotterdam. Rosalinde was asked to strike a pose between them and place her right arm higher than her left. This created a good diagonal and a more relaxed pose.

I was going to move the Lupo 650 LED spotlight that you can see in the back of the shot, but I decided to leave it in frame and go for the flare instead. The key light was a Lupo 1000 with a ¼ frost gel attached to the barn doors using the light's integral clips.

The low viewpoint creates striking diagonals thanks to the converging verticals of the doors.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/80 sec • f/2

This kind of pose has many of the elements usually found in my portraits; the right knee in front of the left, for example, and the asymmetric arm positions which create a diagonal shoulder line. Another favourite posing trait of mine is a look down and to the side. I styled this shot with bare feet as they strip any formality out of a shot.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm f/1.4 • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/2.8

I set up this shot of Carole at a villa in Switzerland. There is so much going on in this picture in terms of composition, tone and colour but it is Carole's relaxed pose that gives the shot its mood. I offset the niche in the frame to create a more pleasing framing, with Carole counter balancing the vase. I gave the shot some diagonal emphasis from top right to bottom left with my post production using the Radial tool in Lightroom.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 58mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

This shot of Claire in a Gloucestershire mansion has a classic Lovegrove pose of a look down to the side. It is relaxing and draws the viewer in to imagine what Claire is thinking about. I'm shooting into the unlit side.

Turn it upside down

If you find you are struggling to make an impact with your posing, literally turn it upside-down. I've used this technique to create fab bridal shots and add impact to editorial shoots too. Art directors and picture editors working for magazines like to be given something striking and out of the ordinary to work with.

▲ *Fujifilm X-100T • 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4*

Zara was willing to humour my idea for a shot in this empty wardrobe in the foyer of the Manchester Hilton. I thought the cut-outs looked like tumbling ice so I decided we could echo this theme.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 23mm • ISO 400 • 1/100 sec • f/1.8

Amber fits this space perfectly. One Lupo light with a Scattergel was all it took to create this striking portrait. Shuffling into position whilst lying on her back with her legs up the wall may have seemed odd at the time, but this shot of Amber has quite a natural look.

All the diagonal composition lines in my work are from camera position and posing, never from camera tilt. It's something small, but keeping the camera upright is really important to me.

Fujifilm X100T • 23mm • ISO 1600 • 1/125 sec • f/2.5

Here is another example of a 'legs up the wall' shot, but this time Chantelle is lit through a door by a Lupo 1000 with a Scattergel. I love the crisp shadow of the doorway on the carpet fading into black. Notice how the design cues are similar in the previous shot of Amber. Both have their hands above their heads, bare feet, a diagonal pose across the frame, and closed eyes with their heads titled sideways. I particularly like how Chantelle's arms frame her face in this shot.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/3.6

Zara is sprawled out on a black leather sofa in the presidential suite of the Manchester Hilton for this shot. Her arms create striking triangles and her legs are in running mode. The sparkly dress was chosen for this shot to match the lighting style employed. Normally it's the other way around. I used a Cactus RF60 Speedlight in manual mode on top of my camera to light Zara. This on-camera flash technique reflects the highlights on the sofa and the dress straight back into the lens. The X-T1 tilting screen is really useful when shooting from a high viewpoint. I was standing on a chair at the time and could easily frame my shot using the LCD.

Aspect ratio

The square is still one of my favourite aspect ratios for portraits. I rarely use square now as I like to crop and compose in camera. Fujifilm has adopted the 3:2 aspect ratio made popular with the 36mm x 24mm film frame on 35mm wide film. For many years a 4:3 aspect ratio was used both by pro photographers with 6 x4.5 digital backs and by the TV industry. In recent times more oblong formats have become the norm with 16x9 adopted by smartphone cameras and TV alike.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 34mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/11

This shot of Chloe-Jasmine was cropped to square in post-production. I rarely place my point of focus this close to the centre of the frame, but it really works here. I often shoot portraits with the eyes of my subject on a diagonal plane.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 500 • 1/200 sec • f/1.2

Occasionally I spot opportunities to shoot inverted frames. Charlotte used a chair to climb onto this worktop, and the resulting image is striking because of the inversion; the paneling would normally be at the top of the shot and Charlotte on the floor. The strong dividing line of the bar-top runs right through the middle of the frame and the shot is top-heavy, with all the visual weight in the upper half. The crop I captured here in camera breaks so many rules, it's good again.

Change your viewpoint

Shoot from above, shoot from below, shoot inside from outside, and shoot from one room to another.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/180 sec • f/1.4

All I need to capture a top shot like this is a chair to stand on and the tilting screen of the X-T1. One other technique that I've used is to rest the camera on the ceiling while it's attached to an extended monopod. I then use the camera's remote app to frame the shot, set the focus point, and take the picture. It's a bit of a juggle and it helps to have a handy table to put the smartphone on. Although there is a high viewpoint here, I always ensure the camera is upright and that the diagonals in the composition are generated by camera position rather than by tilt.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/800 sec • f/2

This shot of Wlada was all guesswork in the framing. I had to shoot at full stretch without getting my feet in the shot. I was lucky to be using the light Fujifilm X-100 at the time.

When taking this kind of shot, don't forget to create a moment. I'm sure Wlada was laughing at me rather than with me, but I don't mind that. As long as the shoot is fun and the moments are real, that's alright with me.

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Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/480 sec • f/2.8

I shot Natalia with the X-Pro1 camera at ground level to add impact to my portrait of her. The wild hair, Bond Girl beauty, and the natural look made this a winner for me. The dark, empty doorway was the ideal frame for Natalia. A light Natalia set against the dark background makes a great tonal separator that draws attention to her. I brought her into the scattered sunlight to highlight her hair and legs. The sun was coming through a couple of old eucalyptus trees and it's lighting like this that made me want to create Scattergels. Natalia's bare feet complete the look.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/2

I shot from above using the tilt screen of the X-T1 to frame Clair in this cold, cast-iron bath. I had to keep my feet out of the shot and get the symmetry spot on. I'm a stickler for balance, and I like to take a bit of extra care at the framing stage to ensure the perfect geometry in camera. This trait comes from my time shooting transparency where there was zero margin for error. I started shooting transparencies for the Science Photo Library in London in 1986 and I went digital in 2001 after 15 years of film. I'm now at the point where my digital life has caught up with my analogue one, but the same rules apply. Get it right in camera.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2

This is one of the first images that I took on my original Fujifilm X-100 back in 2011 in a hotel in Berlin. I partially closed the doors which separated the sleeping area from the lounge area and shot Wlada through from one zone into the other. Shots like these trick the mind because of the seemingly privileged view. My tip here is to think about shooting from outside looking in, or from one room into another.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/60 sec • f/.2

This shot of Patricia was taken in a studio in Stuttgart. It's another 'legs up the wall' shot, only this time I'm up a step ladder looking down. Patricia is lit with one Lupo spotlight with a pre-Scattergel modifier made of fabric to break up the light.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 3200 • 1/210 sec • f/.2

The original X-100 with its large 12-megapixel sensor is a fabulous high ISO performer. The lens is also excellent when wide open, and this is the first digital camera that I have owned that is set to become a classic. Stina here was lit with the modeling light in an overhead soft box. I like the grit and shallow depth of field which comes from working in dingy light. The DMs that I bought in Berlin were a perfect match for the tutu.

Profiles

Profiles are cool. Eye contact isn't always needed or desired in a portrait. I love to shoot profiles and there are more than ninety of them in this book alone. My thirst for a 90° key light angle have generated many profiles in my work and I have developed an appetite for them.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 1000 • 1/180 sec • f/2.5

This shot of Melanie was lit with the light coming through a crack in the curtains of a Copenhagen penthouse. I closed all the other curtains to give us the deep contrast for the shot. The light came through from all levels because the apartment was high and overlooking the harbour, and sunlight reflected off the water lit the underside of Melanie's chin. Rim lighting is ever so beautiful with profiles. Closed eyes and a raised chin complete the look.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 1250 • 1/60 sec • f/5.6

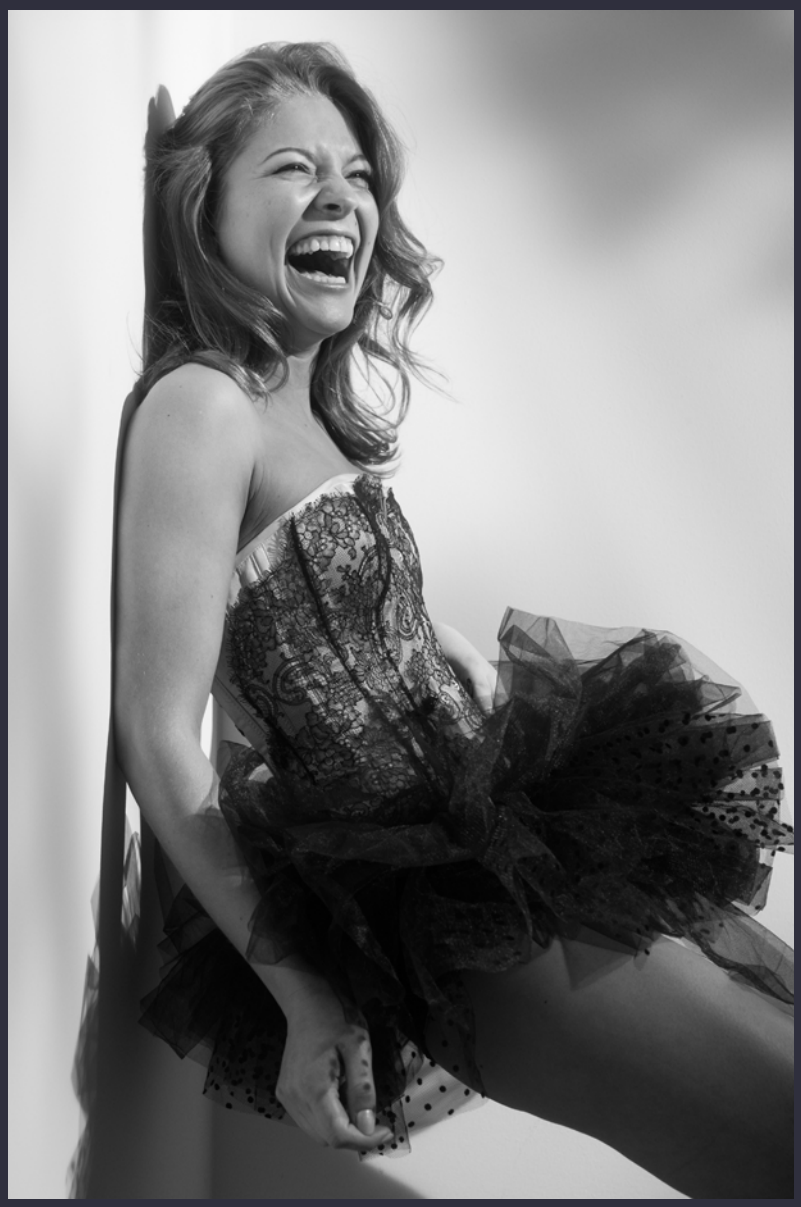
My settings are all over the place for this shot but the look is gorgeous. I love the way wisps of hair grace Carla's face. I asked Carla to rest her forehead on the wardrobe door for this classic profile portrait.

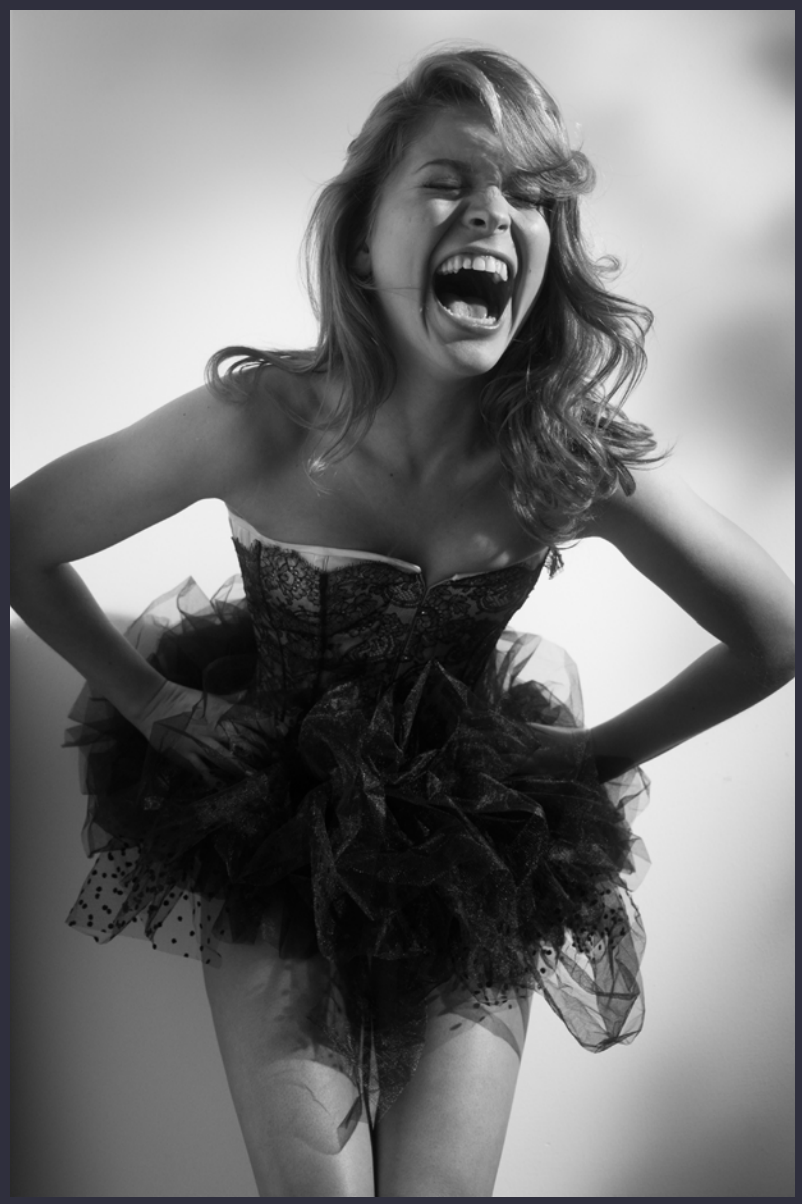
Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 1250 • 1/60 sec • f/2.4

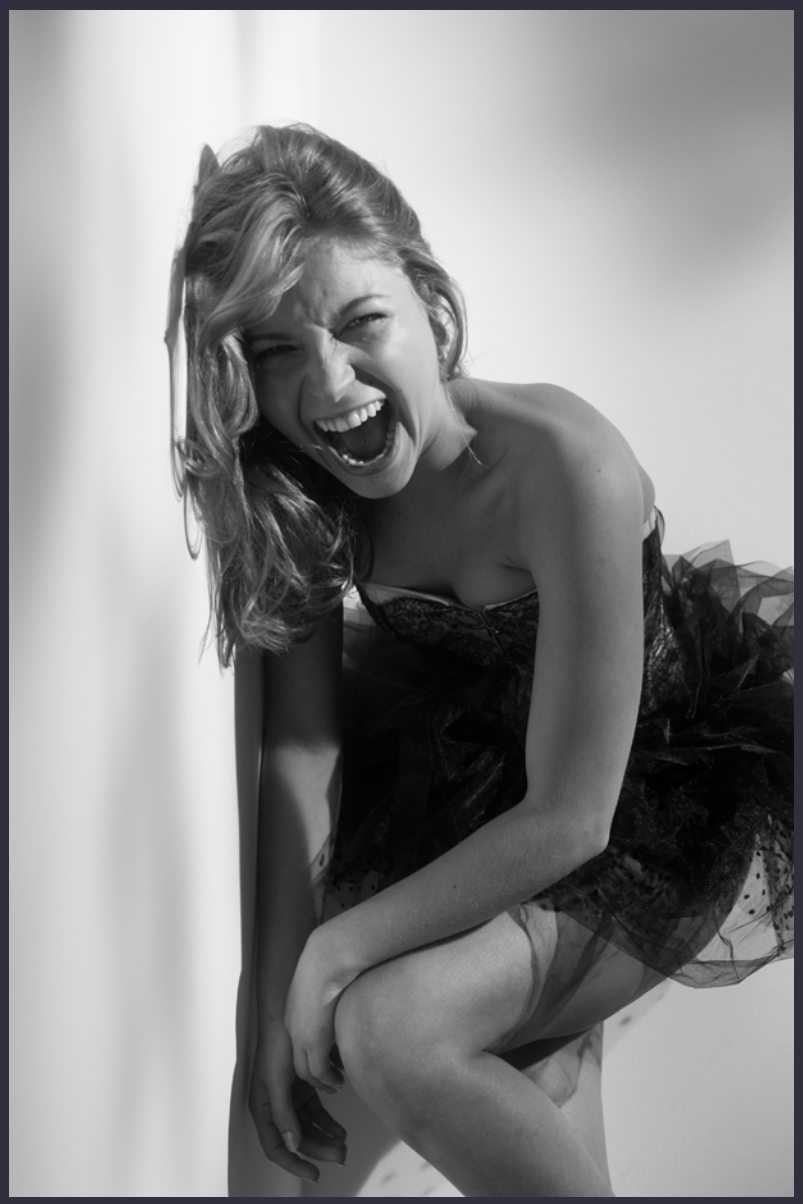
The most obvious way to photograph profiles is to use window light and to shoot at 90° to the light. This shot of Jay is simply sublime and captures her beauty perfectly.

Shoot a sequence

If you are creating a body of work like an album or even a multi-frame for the wall, think about shooting in sequences. When I was shooting retail portraits for clients the motto was, ‘Don’t sell one shot if you can sell three’.

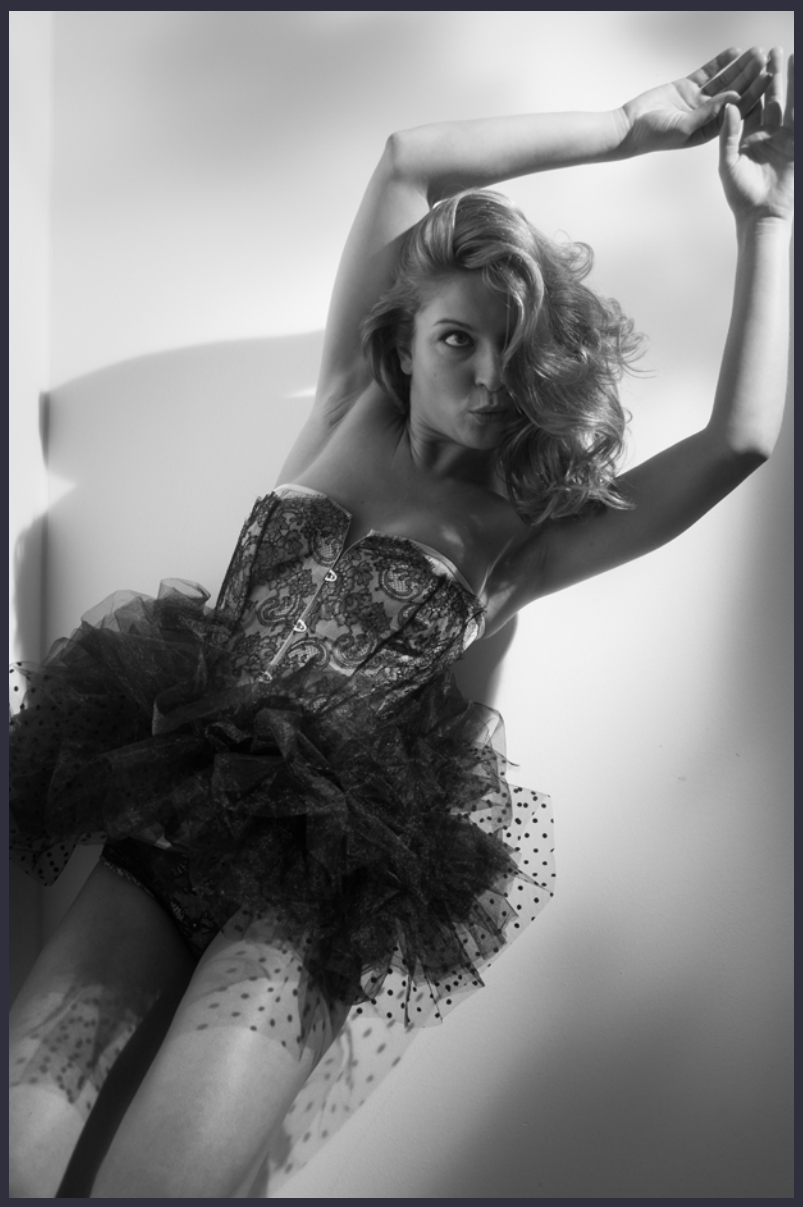




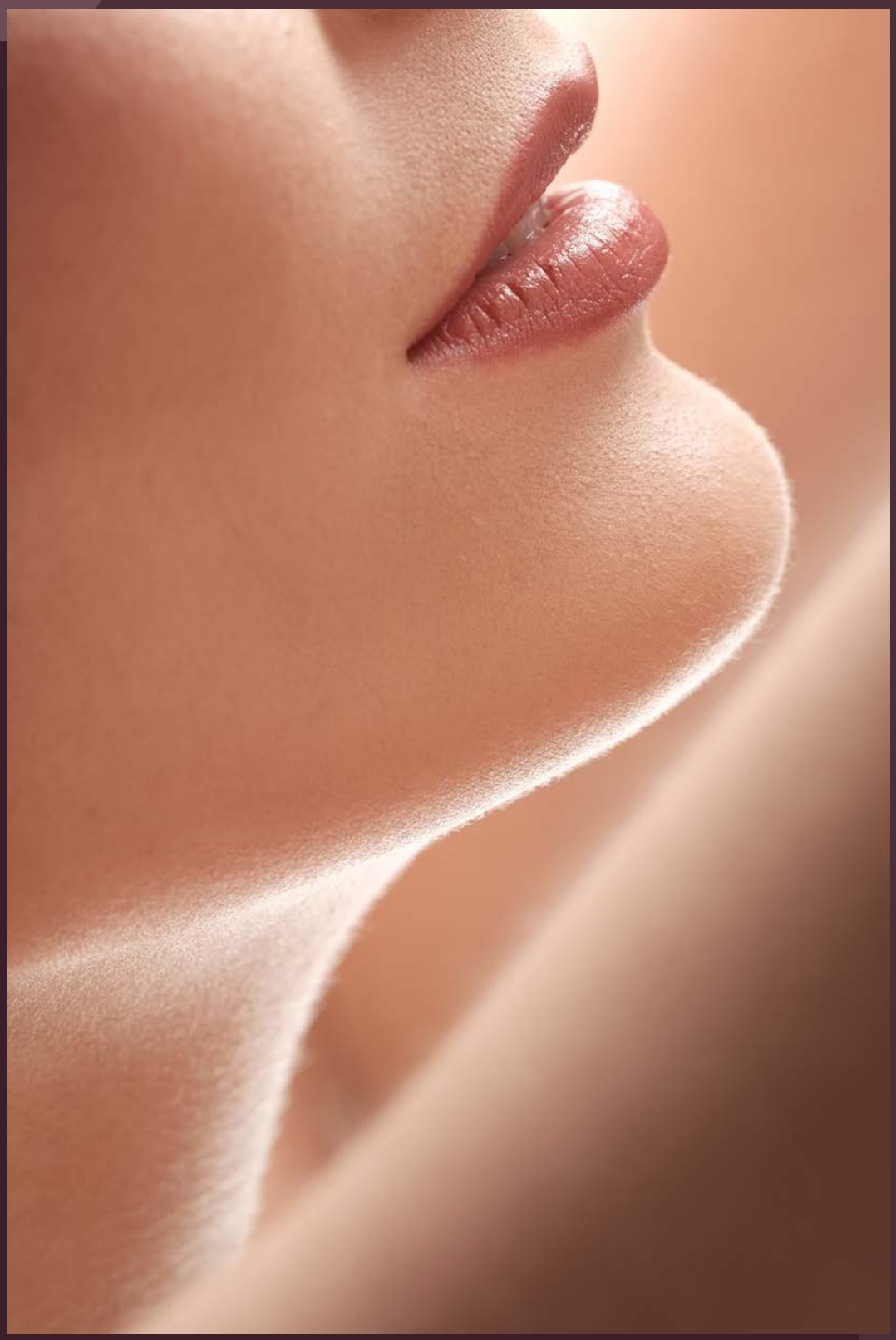


All images in sequence:
Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 500 • 1/200 sec • f/1.2

Once my lighting is set up I create an energy, lark about or do whatever the shoot calls for, but all along I'm capturing key moments that can be worked together in a collection. These 5 images were shot in the corner of a white room and were lit with a single Lupo LED 1000 spotlight with a Scattergel. You don't have to wait for the beep from a flash head when you use continuous lighting and that's a big advantage when shooting sequences.



Lighting Matters



The direction of light

The direction your light comes from is really important, but the only rule you need to be aware of is: ‘If the shot looks good, it is good’. With direct sunlight or directional soft light (from a North-facing window, for instance), I regularly light down the nose. By ‘down the nose’ I mean that I ensure my subject’s nose is pointing towards the direction of the light, which creates beautiful shadows under their cheekbones and ideal contouring on their face. Sometimes I shoot directly towards the light, either with my subject between me and the light source, or oblique to the light in order to create low-key, rim-lit portraits. The principal idea is to avoid unsightly shadows, or shadows that fall across the face and body in an unflattering way. You can’t soften a shadow by adding fill light or a reflector, you can only reduce its contrast. The shadow will still be there.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/500 sec • f/1.8*

Alicia is lit by sunlight reflected off a wall outside a window. I directed her to look out of the window so that the light would fall beautifully on her face. This ‘down the nose’ lighting is a style that I use in a lot of my work. I nearly always choose to shoot into the unlit side of the face, narrowing it and emphasising the cheekbones and jawline.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 90mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2

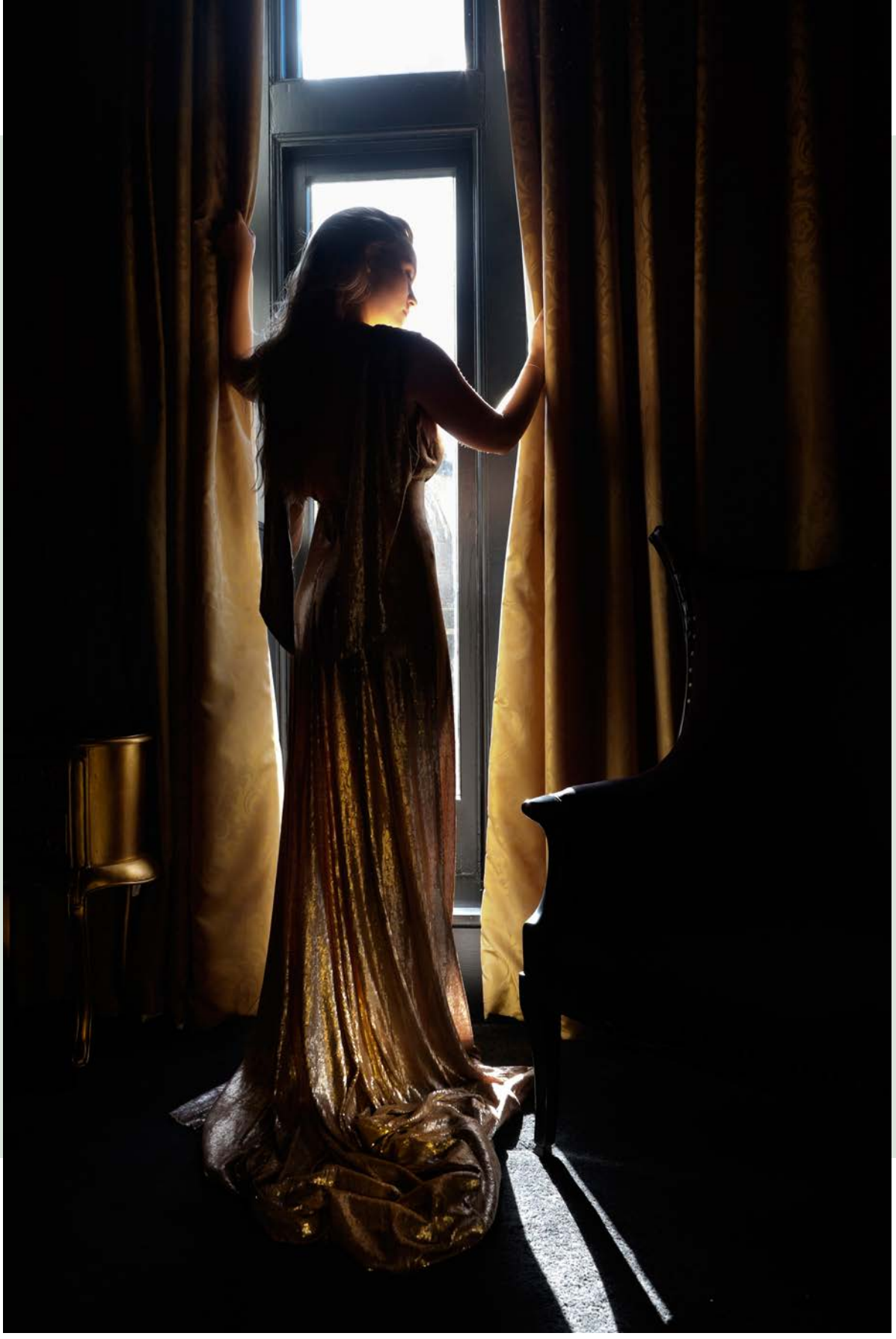
For this shot of Mischkah I used the window as a kick light to rim-light her and let the rest of her fall away into shadow. When I was shooting this kind of image at weddings and needed a bit more fill light, I would remove my jacket and reveal my white shirt to act as a reflector.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/2

The only light on Mischkah is from the sunlight falling through the dusty windows. The only change here is that I have chosen to shoot contre-jour; that is, into the light.

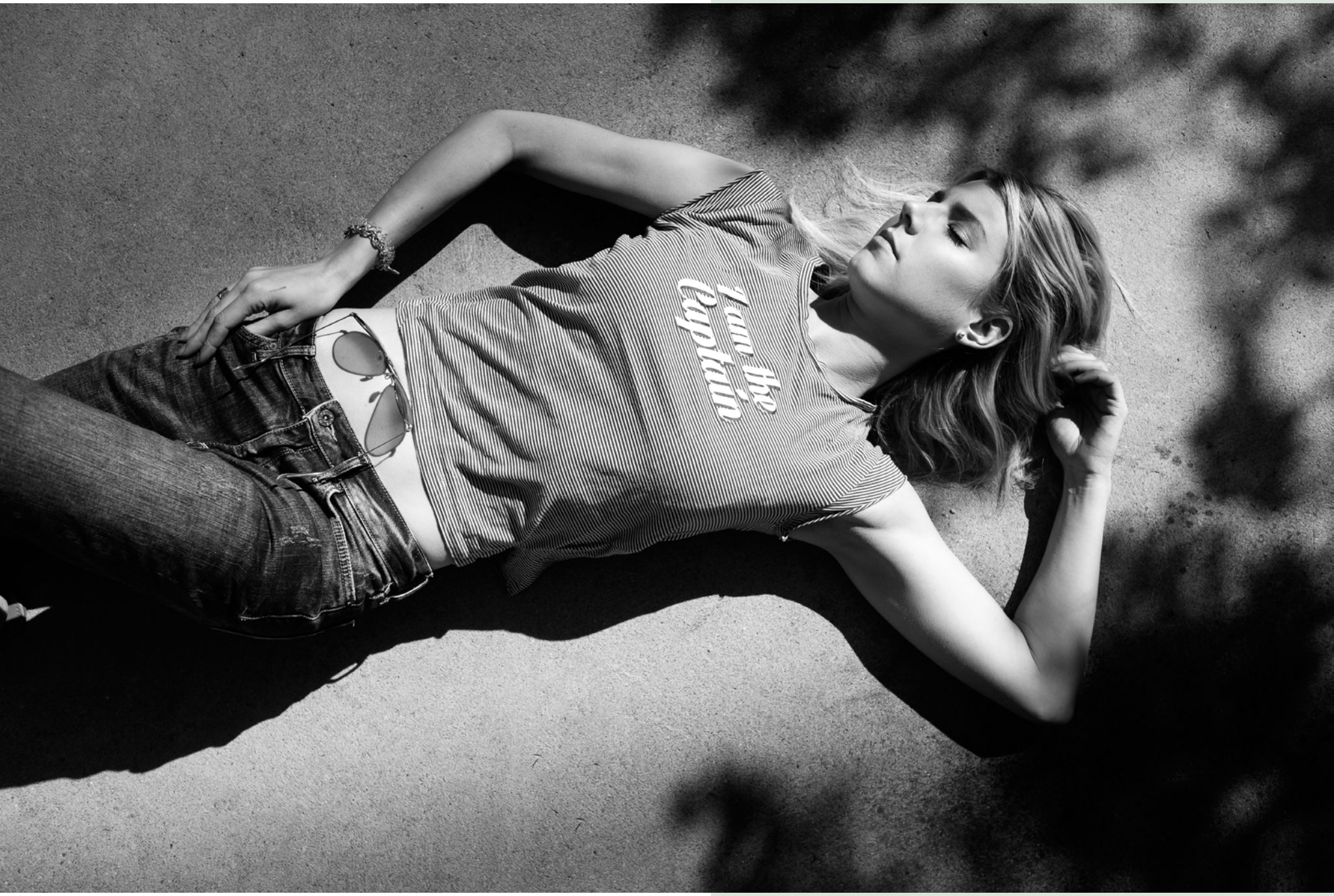
Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

When using kick lighting from a window in a large room the contrast can be very high. This is because very little reflected light reaches the subject from the wall furthest from the window. I took advantage of this for dramatic effect in this portrait of Amber.



▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/15 sec • f/6.4*

This shot of a gold dress was taken into the light to give a richness to the gold sequins. The sunlight that is striking across the floor is also on a white towel I placed on the back of a chair to the right of me to act as a reflector. When absolute quality is needed, like in this shot for the dress designer, I will always keep the ISO low and either use a tripod or, as in this case, a monopod. I find I can work with a shutter speed at the reciprocal of the focal length of the lens when I'm using a monopod. In this case I used 1/15th second. Clair was not moving so there was no subject movement to consider. A small aperture was set to deliver enough depth of field to render the dress sharp from front to back.



Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 23mm • ISO 100 • 1/1250 sec • f/2.8

Carole is lying on a concrete slab in a park in Lucerne and I orientated her so the sunlight is striking down her nose. It is important that the shadows fall in a natural way when lying someone on the ground. You can clearly see the definition in her cheek bones that I was after. I carefully placed her sunglasses to create the striking shadows. Attention to detail is a must for great portraiture.

Illumination 1 Full HD Video Tutorial

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Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/5.6

Midday sun in the South of France was just too much for a full-on portrait, so I asked Chantelle to stand in the shade by the blue doors. Red, green, and blue create perfect colour harmony. As well as including the primary colours of light, the green foliage also has a very high yellow content, which helps because yellow is a primary pigment colour.

Sunlight

Don’t rule out shooting in full sun in the middle of the day. I was always told that midday sunlight should be avoided for portraiture. However, I’ve found through necessity when photographing weddings that you can achieve fabulous portraits as long as you shoot into the light, work in the shade, or shoot with reflected sunlight. You can also use the sunlight directly if your subject wears sunglasses or a hat. Look out for shadows and patterns, and be creative with these too.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 55-200mm • 141mm • ISO 400 • 1/750 sec • f/4.4

The mountains of Italy were the perfect backdrop for this sun-drenched portrait of Debora. Shadows reveal everything when decoding lighting style and direction. The shadow from the peak of the hat on the brim tells us the sun was high, beyond Debora, and slightly hazy, with just two stops of contrast.

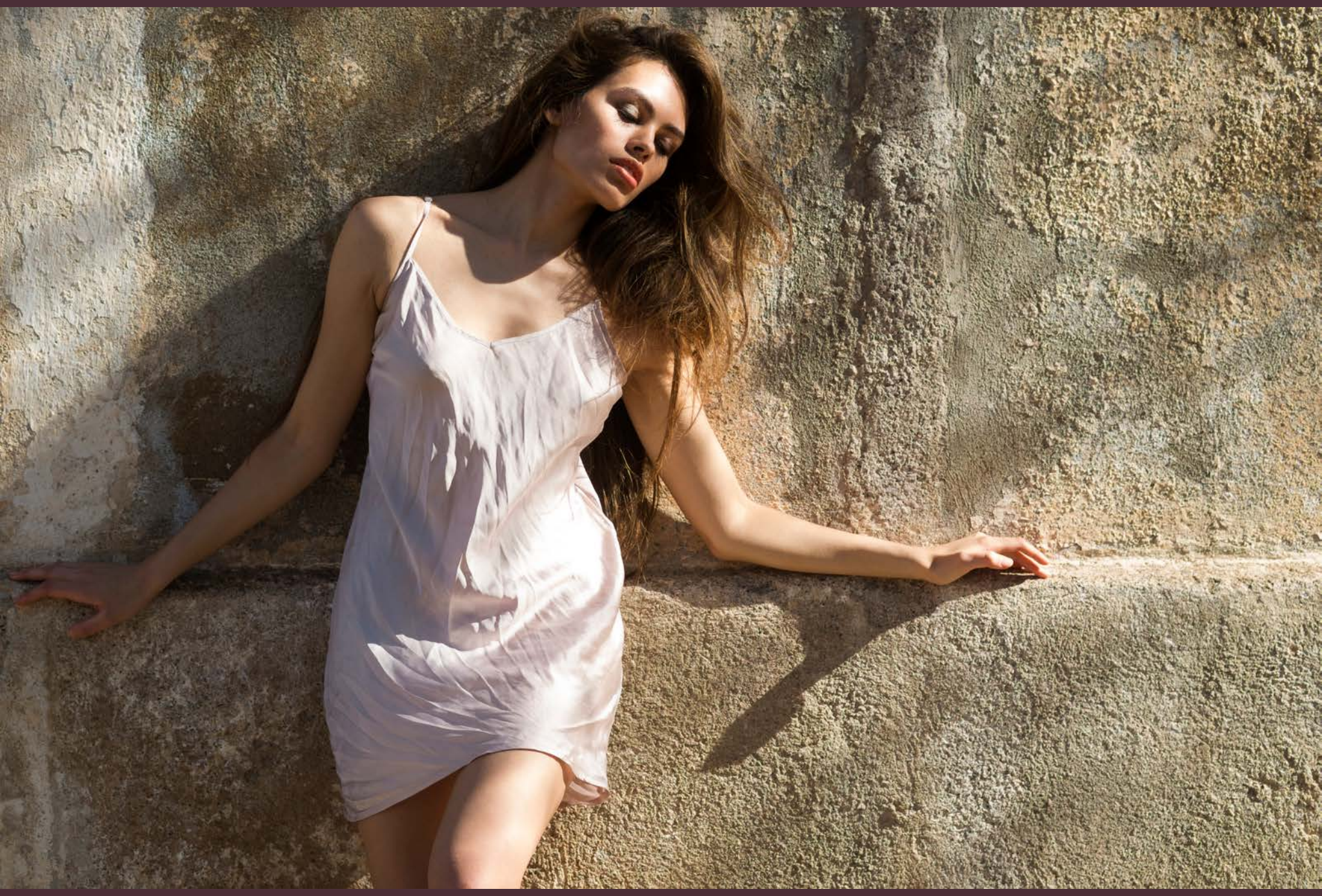
“Shadows reveal everything when decoding lighting style and direction.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/2.8

It was hot and sunny in Southern Spain, and this gap between the rows of trees on an abandoned military base was a perfect shoot location. I placed a small reflector on the ground in front of Liv to get some light in under her hat. Notice how wonderful the look is on the XF 60mm lens at f/2.8. It's dreamy and uncomplicated like a good impressionist painting. What's more, the 60mm lens is pin-sharp right into the corners, even wide open.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/8

Carla is standing in the desert in full, overhead sunlight. I chose to shoot into the light to create this high-key, low-contrast image.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 400 • 1/1000 sec • f/4

When I first noticed this wall it was still just in the shade but about to become glanced with sunlight through a big, old olive tree. I suggested to the group that we shoot inside the building for ten minutes and then come back. When we returned we had lovely dappled light to work with. I angled Natalia's nose towards the sun and asked her to close her eyes. Notice how well-defined her cheekbones are. It's worth noting that the sun tracks across the sky at 15° per hour. I remember the angle of my 30° set square from my school days, and it's easy for me to predict the position of the sun over time when I'm shooting on location.

There are more examples of portraits shot in full sun in the section on urban portraits.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/6.4

I love the patterns that sunlight makes as it goes through trees in the summer. I placed Carole on the step so that she is facing the sunlight. It gives her great muscle definition on her legs and creates that all important cheekbone shadow.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/480 sec • f/5.6

Don't rule out sunlight as a key light when shooting inside too. I used the fuchsia pink bag as a colour pop to contrast with the green light created by the glazing.

One light magic

There is only one sun, and someone once suggested to me that there should only be one light source in photographs. If they had opened their eyes they would have seen that light usually comes from multiple directions in every environment. One light can work well in portraiture, but it's not the only way. Light from one direction can produce wonderful images and is the easiest lighting scenario to work with. We call the main light in an image the 'key light'. It can be a back light or a side light, but in all instances the key light is the principal light source in the shot.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 124mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/2.8

When I'm shooting in the studio or on location, I use a very simple tonal separation technique that places a dark foreground against a light background, and a light foreground against a dark background. This one-light portrait of Carla uses both. I lit her with a Lupo LED 1000, once again 'down the nose'. Note the wonderful 'S' shadow line below her cheek and jaw bones.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/8*

For this simple fashion shot, I used a fairly large soft-box pointing straight down to the floor and placed it in front of Rosalinde. The positioning of the light means I have even lighting on the white background from top to bottom. Placing the light much closer to Rosalinde than to the background ensures two things; firstly, that the light on the background is two stops darker than on Rosalinde, and secondly, that Rosalinde's shadow is very diffused by the time it reaches the background. You can't get this look simply by pointing a soft-box at your subject; it needs feathering.

“Light coming from only one direction can produce wonderful images, and it is the easiest lighting scenario to work with.

Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

Helen looks splendid in this period-style shot for a magazine editorial. I used a silver Sunbounce Pro reflector on a stand to move the sunlight into the right spot. The fall-off is completely natural and didn’t rely on vignetting in post-production.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 400 • 1/60 sec • f/2.4

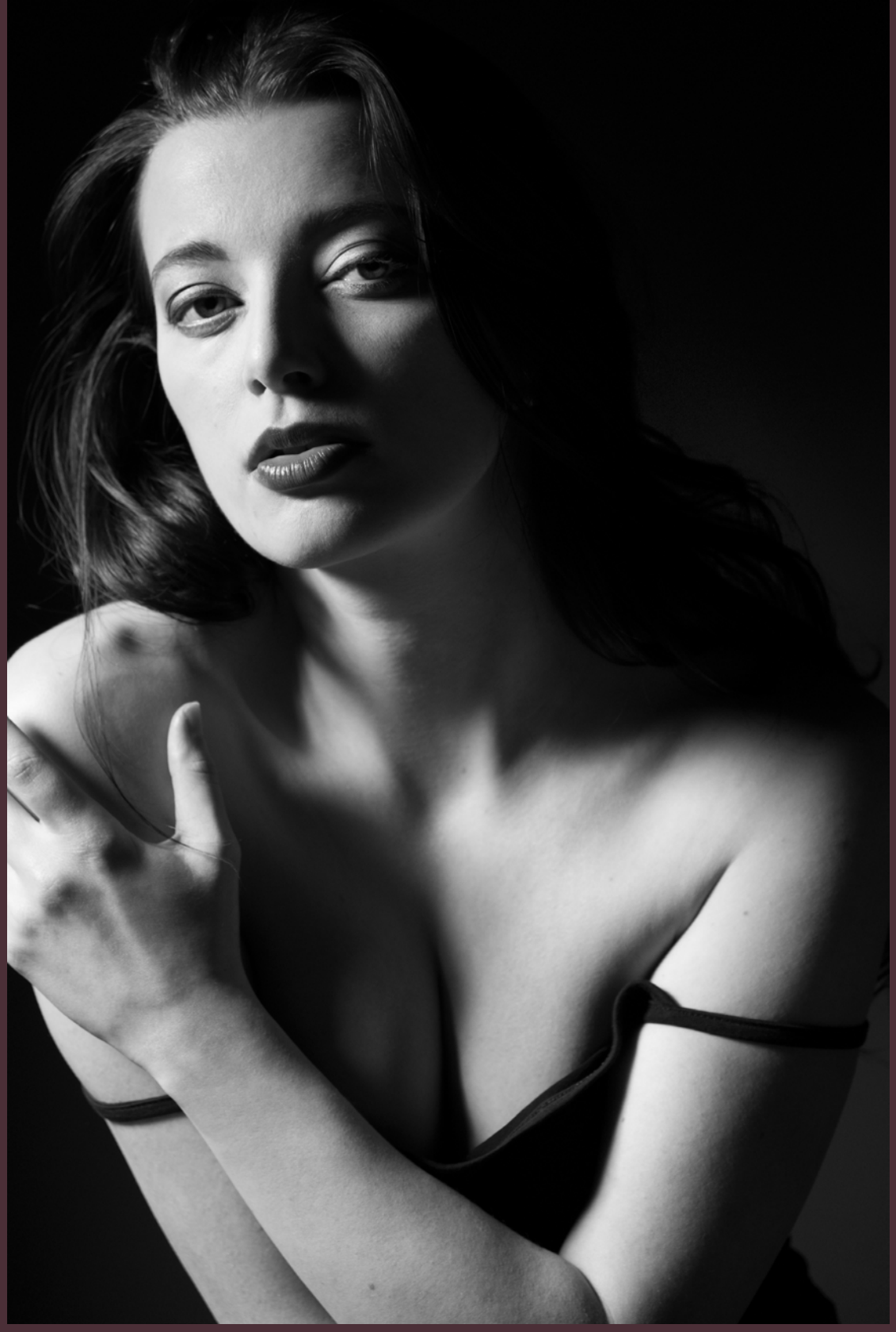
I took this shot of Elke back in 2012 on my Fujifilm X-Pro1. I used the 60mm lens that I bought with the camera and I used a monopod to avoid camera shake. Elke was lit with a single Lupo 1200 HMI spotlight above and to the left of camera. I love the way leather reflects the light back into the lens.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 18-55mm • 52mm • ISO 1000 • 1/125 sec • f/4

I used a Cactus RF60 Speedlight in a small, silver umbrella to light this shot of Carla in our Munich hotel. This shot deviates from my convention of lighting 'down the nose'. It's okay to ring the changes every now and then; if the shot looks good then that's all that matters. When posing a client or model, try to create diagonals and asymmetry. Keep the hands at different heights, cross the legs, and cut the bottom of the shot at the crossover point.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2

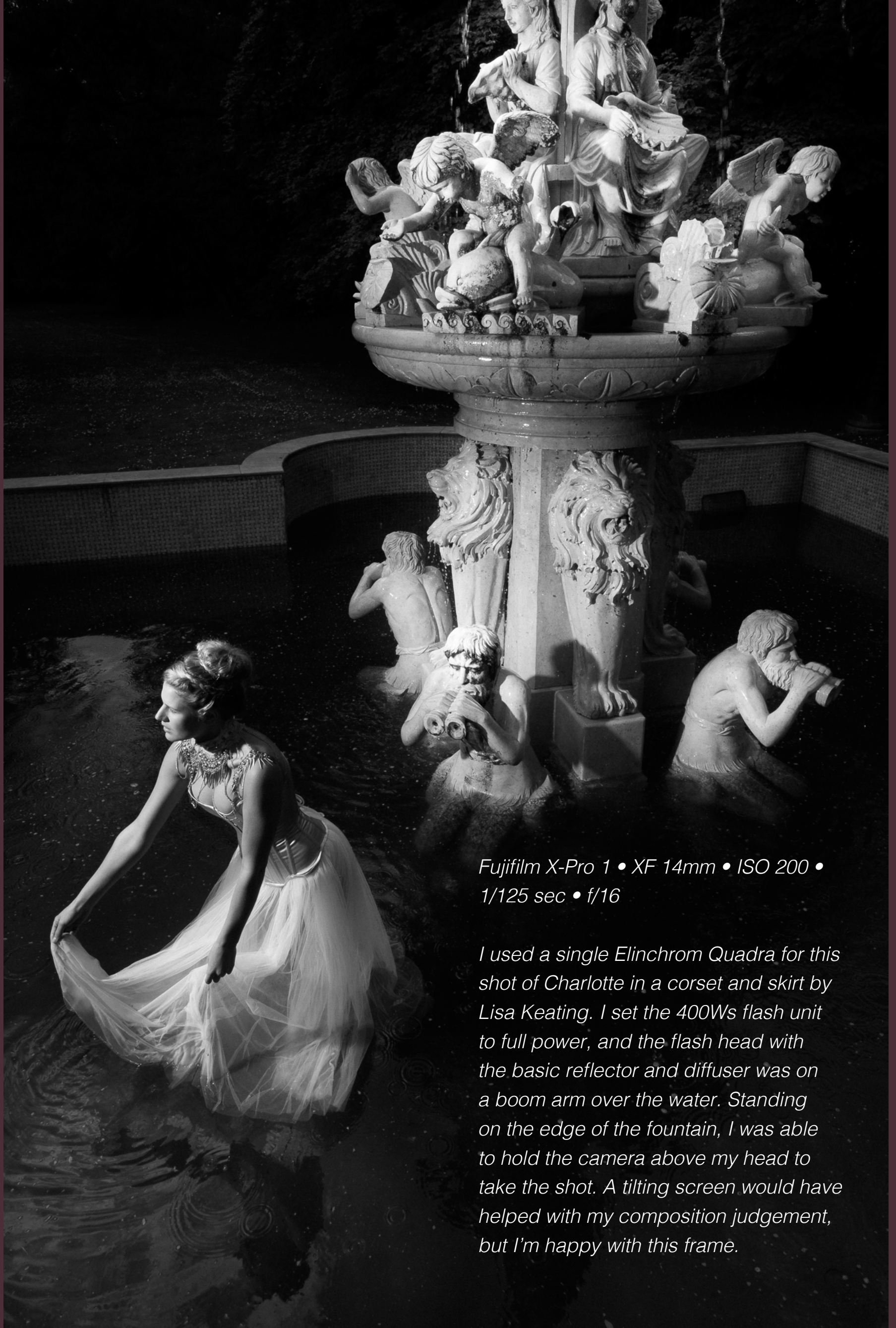
A single slash of light from a Lupo LED 1000 (on full-flood through a narrow letterbox slot in the barn doors) worked really well for this shot of Zara in the Manchester Hilton. Zara's left hand just picks up the light from a downlighter in this corridor. A 'down the nose' lighting direction reveals her wonderful facial structure.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 55mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/4

This one light portrait of Helen is lit with a Lupo LED 1000 spotlight with a frost gel clipped to the barn doors. You can see the slightly diffused penumbra - the transition between the lit and unlit part of the shadow caused by the frost gel on the light. I've let Helen's nose shadow touch her cheek shadow to enclose a triangle of light on the unlit side of her face. It's important to ensure some light gets into both eyes when using this Hollywood lighting style.

> *When posing a client or model, try to create diagonals and asymmetry.*



Fujifilm X-Pro 1 • XF 14mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/16

I used a single Elinchrom Quadra for this shot of Charlotte in a corset and skirt by Lisa Keating. I set the 400Ws flash unit to full power, and the flash head with the basic reflector and diffuser was on a boom arm over the water. Standing on the edge of the fountain, I was able to hold the camera above my head to take the shot. A tilting screen would have helped with my composition judgement, but I'm happy with this frame.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

The magic in this shot of Amber comes from the bokeh produced by the 35mm f/1.4 lens and the lighting provided by a Lupo 1000 powered with a battery. You can see the effect of the light by looking at the shadow it created under Amber's chin. A simple hard light on a stand is my preferred kit for commercial portraits. As an aside, I used my Fujifilm X-T10 for this shoot because I was getting familiar with it in readiness for a trip to Rome. The X-T10 is my go to camera for travel and holidays. It is small, lightweight and absolutely superb value for money too.

Two lights

Two lights are used by most movie lighting directors on each actor in a scene. It's often called two-point lighting, with the light sources hitting the subject from opposite sides. This two-point lighting can be in the form of 'key and kick', where a kick light glances the cheek of the actor, or 'key and back light', where the second light just illuminates the hair and shoulders. Stills photographers sometimes use a couple of alternative two-light set-ups called 'clamshell' lighting and 'butterfly' lighting. Clamshell lighting involves placing one light above and in front of the subject, and one below and in front of the subject. The light from below can be replaced with a reflector to achieve the same results. Butterfly lighting uses a similar set-up but rigged to the left and to the right of the subject.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/4*

This shot of Victoria is lit from two directions by two very different light sources. Her key light is the skylight from the edge of the woods, and her kick light is from a Lupo 1000 running on battery power. A Lupo 1000 will run for about two hours on full power off one Li-ION battery. I set the exposure by the quantity of daylight and dimmed the Lupo to suit. This is a frame from the collection I shot for Lisa Keating, the corset maker. I chose to include the ivy roots on the tree in the frame as they harmonised with the structure in the corset.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 14mm • ISO 400 • 1/60 sec • f/2.8*

By placing Debora between these two windows I have ensured key and kick lighting. This classic two-point lighting style is available for interior shoots far more often than people imagine. I lit many of my bride-and-groom portraits in this way, working in the corner of a room with windows in two walls. The 14mm makes a wonderful lens for placing people in a scene. By shooting from a certain height it's possible to keep the back of the camera upright, and to keep the verticals in the frame as a result.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 55-200mm • 110mm • ISO 800 • 1/30 sec • f/4.2

This shot of Debora was taken in exactly the same position as the previous shot and uses the two windows as light sources. The colour-shift between the sources is due to the fact that the kick light is coming from a blue sky through the window on the left, and the light from the right is sunlight reflected off the wooden window shutter. I partially closed the shutter on the right to create the lighting balance you see here.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.2

The light on Jen is daylight coming from both ends of a short tunnel. It creates perfect 'key and kick' two-point lighting. The key light gives great facial definition and the kick light further enhances her figure.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 1600 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

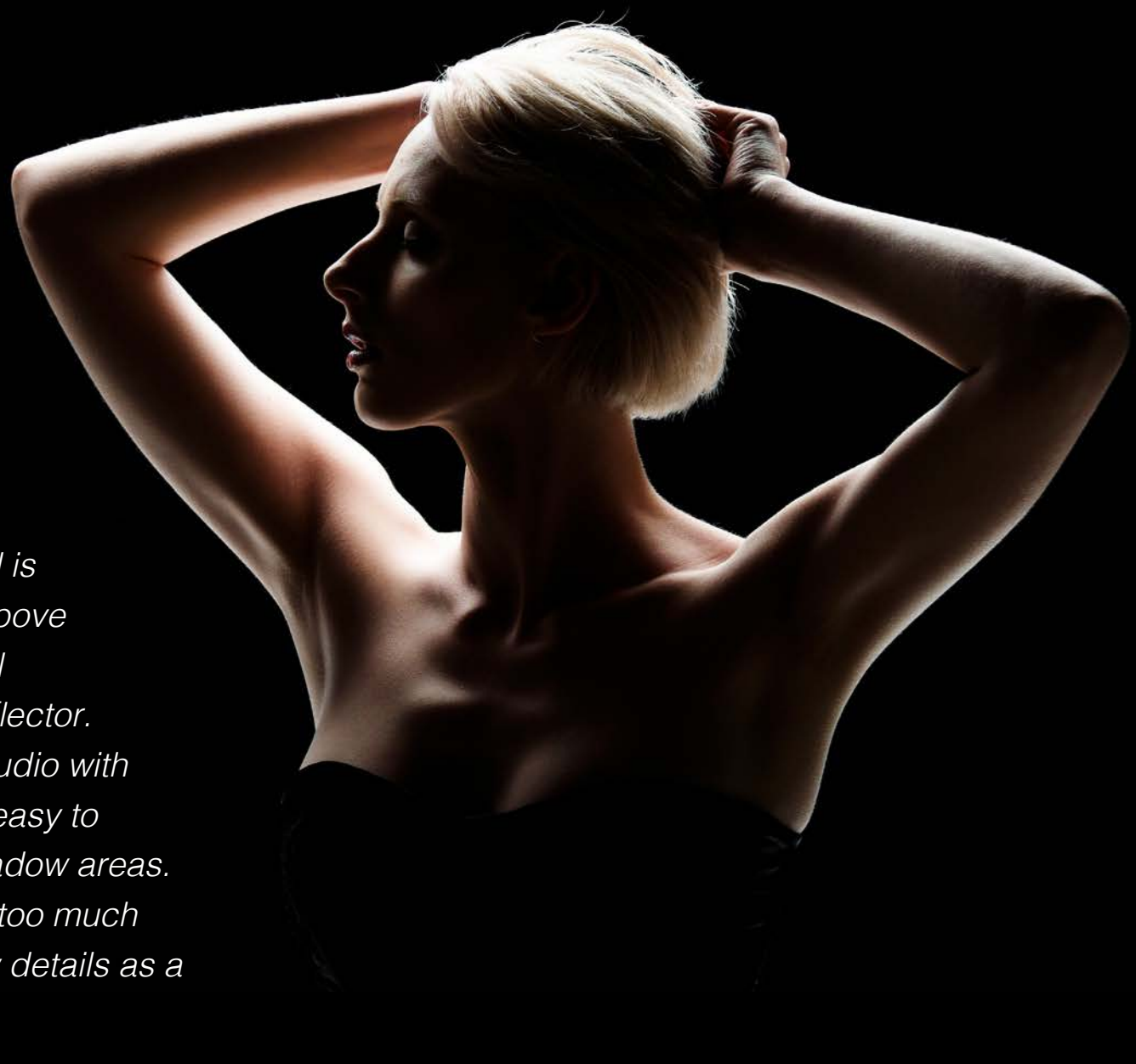
This shot of Yulia was taken in an abandoned villa in Cambodia. She is backlit by the light coming through a grenade-hole in the ceiling, and a window partly overgrown with creepers acts as her key light. I love to work with minimal post-production, and when presented with such natural beauty I like to keep the raw quality as it is, just like I did when shooting on film.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

This shot of Tilly uses two windows as light sources. I had a Tiffen ¼ Black Pro Mist filter on the lens to give the shot this ethereal glow.

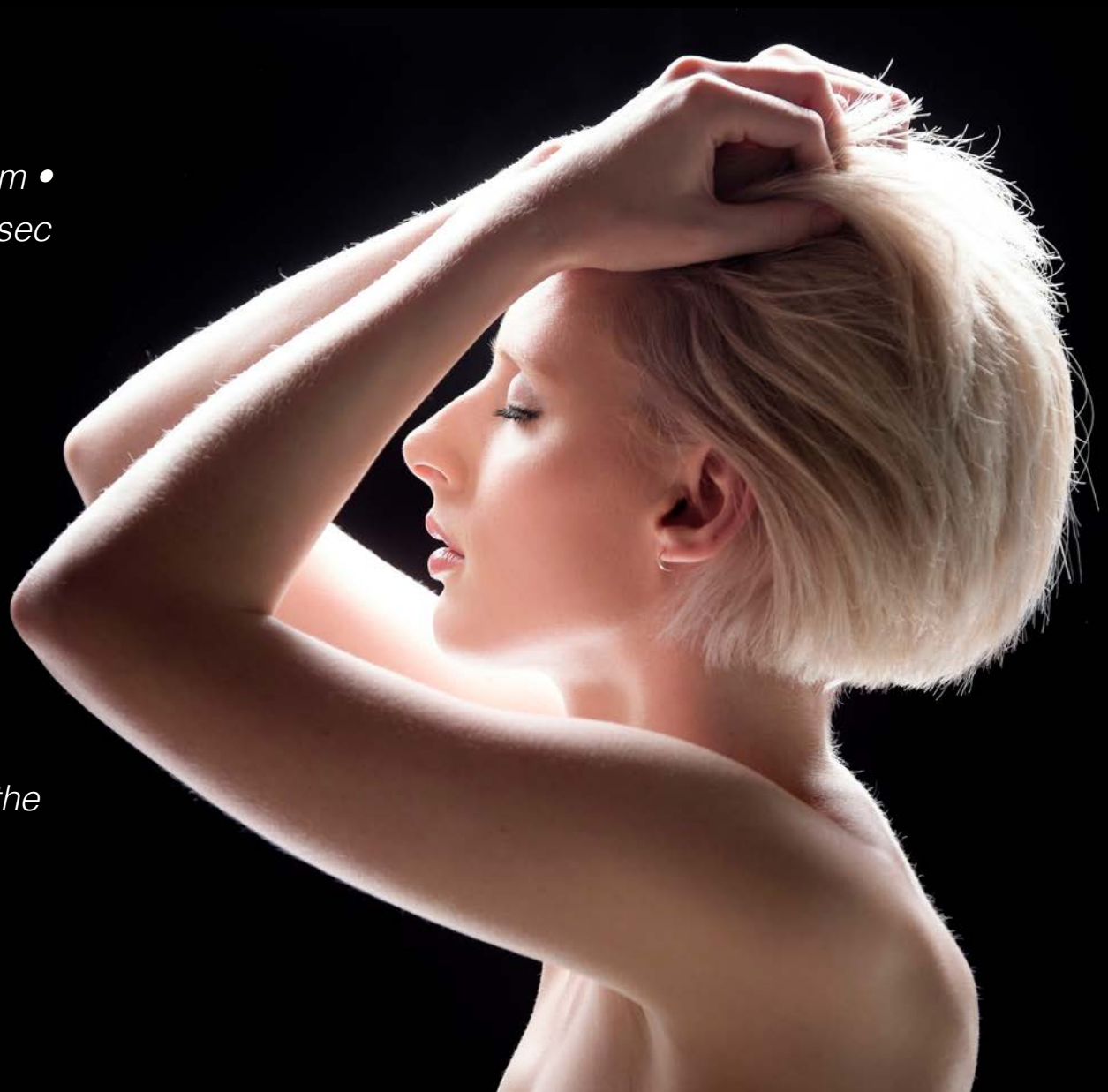
Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/5.6

This studio shot of Victoria uses one Elinchrom RX 600 flash head in an overhead striplight soft-box. It's rigged straight downward like the light over a snooker table and is beyond Victoria rather than above her. The light from below is all reflected via my trusty old Triflector. The advantage of having a studio with dark painted walls is that it's easy to achieve true blacks in the shadow areas. White or light walls reflect far too much light and give muddy shadow details as a result.



Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 106mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/2.8

This is the same lighting as the previous shot but with the lens opened up a couple of stops. Now the light on this side of Victoria's face is reflected off her left arm, and the light on her arm is reflected off the floor.

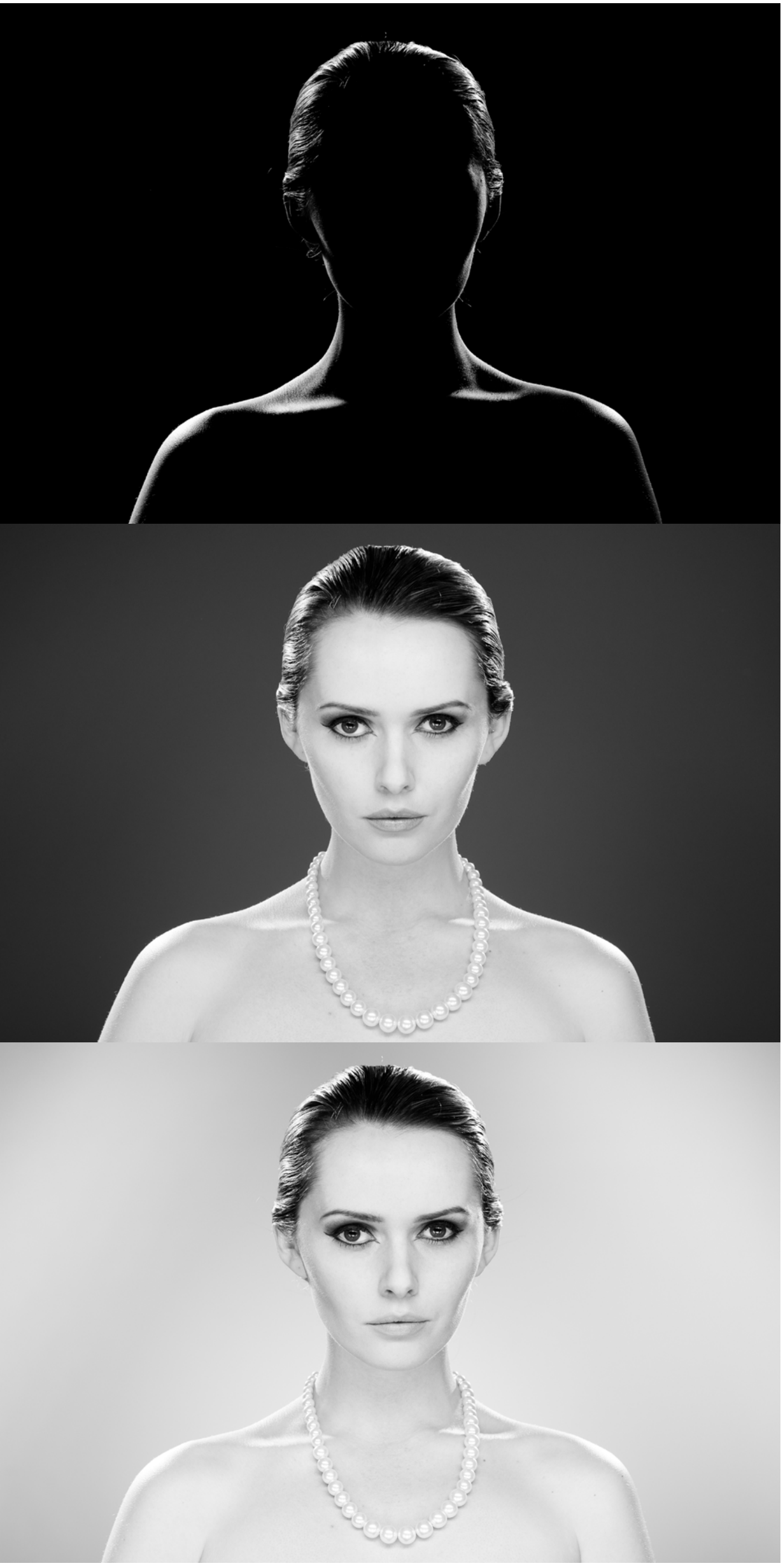


Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/9

This shot of Cass was lit with a pair of flash heads with striplight soft-boxes rigged vertically either side of her. This is often known as butterfly lighting and it's a great lighting technique for highlighting figure shape. It's highly useful in pregnancy photography.

Multi-light setups

Multi-light set-ups in the studio are quite straightforward to rig as long as you start with the end result in mind. Rig one light at a time and make sure that each light is doing exactly what you want it to do before moving onto the next one. Having just one light on at a time is the best way to rig your set-up, unless you are matching ¾ back lights. Once your lights are rigged, switch them all on together and start the process of balancing them. Tip: Make sure the light with the most work to do is your most powerful or fastest-recycling unit.



Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/8

I started this lighting set-up with the ¾ back lights from the left and the right. I set these to be even, paying particular attention to Carla's collarbone symmetry. Then I added a soft-box striplight, pointing directly downwards in front of Carla, and reflected the key light back into her face from below. The second shot shows the effect of this. You can see that the background has been lifted to a dark grey as a direct result of spill light from the key. An easy way to avoid this is to place black cloths on the ground around the sitter.

Finally, I added a light to the background. Because the background light is independent of the key and back lights, it's easy to light it to any colour, or to add a pattern.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/11

This shot of Victoria is a simple set-up, layered in just the same way as the previous example. I used a key light which was also pointing downwards but rigged further to the left. I used less reflected fill light and pushed the right hand back light up a stop to create a key and kick look.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/8

For this shot of Rosalinde, I used a Broncolor Fresnel unit to simulate the quality of light I get with my Lupo lights. Using flash delivers far greater depth of field and technical quality at the expense of atmosphere. The choice is yours. I had to set the key light low to get it in under the hat and I used just the one back light rigged opposite the key light. Once that was set, I lit the 'Storm Grey' background roll with a small Bron Picolite aimed through a plastic palm tree.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 1600 • 1/500 sec • f/2

Unlike the flash shot of Rosalinde, I lit Charlotte with continuous light using three Lupo LED 1000 spotlights. I needed 1/500th second to freeze the action and that forced me up to ISO 1600. The image quality from the Fujifilm cameras is excellent at this ISO, and I'd have no issues printing this frame several meters high for display in a retail store.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

Chantelle was lit with a simple three-point lighting set-up: two ¾ back lights and a key light down the nose. I used the wonderful XF 50-140mm lens fully zoomed in to get this tight crop. The 90mm lens works well in the studio too, but since it doesn't have optical image stabilisation I'd have needed to use ISO 800 at 1/500th and f/2 to get a super sharp shot with a hand-held camera. Alternatively, I could have used a monopod at the same settings that I used for the zoom.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/500 sec • f/1.4

I set the white balance to 3200K for this shot of Victoria. The quick way to do this is to set the white balance in-camera to 'Tungsten'. The symbol in the Q menu is like an old-fashioned light bulb. I pulled the white balance back slightly on the face and arm in post-production using a brush in Lightroom. Being able to selectively adjust the white balance during RAW file processing is a wonderful asset. Pulling colours around in 8 bit jpeg files breaks them up very quickly.

White balance

White balance is another key consideration when establishing the mood of a photograph. To set an accurate, custom white balance in a continuous light situation, choose a piece of white fabric like a t-shirt, or a piece of white paper to be your sample white. Bear in mind that not all whites are equal; for instance, office copier paper is often much bluer than white wall paint. Put the white sample in the spot where your subject will be, illuminated by the light source, and expose it to be as near white as you can without burning it out. Using the main menu, not the Q menu, navigate to 'White Balance, Custom 1'. Frame your white sample within the box to fill it completely, and press the shutter. A new white balance has now been set at the Custom 1 position.

You have three custom white balance memory positions that you can use. I've set my 'Custom 1' for the Lupo LED 1000, my 'Custom 2' for the Lupo Striplight that uses fluorescent bulbs, and I've kept my 'Custom 3' position for day-to-day use in mixed lighting environments.

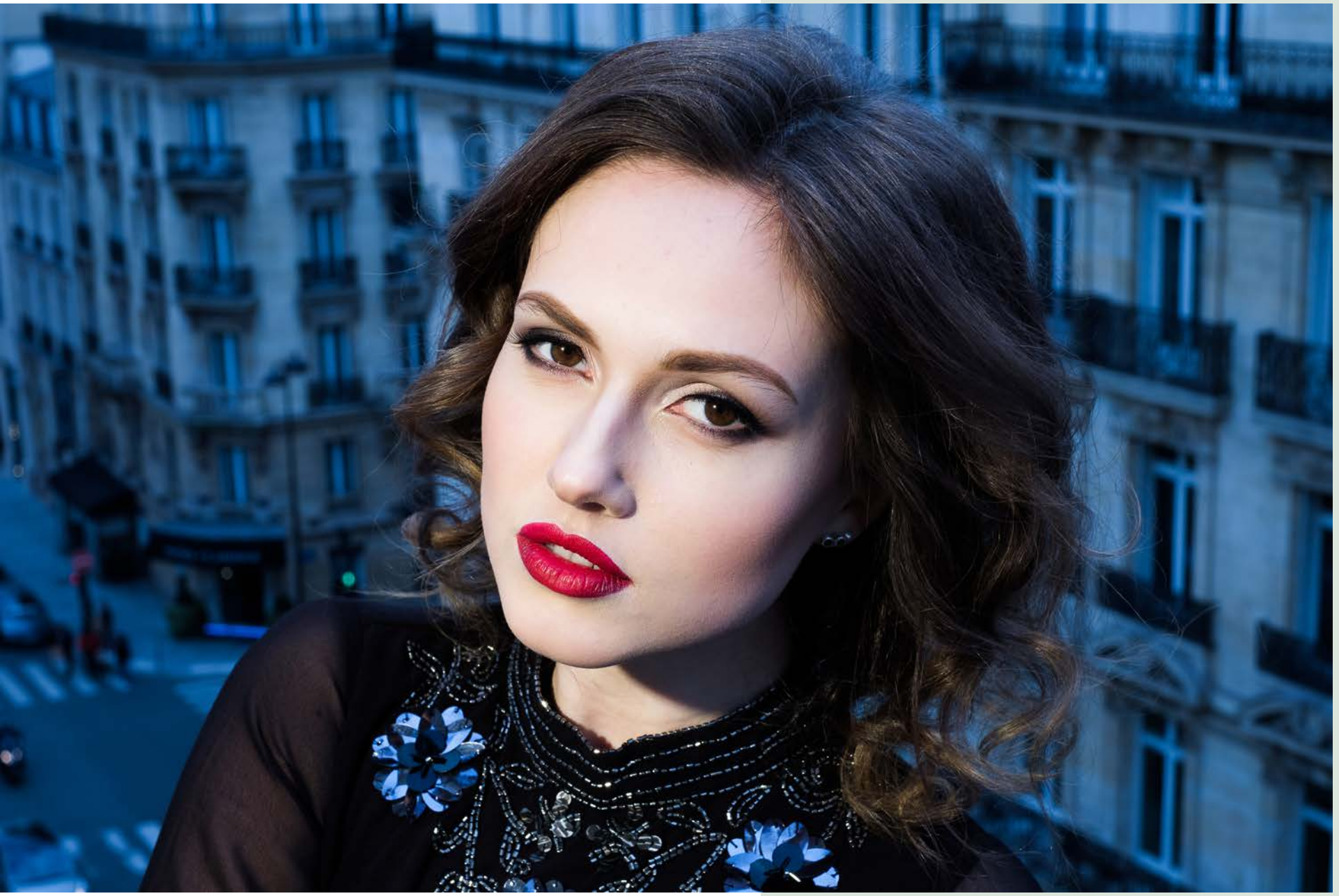
The good news with custom white balances is that they set the tint level too, so when you bring the

files into Lightroom or Photoshop both the white balance and the tint settings have been taken care of, even when shooting RAW.

Sometimes you may want to manipulate a white balance to give your image a cool or warm look. In this instance, use the main menu to select ‘K White Balance’ and then click right to set the colour temperature. You will see the preview of your shot change as you change the setting, which is especially useful. Thank you, Fujifilm.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 1000 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

We placed this AC Cobra in a road tunnel lit with low-pressure sodium lighting. I lit Helen with winter sunlight reflected off a Sunbounce Pro reflector, placed high up on a stand some 30m away. Blue sky did the rest, and the resulting image was a beautiful mix of colours without having to do any further editing in Lightroom. I set the white balance in-camera to 5600k and left it there in post-production.



▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/8*

This shot taken on a balcony in Paris uses a 3400 Kelvin white balance and is lit with a Speedlight fitted with a full orange gel called a CTO (Colour Temperature Orange). CTO converts light at 5600 Kelvin to 3200 Kelvin. I chose 3400 Kelvin to give the skin tones a bit of warmth to counteract the blue streets of Paris.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 400 • 1/60 sec • f/2

I shot Agata in this super dress under the canopy of a palace entrance.

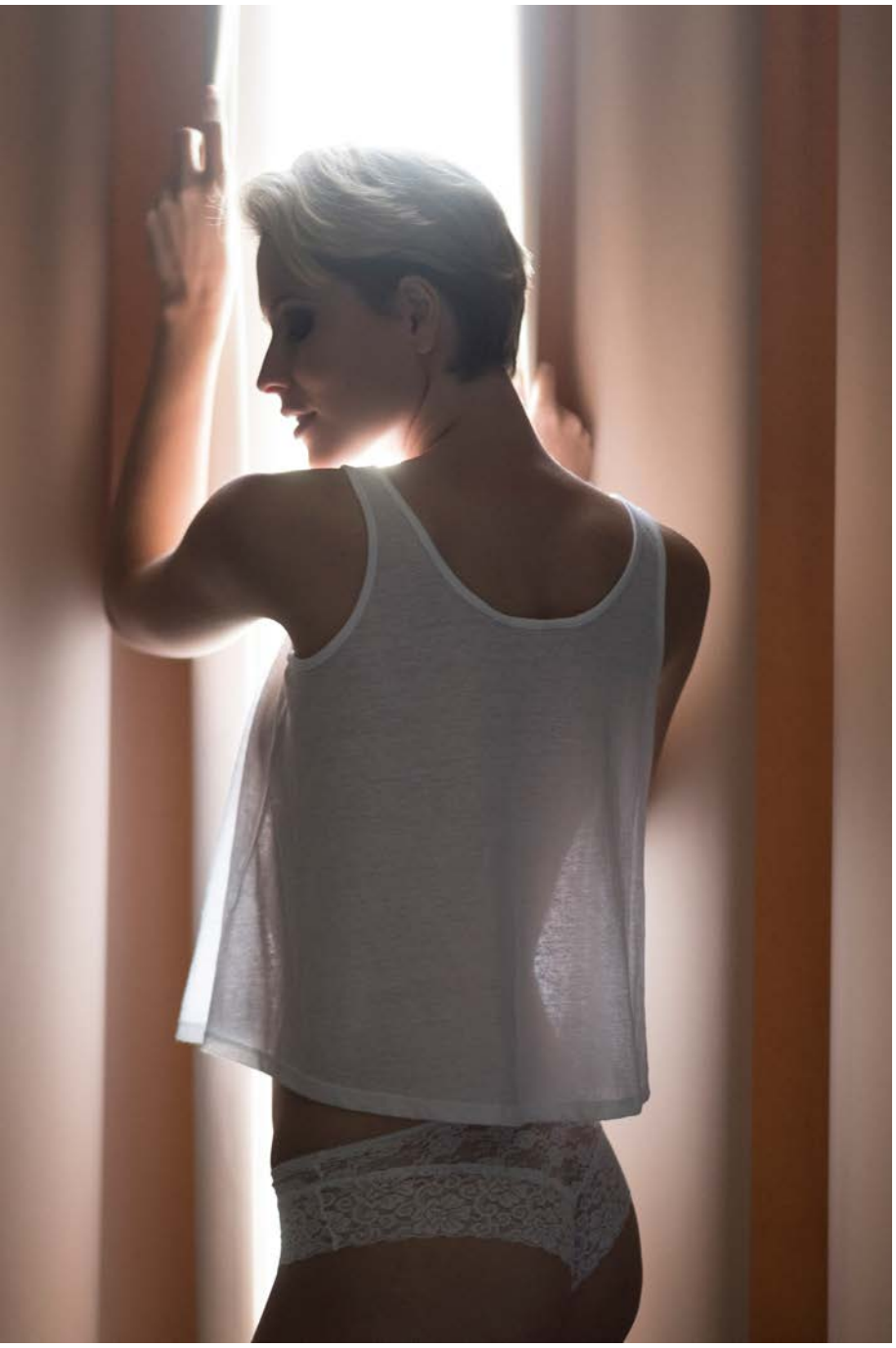
The highlights on the iron railings behind add to the look in the image. I just used natural light, set the white balance to 3200K and placed the camera on a monopod.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2

I drew the curtains in this hotel suite, leaving one just slightly open on the left of the shot. This seam of light makes the shot far more interesting than it would have been with the curtains open.

Manipulate the light

Manipulate the light in the environment around you to make it do what you want. If you are inside, you can partly close the shutters, blinds, or curtains until they are nearly shut to create a striplight soft-box effect. This will also increase the contrast in the room by darkening the shadows. If you have sunlight you can reflect it through a window or into a shady area outside to create a patch of gorgeous light.



Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.2

Restricting the light to the equivalent of a striplight soft-box, simply by closing the curtains, has created a dreamy boudoir image. Notice Rosalinde's asymmetric hand position on the curtains.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

Another narrow slash of light from partially open curtains illuminates this shot of Rosalinde. You can make out a pattern created by the sun coming through net curtains, which I brought myself and rigged in front of the hotel blackout curtains. I bought these useful net curtains from Ikea and clip them up to curtain rails, using crocodile clips as required.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/1.2

Closing all of the shutters in this abandoned mansion except for the one in front of Mischkah gave me the light I wanted for this shot of isolation.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/30 sec • f/1.2

Even in a dark cellar the quality of light can be wonderful. A single, small, subterranean window with reflected daylight was all I used for this shot of Victoria. The dress she is wearing is a calico sizing sample for a silk gown by designer Molly Mishi May.

Quality over quantity

Dark interiors often make great shooting locations. It's not the quantity of light that matters, it's the quality. Use a monopod or a lens with IS, but be careful with subject movement. By seating your subject, or having them lean against a wall, you effectively stop them moving. Use a high ISO if you need to. It's far better to use ISO 3200 and have no camera shake or subject movement than to use ISO 400 and have unintended blur.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 3200 • 1/30 sec • f/1.2

At 7m from the cellar window the light level was very low, but the quality was superb. I needed a monopod to keep the camera steady at such a long exposure, and I directed Victoria to be perfectly still. This is possibly the limit of low-light portrait shooting; fortunately, the X-T1 coped very well indeed.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

I lit this shot of Tilly using a Lupo LED 1000, with a Scattergel clipped to the barn doors to create a dappled look. This is a classic example of the way I shoot at 90° to my light source. I placed Tilly against the dark, unlit panelling to create subject separation.

Shoot at 90° to the light

I find that some of my best portraits are shot when the light is falling on my subject at right-angles to my camera position. The closer the camera gets to the angle of the light source, be it skylight coming through a window or sunlight out in the open, the flatter the pictures become. I only move round to close the light angle when I need my subject to make eye contact with the camera. I shoot about 50% of my portraits without eye contact.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 69mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/5

Shooting at 90° to the light doesn't have to be from the side, it can also be from above. For this shot I used an Elinchrom Quadra head on a boom arm with a striplight soft-box suspended above Debbie. Large flash heads like mono blocks, or those that have integral Li-ION batteries, are too heavy to use on boom arms. This is why I prefer the Quadra in such circumstances.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 1000 • 1/60 sec • f/2

I used a Lupo LED 1000 spotlight with a Scattergel to create this shaft of dappled light on Jen, shooting from below the eye line and at 90° to the light.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/30 sec • f/2

A gloomy spot in this abandoned mansion in Cambodia was perfect for a location portrait. The diagonal shaft of light from a window like this is a lifelong inspiration for me. I use this kind of light in the studio, on the streets, and in many locations.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18mm •
ISO 1600 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

This bedroom was too small to rig a light in, so I decided to open the door and rig an Arri 300 Junior spotlight in the next room, lighting the scene through the open door. I directed Raphaella to create a line that echoed those of the bed frame. Tip: If there are room lights in the shot, switch them on, whatever the lighting conditions.

Simulated sunlight

Simulated sunlight is a wonderful pick-me-up for interior portraits. For close work I regularly use a Lupo LED 1000, but when I'm having to light bigger areas I use a big flash kit like the Elinchrom Quadra at 400Ws.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 500 • 1/200 sec • f/1.2

Claire was lit with a Lupo LED 1000 from behind and to the right of the shot, her key light came from a North-facing window behind the camera. I tried to make the Lupo simulate sunlight coming through a roof light in this attic bedroom. There were no roof lights, but the fake sunlight makes the scene bright and beautiful. Working with continuous light in this way really affects the mood at the shoot. It doesn't take long for us all to feel wonderful in this artificial sunlight. Switch the light off and we are plunged into the gloomy reality of a dark winter's day.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 1600 • 1/60 sec • f/2.4

By using a Lupo LED 1000 out on the patio of this basement flat I created what looks like sunlight on a wet, overcast January day in Bristol. You can see the shadows of the window bars that add to the illusion. Tip: Use a large, clear plastic bag upside down on the Lupo LED lights to make them weatherproof.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro 1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2*

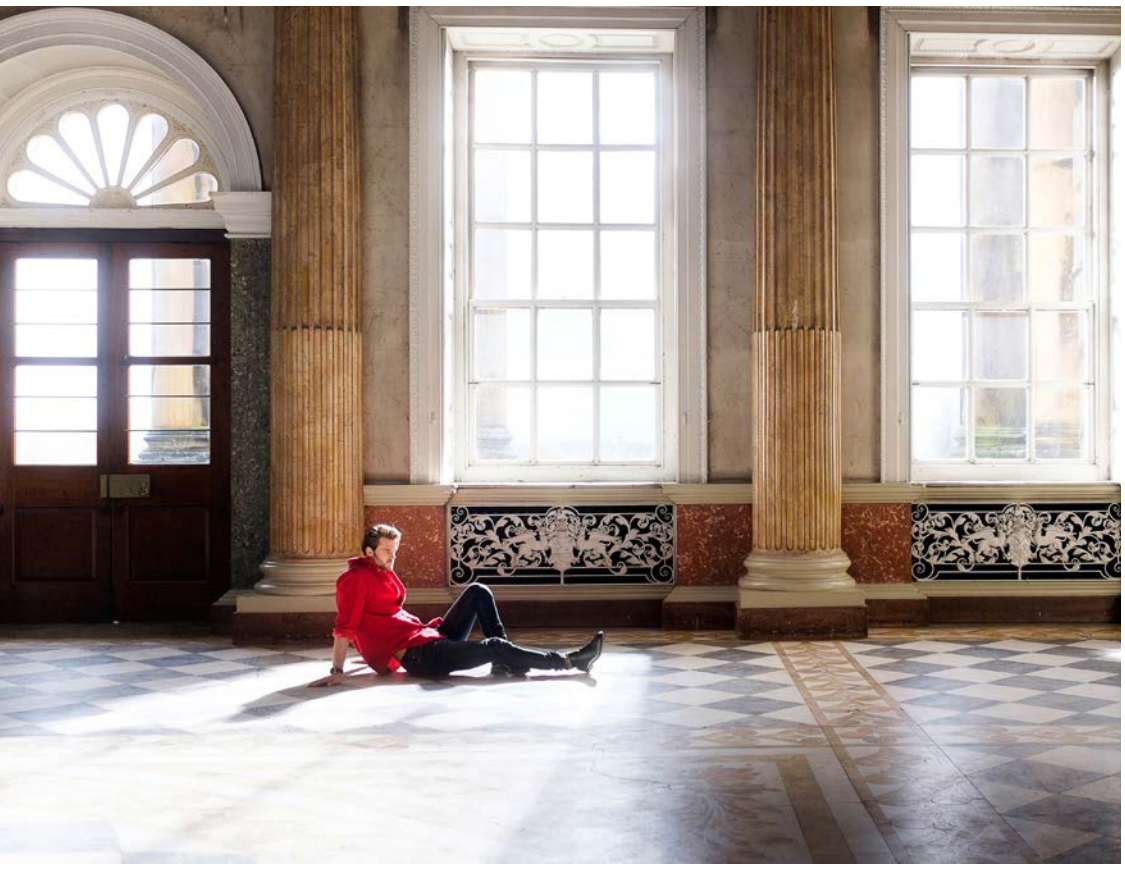
This shot is very similar to the previous one, except that there was no window for us to use as a key light. Instead I used a Lupo Striplight rigged horizontally above the camera. I let the Lupo 'sunlight' burn out on the duvet to mimic reality. Preventing the highlights from getting blown out would have resulted in a flat, dull picture. Notice the table light has been switched on in the back of shot.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 500 • 1/180 sec • f/1.6

Mischkah is sitting in a patch of simulated sunlight in this abandoned farmhouse in Spain. You can tell by its absence coming through the window on the far left that there is no sun coming from that direction. I created the sunlight using a Lupo LED 1000 with a Scattergel. The Scattergel breaks up the light and makes a world of difference to the shot. The Lupo was running on a battery and can run for over two hours on a full charge.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/4

I swapped over to my X-T1 to capture this shot of Jamie in the same lighting set-up as the previous photograph. I adjusted the power of the flash to create a controlled but believable contrast for sunlight. This is how it works: If I were to drop the power of the flash by two stops, I'd have to open up the lens by a corresponding two stops to get the correct exposure on Jamie's face. By doing this, the unlit background would also be two stops brighter, and the contrast would be greatly reduced as a result.



Fujifilm X-E2 • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/2

It was a dark winter day in Yorkshire when I took the pictures on this page. To light this scene with 'sunlight', I used an Elinchrom Quadra outside the building, high on a stand with a Rotalux 70cm deep-dish octabox in beauty dish mode. To extend my lighting stand I rigged a boom arm, fully extended, pointing straight up on the top of a tall stand. I added sand bags to the base of the stand for greater stability. It was important to get the light far enough back to light both windows and the door.

The sky’s the limit

Keep the sky out of your pictures unless it is amazing. It might sound obvious but the best tips often are. A highlight at the top of your frame will draw the viewer away from your subject and reduce the impact of your portrait. The sky has to be exceptional to consider it a worthwhile component in a portrait. A deep-blue, cloudless sky can make a fabulous backdrop in monochrome, or form a key element when shooting colour portraits using the primary colours of light and pigment. Here are a rare few of my portraits which include the sky. If I’m in doubt, I leave the sky out.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/1.2

This impending storm in Cambodia was reason enough for me to use the sky as a backdrop for this portrait of Yulia. You can tell how dark it was by looking at the exif data.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/8

Sunny Spain delivers an almost year-round blue sky. I bought the yellow dress for just this kind of image, and I asked Mischkah to be a sail on my imaginary yacht. The colour contrast makes this shot work well.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 55-200mm • 95mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/4

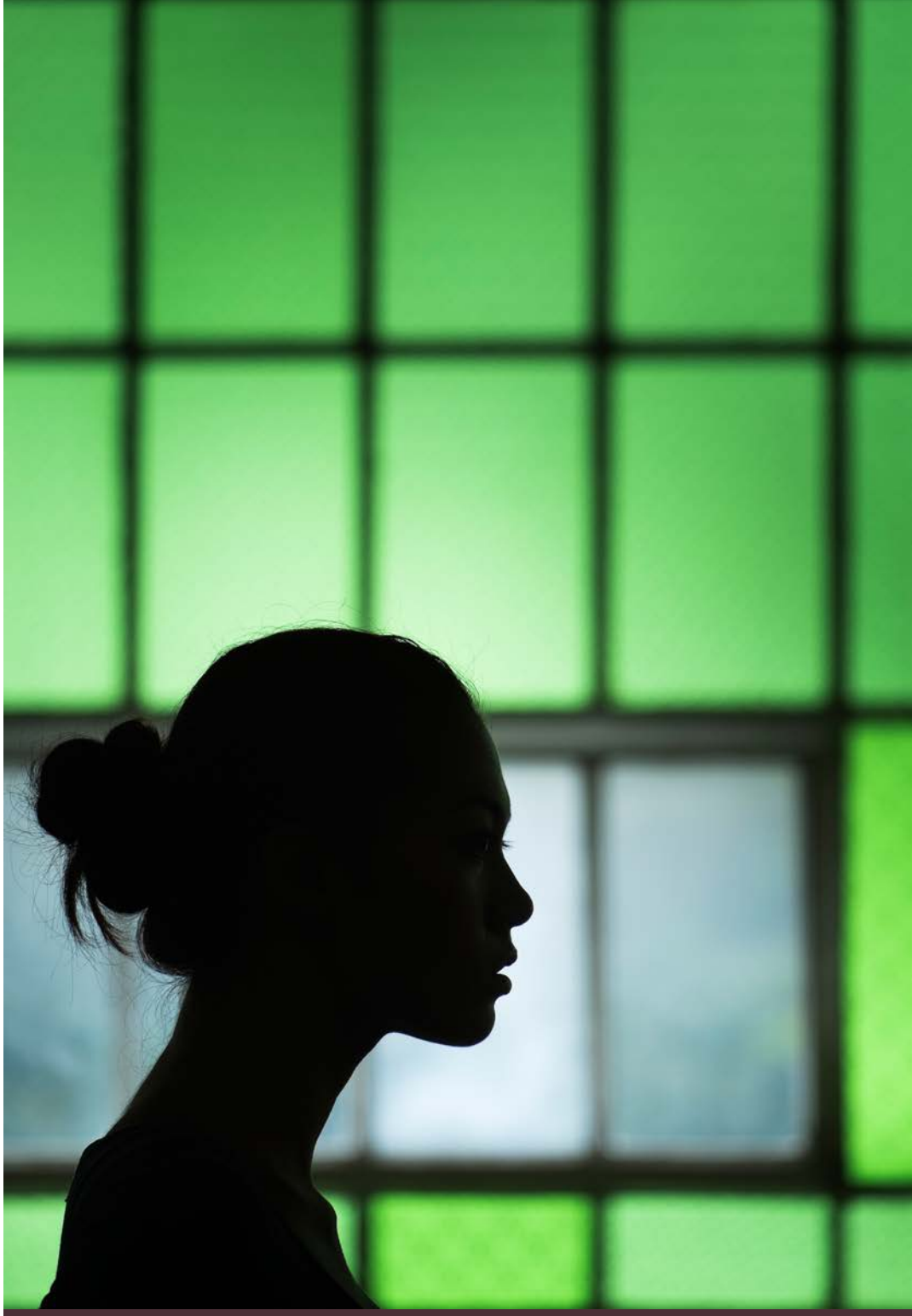
The delicate pastel colours of the English summer gave me a perfect backdrop to use for this action shot of Charlotte. The sky in this picture is the shade I'd use in the studio to light my background for summer fashion.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-200mm • 69mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/5

The same hill, the same model, the same dress, and the same hat as the previous picture, but now I'm shooting towards the sun and exposing for Charlotte's face. The sky has now become a high-key background.

Break the rules with exposure

Break the rules with exposure to keep skin tones looking vibrant or your pictures dramatic. Fujifilm X cameras give an accurate preview of exposure in manual mode. If you prefer to use one of your camera's auto modes, you will get a preview of your exposure compensation. This preview means you can get creative with exposure and see the results before you press the shutter. Ignore histograms and don't worry about burned-out highlights, just look at the skin tone and the vibrancy of your subject. When you are shooting into the light you can shoot silhouette or low-key rim-lit shots. By increasing the exposure by several stops it is often possible to create high-key portraits in the same space as your low-key ones. Get creative with your exposure and take control.



Fujifilm X-Pro 1 • XF 55-200mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/5.6

Whatever shooting mode you use, be sure to use an electronic preview of your image that shows the true exposure. I choose to shoot in manual mode and have the 'exposure preview in manual mode' function switched on at all times when working with available or continuous light. It's under these conditions that full creative control of exposure can be achieved before the shutter button is pressed. For this shot of Gabrielle in Singapore, I set the exposure to just let her skin tone drop into deep shadow.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/1.2

I shot towards the sun for this picture. The sun was coming through a tree and giving a nice dapple effect to the light falling on Mischkah. The background is a sunlit field of straw and I've let it fade off into white because I wanted Mischkah to have a healthy glow. I let her shoulder bleach out too. If I were to recover the detail in post-production the shot would look false, flat, and boring. Note: I asked Mischkah to lean into the wall and cross her legs. The wind was coming from behind me and was wafting nicely into her hair.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 56mm • ISO 1600 • 1/250 sec • f/1.2

Victoria was in silhouette when I rigged the light. I set the lens to f/1.2, braced myself against the wall of the studio and set my shutter speed down to 1/125th second. I then increased the ISO until the picture screamed. That's how I got this sunny beach look using one Lupo LED 1000 spotlight from behind my subject. Notice how I let the highlights blow out to complete the look. If you do this kind of shot, make sure you don't try to recover the highlights in post production.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 55-200mm • 156mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/4.5

I love low-contrast light like this scene on Bokor mountain in Cambodia. I placed Yulia in a wide doorway of a bombed-out villa as the clouds rolled in. I was faced with shades of grey that could have been exposed at various levels to produce an acceptable print. Yulia lost her balance on tip-toes, and I caught this fleeting moment as she recovered herself.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 55-200mm • 78mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5*

No matter what metering mode your camera is set to, when left to its own devices, scenes like this will pose a challenge. Take control of the decision-making process, knowing that, with the viewfinder correctly calibrated, (see the camera set-up section) you can accurately assess the highlight and shadow detail in the frame.

> *Know your camera's limits and have fun exploring them.*

3

Urban Portraits

This is my guide to shooting portraits in the city; the ideas, strategies and techniques needed to make the world your studio. The concept of shooting portraits on city streets is nothing new. In fact, it's been around as long as photography itself. And unlike street photographers, who candidly document the people of a city without intervention, urban portrait shooters take control of everything and make studio-grade portraits everywhere.

The perfect location

What makes the perfect location? A great city location is an area full of picture opportunities closely packed together. I like to work within a 500m radius of my start point, aiming for enough variety of backgrounds and shoot spots to last me a whole shooting day. I usually start at a coffee shop so that I can meet my client in comfort before we venture out with the camera. I shoot come rain or shine, as there is nothing more frustrating than having to cancel because of bad weather. I make sure to shoot between March and September here in the UK because cold weather can make the process painful. As I occasionally have to shoot in the rain, I need the option of covered areas to work in. These can be pedestrian underpasses, areas beneath flyovers, railway bridges, canal tunnels, or building canopies over entrance porches. A perfect city location also has cafés with toilet facilities, a place for lunch, and the opportunity to take photos without being moved on by police or security staff.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/11

The sun is my friend when I'm shooting on the streets. I love to use it creatively wherever I can. Rosalinde is lit with sunlight from the front and a Cactus RF60 Speedlight kick light from the left of the frame. The Speedlight has a ½ CTB (colour temperature blue) gel, and you can see how much cooler it is than the sunlight where it strikes Rosalinde's face. The camera white balance was set to 4800k to further cool down the image. That yellow base to the shot is a perfect balance for the cool blue look, especially since it's a cold yellow. The only real warmth in the shot comes from Rosalinde's sunglasses and lipstick. It's discovering colour palettes like this that make street shoots so much fun.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/10

I love this shot of Rosalinde in Rotterdam lit with a single Cactus RF60 Speedlight. I rigged it from the right, zoomed in to 105mm, and tilted down to create a slash of light. I had ½ CTB gel on the Speedlight and I set the white balance to 'Sunny Day' (5600k). This gave a cool look to the shot.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/5

Shifting the colour of the light can deliver striking results. Here I used a full CTO (colour temperature orange) gel on a Cactus RF60 Speedlight in a Lastolite 55cm Ezybox, with a grid to the left of the frame at 90° to the camera. The blue in the frame is simply the residual daylight. I directed Victoria to create this curved pose which breaks up the rigid structure of the background. There is more information on shifting colour and white balance in the Lighting Matters chapter.

Finding locations

I invariably start with Google Earth, looking for intersections of rail, tramways, roads, rivers, and canals. These provide multi-level zones with bridges and tunnels. These are ideal for controlling the light and staying dry on the shoot. I then use the Google Maps overlay to find parking locations, somewhere to meet, and a place for lunch. Google Street View is the next tool I use to look for photography backgrounds. A good background can be a stainless steel louvre at the back of a commercial building or a wall of glass at the foot of an office block with interesting reflections. Being able to wander around at street level from the comfort of my studio is a real bonus at the

planning stage. I can even add virtual pins and create a walking route. I follow the links on Google Maps to business websites to check details like opening times of cafés and parking prices.

Finally, I use the free tourist information websites with ‘what’s on’ calendars and so on. I don’t want to get to a location and find that it’s fenced off for The Tour of Britain cycle race or a half marathon.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/400 sec • f/1.4

Some architectural surfaces and designs lend themselves to backgrounds. I had fun with this façade of a financial building in Rotterdam. I placed Rosalinde perfectly in the panel, yet offset in the whole frame. The circles add interest to the composition and give a purpose to choosing this background. The XF 16mm makes a wonderful location portrait lens.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/2

Even the most mundane business districts in a city can produce interesting backgrounds. I shot Victoria from below her eye-line to make her appear more powerful. Looking up to someone enhances their visual strength. Conversely, looking down on someone diminishes their visual strength. Many times in my career I've heard photographers say that women should be photographed from above, and they give various reasons, such as that it reduces double chins, but in reality it suppresses them and often results in a look of vulnerability or submission. The only rule here is to ask yourself if the viewpoint adds to the desired look. At the time of shooting I described the narrative for this shot to Victoria; she was trader of the year at Rolux Bank and was being photographed for 'The Financial Statesman' newspaper. The portrait shows a sassy go-getter; a modern woman in a modern world. An achiever, confident and determined. The real reason for the shot was to show how to use a single Speedlight off-camera to give contrast and life to an open-space portrait on an overcast day.

The recce

This is a process I adopted from my days at the BBC when we used to look around a location to fine-tune a schedule and plan the technical requirements of a shoot. This has to happen after the online work has been done because cities are vast and a certain amount of narrowing-down is vital. At the recce, I'm looking to confirm the suitability of a location with regards to safety and security. I love disused railway lines and dock sides; in fact, all kinds of places that present hazards. I can then do an assessment, schedule the times we will be at each location, and work out what kit I'm likely to need. I need to confirm several things, like the suitability of covered spaces for lighting control, backgrounds, and textures. I use my phone camera to record shot opportunities and pin the locations on my Google map. If it's raining or overcast when I recce, I plan for the position of the sun using the Photo Pills app on my iPhone.

In Manhattan, New York, I had narrowed down the shoot zone to the meat packing district using Google Earth and Street View.

My recce the day before the shoot confirmed the final route, the shoot backgrounds I used, and even the café I met my client in.

On a recent recce for a shoot in the City of London, I confirmed that the small back streets between St Paul's Cathedral and the river Thames to the west of the main thoroughfare are abandoned on a Sunday. All the office and banking staff are off-duty. I loved the shiny aluminium beer barrels stacked up on the pavements from the antics in the pubs the night before and discovered that these get collected first thing each Monday morning. On the shoot itself, we worked all day without being asked to move on by police or security staff. I rigged Speedlights on stands and had all sorts of set-ups without any trouble at all.

> *Always have public liability insurance. When you shoot out in the city, you and your lighting stands become a hazard.*

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 14mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/9

This shot of Magdalena in the Olympic Park in London is a classic wide-angle set-up. I used a 14mm lens to pull in the building and create negative space suitable for titles and text. Lighting is from one Cactus RF60 Speedlight at 90° to the camera. The background exposure was -2 stops, and the flash power was adjusted to taste. This is the place and position I'd choose for a photograph of the building's architect. The pose that I'd choose would be different, but by being bold it is possible to make the kind of visual statement that picture editors love.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/3.6

This background was the perfect colour and texture to go with a dress that Victoria had brought to the shoot, so I asked her to nip into the hotel next to this shoot location to change into it. I have various 'changing rooms' on my city route through Bristol. I was about to set up a Speedlight for this shot when a break in the clouds revealed striking sunlight. I employed quick thinking and chose a minimalist part of the background, then I directed Victoria into a pose that created a diagonal in the frame. I love the colour of the sunglasses as it sweeps across Victoria's face. Light against dark is my subject separation strategy here.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/8

Rosalinde is pictured here in Rotterdam with the wonderful Erasmusbrug bridge in the background. I used the 90mm lens from a low vantage point to create an interesting composition. The only light in this image comes from the sun. If you look carefully, you will see that the shadow created by the top edge of Rosalinde's glasses runs right across her pupils. This is a technique I use when shooting using sunlight as my key light with the subject's eyes open. Rosalinde's angle in relation to the sun is set precisely so that there is a shadow under her cheekbone and her facial structure is well defined. The sky in this shot works because it's one stop darker than Rosalinde. Adding a circular polarising filter would have added another stop to this differential.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm •
ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/1.2

This shot taken in Bristol from ground level with the 56mm lens wide open shows just how easy it is to make complicated, busy backgrounds compliment the subject. The main body of the building in the background is dull, but the roof line is interesting. Couple that with the tree in the foreground and we have a 'man vs nature' contrast as well. I lit Victoria with a Cactus RF60 Speedlight in a Lastolite 55cm Ezybox with grid. The flash was at about 90° to my camera position, and the contrast in the scene was held at about two stops from the lit to unlit areas. You can see the fall-off from the flash on the bench Victoria is sitting on.

"

Adjust the ambient exposure to set the black level in the shadows. The way to accurately review what you are getting is to use a loupe for the LCD, or you can use the electronic viewfinder if you are mirrorless.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/5

This simple frame of Victoria was lit with sunlight. I opted for colour harmony with the white, grey and blue of Victoria's clothes and the background. The sunlight is steep, and this has created shaded eyes. I usually avoid this in photographs but this time it worked by keeping a bit of mystery in the narrative.

"

Get it right in-camera. Even if you are shooting RAW, set the white balance and picture style to achieve the finished look you want.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/500 sec • f/2.2

I set the white balance in-camera to the light bulb setting. This equates to 3200k, although domestic light bulbs are usually warmer than that at 2900k at best. The resulting picture was very cold, but wonderful. I warmed Victoria up a little in Lightroom but left the ambience cool. Coming back and shooting with the 56mm lens gave me the chance to compress the perspective and to keep the pillars upright without convergence.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/400 sec • f/2*

This shot might look like it's lit with soft light, but just look at the shadow on Rosalinde's neck. You can see that it has a hard, crisp outline, and that's because she is lit with sunlight reflected off a window on the opposite side of the street. The contrast is low, with about one stop of light from the shadow area to the lit area. Now look at the shadow under Rosalinde's cheekbones and the structure of her jawline and neck muscles. All this beauty comes from noticing the patch of light in the first place. When you are walking around, keep an eye out for light, not just backgrounds. The background in this shot is irrelevant and I put it out of focus by using the XF90mm lens wide open.

"If you change camera systems, keep your old speedlights. With the V6 or V6 mkII trigger units from Cactus you can take full control of your old speedlight on your new camera. They even have LCD read-outs of the power setting.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/11

I lit Mischkah in this doorway in Spain using a Cactus RF60 Speedlight on a lighting stand. By keeping the stand hard up against the wall of the building I was able to keep the light off the door. This in turn ensured that Mischkah stood out from the background. I rigged the flash in a horizontal aspect, zoomed it to 105mm, and tipped it down to create a slash of light. Exposure was an important consideration for this shot, and this is how I approached it. I exposed the ambient so that it just showed up in the shadows. I have to use the EVF for this because the ambient light on the LCD kills the shadow detail. Once I have a base exposure set, I then add flash to taste. This ensures that my shadow detail where the flash fails to fall is at the right level to print.

The styling

For urban grunge I use harder light from bare-faced Speedlights, and I choose reflective fabrics like leather jackets or wet-look leggings to make the pictures come alive. I find that black cotton is a bad idea because it soaks up light and ends up as a black hole in the final image. For contemporary locations like glass-fronted office buildings and other clean surfaces I like to introduce patterned, printed fabrics.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/500 sec • f/1.4

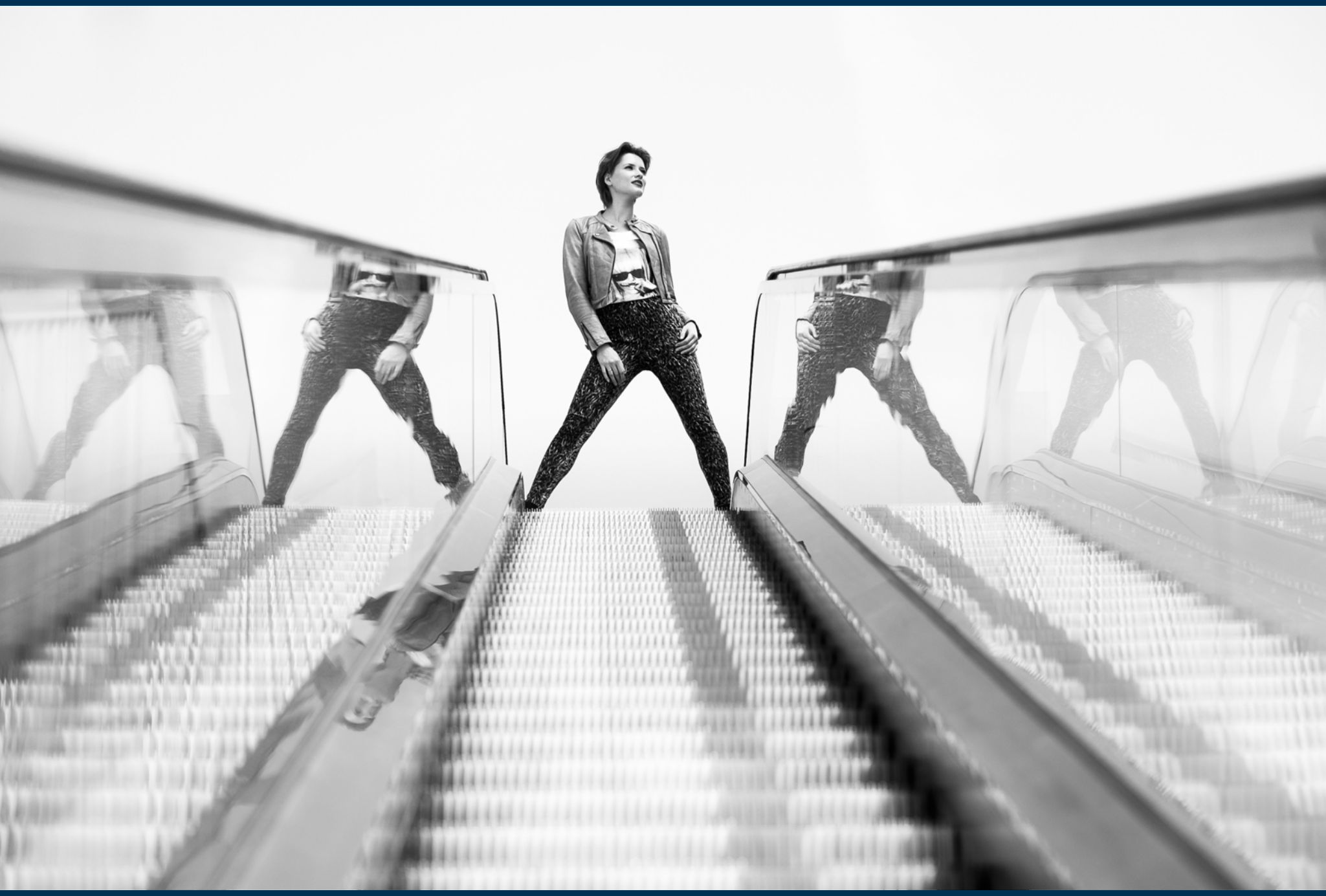
Carla is in a ginnel in Manchester, and I shot her with the wonderful 35mm lens wide open at f/1.4. I like to pose shots in an asymmetric way with hands at different heights, and this is a great example of its effectiveness. The light from above and behind Carla gives her a wonderful back light that you can clearly see on her jacket. I directed Carla to look up at the high windows in the building behind me so that the light from above and behind me could get in under her hat brim.

The light

Well done for getting this far! As you may know, I cover lighting and shooting techniques for urban portraits really extensively on the full HD video. I like to shoot in locations that give me control of the natural light by blocking it from one or more directions. Once I have control of the ambient light, I can either work with it on its own or add more lighting with one or two Speedlights. In the rare places where I have no control of the ambient light, I tend to overpower it with flash and just use the ambient as a bit of fill. Go too far and it looks like the picture was taken at night.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/4

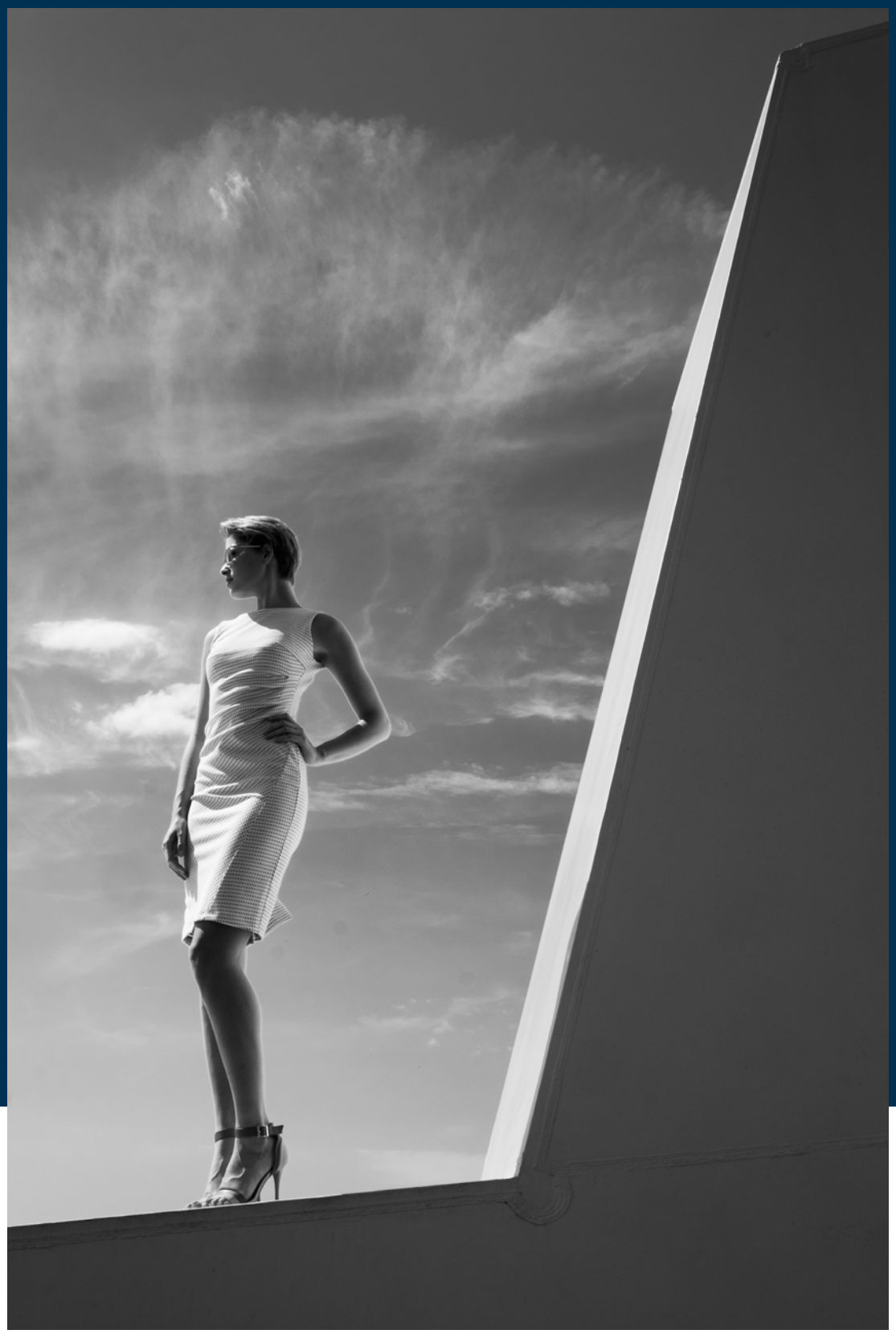
Melanie is absolutely fabulous right in the middle of this frame. Her shirt is creased and partially untucked. Her jeans are too big for her, but wow does she hold the frame with that remarkable beauty and attitude. I lit her with a Cactus RF60 Speedlight high above the camera, zoomed-in and shining through the leaves of an overhead tree. Beware when trying out this technique, because if you go too steep you will lose the catch lights in the eyes.



▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/2000 sec • f/2.2*

I love this shot. I don't know why, but I was expecting a mirror reflection in the glass panels rather than a repeat pattern left and right. Once I'd taken that in, I set about creating the shot. I showed Rosalinde how to jump onto the side panels of the escalator to avoid going down, and then I went down myself to set up the shot. The sky is bland but I held it back, keeping it just off-white. The only true white in the frame is Rosalinde's T-shirt. F/2.2 gives a lovely focus separation and a dreamy lead into an otherwise hard shot.

If you are shooting in sunlight, place the sun behind the model and use it as a back light. Then add flash as required from the front, but not in a fill-flash way; be bold and use it as a key light.



Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/16

Rosalinde took some persuading to get up on this steel structural part of a lifting bridge in Rotterdam, Holland. The 16mm lens pulled in the cirrus clouds to make this a striking shot. The lighting is mainly direct sunlight with a kick light from the reflection off the steel. I really should have pushed the shutter speed up six clicks to get the aperture down to f/8. When I'm shooting I never work out the numbers, I just count the clicks. Three clicks is one stop whatever parameter you are changing, so six clicks down on the shutter speed is six clicks open on the aperture, and so on.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/2

I showed Victoria how to pose in this space before capturing this frame using natural light. The kick-back of light from the shiny leggings and the door paint really gives this shot some atmosphere.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 18mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/4.5

Action with the X-Pro1? Absolutely. I donned the 'kit' 18-55mm lens and set it to 18mm. Incidentally, this lens is better in the corners than the pancake 18mm prime lens. Jamie is super fit and can really jump well, as you can see here. This was a one-take shot. We discussed the direction of action and then I pre-focused on the brickwork in the foreground. I used the optical viewfinder, even though it was partly obscured by the large lens, because timing is critical and the X-Pro1 EVF has a bit of lag. Overall, I'm really pleased with the framing and composition of this shot.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/640 sec • f/2

This is a classic composition in many respects. The left of the shot is held in with a strong, dark pillar and so is the right. The top of the frame is supported by the arch, and the base of the shot is the arch's reflection. Diagonals lead in from bottom-left and top-right. The subject placement is on the thirds, then there is the colour harmony of red, green, and blue. So what could possibly be better? I should have directed Natasha and created a moment. The shot is lifeless. It's very easy to get so wrapped up in composition and design that the basics end up being forgotten.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/2000 sec • f/2.4

Cirila stands in the evening sunlight between the pillars of Venice. A waft of air creates the dynamic movement in her dress. Her legs echo the pillars and there is a subtle rhythm in the shot. I positioned her low in the frame to emphasise the scale of the pillars. Her eyes are closed because it's bright and I wanted her to face the sunlight to get that cheekbone shadow.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/4.5

I love the simple geometry in this shot, with the diagonal line leading in from the bottom left, the strong vertical flutes, and Melanie's shape contrasting with the ogee mouldings of the limestone pedestal. The composition is forced, with Melanie looking out of the frame right rather than looking over her right shoulder back into it. I like the tension this provides and it's a technique I often use. The lighting is simply one Cactus RF60 zoomed to 105mm and rigged 4m away from Melanie.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/1.2

I placed Rosalinde on the floor in the porch area of a bank in Hamburg. Over her left shoulder there is daylight coming through a gap in the frontage. Her right side is lit by daylight coming from the left, and this ¾ kick lighting is subtle but beautiful. The soft colours of the building add to the look, especially as I placed her against the neutral grey panel. This gave punch to her hair colour and provided tonal separation.

Illumination 2
Full HD Video Tutorial

Follow me as I explore the city for image making opportunities, using a combination of natural light, speedlights and light modifiers. Learn how I capture a wide range of exciting and dynamic urban portraits in full HD. 25 chapters in 102 minutes, packed full of knowledge and inspiration. Buy it here.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/5*

Victoria had to be patient with me for this shot. I directed her to start with her back against the wall and step, step, jump on cue. The first time we rehearsed this her left arm was forward, which closed her body posture, so she swapped her starting foot and we were ready to shoot. I had the camera on the ground in this zone under the Aquadrome entrance at the Olympic Park in London. I set the focus to manual and asked Victoria to stand in the jump position so that I could pre-focus, then we were good to go. This shot was lit entirely by sunlight.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5.6

“Step, step, flick.” Striding out into the sunlight is such a great look. I directed the action and we worked the rhythm together. I created the sunlight myself with a Cactus Speedlight on a stand and gave the rest of the world a blue tone by putting a CTO gel on the Speedlight, then setting a white balance of 3400 Kelvin.

Tip: Never rule out concrete as a background. The more you use it the more you will realise that civil engineers have design in their hearts too. This pillar supporting the road above could quite easily have been constructed with straight sides. It would have made it far easier to build the timber shuttering but instead it has curves and angles, and I like that. I’m a fan of brutalism too.

How to achieve the look

Backgrounds

Be very selective with your backgrounds. They don't have to be big. I often use just a 2m-wide section of wall or glass as a background for my urban portraits. Shooting wide open with a standard or telephoto lens, away from a background, can soften the look and render it beautifully out-of-focus.

Depth of field

Use neutral density filters to achieve a wide aperture, shallow depth of field look when using Speedlights on location with mirrorless cameras. The electronic viewfinder and LCD remain bright, as the exposure compensates automatically. A HoyaPro ND100 filter gets you from f/16 to f/1.8.

Colour

Mix your colour temperatures. Use a CTO gel on the Speedlight and set the camera white balance to 3400k to make the background or daylight-lit areas turn blue while your subject maintains a warm glow. Use a CTB gel as a back light for added effect.

Modes and settings

Use manual exposure control for your camera and manual power settings for your Speedlights. This will provide a consistent exposure, even when you change your composition. Using triggers like the Cactus will allow you to set the flash power remotely from the camera position.

Exposure

Without the flash switched on, set your camera shutter to the maximum flash sync speed, set the ISO to its lowest setting, and then adjust the exposure of the background using the aperture. Finally, add flash to taste, adjusting the flash power and position as required.

Review each shot

It's all too easy to get carried away when shooting with Speedlights and run out of battery power. Stop and look at the image after each flash shot taken. Use a loupe or EVF to see how it can be improved. Make tweaks as required until you achieve perfection, then move on.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/5.6

It was getting dark on a November day in Bristol when I took this shot of Helen. I used an Elinchrom Quadra head in a Rotalux 130cm x 25cm striplight soft-box for Helen's key light and a Cactus RF60 as her back/kick light. I exposed to reduce the ambient by three stops to give the shot some punch. Both the Quadra and the Cactus were on ½ power.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/16

This corner of a modern office building in Hamburg was the wall of the plant room, with hot air coming through the louvres at various places. I lit Rosalinde with a Cactus RF60, zoomed in to 105mm and set at a slight angle from vertical. It's pointing down her nose to create the shadow under her cheekbone. The back light is a second RF60 rigged horizontally and tipped down to create the striking diagonal pattern of light on the louvres in the background. That Speedlight is also zoomed in, partly to avoid flare, but also to emphasise the slash effect. I chose a low viewpoint to enhance the drama of the composition. A three-stop ND filter would have let me shoot at f/5.6 and this would have been a better aperture for resolution.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/8

I love this spot in The Hague in Holland because it is under an overhead tramway, and the intricate mix of horizontal and vertical lines is a joy to compose with. I chose to use the diagonal staircase in the background as motivation for the lighting direction. I rigged the Cactus RF60 high on a stand and zoomed in to 105mm. Underexposing the background by two stops ensured a punchy picture. Notice how I placed Rosalinde in the centre of the door. It's touches like these which define a style. In post-production I was inspired by the colour palette of Edward Hopper, the American artist. I split the shadows to blue and the highlights to yellow in Lightroom using the split toning module.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/180 sec • f/16

I had just a couple of minutes to take this shot of a monk in Cambodia before he went for prayers. He was standing on the opposite side of the road and I asked my interpreter to see if I could shoot his portrait. I chose this spot because of the colour harmony and rigged a Cactus RF60 high on a stand, zoomed in to 105mm. I then found a ladder on the building site next-door and leaned it against the wall. Finally, I brought the monk into the scene and asked him to look up to the pagoda. The shot looks like he's looking for spiritual guidance. The settings I chose are not ideal because I still had ISO 800 selected from the previous shot, and I could have done with ISO 200 at f/8 instead, but the shot works and the X system coped well with my sloppiness.

Hollywood Portraits

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF90mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2.0 • Monopod

This shot of Rina was taken in a hotel room in Dusseldorf. I used an unusually high viewpoint to open up her expression. My direction to her was, "Throw your head back and laugh." The prop is a Leica M2 and I lit the shot using a pair of Lupo LED units in classic key and kick, two-point lighting mode.

The golden age of film

The classic Hollywood portraits from the golden age of film conjure up visions of fantasy, romance, and perfection. These evocative images have always been a style that is in great demand among high society. Establishments like the Studio Harcourt in Paris, set up in the 1930s, have met this demand and continue to this day.

In this chapter I'm going to share with you the skills, formulas, and iconic styling features needed to make up the Hollywood look. I learned how to light the Hollywood way from a retired lighting director when I was undergoing my lighting training at the BBC in the early 1990s.

I'm often asked what makes a portrait 'Hollywood' in style. My answer is; the finely controlled use of hard light from Fresnel spotlights, a narrow depth of field, and a high-quality monochrome print. Vintage Hollywood photography also needs appropriate hair, make up, and fashion

styling to complete the look.

This Hollywood system works well on location too, and with the right lighting any location can look like a film set. A unique characteristic that makes Hollywood lighting so special is the use of traditional spotlights with Fresnel lenses and barn doors. These luminaries produce a crisp, hard light that is controllable using a flood/spot system and by the shaping of the barn doors. The look needs Fresnel lens lights for authenticity, and it's easy to spot the classic lighting style of the past masters when lit with these. Five years ago LED Fresnel spotlights weren't even dreamed of. Now they have largely replaced HMI and the hot tungsten lights of old. The Lupo LED spotlights are now available with bi-colour LEDs so that they have an adjustable colour temperature from 3200k to 5600k. The LED revolution is exciting for stills photographers because we can tap into the kind of lighting that was once the reserve of film crews with mega-budgets.

The big problem for Hollywood was to make the three dimensions of life look good in two dimensions. This was achieved by separating the foreground and background using tones. Subjects closer to the camera were, and still are, lit to a higher contrast than the environment or the set they are in. Pretty much every shot of an actor in a high-budget film or TV drama has a back, rim, or kick

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 55mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/11*

You can get 90% of the look in the studio with a gridded 18cm reflector on a studio flash head. I used just one studio light for this shot of Chloe-Jasmine. The shrug was from Topshop in the UK. A string of pearls would have completed the look.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

This classic three-point lighting shot of Leela in the studio uses four Lupo LED Fresnel lights in total: One with a Scattergel and dimmed to 10% to light the background, one key light rigged straight down the nose, and two ¾ back lights. Notice how the key light creates beautiful cheekbone shadows. The ¾ back lights create the separation between Leela's hair and the background, as well as giving it a lovely sheen. Soft back lights give hair a flatter, less specular look and are therefore less suitable for darker brunette shades. They are also more likely to cause flare.

light. These all give the artist a presence in the scene and separate them from the background. Landscape and portrait painters use the same trick. The most distant parts of the scene have the lowest contrast and black is represented as grey.

The steepness of a key light is determined by the set of the sitter's eyes. Deep-set eyes or ones with false eyelashes need a shallower key light. This ensures a lovely highlight in the eyes. Shallow-set eyes can get away with high, steep key lights and still get a highlight. The steeper the light, the more chiselled the face becomes, with clearly defined cheekbones and jawlines. Rig your key light as high as you can, making sure you still get a highlight in each eye.

Shadows are your friend. Shadows reveal shape, and the crispness of a shadow edge is determined by the relative size of the light source. The depth of the shadow (in its darkest part, or umbra) relative to the

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/2.0

This shot uses just three Lupo LED Fresnel spotlights. The background light with a Scattergel is at 20% power, while the key light, a Lupo 650 with a Scattergel, is at full power. The bare-faced 650 back light is probably at about 60% power. Carla's pearls are from Primark in the UK and the camera she is holding is a Zorki 5, made for the Russian market.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 500 • 1/180 sec • f/1.4

With identical lighting to the previous shot, this frame of Carla Monaco is brought right up to date with a few styling tweaks. The dress is Carla's own, the Jackie-Onassis-style glasses are from Primark, and the gloves are from Claire's Accessories in the UK.

illuminated sections determines the shadow contrast. I like to create dark shadows that still have significant detail. The quality of the final print will be governed by the control of the deep shadow detail. Never let it sink into a black hole.

A medium telephoto or a standard lens works best for these kind of shots. For the big, wide scene that I shot in Bristol Museum at night (page 166) I used the moderately wide 23mm lens on my Fujifilm X-T1 set to f/1.4, which equates to a 35mm lens on the full-frame SLR format. The trick is not to get too close.

If you are more than touching distance from your subject, you'll be okay. If I'm shooting a vintage look I pop some Ella Fitzgerald or Etta James on the hifi in the studio to set the mood. The sitter needs to feel amazing for that energy to come through in the photograph.

Hollywood is not all about the past; there is a new genre taking hold among social photographers which fuses classic Hollywood lighting with modern fashion styles. The crisp light from these spotlights closely resembles natural sunlight and makes skin

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/400 sec • f/1.4

A really low viewpoint for this shot of Dutch model Rosalinde gave her a powerful look and emphasised the jet of water. I lit Rosalinde with a single Lupo 1000 LED spotlight, running on battery power for safety.

come alive. Hard light has been rediscovered by advertisers too. One disadvantage is that hard light can emphasise skin surface blemishes, but then that's what Photoshop is for, isn't it? Crisp, beautiful hard light energises photographs and transforms them to a fantasy level.

Here's how you get the look: Get it right in-camera. Don't rely on post-production to achieve magic. Lighting control is the key here, so set up your camera first to show exactly what you need to see. Switch the LCD or EVF to black-and-white and the screen brightness to manual in the middle position. This will give you a great preview of the lighting changes you are making. You can also use a tripod, but it isn't exactly necessary. I find a tripod helps my fine-tuning of the shot. It also helps as I shuttle back and forth contrasting and comparing the subtle lighting changes made between shots. I share the images on the back of the camera with my sitter regardless of whether they are a client, a model, or a celebrity. This kind of shoot is a joint venture, and often the sitter will be able to suggest changes to the styling or expression which ultimately make the shot a success.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 640 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

The lighting set-up is identical to the picture opposite, but this time Helen has rotated slightly so that the key light is now directly down her nose. Look how beautifully the background is rendered by the 35mm lens wide open at f/1.4

5 steps to create the look

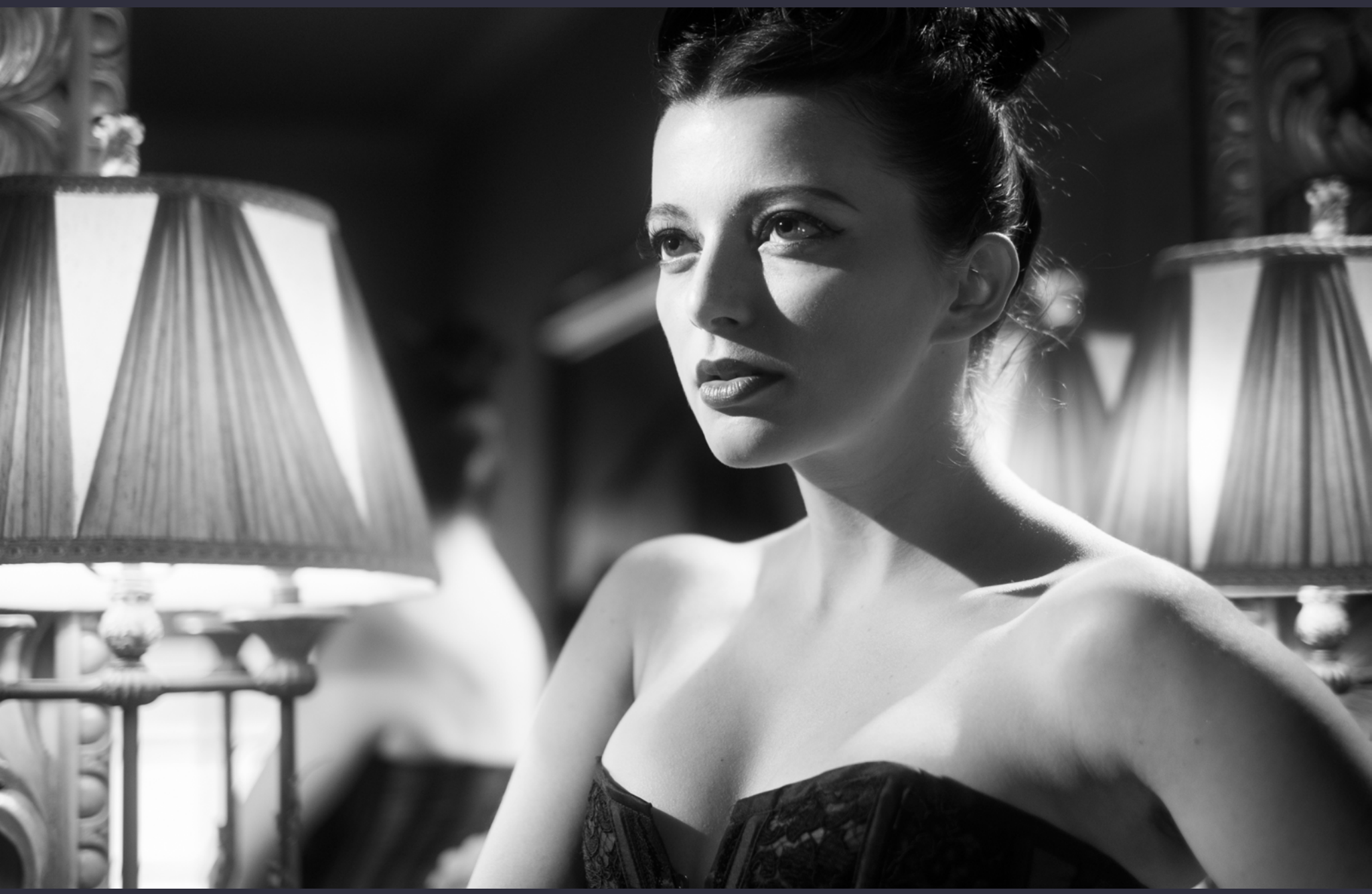
1. Set the mood of the shot with the camera position. Shoot from below the eye-line to make someone seem powerful, statuesque, strong, and confident. If you want to soften someone's look to make them appear vulnerable, choose a high viewpoint and photograph them from above.

2. Carefully set your key light. Always light from above and aim the key light either 'straight down the nose', or just off to one side so that the nose shadow touches the cheek shadow to enclose a 'Hollywood triangle'. Use the barn doors to control any spill.

3. Add a back light or kicker to make the image three-dimensional and to help separate the foreground from the background. Use a reflector in the spill from the key light to control the contrast in the scene, then light the background as required.

4. If you are going for an authentic vintage look, make up and hair styles are really important. Curls and lashes take time to get right, so allow plenty of prep time for your shoot. I research vintage hair and make up styles using Google Images when preparing for a shoot.

5. Get the styling right, because this is such an integral part of the look. An evening dress makes a good base. I often add a white shrug which I bought in Topshop, some pearls from Primark, and vintage-style sunglasses purchased on Ebay.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 640 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

Helen Diaz is one of my favourite UK models, and here she is looking every bit the Hollywood starlet. She wears a corset by Lisa Keating, with hair and make up by expert Claudia L. Spoto. The lights behind Helen give the motivation for the key light and the back light. It is as if the light on Helen is coming from these table lamps, when in fact I cheated the key and back lights around to optimise my shot. The enclosed triangle of light on the unlit side of Helen's face is called the 'Hollywood cheek triangle'. It works well when there is some light in the nearest eye and the nose shadow crosses the cheek shadow. For this lighting I used an Arri Junior 300 and an Arri Junior 150 as a back light rigged on a boom.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 18.8mm • ISO 1600 • 1/30 sec • f/3.6

The exposure for this scene was set for the fire and the lights were added to suit. I used an Arri 300 Junior as a key light and rigged it with an inline dimmer I bought on Amazon. The back light is an Arri 150 Junior rigged on the book shelf above Chloe-Jasmine, and as it has a built in dimmer it is easily set to the correct level. I added props to give the shot a period drama look, including a Remington typewriter, a Bakelite phone, and a Beretta pistol. Notice the light on the mantelpiece from the practical lamps. Candles would have worked well here, or I could have opened the barn doors a touch on the key light to achieve a similar look.

Kit list

1. Spotlights with Fresnel lenses are best. Fresnel lenses achieve the magnification of a much thicker lens without the weight. The lens rear is stippled to give the light a super smooth, soft-edged fall-off.

2. I use a Tiffen Black Pro Mist filter with ¼ strength to give a subtle diffused look to my Hollywood images. An old lens from the 1950s or 60s, used via an adapter, can also work well. Consider a Russian-made 50mm f/2 Jupiter 8 lens or a Pentacon 50mm f/1.8, but be prepared to manually focus these lenses.

3. A Scattergel or other gobo (go between) is used to break up the light to create mood and ambience. This simple piece of kit really delivers the icing on the cake.

4. Barn doors on the back lights reduce the chance of flare and help to keep the image shadows under control. Barn doors on the key light keep the spill light off the background.

5. A reflector placed just out of shot from the side is great for controlling contrast. I use an original Triflector which I bought way back in the 1990s. It works well from the sides as well as from underneath.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 20.5mm • ISO 1600 • 1/125 sec • f/4.0

Just two Lupo LED Fresnel lights were used to create this Film Noir shot starring Chloe-Jasmine. I placed a 650 on the top step of this cellar and rested it on a book. It picks up the tops of the stair treads nicely. The key light is a 1000 with a Scattergel, rigged on a stand just to the right of the camera. Both lights were powered by battery as there were no power outlets in the cellar. It's easy to see the effect of the 'Alto' Scattergel when it's rigged so close to the camera.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 18mm • ISO 1250 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

I used a classic key and kick two-point lighting strategy for this shot of Jamie in the hull of a galleon. (Well, he's not actually in a ship, but it sounds good). It's the subtle back light that makes this frame look like it comes from a movie. The 'Alto' Scattergel on the key light helps too.

Hollywood Portraits Remastered Video

Set against the backdrop of a fabulous 17th century English country house and starring both Chloe-Jasmine and Jamie Roche, this video tutorial will show you how to recreate the enigmatic charm of a bygone era of photography. I'll demonstrate in detail the classic lighting techniques I learned during my lighting director training at the BBC. Buy it here.

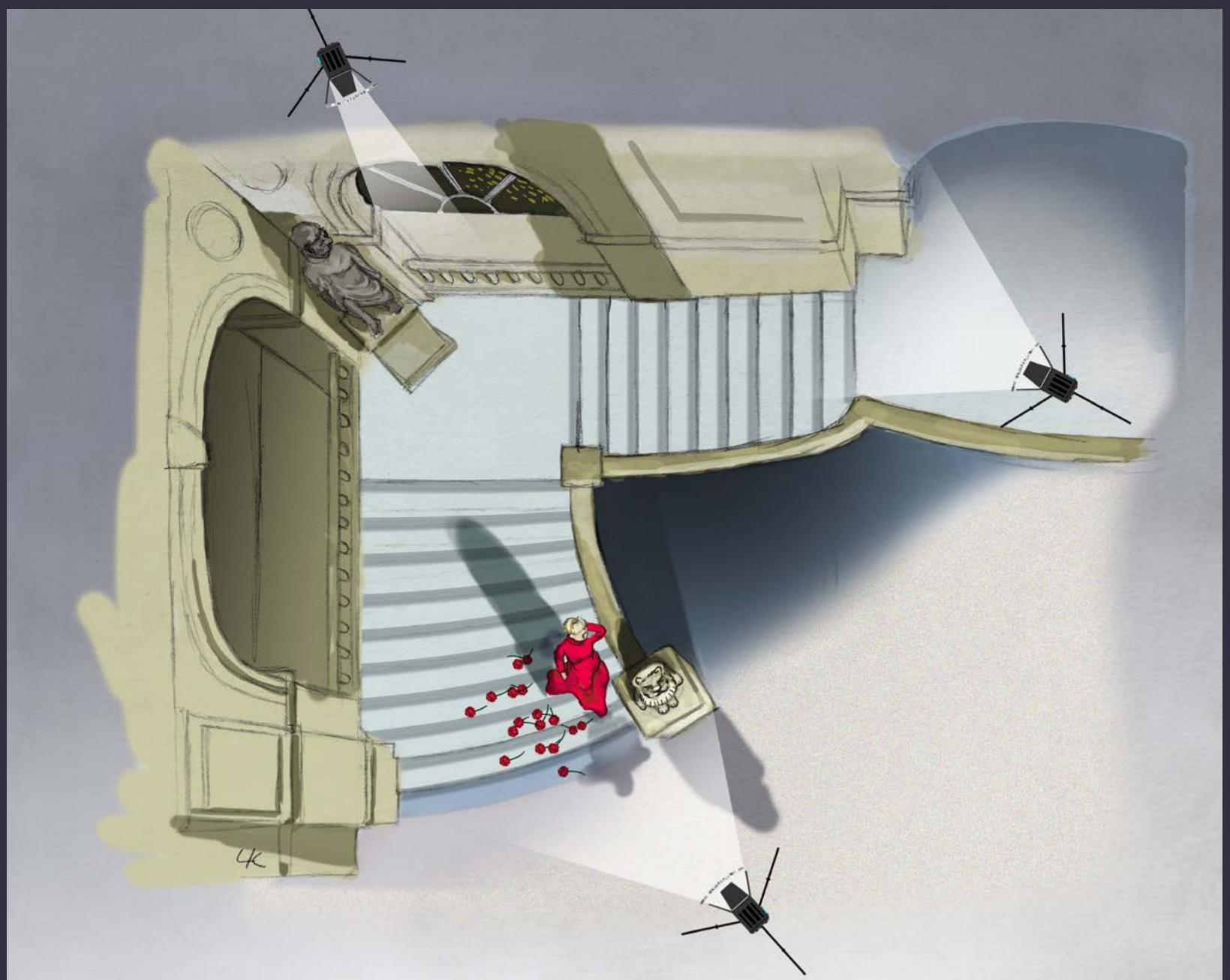
Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2

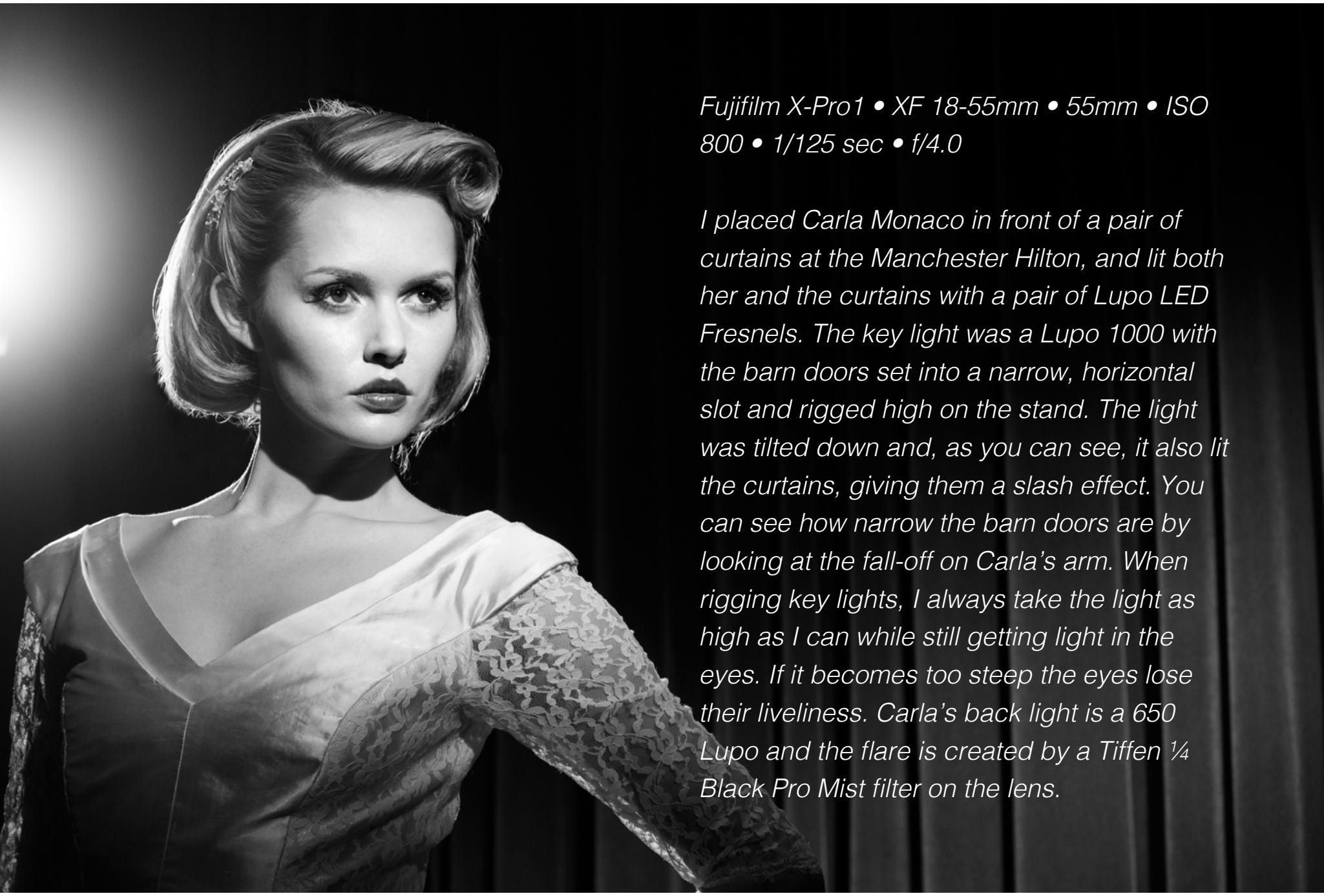
I used a pair of Lupo LED Fresnels for this shot. The key light was a Lupo 1000 tightly doored in and on full spot. A 650 was used from the right to light the table. You can see the shadow of the peacock feathers on the back wall.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 400 • 1/30 sec • f/1.8 • Tripod

Take the Hollywood look on location to bring a space to life. This shot of Victoria Coutts is probably the most complex in this chapter. When I'm lighting large places I treat the backgrounds separately from the subject. In this shot I lit the back wall and the bronze statue from the right using a Lupo 1000 with a "Crunch" Scattergel. I lit Victoria and the lion from the front right using a Lupo 650 with an "Alto" Scattergel and I used a Lupo 1000 from the balcony on full spot as Victoria's back light.

This photograph was commissioned for a poster campaign for the Bristol Museum events department.





Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 55mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4.0

I placed Carla Monaco in front of a pair of curtains at the Manchester Hilton, and lit both her and the curtains with a pair of Lupo LED Fresnels. The key light was a Lupo 1000 with the barn doors set into a narrow, horizontal slot and rigged high on the stand. The light was tilted down and, as you can see, it also lit the curtains, giving them a slash effect. You can see how narrow the barn doors are by looking at the fall-off on Carla's arm. When rigging key lights, I always take the light as high as I can while still getting light in the eyes. If it becomes too steep the eyes lose their liveliness. Carla's back light is a 650 Lupo and the flare is created by a Tiffen ¼ Black Pro Mist filter on the lens.

On a budget?

If you can't afford the HMI or LED Fresnel spotlights from Lupo, tungsten Fresnel spotlights are still available from Arri and cost less than a Canon or Nikon Speedlight. I recommend the 650, 300, and 150 in the junior series. Speedlights with grids can get you 90% of the look, but without modelling lights they can be hard to set up and rely on test-and-measure to achieve a good power balance. Studio lights are a better option when attempting this look with flash because they have modelling lights, but you might not be able to achieve f/1.4, even with the flash set to minimum power. There are expensive Fresnel adaptors available for studio flash systems, but they don't have the control and versatility of a dedicated light. I'd advise using the cheaper 18cm reflectors instead, fitted with 20° honeycomb grids to get near the look you want. Set the flash power to minimum on your most powerful unit and balance the power of the other units to taste.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/180 sec • f/2.5

A classic look can be created with great styling and posing. I closed the window shutters then opened one panel very slightly to light Mina Renoir. The dress by Molly Mishi May and the period styling accessories completed the look. I used a low viewpoint in order to keep the uprights in the room upright in the frame.

Using flash will create a darker shooting environment because the modelling lights are a fraction of the power of continuous lights, so take care when focusing.

Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/320 sec • f/2.0

This shot of Rina looks naturally lit until you see the shadow from her face on her neck. I've lit Rina from the left and slightly upstage, because the sunlight through the window is coming vaguely from that direction. This makes the shot look more believable. It's a classic lighting trick I learned at the BBC.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm •
ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

The mix of retro design in the bathroom fixtures and the minimalist panelling gives this shot a simple, uncluttered look. I used a single Lupo 1000 with an 'Alto' Sacattergel to light Chantelle.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 54mm • ISO 400 • 1/30 sec • f/3.2*

When I'm shooting with the XF 50-140mm lens inside, I often use a monopod to take the weight and hold the camera steady, leaving me free to concentrate on creating the moment. Victoria here is lit with a Lupo 1000 light from the left of the shot. The sunlight is also coming from the left, as can be seen in the confusion of shadows on the floor. I'm not concerned about the floor shadows because unless they are pointed out they don't get noticed. That's another good reason to create an arresting moment.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 54mm • ISO 400 • 1/30 sec • f/3.2

This shot of Victoria at the dressing table was lit with a Lupo 1000 from the front, high and just to the right of the camera. An Aladdin A Lite on a boom arm provided the back light. I use a boom arm for the backlight to avoid seeing the lighting stand.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 130mm • ISO 640 • 1/60 sec • f/2.8

This close up of Victoria on the phone was lit with a Lupo 1000 from the front and a small Aladdin A Lite on a boom arm provided the back light. I like the drama that is created by a look over the shoulder. It's a great pose that can be adapted to be cheeky, alluring and questioning with a change of expression.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 1000 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

I lit this shot of Alicia in a hotel in Mechelen in Belgium using a Lupo 1000 powered with a battery. I get about 1.5 hours use from a Lupo battery with the light on full power. The crisp hard light and retro fashion give this shot a classic feel.

> *Keep the lighting hard and the contrast soft to make this genre work well.*

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF18-55mm • 18mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/4.0

High-key Hollywood lighting is just as beautiful as low-key, and might just prove more popular with some photographers and clients. Keep the lighting hard and the contrast soft to make this genre work well. You can spot how hard or soft a light source is by looking at the rate of transition from shadow into light. In this shot the penumbra (the area of partial shade) is about 3mm on the headboard, indicating a hard light source. In this case it was a Lupo 650.

Boudoir

A **boudoir** (/ˈbuːd.wɑːr/; French: [bu.dwaʁ]) is a woman's private sitting room or salon in a furnished accommodation usually between the dining room and the bedroom, but can also refer to a woman's private bedroom.

Background

Ever since Annabel Williams started a business in the late 1980s photographing women in a makeover, cover girl style, there has been a constant demand for professionally styled photography for girls and young women. The feather boas and swept gold frames are a thing of the past, but the female customer base continues to be a major sector for professional portrait photography. Styles have ebbed and flowed with the buzz words of the day. Vintage and pinup have finally had their day and are now old hat; boudoir and lifestyle linger on - although no doubt these will also be replaced in due course. Being ahead of the curve and identifying the leading trends is the target of most portrait professionals. My job over the past 10 years or so has been to educate the next generation of photographers in the rudiments of photographing women beautifully and creatively.

The whole makeover photoshoot vibe was revived in the UK by a fashion and style show called “How to look good naked” presented by Gok Wan. In the show, participants were transformed from a state of unkempt style disasters lacking in body confidence, to being on point and looking fabulous. The show culminated in a photography session for the willing participant, who wore nothing but her birthday suit.

The boudoir genre runs on the same

principles as all other genres of photographing people, clothed or not. The trick is to make the best use of assets and hide the least attractive bits. I favour real locations as opposed to my studio, and I like to capture the character, fun and sassiness of my clients. ‘Sexy’ is not written in the way I pose pictures, but in the emotions and energy that comes from my clients. I’m not a fan of red and black lingerie with suggestive glamour poses. Each to their own, but I have stuck to what I like and my success has followed it.

It often takes a certain amount of courage to commission a photographer

Fujifilm X-100T • 23mm • ISO 1600 • 1/125 sec • f/2

I used the little Fujifilm X-100T for this shot of Chantelle in the bedroom. By stretching her legs up the wall I was able to create a little magic. I used a single Lupo 1000 spotlight with a ScatterGel to create a dappled lighting effect. The crisp hard spotlight created wonderful cheekbone shadows. The colour temperature of the Lupo was set at 4200 Kelvin using the variable control, and the camera’s white balance was at 4800 Kelvin. This gave the bed sheets a cool look, and the table lamp a warm look.

for a boudoir shoot. Clients may want to capture their youthful beauty while they have it. Some clients want to show off their tattoos, some want to show how hard they have been working in the gym, others are proud of their surgical body enhancements, and some have lost weight and battled body issues. Whatever their reason, there is a ready supply of mainly female photographers ready to take on the commissions.

Maximise, minimise, enhance and diminish is what I do in my job as a photographer of people. I use light, shadow, pose, camera angle and props to achieve this. I will further explain these strategies as I deconstruct each image over these next two chapters.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.8
Carole's playful expression says it all. Less is more at times.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2

I regularly pose my clients with their head tilted to give a strong diagonal in the image set by the imaginary line that connects their eyes. A high viewpoint creates a vulnerability, which in this case is countered by Claire's warm, friendly and connected expression.

A loose t-shirt is great for boudoir, as the shot becomes less about the clothes and more about the person. This shot would have the same impact if Claire had jeans on as well. The intimacy that comes from Claire lying on the bed, combined with the warmth of her smile and the vulnerability caused by the high viewpoint is the DNA of this image.

Lighting on Claire was from behind with a Lupo 1000 and Alto ScatterGel. A window behind me was the key light.

Location, location, location

I like to shoot in boutique hotels. They have crisp white bed linen, high quality furniture, and curtains that can black out the room as required. The simpler the room, the easier it is to shoot in. I offer a package to my clients that includes an overnight stay in the room we will be shooting in. With an early check in, we can be doing makeup by 2pm and shooting from 3pm until 7pm. If the clients don't need to stay over, we can use the same room for another client in the morning with makeup from 9am and shooting between 10 and 12. I always discuss my plans with the hotel and they are usually very happy for the business. For 1:1 photographer training and workshops, I always go for larger rooms or suites, because with makeup and photography gear, more space is required.

When choosing hotel rooms to shoot in, I look for opportunities to shoot both low key and high key photographs. I look for plain walls or walls with paintings that can be removed, and I look for multiple light sources like bed side lights or windows on more than one wall.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/2

I used a kitchen worktop complete with sink as a location for this shot in Copenhagen. Although the word 'boudoir' refers to a woman's private dressing room or bedroom, other rooms in a house make great locations too. I loved the green tint on the glass oven door behind Melanie. Lighting was natural daylight.

Fujifilm X100T • 23mm • ISO 1000 • 1/125 sec • f/2

Another stolen voyeuristic view, only this time it is Carla undressing in a bathroom in Munich.

I lit the bathroom with a Lupo spotlight powered by a battery for safety. I never take mains powered lighting into bathrooms. It's easy to keep cables out of the shot if you are using a battery too.

One of the key principles of lighting one room from within another is to light the distant room one stop brighter than the one the camera is in. The dark mahogany doors added to the differential of light too.

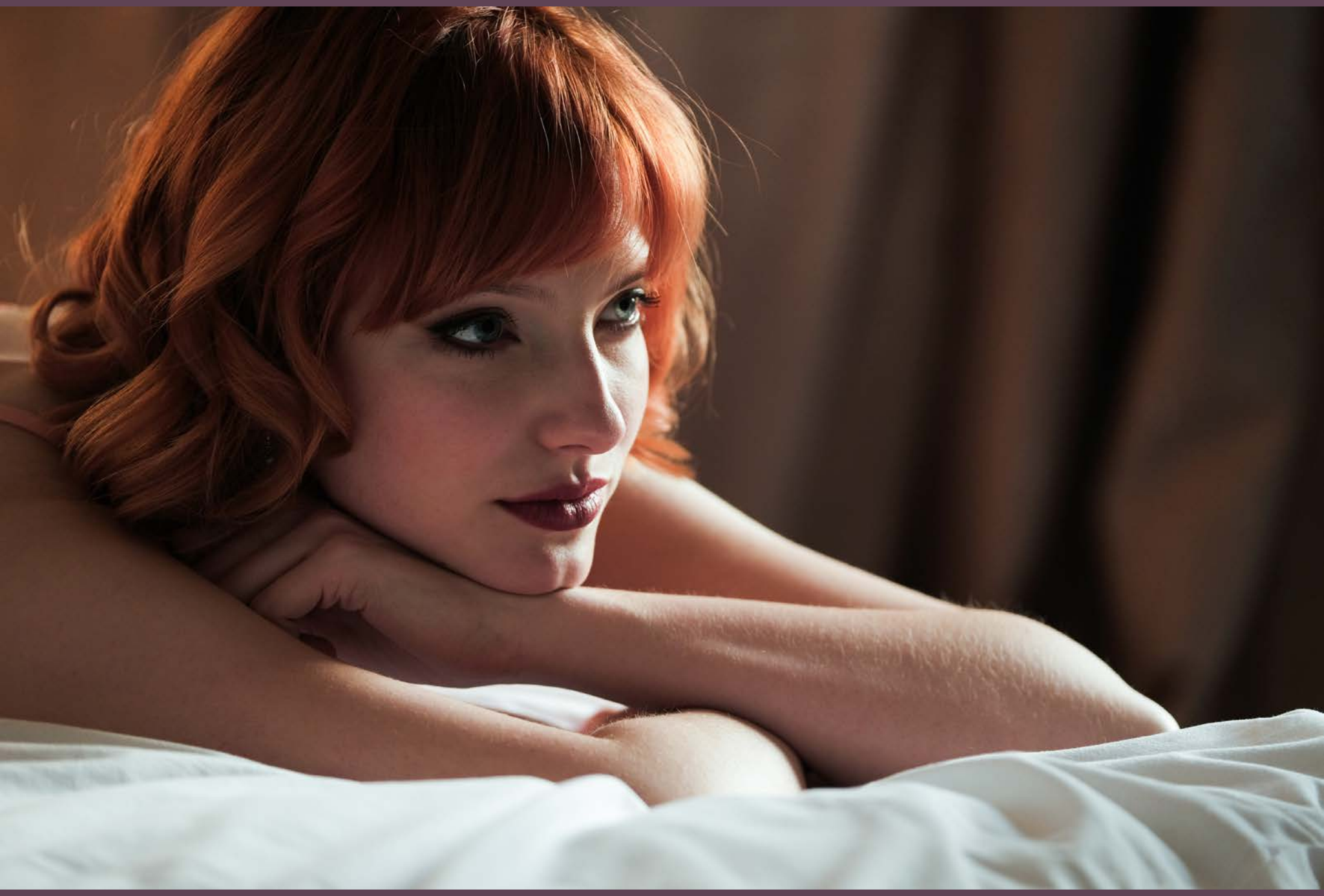
I used the Auto ISO function on my X100T, and because it has the higher resolution of 16Mp rather than the 12Mp of my original X-100, I need to have the base shutter speed set at 1/125th instead of 1/80th. With 1/125th second I can get sharp hand held pictures with my X100T every time.

▲ *Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 640 • 1/80 sec • f/2*

The camera assumes a viewpoint of someone lying beside Kayt on her bed, and this creates an intimacy that is enhanced by Kayt's warm and friendly expression.

The lighting for this shot came from a Lupo spotlight on a stand beside the window, to simulate sunlight coming into the room. This effect is further enhanced by letting the parts of Kayt that are lit by the spotlight burn out to white, as it would do in real sunlight. Remember my rule from previous chapters: "If there is a lamp in the shot, switch it on".

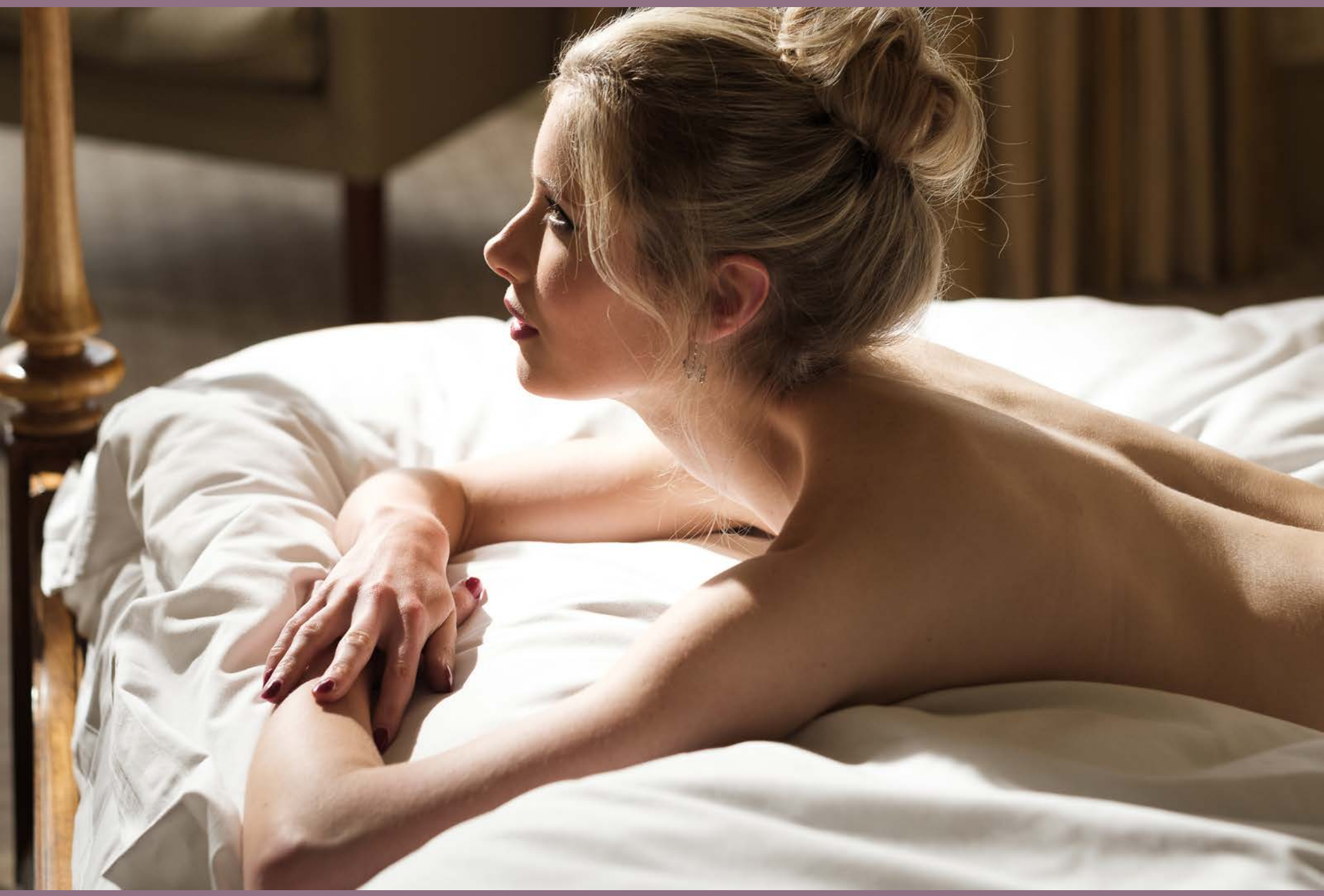
When I'm shooting someone who is less comfortable in front of camera I like to use my trusty X-100 or X100T, as it is far less intimidating. I have it pre-set using Auto ISO with 1/80th second shutter speed as the minimum, and the aperture set to wide open at f/2. Using this auto setting I can just pick up the camera and get great shots without any fuss.



Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 500 • 1/60 sec • f/2.8

A long lens gives me the option to shoot from further away for a less intimate and more isolating shot. When I look at this shot of Claire I wonder what she is thinking about. It's as if no one else is in the room with her. The low viewpoint helps as it's not a natural place to view someone lying on a bed.

The late evening red glow from the sky outside was further enhanced with a subtle red shift in post production. This gives Claire's hair colour a little boost too.



Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 56mm • ISO 640 • 1/60 sec • f/2.8

The sunlight in this shot is coming from a Lupo spotlight and I cheated it round to the left of the window to give Victoria a classic Hollywood cheek triangle on the left side of her face, and a lovely shadow in the dip down her back. I nearly always set up my lighting so that I'm shooting into the light. All the light on the camera side of Victoria is coming from reflections from the bed linen and furniture within the room.

I used a monopod to steady my camera. She was not moving and neither was my camera, so 1/60th second was just right with my 56mm lens.

Keep it real

My view on retouching is that portrait photography in general has become too fake since the turn of this century, and the magic of the ‘Golden Age’ has all but gone in a lot of photographer’s portfolios. Some people blame digital cameras for this shift, but it’s not the capture that is the problem. Even photographers shooting on film for nostalgic or hipster reasons are having their negatives scanned rather than optically printed, and the temptation to tweak in Photoshop is always going to be there. I try to work my digital processing along similar lines to when I was printing from film back in the 1990s. All of my professional photography from over a decade of shooting film was hand printed in my darkroom, both the colour work for weddings and the mono work too. I used dodging, burning and a bit of perspective control (achieved by tilting the enlarger head) as my key manipulations. These practical strategies supported the fine tonal control that I achieved with chemistry and good processing techniques. I’m not nostalgic however, and as soon as I went digital in 2001 I never looked back.

All the photographs in this book were shot in the last 5 years on Fujifilm X cameras and none of them have been edited in Photoshop. They were all taken with the

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 640 • 1/125 sec • f/3.6

There are times when I just want a tight close up, and working with a telephoto zoom is a perfect tool for such a shot. Even at f/3.6 the 50-140mm lens delivers a minimal depth of field. I expect it is just 4cm or so here, and there is a wonderfully diffused out of focus background too.

camera upright and none have fake film looks/presets applied. It's my way of doing things and is a very strong part of the Lovegrove photograph DNA. I encourage all photographers to strive to develop a recognisable style.

"Be brave and keep it real" is my advice. I always mention to my potential clients that I don't use Photoshop. I'm sure it puts many off, but I gain wonderful clients too, and most of them are comfortable with their body image. Attract just the clients you want and you will be a happy photographer. Nothing is more demoralising that trying to photograph someone who hates themselves in pictures and then not being able to win them round without resorting to pinch, nip and tuck.

▲ *Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 60mm • ISO 1600 • 1/180 sec • f/2.4*

There are times when a cheeky banter reveals the inner character of the sitter. I've no way of describing how to do this, it just has to come from real moments. If you keep the shoot fun and fully connect with your client, moments like this will happen. Practising with your camera will make you a more confident photographer, and this in turn will allow you to relax and enjoy your shoots.

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If you would like to stay informed about updates to this book and future books, please sign up to our newsletter here.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 640 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8*

By closing the curtains completely, I kept the contrast high and the lighting punchy. Notice how I set the spotlight from the other side of the bed to create that classic 'S' curve on Victoria's cheek.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/500 sec • f/1.4

It's all about lines, shapes and curves. You will have probably noticed that I nearly always shoot the bed scenes with my client's head at the toe end of the bed and with their body going away from camera. For this shot of Margaux I draped her over the edge, like water over a cascade. Placing her body away from camera gave emphasis to her face. This was further enhanced by letting the light fall off her legs.

Lighting was from a tightly barn doored Lupo 1000 spotlight with a subtle 'Alto' ScatterGel.

Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

For this shot of Clair I directed her to grab the duvet cover and stretch out. This makes the shot more dynamic and creates the cut in under the rib cage. Closed eyes portray passionate thoughts.

Lighting was from the sky coming through a single North facing window.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 23mm • ISO 400 • 1/200 sec • f/1.6

I stood on a chair with my X-T2 and used my tilting screen to frame this shot of Margaux on the bed in a Swiss apartment. I asked her to bring her knees up so that I could get all of her in the frame, and this in turn created the dynamic pose. Sometimes these things happen by chance and the trick is to recognise when a shot is fabulous and just press the button. Nothing was left to chance with the styling however, and I directed Margaux to slide the shoulder straps of her basque down onto her arms, throw her head back and close her eyes.

I always share the images I'm taking with my models or clients as I go, so it can give them confidence that I'm capturing them in the best light, as well as give them the opportunity to improve their looks or posing. I usually leave them with the camera after every few minutes of shooting so that they can scroll through all the images while I'm moving a light or setting up the next shot. This process is important to build trust too.

Lighting on Margaux was from a Lupo 1000 with a 'Crunch' ScatterGel. I closed the curtains quite a bit to increase the contrast too.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

Arina knelt on the bed and I shot from below the eye line to create this intense, intimate portrait.

The lighting was a Lupo striplight from the front and the Lupo spotlight from the rear right of the shot.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.8

A little ‘over the shoulder’ look can work so well to create a character moment. I just asked Arina to sweep her hair to the other side.

I experimented with a Lupo striplight as the key light for this set of shots, and kept the Lupo spotlight as the backlight to simulate sunlight from the window. Exposure was set by the bedside light, and the Lupo lights were adjusted to create the perfect atmosphere.

“A little over the shoulder look can work so well to create a character moment.

X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 1000 • 1/250 sec • f/3.2

I gave Elke the task of fastening her stockings in this bathroom of a small B&B in Belgium. The process took longer than one might imagine so there was no rush to get the shot. I did ask her to flick her hair back on the camera side before she started. Although her hair looks scruffy it has a lot of product in it to allow us to create these 'fly away' looks. Elke's lipstick was spot on for this sequence of shots too.

I lit Elke with the Lupo striplight from the right of camera and the Lupo spotlight provided a back light. The window just gives the image a high key look, yet this window light serves no other purpose.

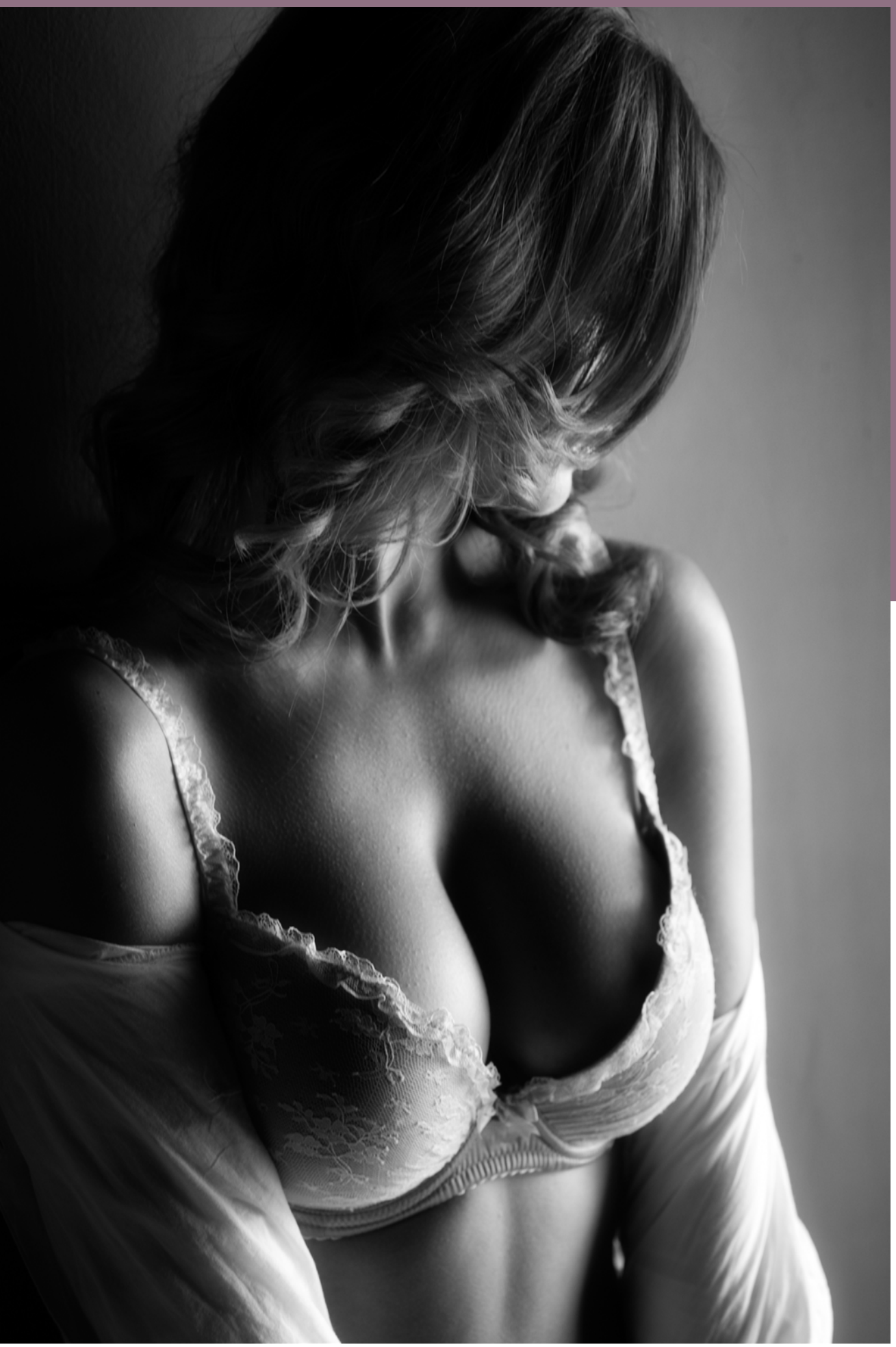
Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 21mm • ISO 1600 • 1/320 sec • f/3.2

I've been using lens diffusion for years, and I used a Tiffen Black Pro Mist 1/4 strength for this shot of Camilla. You can see that the highlights from the window have bled into the shadows, giving a subtle halation.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

The concept of stealing a sneaky view in photography is not new, but it can be used to good effect to create a more erotic image.

The lighting for this shot of Leanne was a window to the left of the shot for the kick light and a window on the right of the shot as the key light. Cocoa butter provided the body sheen for the kick light.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2.4

Anonymity is often requested by boudoir clients. I used the light from a window and a plain wall for this simple study of light and form. The 60mm lens was the first Fujifilm telephoto, and a great performer for portraiture it was too. I (reluctantly at first) retired it when I bought the 56mm f/1.2 lens to replace it.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 320 • 1/250 sec • f/2*

It's okay to cheat the environment. I moved this glass coffee table into position from another part of my hotel suite in Den Haag. I love the simple reflection of Rosalinde. I wish I had straightened the painting on the wall. I could sort it out in Photoshop but then that really would be cheating.

Lighting was a Lupo 1000 at 90° to the camera and straight down Rosalinde's nose. This gave me that wonderful 'S' curve on the side of her face. The subtle positioning of Rosalinde's torso towards the camera ensures a central shadow created by her sternum and cleavage. I closed all the curtains in the room and I hung a white shirt over the back of a chair just out of shot on the right to pop a bit of kick light back in.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/1.2*

This is the identical lighting scenario that I had used in the previous shot, but this time I closed the barn doors tightly to contain the light onto Rosalinde. The amount of reflected light in the room was greatly reduced, and the contrast was increased as a result.

I achieve the contrast and lighting balance in my boudoir work by controlling the ambient light level in the room, rather than adjusting the power of the light that I'm using. The easiest way to reduce contrast in this scene would have been to open the curtains.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.2

I used a set of near white wardrobe doors as a high key background for this shot of Chantelle. I opened the curtains behind her and all the light on her front is reflected ambient light. Reflected light is beautifully delicate, and soft lighting in general represents most photographers' lighting style of choice for boudoir. Notice how Chantelle's bottom has been trimmed by the highlight burn out.

Very few people can stand in open space and be completely at ease being photographed. I always like to find a surface for a client to lean on as this helps to relax them.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/2.5

Margaux is leaning on the outside of a glass sliding door on the balcony of my apartment in Lausanne. The clouds are stormy and the natural light plays little effect in the overall exposure. I've lit Margaux with a Lupo 1000 from above and behind the camera. I just love the double reflection in the glazing.

There is a gritty tension in Margaux's look and that represents the moment so perfectly. I play the role of a feature film director in my stills shoots. I have to bring out the core emotion, establish the mood and coach the 'artist' moments. Having spent 14 years as a cameraman at the BBC I worked with some of the best directors in the business so I had a bit of a head start. Notice how her reflection is a bit more challenging and edgy.

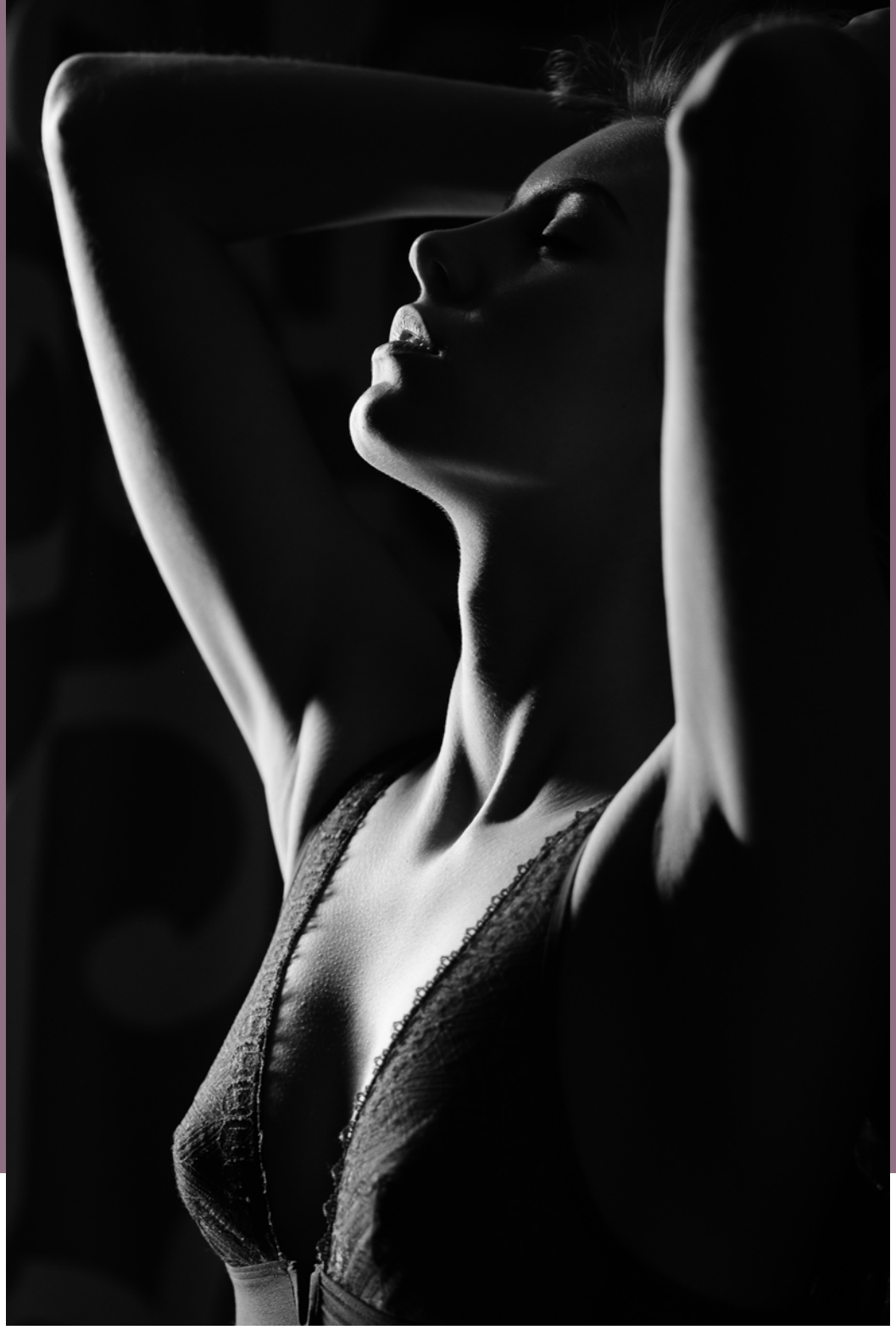
Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/800 sec • f/1.4

The spotlight was not meant to be in the shot but it looked so bad it was good again so I went with it! Margaux is standing in the open door of the apartment and I'm on the balcony looking back in.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 90mm • ISO 640 • 1/800 sec • f/2

I'm shooting from below the eye line and the power in Margaux's connection is electric. The soul in this shot mesmerises me. There is so much wrong with the shot but we need to look beyond the faults and celebrate the strengths. I think the 90mm lens drove me further than my preferred intimate working distance so it required greater energy to make the connection. Sometimes I can get away with it, but for a mid shot like this I'd normally use the 35mm f/1.4 lens at f/1.4.

Ambient key light with a subtle kick from my Lupo spotlight did the trick here.



Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2

This low key portrait of Alicia, a German super model that I shot in Paris, was just lit with window light coming through a nearly closed curtain. This partially closed curtain gives a long strip light effect. Let me explain what that means and why it so important to have this knowledge. A light can be hard or soft, and that is determined by its relative size to the subject. A hard light gives clearly defined shadows as the light can't get around shapes, and a soft light wraps around shapes and gives feathered shadows. A strip light is a hard light and a soft light in one. The vertical strip of light created by the slot in the curtain wraps light beautifully top to bottom, while leaving the rim lit look. No light from the window is getting round to the camera side of Alicia.

I directed Alicia to pose this way because I love the shapes created by her nose, lips, chin and neck muscles. The resulting shadow lines are gorgeous.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2.2

Here is another picture where verticals dominate the background. I completely love shooting with upstage key lighting. All I had to do to control the contrast was to open or close the venetian blind at the window, just out of the right of shot. In this shot I felt that retaining shadow detail in the black bra was important, so I set the venetian blind to the position needed as shown on my camera LCD.

Lighting was a Lupo 1000 spotlight with an 'Alto' ScatterGel. You can clearly see the effect of the gel on the door frame to the left of the shot.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 640 • 1/80 sec • f/2

Part way through the recent boudoir resurgence was a period of 18 months or so where burlesque became a popular genre again. The show girl image is reflected in some of my works of the time like this shot of professional dancer Raphaella taken in 2011. Standing on a table in underwear swinging from a chandelier is exciting, and it works well here because of several factors. The first is that Raphaella is seemingly anonymous. I tried a frame from further left where she was clearly visible in the mirror but it looked too 'clever'. There is something about this imperfect shot that has a realism. Secondly, Raphaella's bra is not done up correctly. Rather than tidy mistakes like this in Photoshop, I keep them real.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2

2011 was a revolution for me. It was the year I went to Berlin to run workshops armed with my Fujifilm Finepix X-100 camera, and I visited the Helmut Newton Museum. The day after, I was in the lobby of a swanky hotel lobby ready to meet and greet my workshop participants, when a rather dishevelled looking Wlada arrived. She said, "sorry I'm late, I didn't have any change for the bus and I've got no clothes for the shoot." I ordered coffee and biscuits for my delegates and postponed the start of the shoot until 10:30. I lent Wlada €20 and we went separate ways. I went to C&A to buy stockings, bras, lingerie and shoes with Radmila (one of the delegates), whilst Wlada sorted herself out in the penthouse suite. It was a bumpy start to what was three years of creative magic between myself and Wlada.
Still fired up from my Helmut inspiration I utilised this telephone table as a stage for Wlada to perform on. I assigned her the task of adjusting her fishnet stockings, and that action made the shot work for me.

My delegates, who were from all over Europe, asked about the 'ugly shadow' from the Lupo spotlight. I explained that shadows are so important as they add to the narrative. This shadow gives Wlada the look of being in the spotlight, being on stage. When we moved the light to the right so that Wlada's shadow fell on the wall out of shot on the left, the magic was gone.

I partially opened the curtains to provide Wlada with a high key background.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 640 • 1/250 sec • f/.2

Mirror shots are some of the most rewarding to shoot but they take a bit of setting up. I pulled the dressing table away from the window a bit so that I could get a spotlight in beyond the mirror on the left, looking back to Victoria. The lighting stand is top left, just out of the shot. When the light is as close as this, I turn it down using the dimmer control on the side of the lamp. You can clearly see the beautiful crisp nose and chin shadows from the spotlight. Victoria's nose shadow intersects her cheek shadow to enclose what's called the 'Hollywood cheek triangle'.

I directed an open triangle with Victoria's arms so that I could shoot through. I suggested that she put some Kirby grips in her hair. Assigning a task like this gives the shot a more natural feel.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2

Triangles, curves, verticals. This shot has everything for me. I especially love Rosalinde's leg muscles. Once Rosalinde and I had chosen the styling and the location, I moved the furniture and closed the curtains while she changed. When Rosalinde was in position I opened the curtains a crack by wedging a book between the curtains and the wall. This was necessary because the curtains were fixed at the end of the track on the left. Occasionally I'll use a lighting stand to hold curtains open a bit. It really doesn't matter how you do it, just use the curtains as versatile lighting modifiers. Every hotel room has them, and they can black out the room too as required.

"When posing someone with their back to the wall, transfer their upper body weight through their shoulders. Ask them to bring their bottom off the wall to make it appear smaller. This example of the pose is extreme but it works for me. Keep an eye out for the other examples of this pose in the book.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 1600 • 1/500 sec • f/2

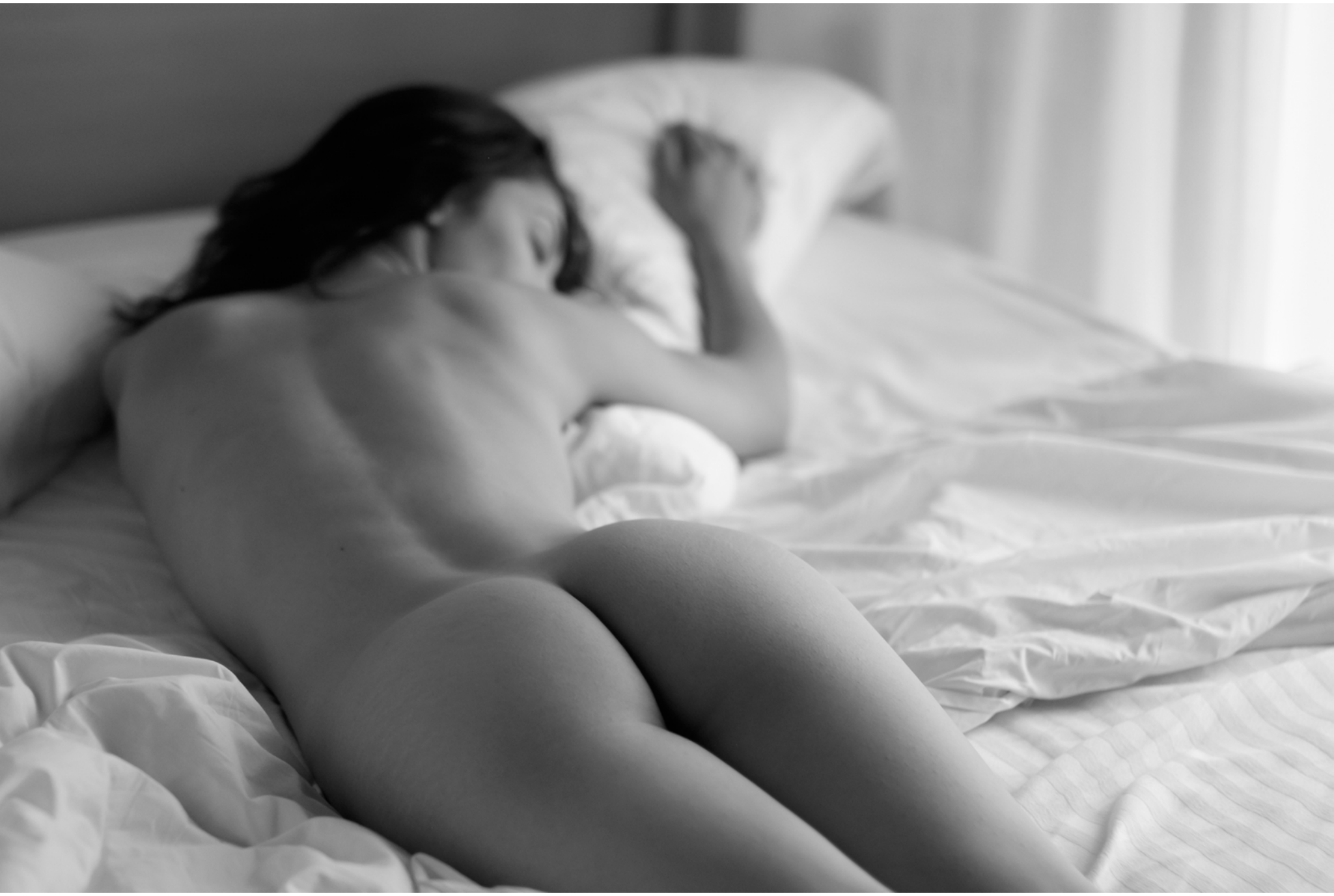
Chantelle has two principal light sources here. A key light coming from above the mirror, and a back light coming from the right of the camera. Both light sources are from the same Lupo spotlight. I rigged the light high and to the right of camera. I spotted it up into the mirror and it reflected back onto Chantelle's face and body. The spill from the spotlight created the kick light.

Nudes

What's in a name?

I call this genre Lovegrove Nudes because there is no justification calling this picture genre Fine Art Nudes, when there is no painting or sculpture involved. Art Nudes or Artistic Nudes are better descriptions, but they pigeonhole the imagery into a more classical style, whereas some of my work with nudes doesn't fit the Art Nude genre at all. Perhaps some of my work is more Fashion Nude or even Erotica, so without a better description I'm calling the pictures in this chapter Lovegrove Nudes.

Just like I described in the boudoir chapter, I use the 'Maximise, Minimise, Enhance and Diminish' strategies in my nude shoots too. I've learned how to feature just the important assets and to hide the least wanted bits. Take a look at the poses in this chapter and the boudoir chapter that specifically hide or champion thighs, legs, breasts, tummies, bottoms etc. Build up a personal collection of 'tear sheets' from magazines, or use Pinterest to make your very own reference body of work that you can refer to at your own shoots. It's all about common sense - use your eyes, identify what you want to feature in the person you are shooting and then set out a plan. I usually do this during the make up session. That's when I put styling items together and design my pictures. Once I have a plan I can rig the lighting and set the room for the first shot so that we get off to a productive start.



Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.2

I used a monopod for this shoot session in Spain to keep everything under control. I find slowing down the shoot process allows more creative thought time for things like choosing a focus point and deciding on what depth of field to use etc. The 56mm lens wide open is a great lens choice for this shot because it gives a subtle abstraction. Having Mischkah's face slightly obscured and out of focus adds mystery to the moment. I like being left with an image that can trigger a narrative. I like to imagine what she is thinking of and how she got there.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2.5

Arielle sits bathed in light in this beautiful timber panelled room. Anonymity is often a strategy that I use to simplify a picture for the viewer. In some cases, my clients also request to be shot in this way too.

My basic lighting rule applies here. If a light fitting is in the shot, the light must be switched on. Arielle's key light is a Lupo 1000 with an Alto Scattergel. I would have liked to rig the key light a bit higher but the ceiling was very low in this room. The hard light from the Lupo clearly defines the muscle tone in Arielle's torso.

In my time as a photographer I've photographed people of all shapes and sizes, have shot over four hundred weddings and thousands of portraits too. None of my clients are in this book, and all the shots in this chapter were taken on 1:1 training days or workshops. It takes a lot of body confidence to put yourself forward as a nude model for a photographer or painter. The resulting images have been easier to capture than a typical client shoot that involves a degree of psychological, confidence building input. Having said that, working with 4 other photographers and a make up artist in the same room poses other problems that can detract from the intimate connection required.

Photographing someone naked or partly naked is tough. Not just the embarrassment

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2

This is a nude shot but you wouldn't know for sure. The fact that the person in the frame knows, is a key factor in the psychology of shooting for profit. When the person in the frame is the person buying the picture the emotional connection to the moment when the photograph was taken becomes a significant factor in the success of the photograph. How the person was feeling and the energy in the room both contribute to a decision to buy a print. Close up details like this usually make fun additions to an album of photographs.

Lighting was from an upstage Lupo 1000 with an Alto Scattergel.

or potential awkwardness of the situation on both sides of the camera but because clothes (and more specifically underwear) do such a great job at shaping, supporting and hiding the perceived flaws in a figure. Women, and increasingly men, are under a lot of pressure to look fabulous. As discussed earlier in this book, digital post production has only made matters worse. Excessive use of retouching of digital and film captures has broadened the gap between the printed image and reality. I like to keep my edits minimal and I just use Lightroom for a maximum of 60 seconds per picture. My advice is “Don’t rely on nip, tuck, pinch and blur - get it right in camera”.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.2

By closing the curtains in a room and using an upstage hard key light, it is easy to create beautiful bodyscapes. Closing the curtains sets the shadow level. You can open them just a touch to keep some detail in the shadows. The Calvin Klein Hipsters will date the shot to 2016, but that’s not a bad thing because this will be retro in 30 years time.

Mad idea: Note to myself - Develop a virtual mirror that retouches blemishes in real time. Glasses that can do the same too would be good. These will be useful as we enter a more virtual reality world.

I'm naturally a shy person and I did my first nude shoot in 2010. I find that being a bit shy helps and hinders in equal measure. It helps me to take things calmly and respectfully, but at the same time shyness can put over a sense of flustered unprofessionalism so I rely on my experience and photographic ability to disguise things like a gracefully gliding swan frantically paddling away under the water.

I place my prime lenses on a side table in the room I'm shooting in, I have no caps on them and any Pro Mist filters that are needed are already in place with lens hoods attached. It's a bit like how a surgeon would lay out their tools on a trolly. I can then quickly swap the lens needed for each shot. Having to go in and out of bags for gear just takes too long and ruins the creative flow.

> *If the light is good, use it. If not, modify it or make your own. Never settle for bad light.*

When I started out in photography I was always thinking "What lens should I use for that shot?" Now, with experience of getting it right, and wrong, my lens choice is second nature. It's like choosing a gear to use when driving a car around a bend. Of the three gears I could probably use, the one I choose will depend on my driving style at the time. The point I'm making is that choosing a lens happens not in the moment, but in the background of the brain. If you are just starting out, don't despair. If you can drive a car you will know how big a learning challenge you can overcome. Until lens choice becomes second nature for you, limit yourself to just two or three lenses at the most and really get to know them well. When I completely switched to Fujifilm X from Canon in 2012 I had just the 3 lenses that Fujifilm made for the X system at the time - the 18mm, 35mm and 60mm. That was all I used for a whole year.

The final composition of your shots is something you just feel. It's important to get to the stage where you are not having to crop or straighten in post production. I used to shoot video at the BBC and transparencies for commercial clients and photo libraries, where both mediums had absolute framing.

I once did a 3 day journalist training workshop in the 1990s during my time at the BBC where one of the techniques we were introduced to was writing the story to the pictures. Being led by the pictures is the way I've chosen to write this and several other chapter sections in this book.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/2.4

I love the way Carla's figure breaks the regular pattern of the sofa in this shot. There is a bit of decoding to do, but that adds to the magic.

There is a window on the wall behind and above the sofa, just out of shot. I had a bit of flare to remove in post production, but the rest of the frame is as shot. I used a monopod to shoot down at 1/60th second.

Fujifilm X-100T • 23mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2

I took this shot of Carla at a hotel in Tegernsee near Munich. I directed her to lie on the bed with her head at the foot end and on her side facing away from camera. This creates body contours like the rolling hills of Wiltshire, in the UK.

I used some Ikea net curtains that I brought with me and clipped them up to the window to reduce the contrast of the scene outside. The light on Carla is a Lupo 1000 rigged just out of shot to the right of frame. It has the barn doors closed in to just light Carla.

***Tip:** This is a great pose to use if you find yourself photographing a larger person nude or in lingerie. You can scrunch up the duvet in the foreground to hide what ever you don't want to see.*

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/3.6

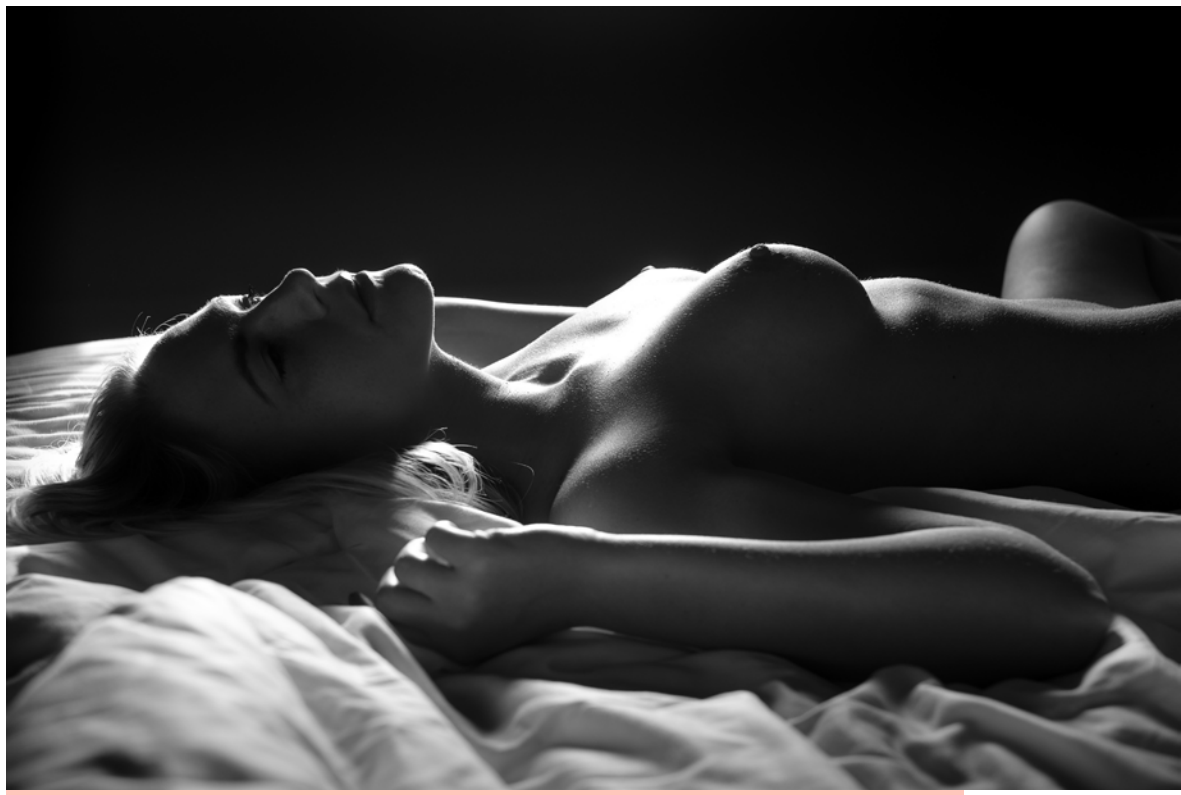
The light from a window in a Dutch hotel was just perfect for this simple nude study of Sheena. All the other curtains and lights were switched off in the room to increase contrast in the shot. The reflected light on Sheena was coming from my white shirt and the bed sheets.

I used a Tiffen Black Pro Mist filter to create the halation at the window as the highlight blends into the shadow. It's small details like this that give a subtle filmic look.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/3.6

I used the same window light for this shot of Sheena lying on her back on the bed. Her closed eyes draw you in to the calmness of the moment.

If the light is good, use it. If not, modify it or make your own. Never settle for bad light.



Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/30 sec • f/1.4

The 35mm is my ‘go to’ lens for magical moments. Somehow it just seems uncomplicated and allows me to concentrate on the detail. Direction for Margaux was micro managed to ensure that all the light scupted the body contours beautifully.

Margaux is standing in front of a partly opened sliding door leading to the bathroom of a swish hotel suite in Lausanne. I closed the shutters in the room and the only light is coming from the bathroom window and through the gap in the door, just out of shot to the right of the frame. The beautiful outer glow on the door is created by light reflecting off Margaux.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

Arielle stands in a 16th century room in Kent UK, and is lit by a Lupo 1000 with a Crunch Scattergel for added dapple. I love how the light creates highlights in Arielle's hair and shows texture on her skin.

On the pedestal is a figure supporting a tray on its feet. Its legs are lit and stand out from the shaded area of the panelling. Little details like tonal separation of props can make or break a picture.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 1600 • 1/60 sec • f/2

Margaux stands by the bathroom door. I always favour tiptoe poses or a pair of 75-100mm high heel shoes for leg shots like this. The light gradients on the background are like symphonies and are completely natural.

The 90mm lens is my ‘go to’ lens for details. It allows a decent working distance and is super sharp too. I love the grain in this shot. I keep noise reduction off, even in Lightroom,as it allows the true beauty of the Acros profile to be realised. Back in the day, when working on film, I’d have shot this on Fujifilm Neopan 1600 ASA. The texture at the pixel level in Acros is similar to the grain in Neopan and is something to celebrate, not to remove.

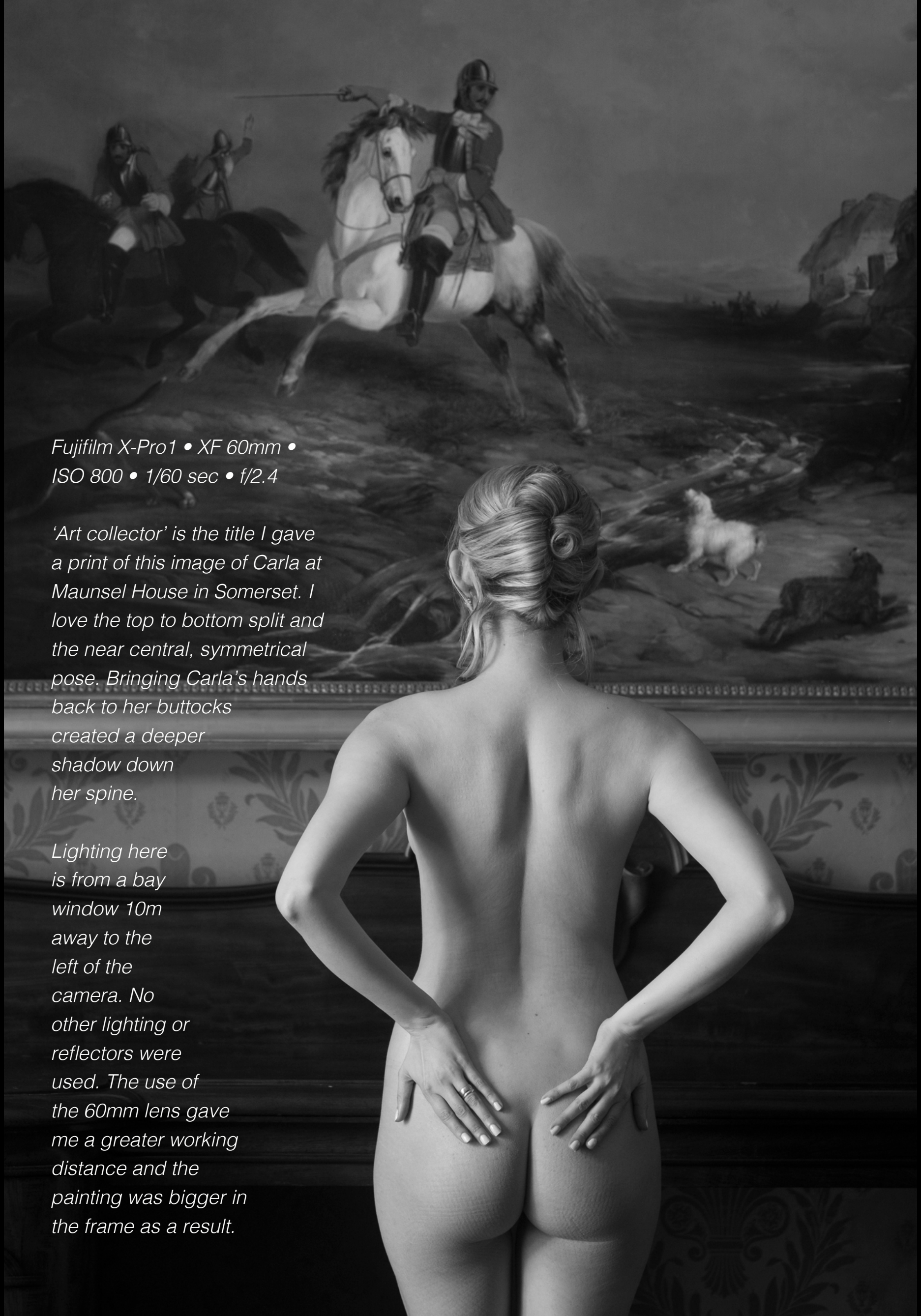
Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

The second shot in this spot was very quick to set up. I like the tonal separation for our figurine on the pedestal, and the fact that the diagonal block of shadow in the top right of the shot matches the angle of Arielle's arm.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/320 sec • f/1.8

I love using simple timeless lighting that could have been created at any time since the 1940s. We are so familiar with it that it is perceived as being natural. It's a bit like black and white photography. We never see in black and white but because for so many years that was all there was available for photography, it is perceived as being normal and okay.

I lit Arielle with the Lupo 1000 and Scattergel to highlight her cheekbones and create that classic 'S' curve where her cheek bone shadow links up with her jaw bone shadow. The exposure was set by the ambient light coming through the net curtains and the light level was adjusted to match, using the dimmer on the lamp. When I want to go full length and include a background I often opt for the 23mm lens. It affords an intimate working distance without creating distortion.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 60mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/2.4

‘Art collector’ is the title I gave a print of this image of Carla at Maunsel House in Somerset. I love the top to bottom split and the near central, symmetrical pose. Bringing Carla’s hands back to her buttocks created a deeper shadow down her spine.

Lighting here is from a bay window 10m away to the left of the camera. No other lighting or reflectors were used. The use of the 60mm lens gave me a greater working distance and the painting was bigger in the frame as a result.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 64mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4

I shot Carla from the next room in this German hotel suite. The light that is landing on Carla is coming from a window to the left of her that has partly closed curtains. I moved the Chaise Longue so that the light was landing on Carla from 90° to the camera. Shooting from one zone or room to another adds an interesting dimension to an image. I chose to use the classic framing convention of thirds and shot from just above eye level to keep the verticals upright.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4

I directed Carla to look down and to the side. This allowed the window light to create the 'S' curve as Carla's cheek shadow meets her jaw bone. I dropped to my knees to shoot from below eye level and zoomed in for this close up.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

I asked Ayla to curl up into the shell seat and I shot from right overhead for added drama through isolation. It's easy to exclude furniture and anything else if you are looking straight down in a room.

I so missed the tilting screen of the X-T1 on this shoot with Ayla. I was shooting with a pre production X-Pro2 at the time. I had to take several shots before getting one with decent framing.

Lighting was from a window with all the other curtains closed in the room.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/170 sec • f/2

This shot of Carla excites me because it is beautiful, abstract and arresting through a strong connection. The veil could signify death but Carla's eyes are alive and she is very much in the moment. Sometimes these ideas for shots just come out of the ether.

I covered Carla with a piece of black veiling that I bought on Ebay and asked her to create a curve with her body. The red splodgy carpet was not pretty but in monochrome and with the veil to disguise it, I got away with it.

I stood on a chair and shot straight down at arms length with my X-100. Those were the days before tilting screens or smartphone apps that show you the image prior to shooting it.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

Mischkah bought this wonderful petticoat to Spain for our workshop in 2015. It was spot on for a sequence of shots in this Cadiz town house. I love how the daylight runs down her back and her over the shoulder. Her look is both protective and alluring.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 500 • 1/60 sec • f/1.6

I used a monopod for this shot to keep the camera still at 1/60th second. I posed Mischkah so that the light from the window to her left sculpted her body in the mirror. I was careful to set the height of the camera to keep the verticals spot on without needing to adjust them in post production.

The shadow you see on the wall above the mirror is from sunlight reflecting off a car windscreen in the street below.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.8

Sometimes the best nudes are accidental. Mina wears a dress by Molly Mishi May that should have been fastened in place with tit tape (or toupee tape as we called it at the BBC). Mina was completely comfortable with the moment as an accomplished nude model. I love her attitude and the moment.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 56mm • ISO 320 • 1/320 sec • f/1.2

Vicki Waghorn, my regular make up artist, creates a wonderful hair up-do. At the end of the shoot we often let the the hair down and revel in curls galore. A single Lupo 1000 Spotlight at 90° to the camera gave this shot of Carla a classic look. A distant window to the left lit Carla's right arm and made this a two point lighting set up.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 60mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2.8

One of the main strategies I employ in my work is to capture the character of my subjects and sometimes their attention too. I want the nudity in the shot to be immaterial or irrelevant. It's important to admire and not desire the person in the photograph.

Carla is lit with a single Lupo 1000 spotlight and wears a waspie corset by Lisa Keating.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2

Just a crack in the curtains often generates just enough light to do a simple body scape shot, like this one of Claire. All other curtains in the room were closed to keep the contrast high. The X-T1 camera was on a monopod to avoid camera shake.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/1.6

A Scattergel gives a fabulous look to the output of the single Lupo spotlight. I rotated the barn doors on the light to deliver a bright patch of light onto Margaux's face.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/2

I saw this white long case clock in a hotel we were shooting in and thought it would make a great prop. I rarely use props in such a dominant position in my shots, but I got away with this one.

I just used the light from a window to illuminate Arielle.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 90mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/2

Margaux's facial profile shadow on her arm is a delight in this shot. The lighting is exactly the same as it was in the previous shot. All I did was pop the 90mm lens on to pick up the close up.

Fujifilm X-Pro 1 • XF 60mm • ISO 3200 • 1/250th sec • f/2.4

I just used the ambient light in Radmila Kerl's studio in Munich to shoot Wlada against the back wall. Sometimes the softest light is a delight to use. It's easy to end up with flat pictures though, so I pop a touch of contrast back in with Lightroom.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 57mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/2.8

It's a brave crop that cuts through eyes but that's what I felt at the time and this is 'as shot'. I chose the 50-140mm lens to shoot Mischkah for this mini session because it gives a lot of flexibility for reframing quickly, while maintaining a decent working distance.

Lighting was a Lupo Quad light from above and a Triflector below. A second Lupo, this time a 650, was used as a kick light.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

Carla poses with my Fujifilm X100T in a two point lighting set up. The high waisted knickers and pearls are from Primark, and the scraped back hair completes the look.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/8

This is probably my favourite shot in the book at this moment. I'm sure my choice will change like the wind, but there's something Helmut Newton-esque about this shot of Margaux. Abstract, surreal and perhaps inspired in part by the artwork on the cover of the Robert Palmer's 1975 album called 'Pressure Drop'. I was meticulous about every detail in this shot. It took a few minutes to perfect the styling, chair positioning, posing and composition. I love it when it all comes together.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/1.8

I love hats. They are great for adding that anonymous touch to a nude shot. It's so important to get life into a shot like this with good use of tonal balance. Sheen on Kate's skin and on the varnished shutters lift the shot out of the ordinary and into a photograph that will print beautifully for display. Cocoa butter moisturising cream and the humidity in Cambodia are a wonderful combination.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 44mm • ISO 200 • 1/400 sec • f/8

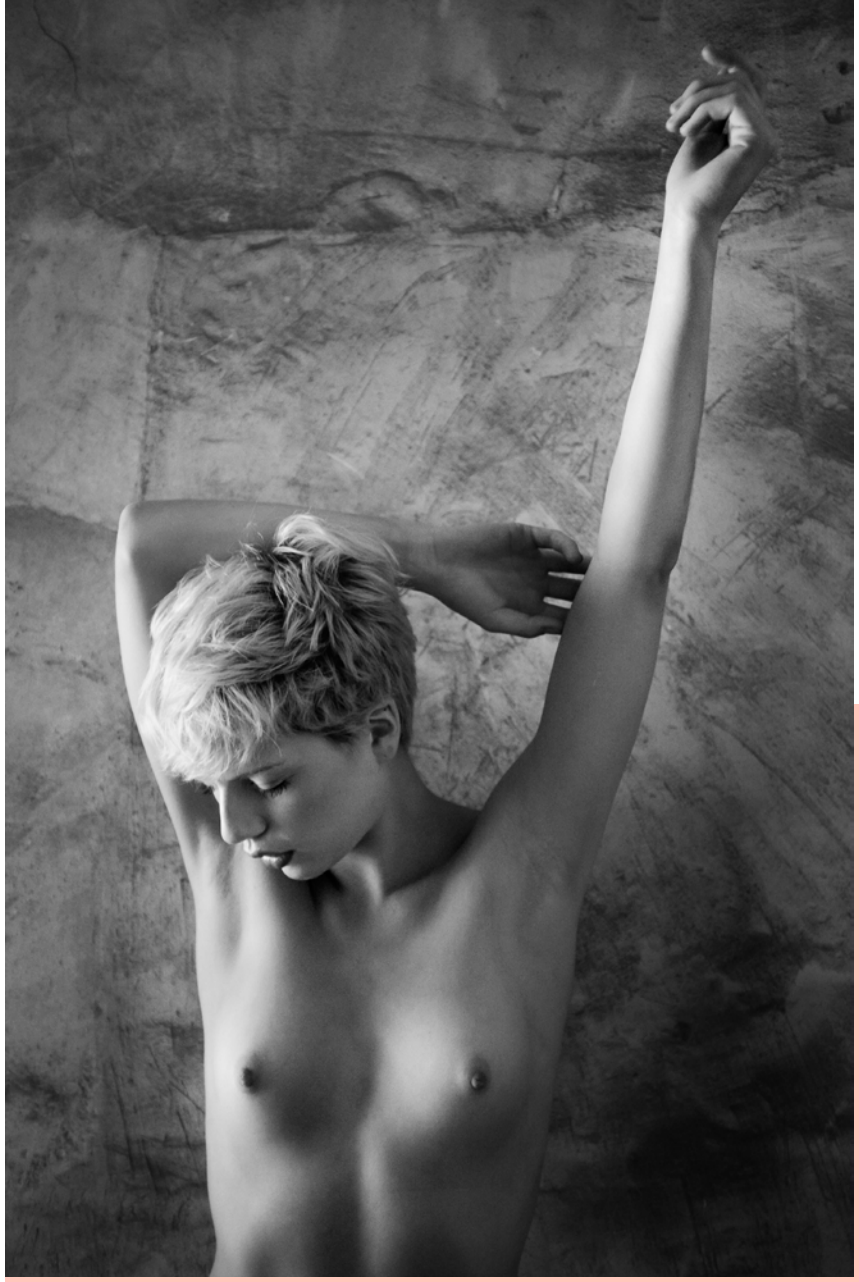
Continuing the theme of hats for anonymity, I bought this hat in a street market in Rimini and headed out to this rusty farm building in the nearby countryside with Deborah. The steep sunlight gave us the perfect crisp lighting needed for this shadow effect.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

This is one of those shots where the idea came to me on set. I asked Yulia to put on some heels and I tried to describe the plan for the shot. At the time she thought my vision was strangely odd, but she loved the subsequent photograph. This shot comes into a category that I call 'Follow Me'. It has something magical about it that I can't pinpoint. The lighting was window light on a misty mountain top in Cambodia.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 1600 • 1/80 sec • f/2

October 2011 was my first adventure to Spain with my Fujifilm X-100. It lifted me as a photographer and the small camera with a real live view preview of my image motivated me to experiment further with my work. Katy stands in the upper floor corridor of an abandoned monastery. The pose is one of defiant beauty and reflection. The disused monastery had been used by the secret police of the dictator General Franco during the Spanish civil war. I used the opportunity to read up on the subject and it makes for some disturbing reading. Whatever your thoughts on Franco, having an emotional connection to a photograph gives it a greater sense of worth.



Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 400 • 1/80 sec • f/2

Tousled hair and glancing light give this X-100 shot of Maca in the abandoned monastery a raw look. I worked with the graffiti because I liked the shading from the corner of the room to the right of the shot. The building had an aura and the history of the place left its mark on all of us.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/1.6

We were shooting in an abandoned villa once used by leaders of the Khmer Rouge. There were no solid widows or doors left in the building. I set up Yulia so that I had two ¾ backlights from the window, and a soft key light from the doorway to the right of the camera. I love shooting with minimalist styling and minimal editing. Lines on her neck, stray hairs and frown lines all add to the raw beauty. When Yulia offered to be my muse for part of my tour in Cambodia I agreed on the proviso that I was allowed to leave the pictures un retouched. Real beauty is ageless and I'm sure Yulia would look fabulous at 18, 40 (as she is here) or 70 years old.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 134mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

Mischkah's beautiful clean skin contrasts well with the crumbling walls of this derelict Spanish farmhouse. The subtle rim light on her face and left arm is coming from a gap in some trees out of shot to the right of the frame.

I directed Mischkah to drop her chin and look at the camera. This subtle lowering of the head opens the eyes and creates intimacy. This can be evolved into an alluring submissive look, or that of a naive girl with doey eyes looking for answers.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 102mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

Mischkah stands in a doorway reflecting on life. The subtle top light sculpts her body with contours.

I used a telephoto zoom for this shot, and wide open at f/2.8 the background is rendered beautifully out of focus. The telephoto effect and out of focus foreground on the right create a distant and less intimate connection.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/1.4*

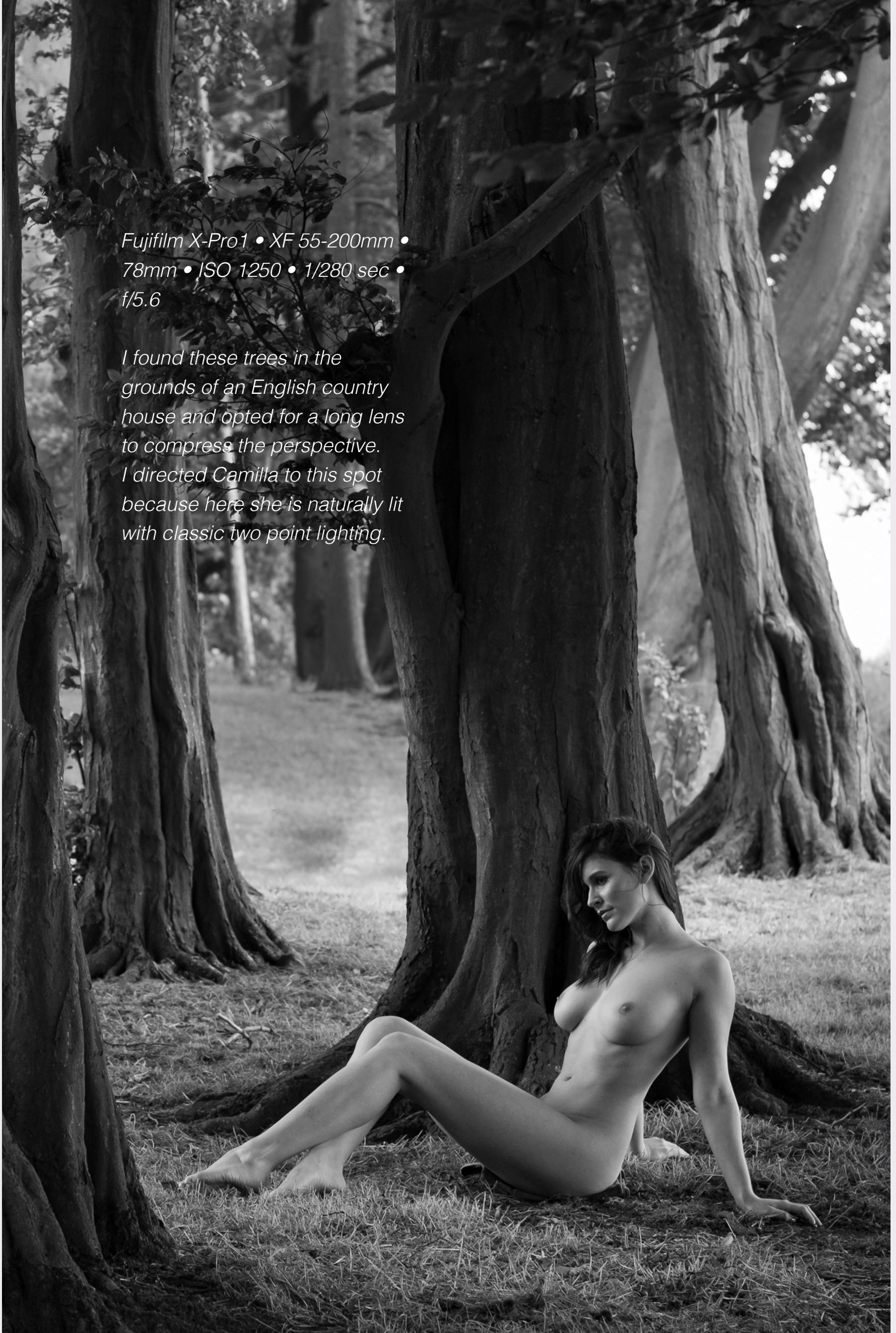
Yulia stands to the left of a mortar hole in the floor of this villa. War has shaped the recent past of Cambodia and time has become a creator of natural texture. This texture is often mimicked in hand painted back cloths, but never equalled. The jungle is reclaiming this house and the out of focus palm tree outside the window is sublime.

I went for the tousled hair look here too but rather than create a moment of reflection, we created a look of strength and defiance to counteract the vulnerability that is born out of Yulia's nakedness and her protective pose. These photographs are a collaborative effort - one that has artistic vision, creativity, trust and dedication at its heart.

★ *While I was on my workshop tour of Cambodia back in 2014 I was interviewed and featured in Ladies Magazine, the number 1 fashion and lifestyle magazine in Cambodia. Here is the article they published featuring more of my photographs of Yulia.*

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm •
ISO 400 • 1/30 sec • f/1.4

Sheena and I found ourselves in an abandoned Chateau in Belgium with this wonderful mural. I lit Sheena and the painting with a battery powered Lupo 1000 with a Scattergel. The shadows on the floor give away the light's position at 90° to the camera.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 55-200mm • 78mm • ISO 1250 • 1/280 sec • f/5.6

I found these trees in the grounds of an English country house and opted for a long lens to compress the perspective. I directed Camilla to this spot because here she is naturally lit with classic two point lighting.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

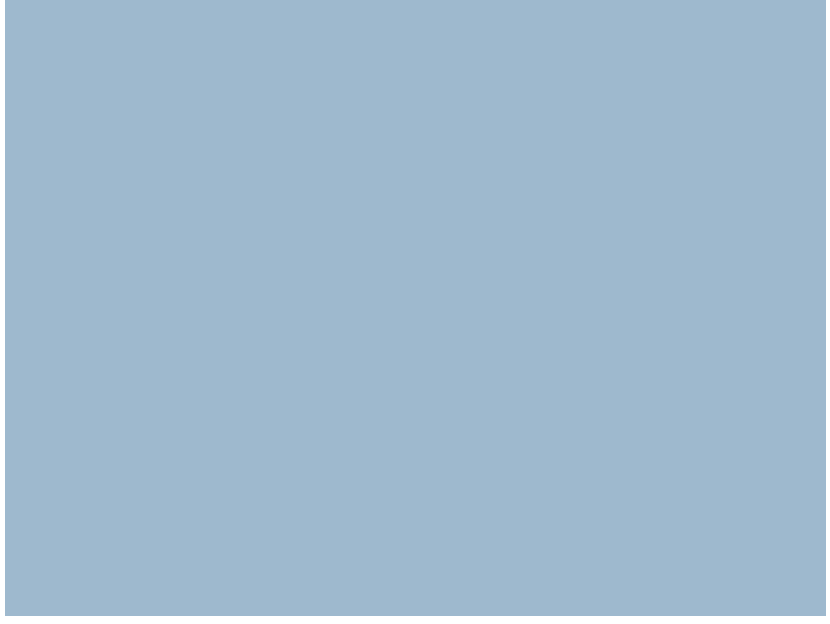
Charlotte stands in a shuttered doorway at the old disused police station in Phnom Penh. It is a relic of a colonial past and an exciting place to shoot.

I set the doors open to create a tall narrow space for Charlotte. I directed her pose precisely and used her left arm to obscure her mouth. This creates a bit of mystery. Tiptoes complete the look.

This was the hottest and most humid of my shoots ever. By mid afternoon I was on my limit with mild heat exhaustion so we navigated down the crumbling staircase to an air conditioned coffee shop. By the time we returned the storm clouds were overhead and the light level had dropped.

7

Figure in the Landscape



‘Figure in the landscape’ is the name I give to a style of photography that sets the subject in the scene and features the whole body as a fraction of the overall frame. It can be shot from a distance with a long lens, or intimately close with a wide lens. I have used all the lenses I own for this type of image, including the extremes, from the excellent 14mm prime to the big 100-400mm zoom lens.

The success of a figure-in-the-landscape shot, for me, comes down to several factors, in particular the use of simple composition. It’s such a fun genre to shoot and works fabulously for large wall prints. I spend hours exploring areas on Google Earth and then on foot to find the right location, angle, and time of day to shoot.

I started shooting this type of photograph for dress designers, taking models in wedding dresses out of the usual wedding environment and placing them in fields and on rocks. Some years later I rekindled the idea and ran a series of workshops shooting fashion with flash on location in the country. I found the UK weather challenging and unpredictable for this kind of work and that started my quest for adventures abroad. I soon found that I was not alone and other photographers joined me on these adventures to exciting places in the sun.

There’s a sense of isolation in my figure-in-the-landscape photographs. This isolation can be portrayed as a symbol of strength, or of vulnerability. Throughout this book you will see many examples of this genre, but on the following pages I want to share with you every aspect of my thought process leading to my choice of design and lighting styles.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/6.4*

This is perhaps one of my most recognisable images, taken in Fuerteventura in 2013. I had sketched a dress design for an 'Angel in the Landscape' shot and my friend, designer Lisa Keating, ran it up in silk chiffon. It was a little more sheer than I'd expected, but it looked fabulous on Carla Monaco in the sand dunes near Corralejo.

I chose an area of sand where, whilst looking towards the sun, the horizon wasn't visible with a low viewpoint. Carla took a long route around the back of the shot to avoid getting footprints in the foreground sand. I lit Carla with a deep dish parabolic reflector on an Elinchrom Quadra 400Ws battery powered flash unit. The flash was above and slightly to the left of the camera. You can see the lighting direction by looking at the shadow under Carla's chin. The flash was on full power and this gave me the perfect balance. The foreground shadows on the sand are from the direct sunlight. You can see the effect of the sun on the top of her head and shoulders. I kept the post-production look calm and the colour palette subtle.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 14mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/16*

I lowered the exposure of the ambient light by closing the aperture to f/16, making the bright, overcast day look more threatening and dramatic. I then added flash from an Elinchrom Quadra head on a boom arm. The boom arm was visible on the left of the shot but I cloned this out in Lightroom.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/320 sec • f/13

The dramatic wilderness areas near Lake Powell in Utah, USA, offers great opportunities for figure-in-the-landscape photography. It looks fantastic on Google Earth and was an easy spot to find on the ground. All I needed was the afternoon sunlight and a standard lens. Keeping things simple is a great way to work.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 200 • 1/200 sec • f/4.5*

This secluded canyon was difficult to find but a gem to shoot at. We had about an hour of afternoon light to capture our images before having to move on. I placed Chantelle against the dark rock in the canyon beyond. A gust of wind would have brought this shot to life. I'll be returning to this exact spot in 2017 with a dancer to create movement. Just like with regular landscape photography, you sometimes need to revisit a location to get the best from it.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 110mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/3.6*

This shot in the painted desert in Arizona was one of the simplest on the trip to take. Martin, my co-tutor, found this spot and all I needed to do was style the pose. It was too bright in the desert for Arielle to open her eyes without sunglasses so we went for a shut-eyed, sun-worshipping look.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 640 • 1/400 sec • f/4

In this image, Chantelle stands in the last rays of sunlight while the blue scree from the mountain is lit by the cloudless blue sky. It's sometimes worth waiting for the light or planning the sun angles using a landscape photography app.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 250 • 1/400 sec • f/2.8

I took this shot of Arielle a few minutes before the sun dropped below the mountain. The dramatic ridge-line gives weight to the right side of the picture and allows me to use a negative offset for Arielle. I often include a forced composition in my work where my client or model is looking out of the wrong side of the shot. Here, my principal direction for Arielle was to face the sun. I placed her against the dark background to provide the necessary tonal separation.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 77mm • ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/5.6

Here you can see Arielle sitting in the grass on the high plains of Arizona. At an elevation of around 5000ft it can be quite barren here. The dust in the air was blowing up off the painted desert and gave the shot an eerie look. The sky really was that colour, and after just ten minutes here we realised all our gear was getting impregnated with the superfine dust. I was glad to have the weather-sealed X-T2 with me because other photographers in the group were struggling with gritty lenses.

I chose the low viewpoint to match Arielle's position. I like to shoot from below the eyeline where possible, so ended up placing the corral against the sky in this image. Moving my position left and right while glancing down at the tilted up LCD allowed me to align the distant mountain perfectly in the frame. We just had to be a bit careful of snakes here!

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF55-200mm • 61mm •
ISO 200 • 1/500 sec • f/5.6

I shot this photograph while recording my 'Illumination' training video. There's something quite magical about the scale of Claire in the frame here. It's worth noting that, if you shoot portraits for income, the smaller that someone appears in the shot, the larger the print or framed image they'll buy (within reason). The perfect places to hang framed figure-in-the-landscape pictures are above sofas and beds.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/10*

I used the existing sunlight on Carla as a back light for this image, and you can clearly see the shadow cast in the bottom left of the foreground. The key light was an Elinchrom Quadra at quarter power on a boom just above the frame and in front of Carla. I used the boom arm to allow me to keep the lighting stand out of shot on camera left. The shadow from the Quadra flash is the one in front of the door. This two-point lighting is quite a common rig for me when I'm shooting fashion.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5.6*

This ghost town in Utah was just too good an opportunity to miss. I had checked it out using Street View on Google and I knew it would make for some wonderful images. About an hour after we arrived the sunlight had gone from these façades, which gave us the opportunity to shoot Arielle sitting in the sun against the darker background. Tonal separation is vital to the success of this shot.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/8*

The narrative of the Wild West is woven into the fabric of this landscape, with its abandoned buildings and telegraph poles. Arielle sits in the window of a derelict frontier house on Route 66. The old road was replaced with a six-lane highway just 100m behind us.

Judging the amount of negative space (in this case black) required in a picture is a very subjective process and one that often gets left to the post-production crop. I like to crop in-camera, and you will see that I view my life at the moment in 3x2 aspect ratio. I think all the pictures in this book are the original format. I occasionally use the crop tool in Lightroom to straighten an image, but that's it. These subtle compositional traits, like your choice and placement of negative space, soon add up to a personal style; unless, that is, you follow the 'rules'. As I've said, the only rule in photography that matters is, 'If it looks good, it is good'.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

The low camera viewpoint adds to Arielle's strong, determined expression. It's rare for me to use out-of-focus foregrounds because I generally find them unattractive. I have, however, used out-of-focus grass several times on my 2016 road trip adventure in the USA. It's good to experiment and allow yourself a little slack every now and then from those self-imposed guidelines.

I post all my upcoming photography tours on the Passion Photography Experience website.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 110mm • ISO 400 • 1/400 sec • f/4

Another grass-out-of-focus foreground, only this time it is quite beautiful grass and a real feature within the photograph. I settled on f/4 to create enough depth of field to ensure that Arielle was completely in-focus and that the background was easily identifiable.

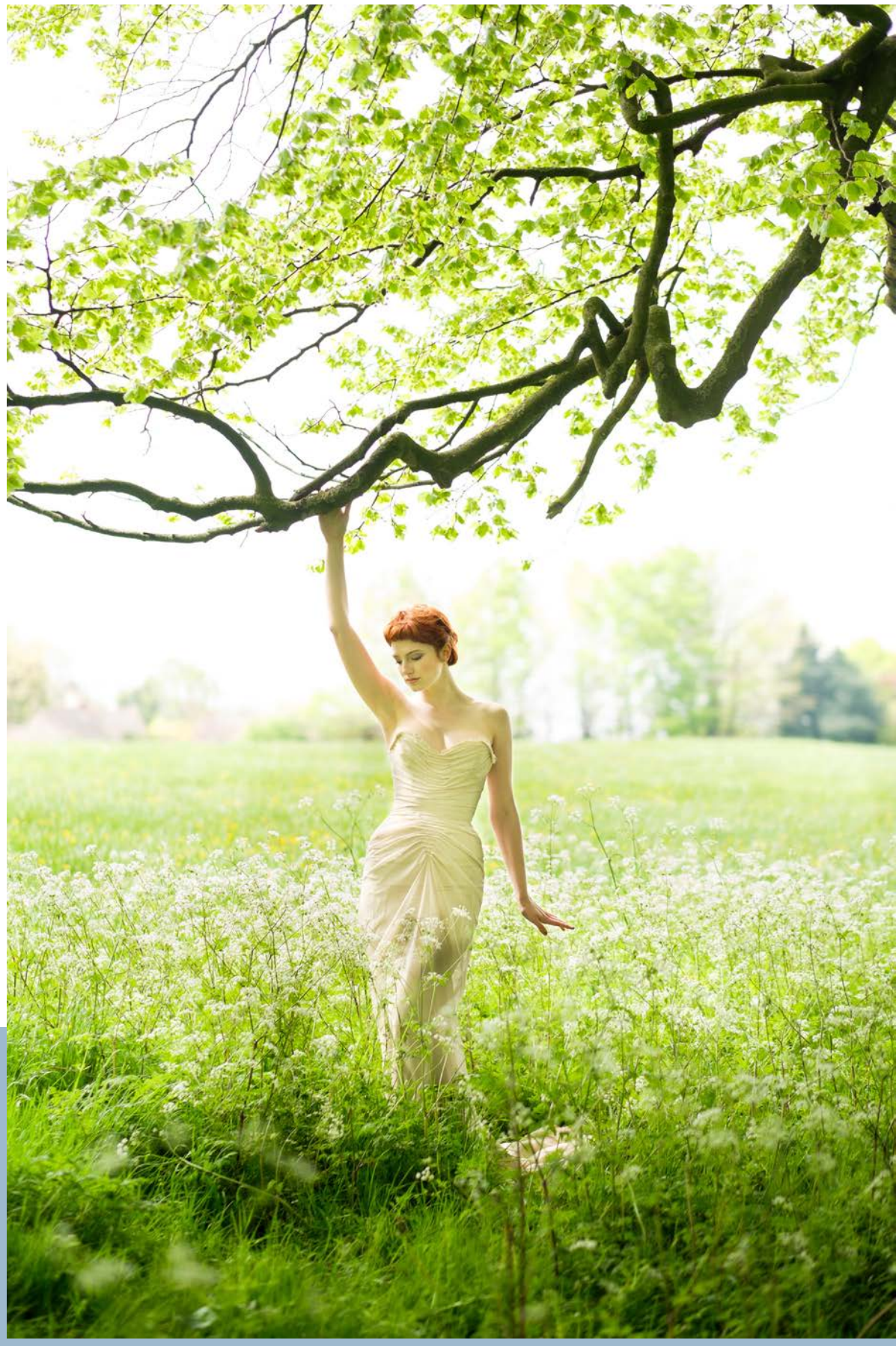
▲ *Fujifilm X-T10 • XF 50-140mm • 91mm • ISO 250 • 1/250 sec • f/4*

There are three main systems that I use to isolate my subject from the background; tonal separation, where the subject is brighter or darker than the background; ***focus separation****, where the subject is isolated within a shallow depth of field; and* ***contrast separation****, where the subject is a higher contrast than the background. Interestingly, our eyes are drawn to points of high contrast in prints, which is why text is considered a distraction. There is one other system that I use less regularly and that is* ***colour separation****, where the subject is in a complimentary colour to the background. That's exactly what I've done here for the portrait of Chantelle in a field in the South of France.*

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/1.2

Sometimes the most beautiful shots happen when I work towards the light. The Fujifilm cameras handle the blend from highlight tone to white superbly. The distant trees and brightest leaves have a wonderful luminosity.

I carefully directed Claire's pose to highlight her curves and elegance. The outward flick of her left hand is a classic Lovegrove hallmark, and so too is her look down and to the side. An added bonus of this is the delightful highlight on her jaw bone.



"The only rule in photography that matters is "If it looks good, it is good".

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • ISO 400 • 1/125 sec • f/3.2

I saw these aerial roots with tree ferns in a park in Singapore and asked Gabrielle to bring a white dress to the shoot. Her face is bang in the middle of the shot, but the composition works because the green ferns at the top of the shot balance with the green foliage at the bottom.

▲ *Fujifilm X-pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/8*

This shot of Natalia is from my first trip to Spain with the Fujifilm X-Pro1, and I found shooting with remote flash on location a doddle. This shot uses a pair of Nikon SB900 Speedlights in a Gemini bracket with a small silver umbrella. I triggered the Speedlights with a simple radio trigger system which I bought on Ebay for £15. Fortunately I bought 8 sets for £100 so each of my workshop goers could have a trigger. Nowadays I use the rather more expensive but expert Cactus system that gives me full remote control of power and flash-head zoom. At the time of writing, the Fujifilm EF-X500 is the main offering from Fujifilm but, although it has seamless HSS and remote control, it works on an optical pulse system rather than radio.

I chose a low angle viewpoint to add majesty and height to Natalia. Although I usually don't like to feature sky in my pictures I got away with this because of the slight underexposure of the ambient light. The kick light on Natalia comes from the sun, with the flash rig directly opposite in my classic two-point lighting style.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 1600 • 1/15 sec • f/1.4*

This shot of Mischkah in a hidden cave in Spain is lit with natural light coming from a shaft to the surface. It was a wonderfully sunny day above ground and about as dark as I could shoot in the cave. I used a monopod to hold the camera steady at 1/15th second, and since Mischkah was moving slightly a slower shutter wasn't an option. The lens was wide open at f/1.4 (I focused on Mischkah's hair and the top of her back). The ISO was at a fairly normal 1600 and I could have gone higher if necessary, but I chose to slightly underexpose in-camera and bring up the areas of the shot that needed it in Lightroom.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 16mm • ISO 1250 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4*

In this industrial image, Sheena rides a coal wagon in a disused mine in Belgium. Getting into the mine was quite a challenge, but once we were there the place was fabulous. I used a monopod for this shot despite the 1/125th shutter speed. The main light sources are the dingy fluorescent strips above Sheena and a splash of flash from a Cactus unit just out of shot to the right of frame.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/6.4*

Venice was foggy for the first morning of our workshop so I took the opportunity to shoot some contrast separation shots of our model Alessandra. I used a Cactus Speedlight on a stand out of shot to the right of frame and spotted it up onto Allesandria. I set my base exposure for the ambient light to make it a bit gloomy and pumped in the Speedlight at 1/2 power to complete the look. In situations like this I nearly always aim to shoot at 90° to my light. Sometimes the direction of my light determines my shooting position and at other times, like this one, the composition comes first and I place the light at 90° to suit.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF56mm • ISO 200 • 1/4000 sec • f/1.6

This shot of Mischkah, taken on a recce in Spain, took quite a bit of compositional design as I recall. I had Mischkah shuffling forwards and backwards, legs up, one leg down, eye contact, no eye contact, etc. I go through this process before shooting so I can get a feel for the shot. What I see on the LCD is how the final image will look once I've pressed the button. I often like to rehearse and explore options before shooting rather than wading through lots of options after the shoot. Looking at the overall composition, I started with the complete stone slab set centrally in the frame and had to pull out on the left to accommodate the wood on the floor. This then offset the window to the right of centre, and I placed Mischkah on the same side facing into the frame. The tall weed on the left is key to the picture. It would have taken no time at all to go in and tidy up the scene but it's the little details that make this shot work for me.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 250 • 1/180 sec • f/5*

My friend and model Yulia is in the window reveal of an old casino up on Bokor mountain in Cambodia. I asked her to look camera-left to create a tension in the image. The composition convention is to look into the frame, i.e. camera-right. I did, however, place her on the thirds as is customary, so I'm not too rebellious!

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

This shot of Sheena in an abandoned mansion in Belgium took a lot of lighting trickery. Her key light is daylight from a window to the left of the camera. I just closed the shutters slightly, keeping the light level low enough to make lighting the room behind easier. I had just one battery-operated Lupo 1000 on a stand with me, as my friend Paul and I had to get into this venue 'under the radar' and therefore travelled light. On the left in the back room, just out of shot, was a semi-glazed door that led into another annex. I propped the door open and shone the Lupo light through the dirty glass. The glass reflected half the light back into the room to light the back wall and fireplace, while the other half became Sheena's rim light.

This shot is one of the photographs I captured for my book project called 'Tutu'. The tutu has travelled the globe with me and continues to do so.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 14mm • ISO 500 • 1/60 sec • f/4.5

There aren't many places around with this kind of charm so it takes some travelling to get to them. This is another venue in Belgium that took some getting into but, wow! What a location! I usually isolate sections of backgrounds to simplify the shot and tell the story in a minimalist way. However, every now and then I want to bring the whole scene into the frame and I opt for the 14mm lens to do it. Despite working with the 14mm lens at 1/60th second I still used a monopod to keep the camera perfectly still.

Once the sofa was in place I lit it with a flash rigged in a 55cm square Lastolite soft box with grid set at 90° to the camera. The grid ensured that the light didn't spill out into the rest of the room. I directed Sheena into position so that she faces the light.Her arms and legs created a nice diagonal. She sat on her knickers that were tucked just out of shot.

Wide lenses work perfectly well for portraits as long as you don't get too close to your subject. The perspective in a shot is governed by the camera to subject distance and not by the focal length or field of view.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 16mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

Here is another figure-in-the-landscape shot, taken in an abandoned Spanish farmhouse, which pulls in the ceiling using the 14mm lens. I put Mischkah in the patch of light coming through the window in the top-left of the shot and used a high viewpoint to strengthen her childlike pose.

Fujifilm X-100 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/80 sec • f/2

I came across this horse trough in the stables of an abandoned monastery in Spain (as you do...). The only light came from a door just out of shot to the left of the camera. Katy asked me “What do you want me to wear?” and I said, “You can leave your hat on.”

Fujifilm X-100 • XF 23mm • ISO 500 • 1/80 sec • f/2

One winter's day, Chloe-Jasmine and I found ourselves in an abandoned asylum. I set off a smoke capsule with a 30 second burn time in the cupboard behind her and took this frame on my X-100. I just used the ambient light in the room and carefully positioned Chloe-Jasmine to get that punchy side and back lighting look.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 14mm • ISO 1600 • 1/60 sec • f/3.6*

I photographed Cato in the office of an abandoned carpet factory in Belgium. Interior locations like this often pose a challenge because of distracting objects in the background and high contrast. Sometimes smoke can solve both those problems, but remember to put the smoke behind your subject.

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Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/2.5

An old shed in Belgium with hessian sacks full of suspicious white powder (hopefully not cocaine!) was the perfect location for a punchy portrait. Cato's key light was a Cactus Speedlight in a gridded Lastolite Ezybox and her kick light was a barefaced Cactus Speedlight zoomed-in to 105mm.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm •
ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

Sheena is on the platform of a disused railway station in Belgium. I lit her from behind with my Elinchrom Quadra high up on a boom arm and just out of the shot. The Quadra was set to 1/4 power.

I can't overemphasise how effectively shooting from below generates an empowering mood in a shot. It's why I loved waist-level finders back in the day on my medium-format cameras, and why I love the tilting screen on my Fujifilm X-T2. I used the X-Pro2 for this shot as the X-T2 was yet to be released. I had to sit on the platform to get the shot.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/2.5

Cambodia never ceased to amaze me on my month-long tour. I set up this group shot with Yulia (on the stairs), Shadrack, and Bethany at the side of an abandoned villa. I loved the way the painted lines on the house were slightly off-kilter. A dominant diagonal triangulated with the tree, repeating lines, and Yulia's attention-grabbing charisma made a fun shot into a fabulous shot

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/2.5

The landscape in this image is a Parisian street just behind the Champs Elysees. Our hotel had a balcony with classic cast-iron railings and teak decking; the perfect location for a portrait of Alicia. I wanted a minimalistic look for her styling so we went with unbrushed hair, nude lips, and bare feet for that effortlessly beautiful look.

Lighting was all natural sunlight without added reflectors. I always find reflecting sunlight back into a face causes the client/ model to squint so I avoid reflectors most of the time.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5.6

Carole is dancing in the sun in Lucerne, Switzerland in this photo. It was baking hot and the building behind her reminded me of some of the Mediterranean locations where I used to shoot weddings. I used the trusty XF35mm f/1.4 lens for this shot. When shooting in full sunlight the shadow and highlight tones really have to be well monitored. I let the dress go and concentrated on skin tones and the façade. I have my in-camera jpeg settings adjusted to give the best screen images on the LCD and EVF to asses exposure and contrast. See the chapter on camera settings for the details.

I composed Carole against the green shutters. I put a small twig on the ground as her mark and gave her the direction to dance on the spot and clock the camera over her right shoulder. This kept the sunlight off her face. We had a lot of fun in the sun, and that's how a good shoot goes.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/2

Victoria used a ladder to get up into the niche on this house in Somerset, UK, before we removed it from the shot. I lit her with a barefaced Cactus Speedlight zoomed in to105mm and rigged high up on a stand to the right. The gold dress is by top Bristol designer, Molly Mishi May.

If you see an opportunity for a shot, take it. You will only regret the shots you don't take.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/2.5

Paris was chilly in April. This little Arc de Triomphe by the Louvre was just the right setting for Alicia. I used a long lens to minimise the distant background. It is essential to have good radio triggers for the flash that can cover the distance and go through solid stone. A pair of Cactus RF60s were rigged just out of shot on each side and all I had to do was wait for a gap in the stream of tourists. No one moved us on - perhaps we looked official.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/11

Margaux was lit here in Lausanne with a single barefaced Cactus Speedlight behind the pillar on the left of the shot. I placed her under the information sign because I liked the graphics, and perhaps also as a reference to cloud computing.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5

The lighting and the location are the same as in the previous shot. A gust of wind and a swing of the dress created this saucy moment. I was set up for the Hollywood lighting cheek look, where Margaux's nose shadow crosses her cheek shadow to enclose a triangle of light on the unlit side of her face.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 16-55mm • 21mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5.6

Every city has its creative modern architecture and Brugge is no exception. I lit Rosalinde, sitting on the window sill, with a single, barefaced Cactus Speedlight. The light is zoomed-in and aimed down to give a diagonal emphasis that echoes the balcony above left.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/8

I saw the reflections here and I instantly knew they would make a great background. That's the value of experience. The other important factor is that we were under a canopy which cut out the top light. I used a single Speedlight high and from the left of camera to light Margaux. All I had to do was show her how to do a half turn to get the dress flowing without falling over. I love the way the asymmetric hem strikes a wavy line.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/14

Paris has a modern business district and that's where I shot on this cold but sunny weekend in April. Alicia was standing in the shade and I added the sunlight with a Speedlight just out of shot on the left of the frame. The camera angle and visual perspective is on the limit in this shot but sometimes photographs work well when they play with perspective. What I mean by 'the limit' is that Alicia's feet look big and her head looks small by comparison. If I had taken a step back it would have helped with the perspective but the shot would have lost some of its impact.

"

I can't overemphasise how effectively shooting from below generates an empowering mood in a shot.

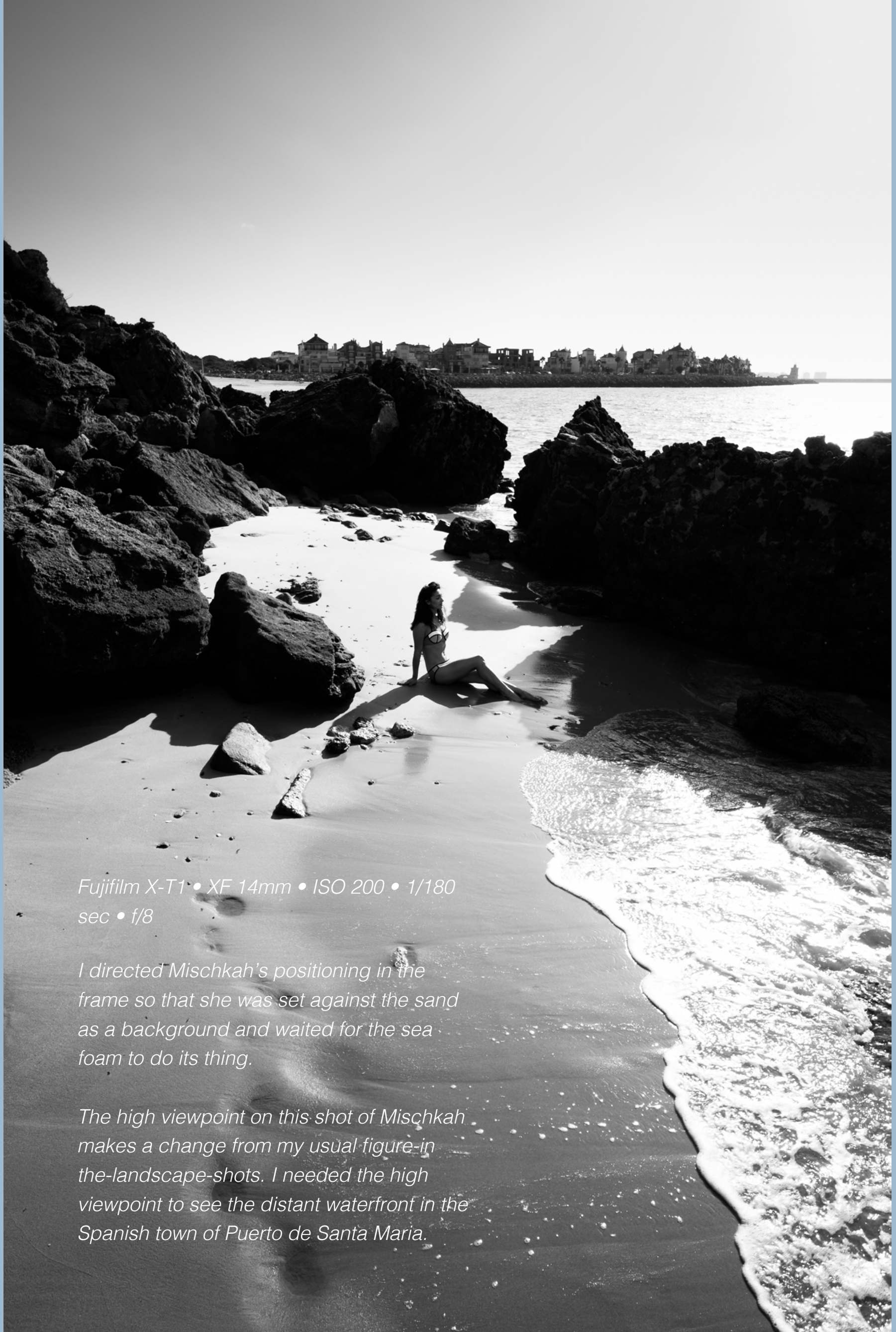
Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140mm • 52mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/13

Larissa is lit with a pair of symmetrical Speedlights. It's a classic Lovegrove two-flash setup that can make punchy, interesting pictures on any dull day.

The clay tiles work well as a colour pop on this 'shades of grey' building in Brugge. In 2016, northern mainland Europe is currently in a shades-of-grey phase. The cars are nearly all black, grey, silver, or white. Architects and home owners are really into their neutrals too.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 16mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/11

Alicia stands on a bridge over the Seine in Paris. The steel and concrete provide a great setting and the single barefaced Speedlight does the rest. I forced the composition and gave her a look out of the frame. If I had wanted Alicia to look to her left into the frame I'd have placed the flash to the right of camera instead. It's not until I have the shot worked out that I rig the light. It's easy to put it in the right place if there is a plan. I was careful to keep the separation between Alicia's shoulder and the bridge structure. A low viewpoint finished the look.



Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 14mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/8

I directed Mischkah's positioning in the frame so that she was set against the sand as a background and waited for the sea foam to do its thing.

The high viewpoint on this shot of Mischkah makes a change from my usual figure-in the-landscape-shots. I needed the high viewpoint to see the distant waterfront in the Spanish town of Puerto de Santa Maria.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 200 • 1/1000 sec • f/2.8

I took this dress to Arizona for a shot just like this. I've used it before in Spain but the sky was a really vivid blue here at 6000ft. There is very little yellow needed to counterpoint the blue. The red earth completes the colour triangle for pigment.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 18mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/8

I took Natalia to some dramatic rock formations in Southern Spain and worked with the complimentary colours of blue and yellow. I placed Natalia in the shade and lit her with a pair of Canon 580 Speedlights on a dual bracket. You can just make out the dual shadow on the ground. I could have Photoshopped that out but I chose to leave the image as shot. Natalia's dark hat works nicely against the light sand and her light legs are set against the rocky shadow.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 14mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/11

Claire is lit with an Elinchrom Quadra head with a deep dish reflector. This is two-point lighting but square to the camera. The sun was setting and the tide was coming in fast. The rock that Claire was on soon became submerged but we were on our way by then because it was beer o'clock!

Studio

The perfect studio

Does the perfect studio exist? I've not seen it yet if it does. Every shooting space has its limitations. These can be minor like too few mains sockets or mains sockets in the wrong places. Major issues include the studio being too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. I find these problems in converted warehouses without adequate insulation. Having pointed out some of the faults here are the benefits of a good studio; It is a safe and comfortable working environment that can be used at any hour of any day in any weather.

If you do not have a studio not to worry. You can hire a fully equipped studio or get yourself some lighting kit and a background support system and hire a village hall, school gym, scout hut or hotel meeting room. Any of these spaces can be set up with portable kit to become a portrait studio.

▲ *Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 60mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/9*

Arielle is standing 1½m in front of the green painted patch of wall on the East side of my studio. It's a patch I painted using 2 match pots from Wickes store costing £2.49 each. The area is about 1½m wide and 3m tall. The lighting is from one large soft box pointing straight down to the floor and hanging above and 1m in front of her. Just out of shot below the bottom of the frame is a triflector that I bought in the mid 1990s. It is the triflector that is pumping up the light under her chin and filling the shadows in the eye sockets. Having a classic one light set up that is easy to create and delivers 'beauty' style photographs is great for business if you are a professional portrait shooter.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/6.4*

The lighting in this shot is still the same set up with just one large soft box and a triflector. Moving the light and Vicki further from my 'Sea Foam' background makes the background appear darker.

Size matters

Sometimes the size of the shooting room in a studio will restrict the type of photography you can shoot in it. The obvious limitation is height. A converted spare room or a double garage can be too low and not deep enough to shoot full length portraits without seeing back lights in the top of the shot. That doesn't mean those locations won't make great head shot studios. Smaller spaces often deliver the best environments for photographing actors or musicians.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/8*

Chantelle's key light is a 42cm beauty dish with a shower cap rigged pointing straight down from above, and about 1m in front of her. I've set the light position to create the Hollywood cheek triangle where her nose shadow just touches her cheek shadow. I added a backlight too in order to create a bit of tonal separation between Chantelle and my grey wall.

The lighting contrast here is carefully controlled using my shadowless fill light. The back half of my studio, the complete area behind the camera, is lit with an old powerful studio flash head. I adjust the power as required to set the shadow depth in my images.

The close working environment can deliver pictures with a more intimate soulful character. Large spaces often seem less personal and are great for photographing inanimate objects like cars or products. However large studios can be broken up with multiple room sets to create several smaller shooting zones.

Ambient light

A great studio is a black box that has no extraneous light sources. The backgrounds, props and all the light in the studio is placed

there under full control. Even in a daylight studio we need to have window blinds that allow us total control of the light. When the photographic lights are turned off the studio is plunged into blackness. I have fitted Cat 5 fluorescent strip light fittings with daylight balanced tubes. The best tubes are those that are designed for SAD, seasonally affected disorder. I use T8 Active by GE, Sylvania, Osram or Philips. They are full spectrum, not expensive and deliver a superb daylight balanced light. I also have a little 20w spotlight onto the main shooting position so that the person I'm photographing can see me as we work together. It is very disconcerting having a voice coming at you from a black void, hence the spotlight.

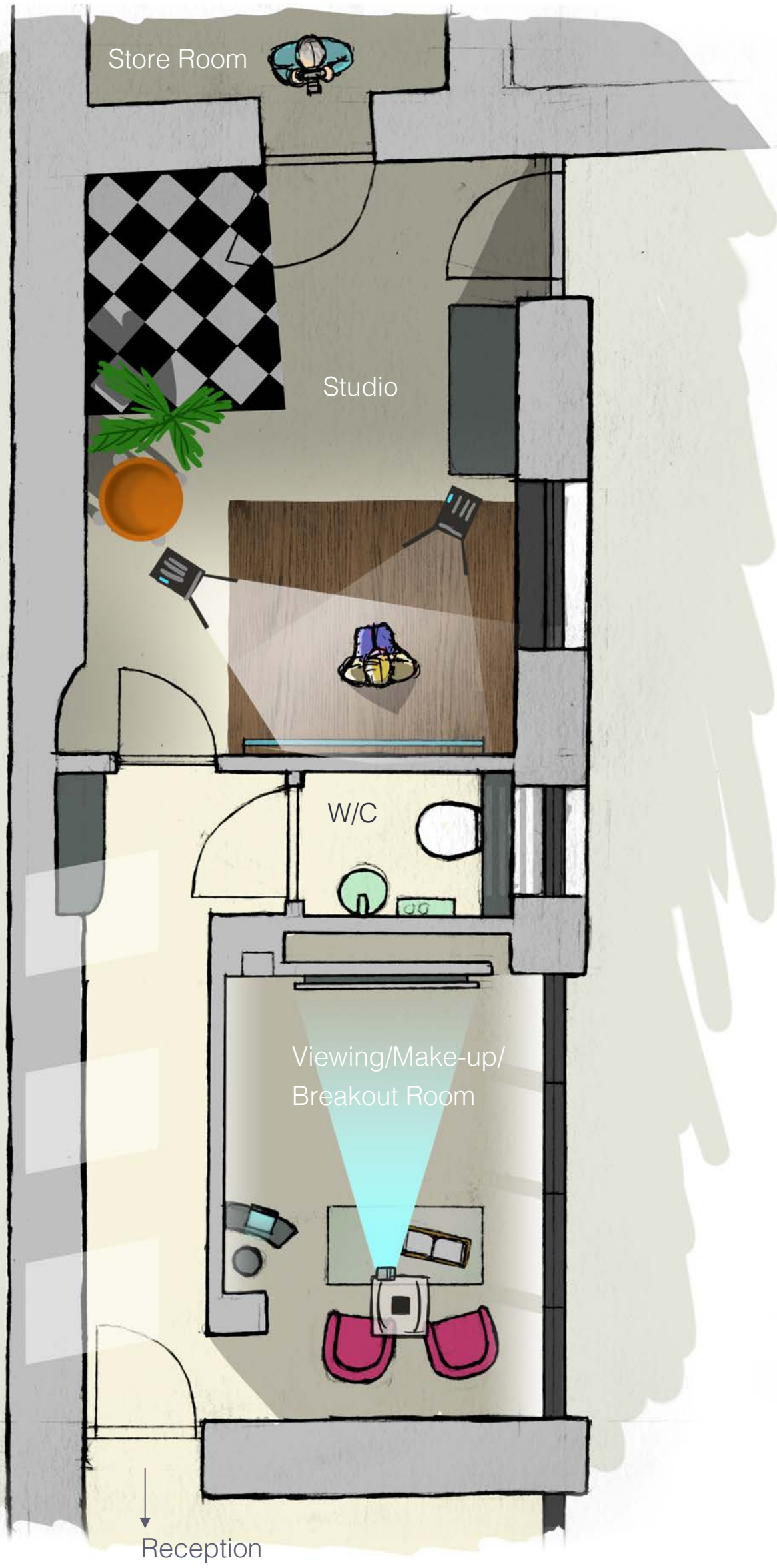
Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 50-140 • 59mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/5.6

I've included this simple shot of Lydia from behind to show the variety in my collections. I regularly shoot 40 to 60 different photographs in a studio session and these kind of images make great album shots.

Lighting was from one strip light soft box suspended directly above Lydia and a simple Tri-Flector below her to kick up some rim light onto her arms.

Zones

The Lovegrove studio has a reception area, a kitchen, a breakout room/viewing/ makeup room, a changing room with WC, a shooting room and a store room that I occasionally use to extend the shooting room.



This zone is primarily for clients.

This zone is for administration.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 2000 • 1/100 sec • f/4

This shot was taken in a cellar studio in Stuttgart. This was a Paris boudoir set and I lit Tiffany in it with a Lupo HMI 1200 and a Lupo 800 spotlight. I put the 1200 on a boom arm behind the curtains on the other side of the unglazed window, and shone it back into the studio to simulate the sun. (You can just make out the stand and it's castor wheel poking out behind the curtain tie back). The second spotlight was rigged from the right of shot to cheat some key light onto Tiffany and the light from the left of shot is a reflection of this cheated key light and is simulating the light coming from an imaginary East facing window. Study the shadows to learn the whole story. Look at the angle of Tiffany's leg shadows on the floor from the cheated key light. Also, spot the position of her head shadow on the right shoulder. When studying the shadows you can tell that they are not from the 'sunlight', but it doesn't look wrong in the final image. I think there is a touch too much of reflected key light from the left of the shot, but I'm not going to let that bother me.

HMI lights are a bygone technology in the smaller fixtures. Nowadays, I'd use the new ***Lupo LED 2000*** *as the sunlight and a Lupo LED 1000 as the key light. I could have worked this scene at ISO 800 hand held, or at ISO 200 using a monopod.*

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 90mm • ISO 200 • 1/100 sec • f/14

Carla wears the Chinese fighter pilot's helmet that I bought on Ebay and a vaguely military styled jacket from her collection. I directed the pose and the salute. Carla's look reminds me of a classic shot of fashion Icon and music legend Debbie Harry by Lynn Goldsmith, 1978. I recall that she was saluting the camera whilst wearing a Popeye T shirt and sailors hat.

Lighting for this shot was from a single 70cm octagonal soft box above and slightly to the right of the camera.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/9*

I like to combine hard and soft light sources in the studio to deliver a look that accentuates shape and texture. Leela has soft delicate glowing skin with clearly defined cheekbones. I used a soft key light with a bottom reflector and hard three quarter back lights. I also put a pool of light from a gridded beauty dish on the background to give some extra separation and depth.

Studio walls

In the real world light rattles around rooms. Even if there is only one window on one wall of a room, the light in that room comes from all angles as it gets reflected around. A white or brightly decorated room will give the most fill light to key light ratio. To recreate the same effect in the studio with a single soft box we need to use big reflectors or have white painted walls.

I’ve never had a white walled studio because

it is difficult to get clean, crisp, deep shadows when light is bouncing off just about every surface, and shadows are what we need to define shapes in photographs. With white painted walls, the only way to reduce the reflections and strengthen shadows is to use negative reflectors (matte black). The Paint on the back wall of my studio is a dark grey with the UK trade name Dulux Ice Storm2. It is as near a neutral as you can get with pigment and comes from their professional range for architects and designers. There are several paint bases available and I opted for one called Flat Matt. It has no vinyl and the finish is similar to the now very popular (in the UK) Farrow and Ball paint texture. Slightly powdery/chalky but ever so matt with no sheen or hot spots at all. This is not a wipe down paint like vinyl matt emulsion and as it is porous it allows the walls to breathe. This is useful if like me your studio is in a converted 17th century barn with slightly damp stone walls that are 1m thick.

A word of caution – if you cover your complete studio in Ice Storm2 paint it will look like a cave. The longer the studio the lighter you can go with the walls and still get a good black on an unlit background.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 49mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4*

This shot of Holly for corset designer Lisa Keating was lit with continuous light from 3 Lupo spotlights. A Lupo 1000 was on about 30% power and shining on the grey background studio wall through a Scattergel to break up the light. A Lupo 650 was at about 70% as a backlight and the key light was a Lupo 1000 with a 1/4 frost filter to give it a subtle diffusion. I bought the bird cage netting and lacy black body on Ebay. The lace fingerless gloves came from Claire's Accessories.

Dulux Grey Steel3 is a lighter shade and is perfect for studios with about 15m of length. You can light the correct shade of grey to make a white background or not light it and get a black background.

Other walls in the studio can have patches of a different shade or colour. If your shooting room is big enough you can be a bit more elaborate with sets.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2.2

I shot Wlada in Radmila Kerl's studio in Munich. I lit Wlada from the left through the leaves of a real palm tree. I had to place the palm pot on a chair to get it high enough. A second Lupo was added to light Wlada's back.

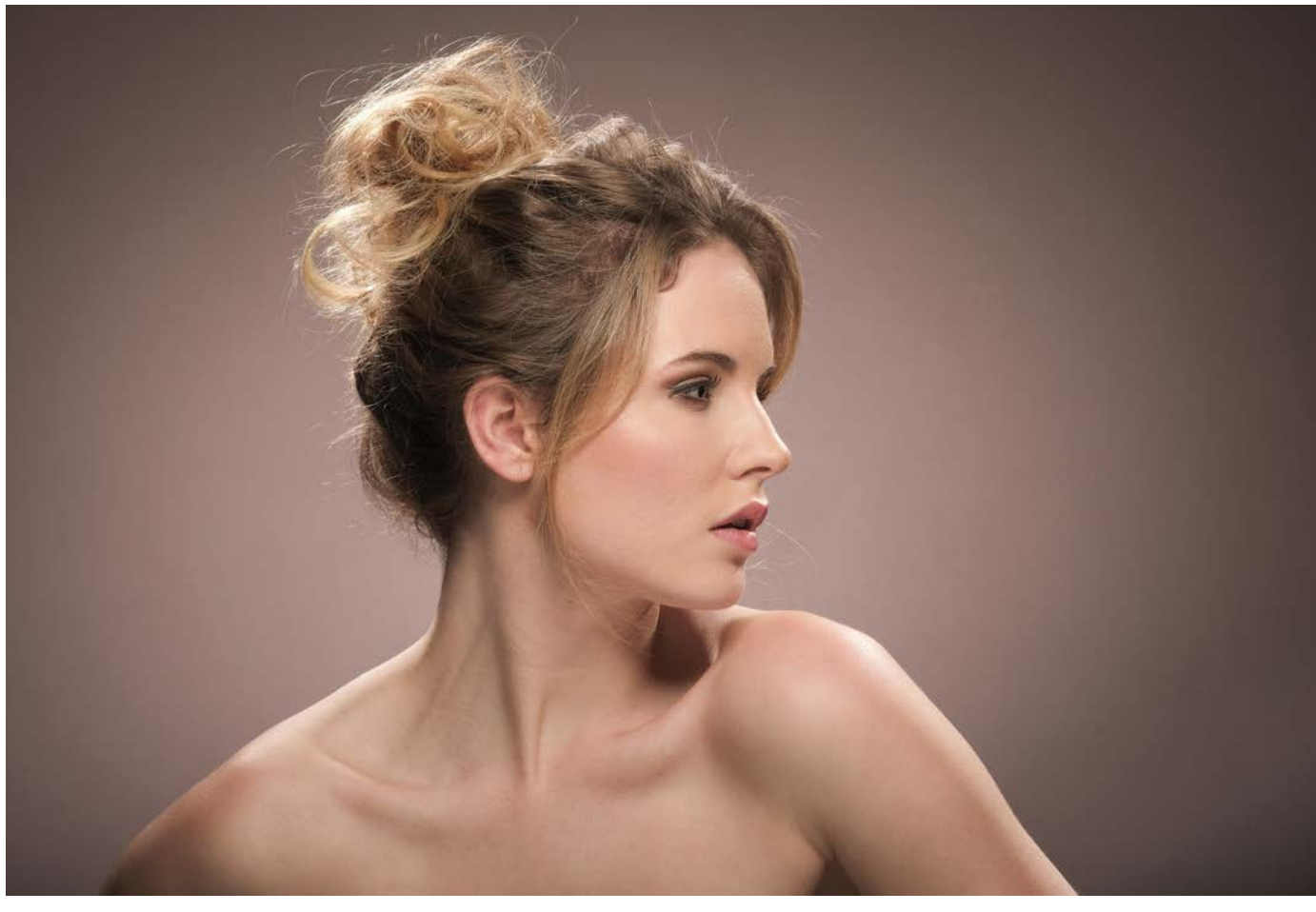
Wlada wears a dress designed and made by her father.

Fujifilm X-E2 • XF 60mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/2.4

Arielle was lit with a key light from the right of shot that was barn doored off her legs, and her legs were lit with a key light from the left. You can see how evenly the lights blended by following the transition from one to the other on her left arm. I often use this technique to light musicians with their instruments.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/11

*For this shot of Lydia I added a **LC20** gel from the **Lovegrove Studio Collection** to the background. This gave my grey studio walls the depth of colour needed to complement Lydia's skin tone.*



Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/10

Two strip lights rigged vertically on the left and right of the studio are perfect for pregnancy shots like this. I keep them inline or just behind my client so that the side of the person that faces the camera is black or as near black as I can get it.

With some strip light soft boxes rigged in front of the camera pointing into the subject but away from the background, it is hard to avoid flare. To combat this I use a black cloth draped over a boom arm on each side to block the direct light hitting the lens.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro2 •*
XF 18-55mm • 26mm •
ISO 1000 • 1/60 sec • f/4

I asked Lydia to tie a knot in her vest top and I gave her some 'Jackie O' shades I bought on Ebay, and a hat I bought in a street market in Rimini. Light was from a single Lupo 1000 spotlight through my plastic palm that I bought online. I bought a universal clamp so that I can attach the palm to a lighting stand. It's a simple and effective lighting gobo (short for go between). If it was a live plant it would be called a piece of dingle. I love these old film making terms that we used at the BBC.

Lighting support

Pantographs on rails is the ultimate solution to the studio lighting support conundrum. However they are expensive and you need a lot of height to get the necessary clearance. My rails are at 3.2m above the floor and the backlights are often still in the top corners of the shot. I suggest 4m is the perfect minimum height above the floor for the cross rails on a lighting support system. You will then need pantographs on the front rails that give at least a 3m extension because, when you use strip light fittings from the side, they are often used just above floor level. I prefer the pantographs

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 1000 • 1/250 sec • f/1.4

Here is another angle of this same lighting set up with a new pose. I love anonymity in a shot and I take quite a few especially if they form part of a collection or album. A viewer looking at the photograph feels less inhibited studying the detail, and there is a detachment that draws the viewer in - not in an impersonal way, but in more of an inquisitive way.

that use a spring balance system even though they need trimming when I change modifiers, because they are so easy to set to the perfect height. The back light pantographs will be fine with a 2m drop.

I also have a range of floor stands to hand too, including base plates for background or floor lights. I use the floor stands for flags and reflectors as well as lights.

Photographic light

My system for setting up studio lights regardless of whether they are flash or continuous is to set up one light at a time, switching off all the others while it is being set. Once the direction and hardness of each light is set, I will then switch them all on and adjust the lighting balance using the power controls on each head. The final stage is to control the contrast in the key areas of the picture with reflected light as necessary. I have an old Bowens Prolite 120 with an 18cm reflector aimed at the back wall of the studio behind the camera position. It just lifts the ambient level of light in the room without creating shadows as the whole studio wall becomes the light source. This light is my contrast control system. Just a splash of flash can lift the shadows to a level that is easy to print without killing the mood of the shot. No light meters are needed. You just need to use the screen on the camera, zoom in to 100% and scoot around. You can see exactly what information is in the shot, both in the highlights and the shadows. Once the contrast is set, just shoot and get creative.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4

My plastic palm was used to good effect here. I love working with flare in my images and I always create it in camera. Look how beautifully the Fujifilm X-T2 handles the transitions from burn out to detail, and how crisp and clean the flare is.

Lighting on Victoria is from a Lupo LED 1000 spotlight.

9

Lighting Equipment

Lighting without lights

Choosing to use wonderful ambient light for a shot is a perfectly valid lighting decision. I find there are times that I can be led by light; finding pockets of beautiful light where I can shoot. The background may not be important and can be put out of focus or left in the shadows. Of course there are many instances where wonderful ambient light just isn't there. I often find that the scene dictates the direction of shooting and subject placement. It is very rare to find optimal light in the right places in these situations. When the available light is poor or in the wrong place, I use my own light so that I don't have to compromise my vision, or the client's requirements for the picture.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 •
XF 35m • ISO 200 •
1/500 sec • f/1.8

I love using the 35mm lens in close to create fashion detail shots. By shooting from above, I managed to get the Margaux's sunglasses, eyelashes and collar sharp but with wonderful transitions into softness going on all around.

Continuous light

I use continuous light when I want to blend with ambient light for interior shoots. Flash can be too dominant in these situations and is more challenging because you can't see it until the shot's been taken. I use one main type of continuous light, the Fresnel spotlight, and it's the one I used for many years at the BBC. Back in the day, they were hot tungsten bulbs in a metal housing and came with a 'Spark' (an electrician with safety gloves) to rig and set the lights. Nowadays a Lupo Fresnel spotlight uses cool running LEDs in a lightweight composite housing. It can run off a mains supply or for several hours using a battery. The Lupo LED spotlights are light enough to rig without assistance and portable enough to take to any location.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/1.4*

I set Mischkah upon the stairs in this wonderful Cadiz town house, wearing a petticoat and organza top. I posed her right foot on a step above her left and asked her to tuck it behind. I like legs to finish at a point. It's a style trait that I use where I can. I was going to remove the box plant ornament but I decided that it echoed Mischkah's hair and I posed her arms to be the pot. It's quite random but I suppose that's where my ideas come from.

The lighting was from a single Lupo 1000 spotlight with an Alto Scattergel.

The benefits of working with continuous lighting

- **What you see is what you get.** It's fast to set a light when you can see what it is doing in real time. Subtle tweaks to the power or direction are easy and gives the photographer the sense of having complete control.
- **Great for video.** It's becoming rare to do a shoot now without some video element. Several cameras can be set up and capture the scene on video or stills from different angles simultaneously.
- **Easy to focus the camera.** Continuous lighting delivers a scene that is easy to shoot because the lighting is far brighter than modelling lamps in flash heads.
- **Creates the mood at the shoot that the scene depicts.** If a room is lit with a Lupo simulating sunlight everyone in the room enjoys the sunlight. It's like shooting on a sunny day and the feel good factor can be seen in the photographs. When the lights go off at the end of the shoot the mood drops and there is often an audible sigh from the team.
- **Great for selfies.** This may seem a bit light hearted but models on set are often shooting selfies. Hair stylists too get grab shots of their work on set and these look stunning in the working light. By the end of the shoot, many social media channels have been populated with fabulous pictures. The buzz of the moment is great for your brand, if indeed this is important to you.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 800 • 1/60 sec • f/2.8*

This shot would be nothing without the light from the Lupo 1000 Spotlight and Crunch Scattergel rigged at 90° to the camera. Alicia sits on the arm of a chair in a suite of Martin's Patershof boutique hotel in Mechelen, Belgium. There was so much detail in the room I decided to shoot tight against this wall to simplify the picture.

I bought the halter neck dress from Jane Norman and the shrug and cats eye 50's sunglasses from Ebay.

Other continuous lights that I occasionally use are small LED panels that fit in the hand and larger LED panels that can be rigged on stands. The softer the continuous light source, the harder it is to look towards the light without squinting. That's a factor that's worth bearing in mind. Spotlights are fine as you will see throughout this book.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 16mm • ISO 1000 • 1/30 sec • f/1.4

Carla calls the picture desk at Vogue from the foyer of the Manchester Hilton. Well maybe she's faking the call, but that was my direction at the time. The spotlights on the ceiling and their light patterns were motivation enough for me to add a Lupo 650 spotlight of my own to key light Carla.

I bought the dress from Zara and I love how it echoes the number pad on the telephone. The Jackie O glasses were from Primark.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/4*

Agata is under a Paris bridge over the Seine at night. She is lit with a Lupo 1000 spotlight on battery power. Rivets fascinate me and I love their endurance over centuries. The ambient light level was low here, but there was still enough coming back from the sodium lights to give a lift to the distant ironwork. Shiny black surfaces are a delight to shoot too. They give so much back in the form of specular reflection.

Fujifilm X100T • 23mm • ISO 1600 • 1/125 sec • f/2

I set up my Lupo 1000 on the patio outside the office window to light this detail of Vicki. I used a battery with the Lupo rather than run the lead through an open door because it was winter.

I think this would be great printed large and framed.

Flash

Flash is scary to use at the best of times because it takes experience to be able to predict what the resulting picture will look like. I'm lucky enough to have 20 years experience of working with flash of all shapes and sizes, yet I am still occasionally surprised by my test shots. I have to think through the exposure elements just like everyone else - there's no shortcut for this process.

The more complicated the tech in the flash, the more likely it is to drive the look of a shot.

Fujifilm X-100 • 23mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/11

Carla is in the ladies toilet at the Cloud 23 cocktail bar in the Manchester Hilton. I popped a Canon 580EX2 on the hot shoe of my little X-100 and set it to manual flash at 1/2 power. I adjusted the lens aperture to taste. Thankfully there was no-one in the cubicles at the time.

I love the way the light bounces off the shine surfaces. Don't try this with TTL because the kick back of flash will cut it off early and you'll get a really dark picture. One that any amount of FEC (Flash Exposure Compensation) can't put right.

All flash sources are small, from the size of a match in a Speedlight to the size of a small roll of Sellotape in a studio flash head. It's the electronics and power supply that add the bulk and weight.

On location it is far better to use Speedlights or flash heads that are separate from their power supplies. Having a cable to link the battery pack to the flash head makes the flash far lighter and suitable for rigging on a boom arm or high on a stand. The heavy all in one battery powered flash heads have very limited uses, apart from the obvious point at the subject and shoot.

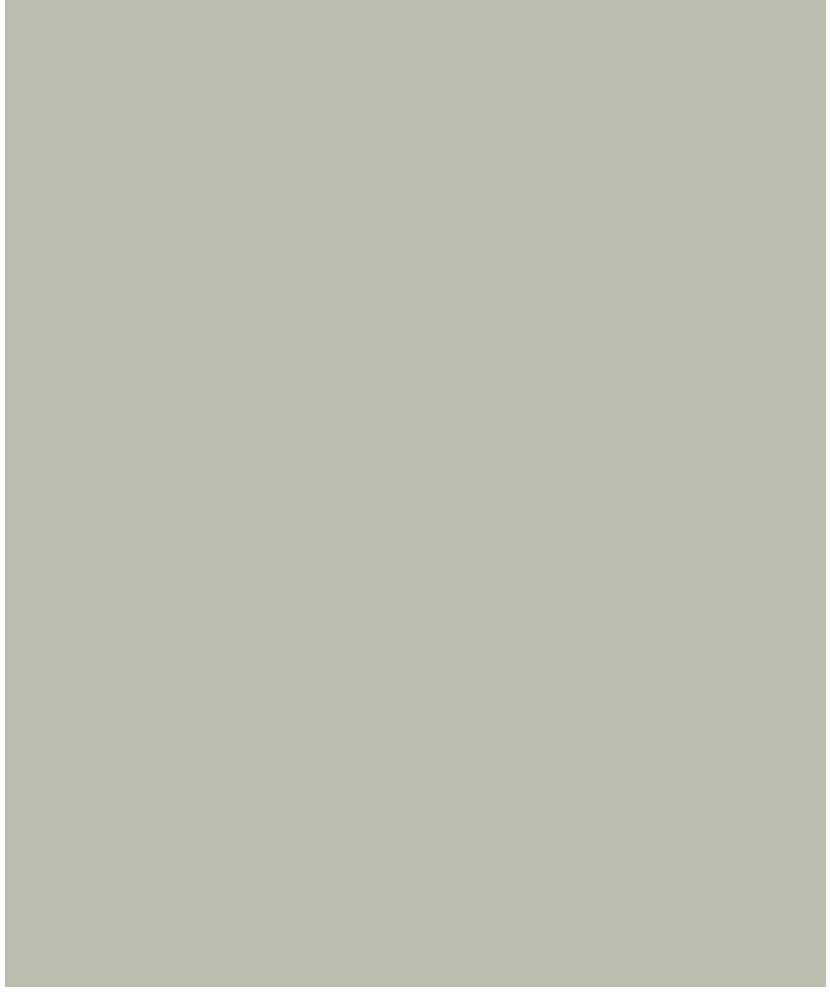
Understand that TTL and HSS are fads that will pass. TTL works fine for flash on camera or close to the lens axis, but it becomes inconsistent when the lighting becomes creative. HSS allows a faster shutter speed than the flash sync speed but it loses at least half it's power, or one stop of flash to ambient mix in doing so. By using the regular sync speed and an ND filter you can get the benefit of the complete flash pulse and use a wide open lens aperture.

You will always get a more powerful flash to daylight ratio

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 56mm • ISO 400 • 1/180 sec • f/1.2

Rosalinde was lit with a Cactus RF60 Speedlight hanging from a boom arm above and to the right of camera. The water in Hamburg was beautifully lively and sunlit. I used a Hoya ND1000 (9 stops) to get from f/16 to f/1.2 and had to pop the ISO up to 400 to trim the exposure.

It's okay to trim the exposure with the ISO if you haven't got the exact ND filters required for the shot. Using HSS (High Speed Sync) would have given about one stop less flash exposure so the water would have been considerably brighter.



by using normal sync than you ever will with hyper sync, power sync, super sync or mega sync etc. Don't be sucked in by the hype. Stick to simple manual flash systems because they work consistently and without ever having to read the manual. All the flashed location shots in this book were shot using either manual speedlights, mostly the Cactus RF60 or an Elinchrom Quadra. The power of the Cactus overlaps with that of the Quadra so these are the only flashes I need. All the flashed studio shots in this book were taken with manual flash systems. Manual flash systems are easy to use and they always work. If you want a bit more light out of your flash you simply turn it up. If it's already on full power you get a bigger flash. Nothing could be easier.

The benefits of working with flash lighting

- **Lots of power.** Having a pulse of very bright light
- **Battery powered.** These take anywhere compact light sources can work wirelessly from deserts to bathrooms. I mention bathrooms because mains powered lighting is a no-no near water.
- **Modifiers galore.** There is a complete industry on making bits and bobs for flashes of all shapes and sizes.
- **Soft light without squinting.** A flash in a soft box can deliver a pulse of soft key light without the person squinting. Large soft continuous sources are horrible to look towards and the resulting shots suffer as a result. Put a flash in a soft box and you get a useful amount of light to use.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 35mm • ISO 400 • 1/125th sec • f/3.2

Gabrielle was at the entrance to an ammunitions depot in a fort in Singapore. I set up a bare Speedlight at the top of the steps behind the concrete wall to the left of the shot. Gabrielle and I planned and practiced the movement required to give a swish to the dress, whilst creating the Hollywood cheek triangle of light. The 90° between light source and camera is a look I love and use regularly.

The Speedlight was attached to a simple stand with a Lovegrove Flash Bracket and was triggered with cheap Ebay radio triggers that simply work through walls and reinforced concrete.

Flash will always have a place in my kit and, although continuous light is becoming far more popular these days, it's a case of using the right light for the job. If I want to create a soft key light for an interior portrait I'll often use a flash in a soft box with a grid. I occasionally mix this with continuous spotlights and the ambient light in the room. If I want to shoot outside on an overcast day and make my own light it will always come from a flash of some kind. Ancillary lightning of any kind in full sun comes from my flash systems too.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/16

The exposure settings that I used for this shot are the absolute limit. Minimum aperture, maximum flash sync speed and minimum ISO. The couple of Cactus speedlights I had rigged were on full power and fully zoomed in too. I really needed an ND filter to allow me to open the iris a bit. f/8 would have been perfect and a x4 or 2 stop ND would have been spot on.

We were shooting on the river bank area in Paris and I asked Alicia to climb up the wall and hang onto the mooring ring. "With one hand?" She asked. "That's the spirit" I said. A month or so later this place was completely submerged with the Spring floods of 2016.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 55mm • ISO 200 • 1/125 sec • f/4

By mixing light modifiers I was able to create this fashion styled portrait of Carla in daylight on the streets of Manchester. I used an Elinchrom Quadra in a Lastolite Ezybox with grid as the key light. I then rigged a pair of Speedlights as kick lights just out of shot to the left and right. These were fitted with blue/green gels to give the dramatic look. A ¼ strength Tiffen Black Pro Mist filter picked up the backlights and lifted the shadows.

Reflectors

I rarely use reflectors but they are great for moving light around. It takes practice and training to get good with reflectors. I have spent time with expert Fujifilm X photographer Tom Museeuw learning how he uses Sunbounce reflectors to produce wonderful soft lighting results for commercial fashion shoots. He's a true reflector ninja.

I have three Sunbounce reflectors that I use on location and an original Triflector that I use in the studio. The Sunbounce reflectors can pump sunlight into a house from out in the garden or can be used with a double bounce to get light around obstacles. I only use Silver/ White reflectors. I find the zebra, warm up or gold reflectors add an unnatural look to my images. If I want to warm up a shot I'll do it in Lightroom.

Size matters when it comes to reflectors. If you want to light someone completely who is standing up you will need a reflector at least the same height as them. If you want to shoot a head shot you can use a smaller reflector. A patch of reflected sunlight is about the same size as the reflector. Do you remember creating traveling dots in the classroom at school with your watch or ruler? The principles are the same with big reflectors too.

The benefits of working with reflectors

- **Pump light around corners.** It is easy to move light on location with a reflector.
- **Green and free to use.** Not needing a power source is handy when shooting on location and it saves the planet too.

The drawbacks of working with reflectors

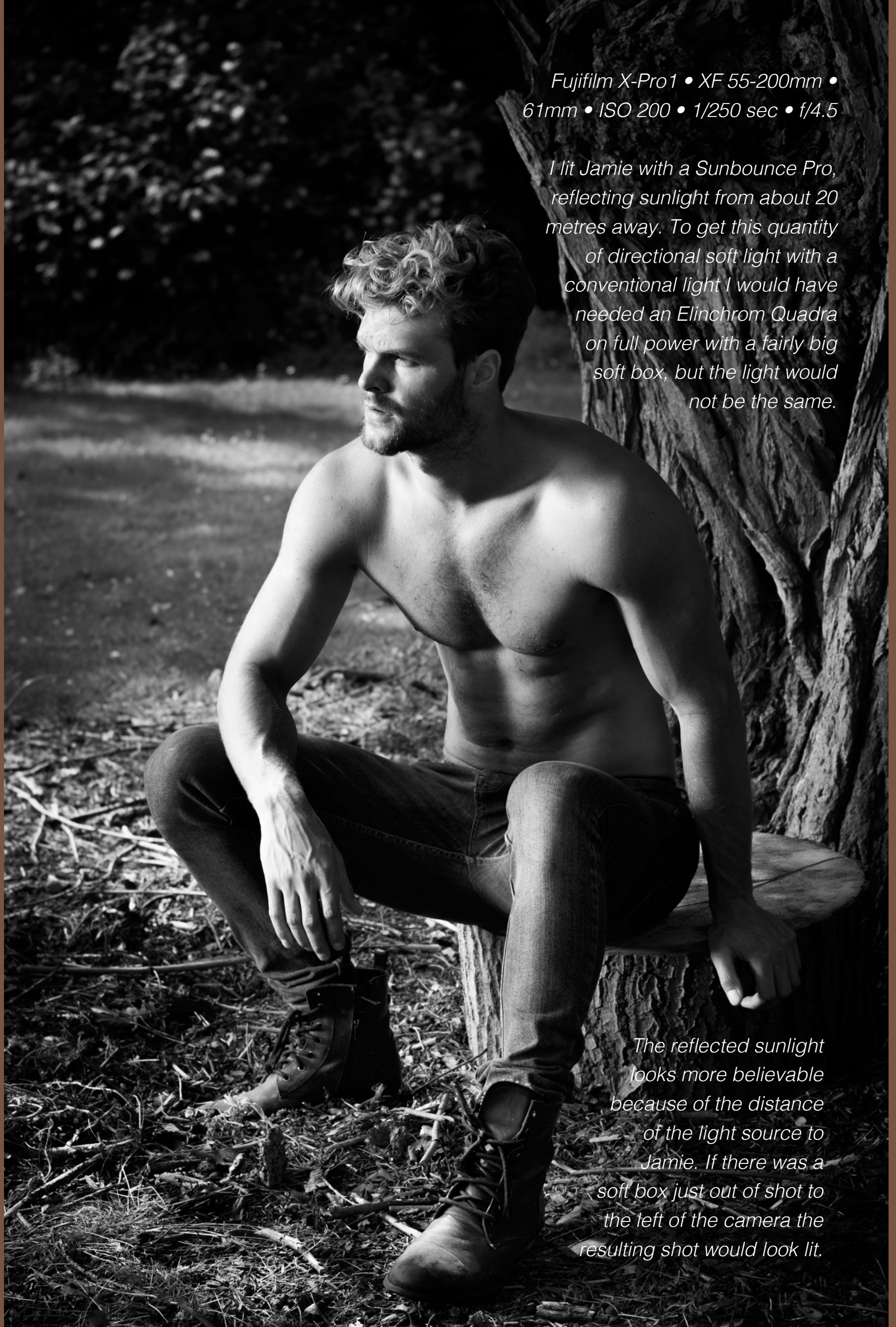
- **You can only reflect the light that is landing on the reflector.** I know it sounds obvious but I've seen people try to fill shadows with an unlit reflector.
- **Reflected sunlight is blinding.** When reflected sunlight is used as a key light it causes the model or client to squint. Feathering the light is a must in those situations.
- **Reflectors need effort.** There is just as much setting up and rigging with a reflector as there is with a lamp or flash unit.
- **Heavy stands and weights are needed.** When reflectors are used outside, the stands they are rigged on need to be strong and weighted down with sand bags to cope with wind forces.
- **Disk reflectors loose their shape.** A subtle twist in a disk reflector will distort the reflected light into a randomly changing shape.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 50-140mm • 140mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/2.8

This shot of Rosalinde by a hut on the sea front in Ostend was lit with a pair of Sunbounce reflectors. The sky was flat and grey and there was very little light getting under Rosalinde's hat until the reflectors were brought into play. The shot relies on the subtle focus separation created by the f/2.8 setting on the lens.

▲ *Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 18-55mm • 55mm • ISO 400 • 1/250 sec • f/3.5*

Jamie was under a tree on the shaded side of a house. I moved the sunlight with a Sunbounce Pro reflector from a distance of about 30 metres and used it as a backlight. I then used a second reflector to pop some light in from beside the camera. Jamie had cocoa butter on his skin, and then I added some dirt for good measure.



Fujifilm X-Pro1 • XF 55-200mm • 61mm • ISO 200 • 1/250 sec • f/4.5

I lit Jamie with a Sunbounce Pro, reflecting sunlight from about 20 metres away. To get this quantity of directional soft light with a conventional light I would have needed an Elinchrom Quadra on full power with a fairly big soft box, but the light would not be the same.

The reflected sunlight looks more believable because of the distance of the light source to Jamie. If there was a soft box just out of shot to the left of the camera the resulting shot would look lit.

Lovegrove Flash Bracket

The Lovegrove Flash Bracket is at the heart of my kit. The key to it's versatility is it can be mounted horizontally to allow greater flexibility, this is especially useful when using optical triggered flashes like the Fujifilm EF-X500. The all metal body with a high grade insulated cold shoe make this a great choice to support and accurately position expensive Speedlights.

Cactus V6 II & RF60

The Cactus V6, V6 mk2 and RF60 Speedlight is my system of choice. I love being able to control both the manual power and the zoom function of the Cactus RF60 remotely. The clear display on the V6 or V6 mk2 transceivers show the flash power for each of the four groups. Both transceivers have an excellent range while the V6 mk2 works with HSS and Powersync too.

Lupo 1000

The Lupo LED Spotlights are at the heart of my shooting system. I've grown up on imagery created with hard lighting and I love how easy it is to make people look fabulous. On the odd times that I want a softer light I use a sheet of frost gel attached to the barn doors. These lights run cool and can be battery powered.

Workflow

Workflow

Digital capture has given portrait photographers many workflow options, and the process of establishing what works for you can be complicated. I will highlight the key elements here so that you can make some informed decisions about your system of working. One thing is for sure, you have to embrace changes along the way. I shot my first commissioned portrait in 1992 for the actor O.J. Lynch. Even though we shot 24 years ago, we still had time to meet up recently at a theatre in Hamburg, where he is working. Since shooting my first commission I have shot many thousands of portraits, and in that time my workflow has continued to change, almost weekly. As previously mentioned, all the photographs in this book were shot in the last five years using Fujifilm X cameras, and my workflow in that time has evolved dramatically. I currently use Adobe Lightroom 2015 as part of the Creative Cloud suite and it is the latest version, even though we are over half way through 2016, as I write. Learning how to use a programme like Lightroom can be a daunting task, but fortunately there is a wealth of information available in video form, like this video I created last year.

The 6 stages of Creating Portraits

1. CAPTURE

- Kit selection
- Planning
- Lighting
- Emotion
- Capture

2. IMPORT AND SELECT

- Working drive
- File selection
- File naming
- Backup

3. IMAGE DATA MANAGEMENT

- Ratings
- Key words
- Collections

4. DEVELOP

- Film simulation
- Slider settings
- Crop
- Tidy
- Variations

5. EXPORT

- Compression
- Colour space

6. ARCHIVE

- Local drives
- Cloud storage
- Backup

1. Capture

Have the end in mind. If you know what the portraits are going to be used for, it will make the decisions at the capture stage easier.

Case Study 1

A family album of 40 portraits taken at the client's home. You will need to shoot 50 or so set ups, and perhaps up to four frames of each one. This kind of shoot is a classic formula for me and one that I have used for over 400 pre wedding shoots and countless family album shoots. The shoot can be done in about an hour and a half, and the set can be whittled down to about 60 frames to edit and show the customer.

Tip: Never show the customer more than twice the number of shots you want them to buy; just show the best photographs and leave them wanting them all.

Perfect lens choice: XF50-140mm f/2.8 OIS
Camera settings: Auto ISO with base shutter speed of 1/125th second, f/2.8, hand held
Lighting: Clever use of natural light

Case Study 2

A location portrait session of a local sports personality at their home for a lifestyle magazine. You will need to shoot a cover image, so think vertical. Shoot for a double page spread too, so keep your sports star either completely in the left half or the right half, to keep out of the fold. Leave the empty half uncluttered, perhaps out of focus, dark or bright in order to leave room for text. You will need to shoot a tight head shot for the contents page and a profile shot too. There may be a stylist on the shoot, so take a tripod. Set up your frame and let them dress the scene knowing exactly what is in the frame.

Tip: Shoot a few bursts of close up video at a high frame rate to provide a slo-mo clip for your client to use on social media. (You will get booked again if you exceed their expectations). Expect the shoot to take two hours and to have a selection of 10 shots to edit.

Perfect lens choice: XF35mm f/1.4 and 56mm f/1.2
Camera settings: ISO 200, f/2, manual exposure, tripod
Lighting: Continuous lighting

Case Study 3

A personal project to photograph the people that serve the community in your town. A one month project, photographing 25 people each week in their environment. The final photographs to be printed, framed and put in an exhibition at the local library. The project is to be funded by the arts council.

Perfect lens choice: XF23mm or X-100 series camera
Camera settings: Auto ISO with base shutter speed of 1/125th second, f/2.8, hand held
Lighting: Clever use of available light

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • 18-55mm • 18mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/3.2

Don't be afraid of white. There are little triangles that light up above the histogram in Adobe Lightroom to warn you that your image contains absolute black or absolute white. Some technical photographers put too much emphasis on the white point for my liking, and fail to make whites shine brightly. There's nothing worse than seeing white clothes, sheets or curtains looking grey.

Fujifilm X-Pro1 • 55-200mm • 90mm • ISO 1600 • 1/60 sec • f/3.9

One of the key aspects of achieving great print quality is exposing the image correctly in camera. I use the jpeg settings to set the LCD and EVF image to show me exactly what detail I have in the highlights and shadows. There is no advantage exposing for one or the other; it's far better to expose for both the highlights and shadows.

This shot of Gabrielle in Singapore shows the detail in the white dress and also the deep shadows of the riveted door, without compromise on each. The last thing you want to do with an scene like this is to have to lift the shadows in post production. I'd rather let some of the whites bleach than pull up shadow noise because the dress needs to be a white dress and not a grey dress.

Gabrielle is in the entrance porch to a gate house and is lit with natural light from a distant open door, therefore forming a classic two point lighting set up. It's a look I call tunnel lighting, that brings some interesting light to an otherwise flat grey day.

2. Import

Download the SD card to an external SSD (Solid State Drive) to be used as your working drive. Keep the computer internal SSD or HDD free for the operating system and editing applications. The files need to be in a well structured file system on the working drive.

SSD Root Directory: Portraits > Client Name > Client Name Raws

You can separate the raw files from the jpegs on the camera SD card by viewing the folder window in list mode, sorting by file type then selecting just the raws and copy them into the correct folder.

Once the files are in the relevant folder, import them into Lightroom or Capture One, or whatever editing platform you are going to use. You can import directly into Lightroom but I have found there is more room for error that way. If you have a lot of pictures, (over a thousand or so) you might want to use a fast selection app like Photo Mechanic as your initial step. It can save hours of faffing when you are selecting and renaming big groups of pictures. Don't rename your pictures until you have made your final selection. I select my 'keepers' using Lightroom's pick and unpick system. You can use whatever works best for you. Then use a good naming convention like John Smith Portrait 01.RAF to John Smith Portrait 60.RAF to rename just the files you have picked as keepers. At this stage you can move the RAW files that have not been renamed (your unselected set) into a folder called 'unused raw files' in the same client folder if you wish. I just delete them. Then re synchronise the folder in your editing program and it will delete any unwanted previews etc.

You now have three copies of every photograph spread over two devices. You have the camera jpegs and camera raw files on the SD card, and you have the selected and renamed raw files on the SSD. Backup the SSD set to the cloud. I use Google Drive and Dropbox. You can use whatever system suits you best. Once backed up, you can format the SD card in the camera ready for the next job. Always aim to keep two copies of the photographs you shoot. There is no need to backup the unwanted raw files.

Fujifilm X-Pro2 • XF 56mm • ISO 800 • 1/125 sec • f/3.2

One important aspect of portrait photography is the creation of natural skin tones. We hear all the time how good the colours are with the Fujifilm sensor and processor combination. The colours do look fabulous straight out of the box, but only with the right contrast tone. Classic Chrome (CC) has too much shadow crushing and dulls skin, Standard (Provia) has a higher contrast and rich saturation, but I prefer the calm and beautiful Pro negative standard contrast (Ns in camera and Pro Neg S in Lightroom). I never use auto white balance either. I prefer to use one of the factory presets; sunny day, cloudy day, tungsten or the Kelvin custom settings. Get these elements right and you can have sublime portrait skin tone colours.

I shot this frame of Victoria 20 metres into a room and lit her with the light from one window.

3. Image Data Management

Your next task is to tag the ‘keepers’ with metadata. They will already have your copyright information if you have set up your editing application import process correctly. They will also have the date, time, exif data, client name and job title (in the file name). All you need to add to the metadata are the extras like genre (child portrait, pregnancy shoot or commercial portrait etc), location (e.g. London, England, United Kingdom) and perhaps usage rights, (not for web use, free to use for portfolio, model released etc). You can usually enter the text once, and copy it across the complete set in one go. I then whizz through the collection, star rating the images between 3 and 5, 3 being good, the 4s are great, and anything 5 is amazing. I’ll explain why I do this in section 6: Archive, later.

Once these processes are complete you will have your final selection of photographs that have been renamed, tagged, and star rated. There will also be a back up on the cloud should you need it.

Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 50-140mm • 50mm • ISO 320 • 1/400 sec • f/2.8

I used Acros without a colour filter for this shot of Arielle without any makeup. When I shoot portraits in monochrome, I’m often looking at the lip colour and skin tone. With the Acros G (green filter) film simulation, Arielle’s lips would darken and so would her freckles. I felt I wanted a baby soft skin tone so I opted for the regular Acros setting in camera and in Lightroom.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 500 • 1/250 sec • f/4*

Arielle leans on a Rat Rod fitted with a big bore Chevy block and Holly carburettors.

I chose to shoot in Acros film simulation because it has a lovely feel with its subtle grain structure and well distributed mid tones. You can set the white point and the shadow point exactly the same in various monochrome film profiles, but the mid tone contrast and colour mix vary between them. My advice is to try out each film simulation in turn until you really get to understand its characteristic look.

▲ *Fujifilm X-T2 • XF 35mm • ISO 500 • 1/250 sec • f/2*

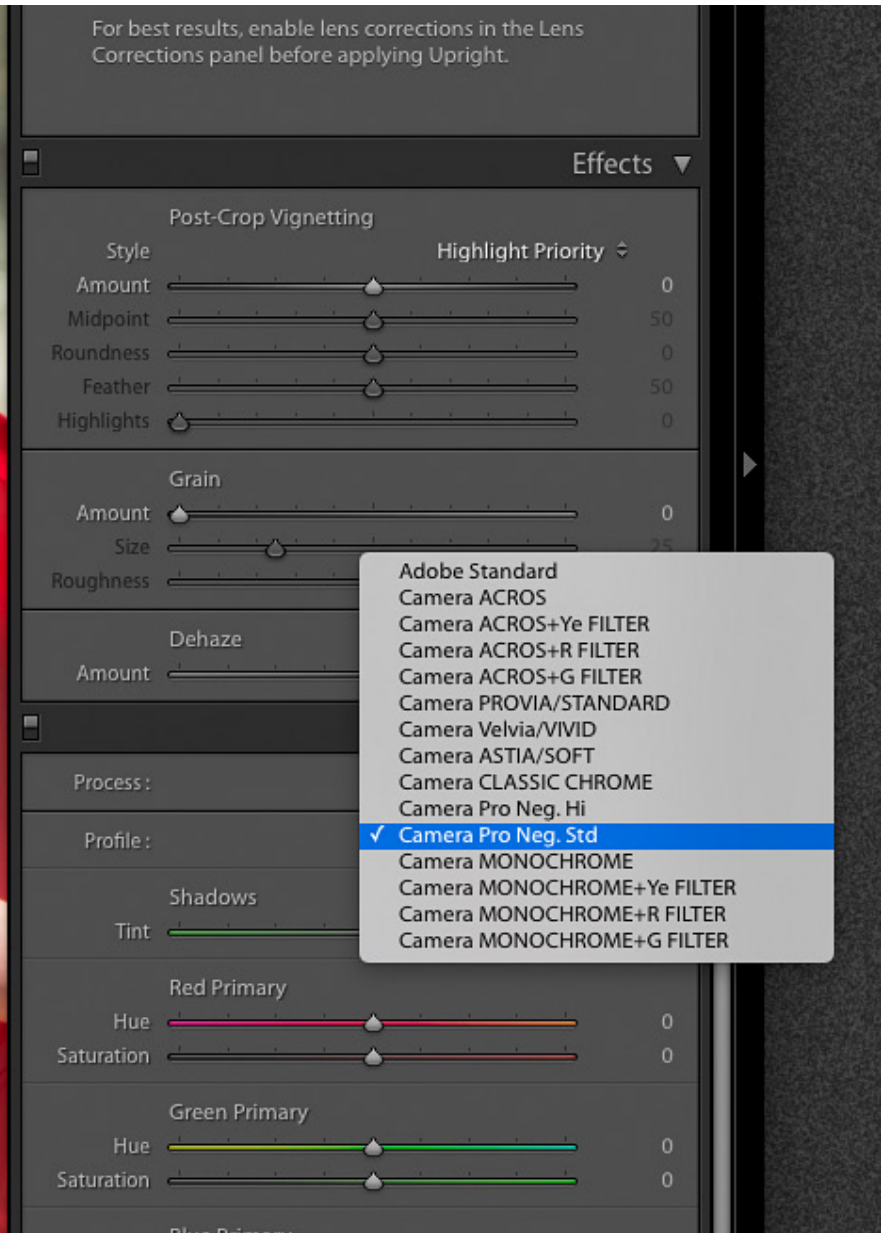
Chantelle is in the driving seat of a $30,000 fully restored bit of American automotive history. The shot was taken in a classic car showroom on the old Route 66 in Kingman, Arizona.

The decision to shoot in monochrome was easy because the windscreen of this car has a strong green tint and getting Chantelle's skin tone right would have been a real challenge. Unless the colours enhance a picture, I simplify it with monochrome. I used the Acros G film simulation to lighten Chantelle and darken her lips.

4. Develop

Basic settings: The develop stage is where the fun happens in post production. If you have got the look almost right in camera, it should be quite straightforward to assign the same film profile to the image and then subtly tweak the top slider set of Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Whites and Blacks according to your style.

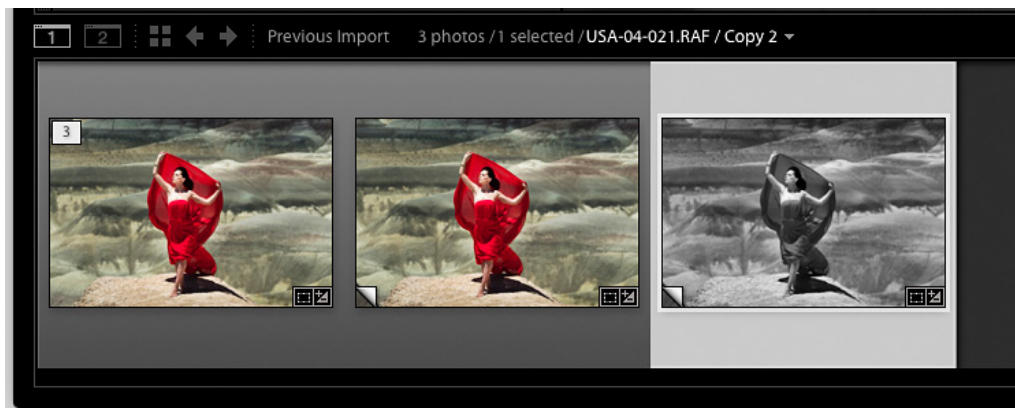
Whatever you do, learn the characteristics of each of the film simulations in the Lightroom Camera Calibration panel. Take a correctly exposed raw file from your camera that represents the style of photography you are researching optimum settings for. Set the Camera Calibration in Lightroom to **Camera Pro Neg. Std.** and adjust the top sliders to achieve a good representation of the scene, being careful to hold the detail in the shadows and the highlights. Then create a virtual copy and switch to a different film profile in the Camera Calibration settings panel. Adjust the



sliders again to optimise the file. Repeat this process, creating new virtual copies of the original file for each of the film simulations in turn. Study the results and you will soon be an expert. It's surprising that many professional photographers using Lightroom have not discovered the Camera Calibration panel and are struggling to get great skin tones because they are still on the default Adobe Standard profile.

Tip: Once you have the best combination of film simulation, noise reduction and sharpness for your camera you can set it as a default. Press the alt or option key to change the **Reset** button at the bottom of the the develop panel to a **'Set as default'** button. Click and relax.

Crop, Transform, Clone, Heal, Gradients, Brushes and Radial tonal adjustments: Once I have my set of pictures renamed with the correct colour, contrast and exposures, I run through the set once more, tidying and refining the images. I want to finish all the global and spot tonal adjustments before I create any variations like monochrome versions etc. This part of the process is where it is easy to add style and enhance the lighting design.



Variations: If you want to make duplicates of some of your pictures and convert them to black and white, reduce the contrast or add presets, create Virtual Copies of the pictures and tweak them as required. If you want to make black and white copies of the complete set follow these steps:

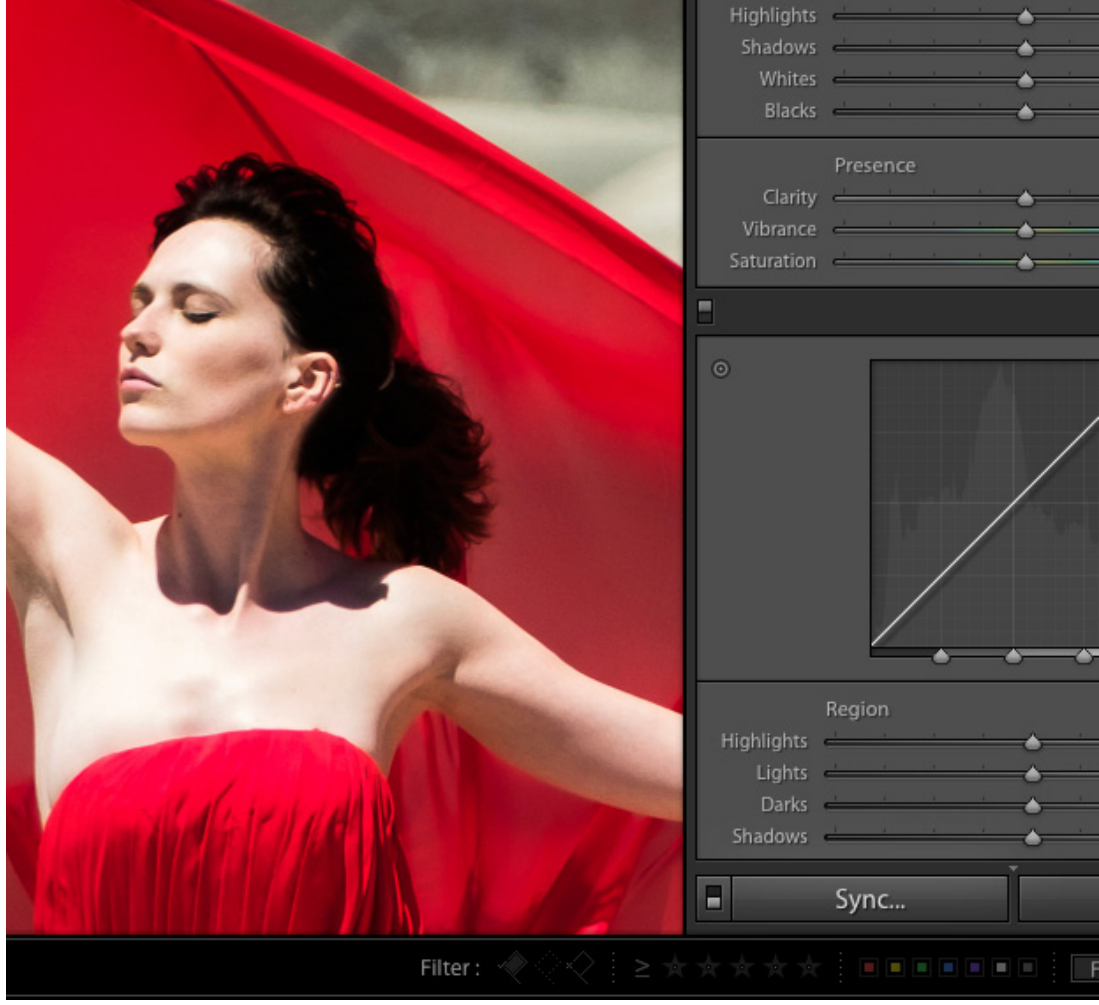
1. Select all the pictures for duplicating using cmd + a
2. Switch to Library module and choose Grid View
3. Create Virtual Copies using cmd + '
4. Switch to Develop module keeping all the selections active
5. Set the Film Simulation to Camera Acros or Camera Monochrome as required

6. Sync Calibration

7. Keep the selection and run through the pictures in turn, fine adjusting the shots as required

8. Deselect all

When Virtual Copies are exported they are given a unique file name with reference to the original file by adding a -2 suffix eg: Lovegrove 02-2.jpg



5. Export

Once I have finished the editing and created the variations that I want, I export four sets of images to the same parent folder as the Raw files.

- **High Res Jpegs:** These are full size jpegs at full quality. They have all the metadata, are in the sRGB colour space and sharpened for screen.
- **High Res Tiffs:** These are full size in Adobe RGB but saved at 8 bits as uncompressed tiff files sharpened for gloss paper.
- **Social Media Set:** These are resized to fit 1000 pixels by 1000 pixels and have all metadata stripped. They're saved at quality 60 with an untagged sRGB profile.
- **Blog Stomp set:** These are created if the shoot is to be blogged. I don't blog client work, just workshop pictures, and I blog them on Prophotonut. My clients enjoy privacy. Once I've blogged the shoot I'll trash this folder and its contents. My Blog Stomp settings are 1500 pixels high by 740 pixels wide jpegs at full quality, sRGB and sharpened for screen.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 23mm • ISO 800 • 1/250 sec • f/2.8

This tableau shot from an editorial shoot was set up very quickly. I had one minute to take it so I made sure I directed each model into place and into character. My experience with shooting groups at weddings comes in handy when faced with this kind of task. I had a vintage car, it was raining and I had four models, so it was 2 in the front and two in the back. I directed the 'driver' to lean forward over the wheel and to give me a glancing look. I then directed the front passenger to use the pillar of the car as a prop and to give me a strong arresting look. My attention turned to the girl in the far back. I asked her to slide forward on the seat and look at me from the side to create an element of mystery. Finally I asked the girl in the front to cross her legs, lean forward and flirt with the camera. I then reconnected with each model before capturing the shot.

The lighting was created when I opened the car doors. I added a gradient in Lightroom to even out the exposure from top to bottom.

Every picture I've ever taken could have been better. In this shot I should have asked the girl in the passenger seat to cross her left leg over the right because this look has too much thigh. The important lesson is to accept your work, don't beat yourself up, but do strive to improve. Things only get better through continued motivation and inspiration, because that in turn gives you the will to get out there and shoot.

6. Archive

Once all the exports are complete, the client folder contains the following; raw files (plus xmps), high res tiffs, high res jpegs and social media set. These are then copied to an external 8 TB HDD running from one of our office machines via a Thunderbolt connection. Once this has copied over and been verified, the SD cards from the shoot can be formatted.

I then choose the 4 and 5 star rated tiffs and copy them to a year folder on my Archive SSD. This drive has all the best images that I've ever taken digitally from 2004 until present day in 8 bit tiff format. They are all keyworded, and make a valuable resource for compiling collections for projects like this book for instance. The Archive SSD has now got over 7,000 photographs in uncompressed tiff format and it has its own Lightroom catalog too. That drive can plug into any computer, has no moving parts, is tiny and can travel with me anywhere. I have protected it with a password in case I should loose it, but essentially it is the key to my photography collection. I can search for images by lens, by client, by genre, by date, by keyword or by location. The Archive SSD is backed up on the cloud. I have just two SSDs; they are both Samsung 500 GB drives, one is a working drive and the other an Archive or 'best of' drive.

Good systems deliver peace of mind and an efficient workflow and is therefore super important.

Two final notes:

1. You are nearing the end of this book and I want to draw attention to a few style traits in the images. I have not shot any photograph with the camera on a tilt. There are no effects, no VSCO fake film looks that will date rapidly, no colour tints, no gimmicks at all. I've tried to keep the colour natural, the black and white pure, and I let the content do all the work. This makes the images stand up for themselves and gives them longevity. No photoshop was used in the editing of any of the photographs in this book.

2. Digital photography is free so make the most of it. I shoot three times a week on average to maintain my edge; any less than that and I slip backwards. It doesn't matter if you play tennis, play a musical instrument or take photographs, improvements come through continued

practice and the application of good skills. It is important to have a camera that begs to be picked up and used. The Fujifilm X system saved my career 5 years ago because of this characteristic alone.

Fujifilm X-T1 • XF 35mm • ISO 200 • 1/180 sec • f/4

When faced with a colourful opportunity like this scene with Mischkah in Spain, it is a temptation to opt for the celebrated Fujifilm Velvia film simulation, but be warned. Keep a close eye on what's happening to skin tones. I prefer to use the Pro Neg S film simulation, but push the vibrance up and cut the saturation back a little bit in Lightroom. That combination tends to preserve skin tones whilst adding some punch to the primary colours.

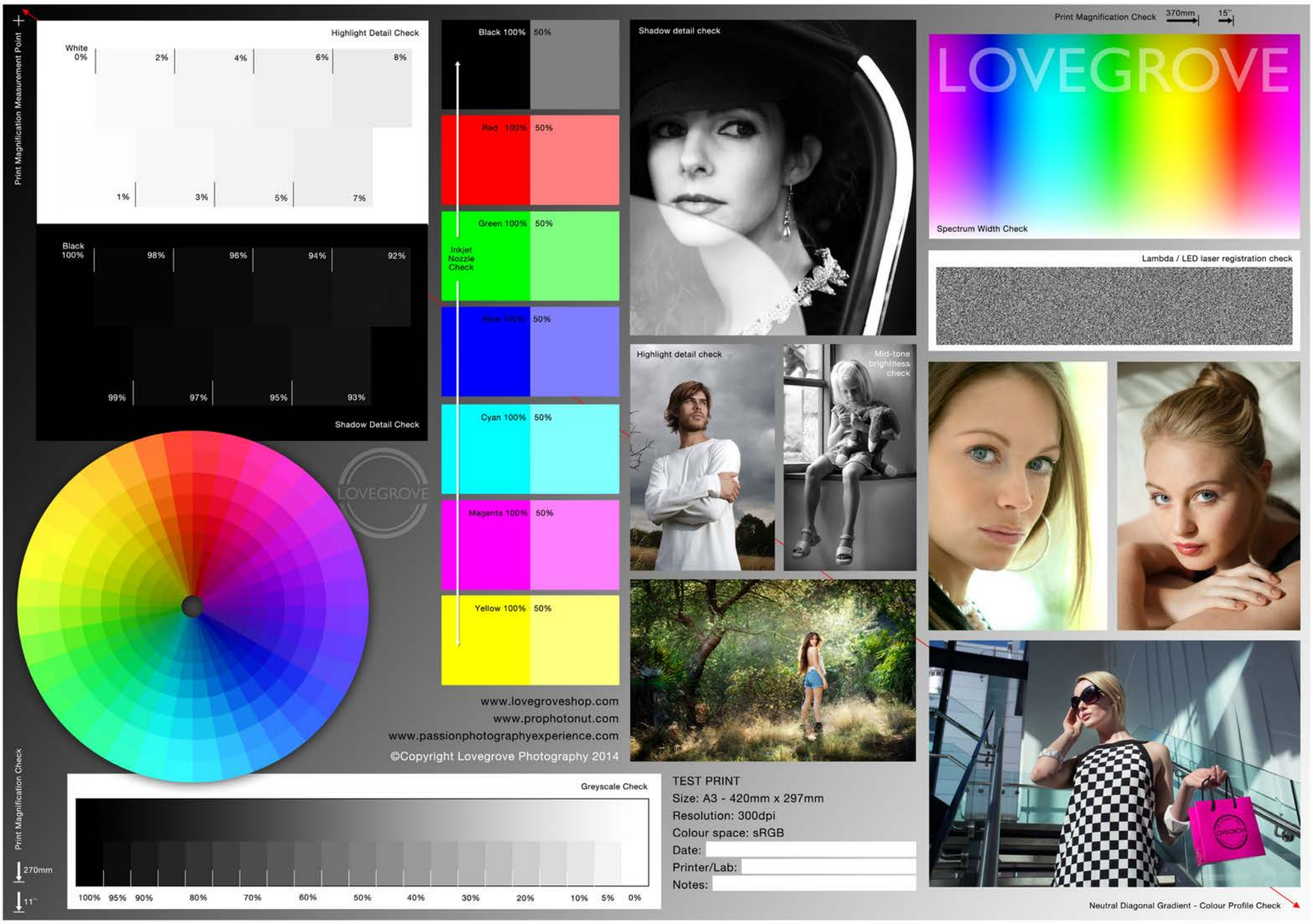
Colour Calibration

IQ essentials

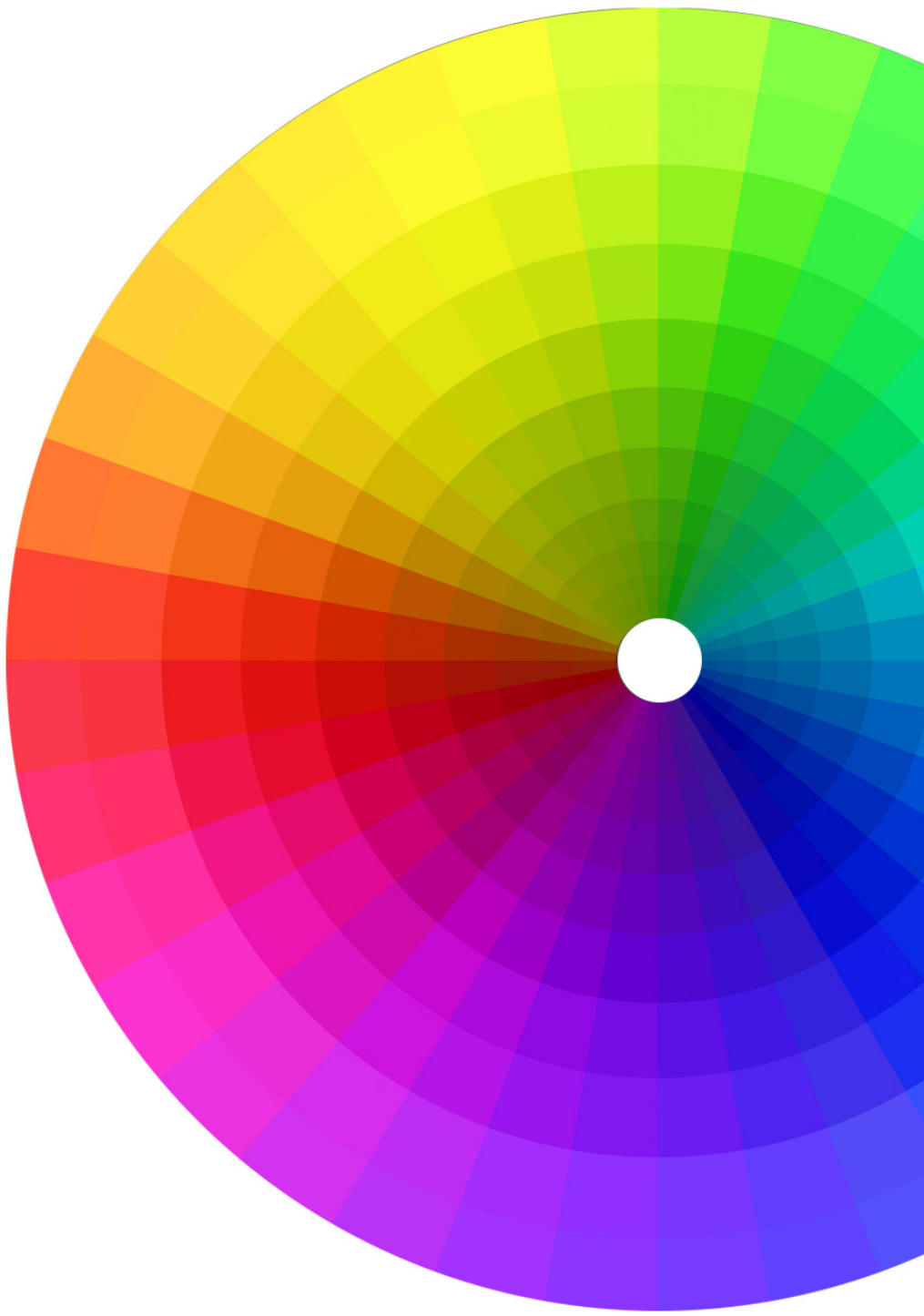
Part of the process of producing fine portrait photographs is the colour calibration of the equipment used to create them. Colour management is a deadly dull subject to deal with, but the good news is it doesn't have to be done too often. I've gone through the process of creating a system to easily analyse the characteristics of printers and screens so that you don't have to. The elaborate Lovegrove test file took a long time to prepare and refine, and a link to it is included here for you to use.

It's not all about colour. Monochrome prints rely on fine detail in the shadows and highlights being preserved. A calibrated system can not only show but also reproduce these details, along with accurate mid tone density.

Download your test file here



Calibrating your monitor



Before you open up the test file, you will need to calibrate your monitor using a hardware device like an i1Display or ColourVision Spyder Pro. This will ensure consistent and accurate colour output from your screen.

These devices are a must for professional creatives who require optimum colour management. The colour output of a screen will naturally deteriorate or drift over time, and so it is important to calibrate it regularly.

Notes about monitors and colour spaces

There is no such thing as a perfect monitor. Some monitors claim to be better than others, but it really does depend on what you want to achieve with your photography that will determine which one you go for.

As a general rule, you should have a monitor that can display the complete gamut of your working profile. So, if you edit your pictures in Adobe RGB (1998) colour space, you need to have a screen that can show you all (or at least 95%) of the colours in that space. If you have a monitor that doesn't show the whole gamut, then you are likely to find yourself increasing the contrast or saturation of a vivid image to give it more punch while noticing little change on screen, yet the numbers in the file will be changing dramatically. When you get the print back from the lab, you may find the colours particularly lurid especially if they use an ink jet machine with a phospholuminescent enriched ink set like those from Epson or Canon.

The labs we use for printing require sRGB files for their RA4 ouput (wet processed prints) making it easy for us to predict the look of the prints.

If you output in CMYK or your lab uses ICC profiles, you may need to use 'Proof View' in Photoshop, InDesign or Illustrator to fine tweak files for print. This is a process we use when producing CMYK printed documents and books like 'Chloe-Jasmine Whichello' as it helps to show us how the 'out of gamut' colours will look in print.

Notes on printers

Inkjet prints

If you produce prints with an inkjet printer, you can either use a scanned profile for your printer and paper combination, usually provided free of charge from the paper manufacturer, or for more accurate results, you can have a custom profile made by one of the many online services. You simply print off the colour patches that they provide you with, send the prints off in an envelope and they will provide you with a custom profile. If you find yourself doing this frequently, it may be worth investing in a professional print profiling system, like the ColorMunki Photo.

Prints from labs

Very few labs use colour profiles. Wet labs use closed loop calibration. They print off a greyscale test print at several times throughout the day and the print gets fed through a scanner attached to the machine. This process is very important to maintain a consistent output, as various factors including developer replenishment and paper batches affect print colour. Labs like this will usually accept files in any colour space, but we suggest you submit files for wet lab printing in the sRGB colour space.

A few wet labs will ask you to convert your files to their ICC profile before sending them. It is important to duplicate the files you want to send to the lab and convert the duplicated files, keeping your original files in a native colour space like Adobe RGB.

We've nearly always found it necessary to create a custom Photoshop action for a close loop calibrated wet lab. Some labs clip 5% of white detail and crush 5% of shadow detail to deliver punchy prints while others have a variation in mid tone brightness or gamma. A few labs print cold colours and others warmer colours. It matters not what the lab characteristics are, as long as they are consistent. I run the action on the files being sent to the lab in order to get prints back the way I want them

> *"A good lab is a consistent lab"*

to look. I create a new action for each lab I work with, so my print look is maintained.

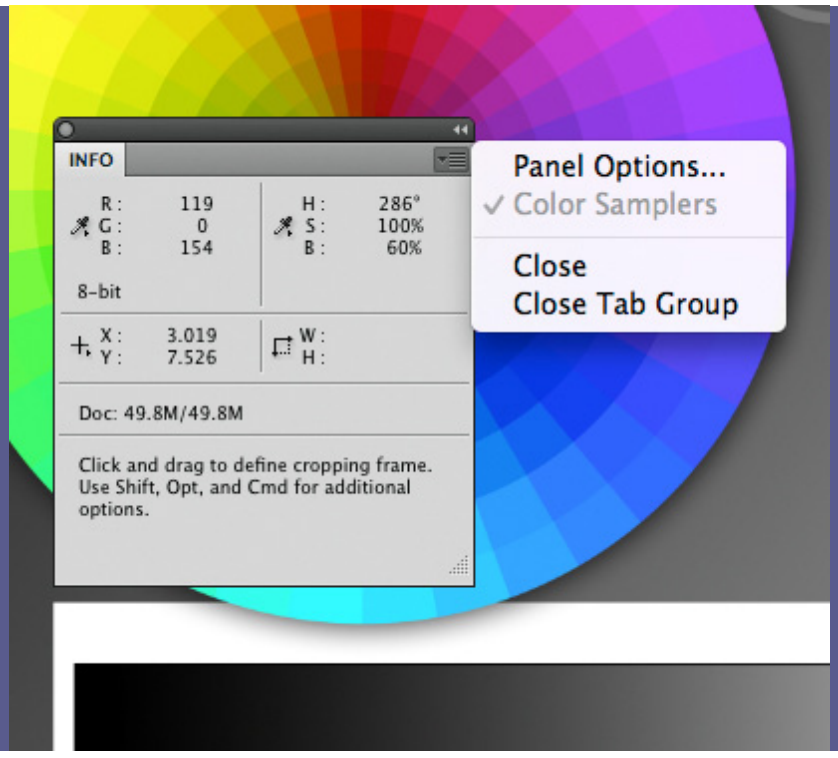
Some photographers like to have slightly warm tone pictures, other photographers like to have the mid-tone contrast higher whilst pulling back the shadows and highlights. As mentioned above, these character tweaks (along with sharpening) can be written into an action that is applied to a duplicate set of files prior to be sending to the lab.

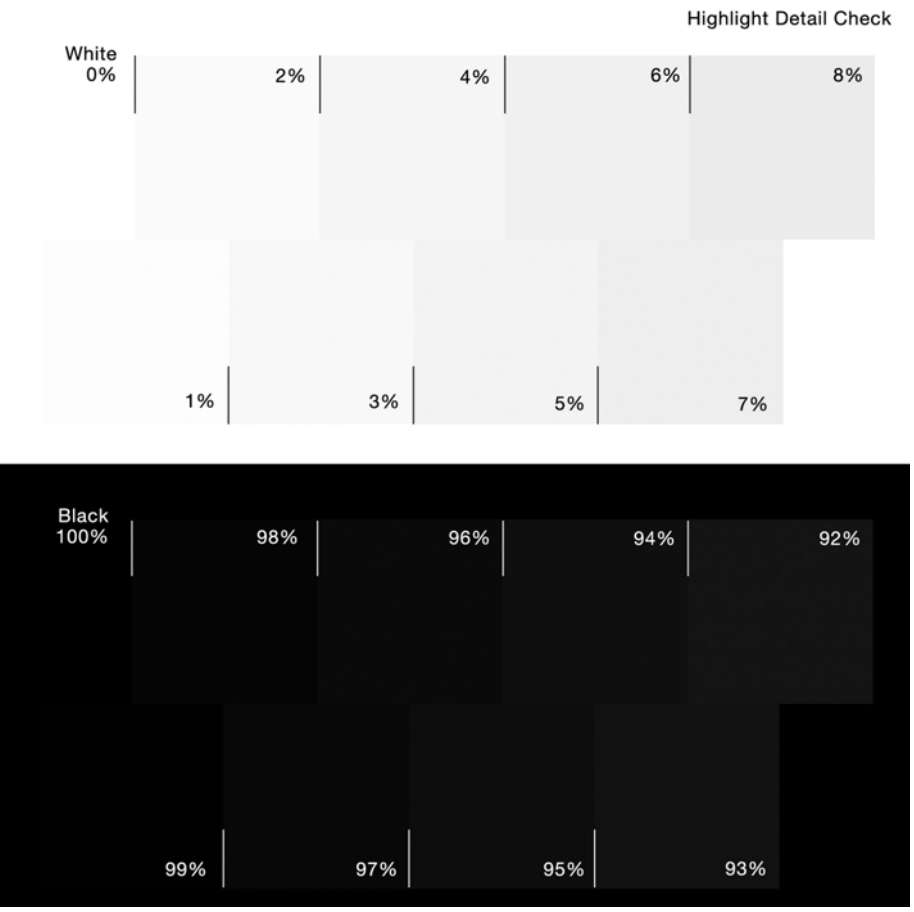
Understanding the test file and monitor assessment

Open up the test file in Adobe Photoshop (If you don't own a copy of Photoshop then you can do most assessments in Adobe Lightroom as well - (see page 348)).

First open up the Info Palette (Window > Info or F8). In the Info Palette's panel options, set the second colour readout to Greyscale. Then, as you hover your cursor over various parts of the test file, including the greyscale patches in the top left hand side, you will be able to see both the luminance and RGB values of each point. The primary use for this technique is to assess the highlight and shadow detail of your monitor. In an ideal world you should clearly be able to visually distinguish the difference between 0% and 1%, as well as 99% and 100%. The cursor's position, together with the info palette readout will confirm a change in the actual file data. A change in the readout should correspond with a difference you can see with your eyes on screen.

The chart greyscale patches (top left of the test file) are in percentage values instead of RGB values. As there are 256 levels available in an 8-bit file including '0', (hence 255 being the maximum,) these don't divide easily into 100 to form an accurate percentage value.





So for example, you may find a small deviation.

When assessing a monitor, you may need to be in a darkened room to see the difference between 100% and 99%. As the ambient light level in the room increases, the ability to see shadow detail decreases. It is worth noting that not all printers can resolve deep shadow detail. This highlights the importance of printing a test file to help you understand both the characteristics and limitations of your printer or print lab.

Our computer screens at the Lovegrove studio are in a constant light environment without windows, so whatever the weather or time of day, the picture processing is consistent. We use special lighting (as specified on page 295) to ensure a natural white spectrum distribution.

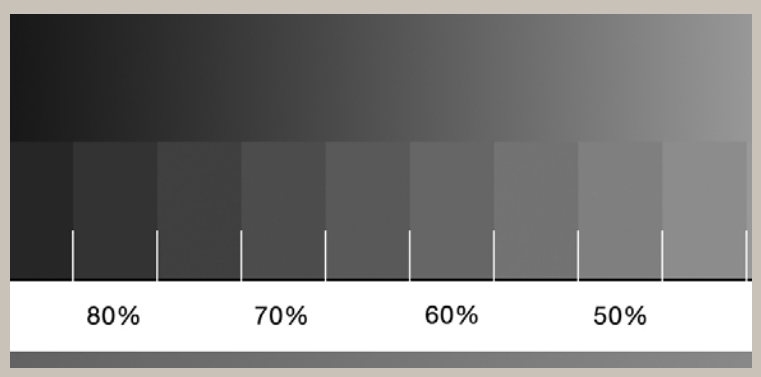
Notes on Lightroom use

If you don't own a copy of Adobe Photoshop, you can assess the test file in Adobe Lightroom instead. Import the test file and go to the Develop module. Hover your cursor over the image. Underneath the Histogram pane you will see the RGB values for your cursor's position. The readout isn't as detailed, but will give you an understanding of what your monitor is and isn't showing.

Here are some simple questions to ask yourself:

1. Does the image of the little girl look monochrome?

2. In the greyscale step in the bottom left panel, are there any colour patches?



3. Do the skin tones in the head shots of the women look reasonable? (Note the girl on the left has less red pigmentation. This is to assess how different skin tones reproduce in print).

4. Is there any diagonal banding from bottom left to top right in the background area of the test file? (You will notice that there is a gradient in the background running between ‘A’ bottom right and ‘B’ top left. It is set as a diagonal to differentiate colour profile errors from printer errors. Profiling errors will run diagonally as mentioned, printing error will always run left to right or top to bottom.)

If the answer is YES to any of the questions above, your screen needs recalibrating.

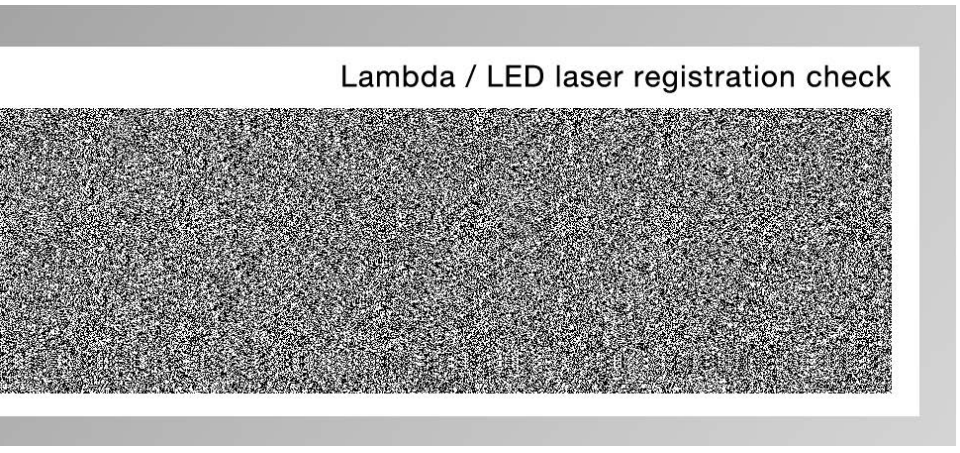
Understanding your printer or lab output

We have requested test prints from several labs throughout the UK and internationally, the variations in the printer characteristics are very noticeable. This doesn’t mean to say that one is right or wrong; they are just different. The points below are designed to help you understand the characteristics of a printer. For example, some printing machines will produce more pleasing wedding or portrait images with calm skin tones and excellent highlight detail, whilst others will produce more pleasing product packaging shots or commercial advertising work with punchy contrast and colours that ‘pop’. Choosing a printer to output your work is quite similar to pre-digital when we chose the type of film to shoot on. Each have their own unique properties.

LED laser registration

The LED laser registration check panel on your test file is made up of pure monochrome fine detail. If you get a print back from a lab that is showing a colour cast in this panel (most commonly yellow) then it is a sign that the laser registration is a little bit adrift on the printer. If this is the

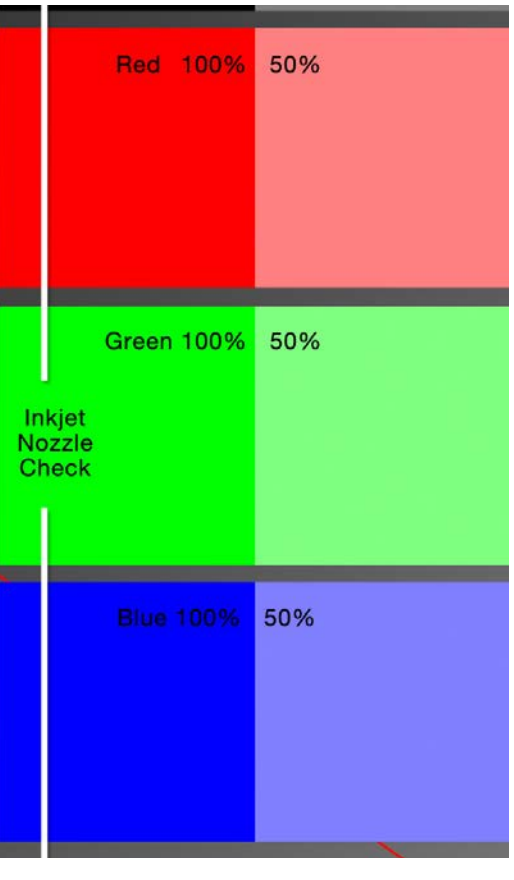
case, take a look at the crosshair at the top left of the print to see if this too is corrupted with colour. This should be pure white.



It is worth noting that a slight colour cast is quite acceptable for prints that don't include text or very fine highlight detail as it will be imperceptible.

Inkjet nozzle check

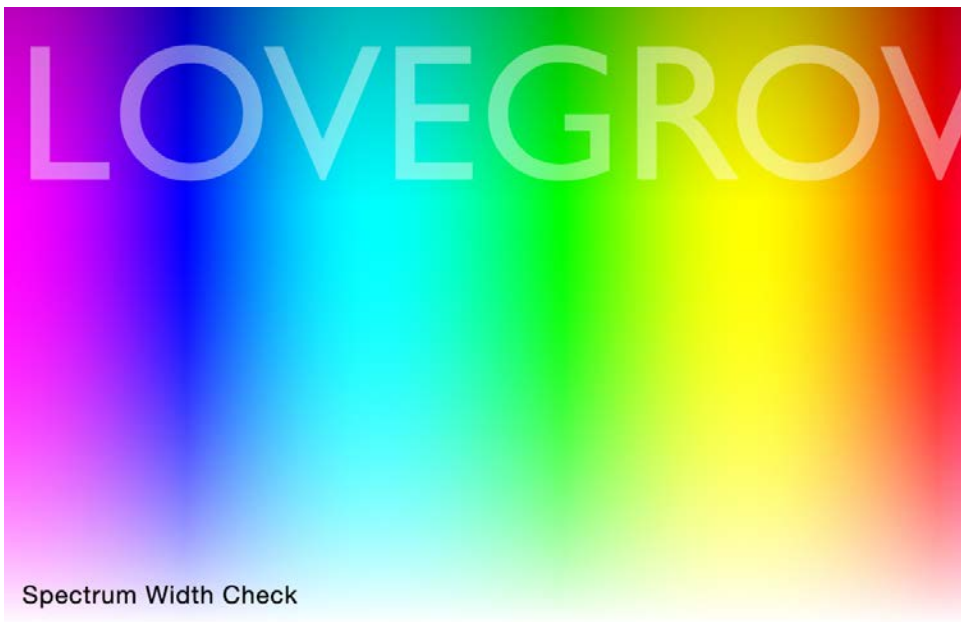
The six blocks of bold flat colour and their half values will show you the printers capability of reproducing both primary and secondary saturated tones. The patches are 100% red, green, blue, cyan, magenta and yellow. Look for the usual signs of nozzle clogging or colour banding.



For portraiture or wedding photography, extreme saturation is a far less important printer characteristic than say product packaging shots which require rich saturated tones.

Spectrum Panel

Looking at the blended colour spectrum panel, the width of the yellow segment will tell you how grass will look in a print. Some printers will have a wide yellow spectrum and a correspondingly narrow green section, making summer grass look dryer and yellow. Other printers with a narrow yellow spectrum will give a very rich green or even a blue/ green look to grass.

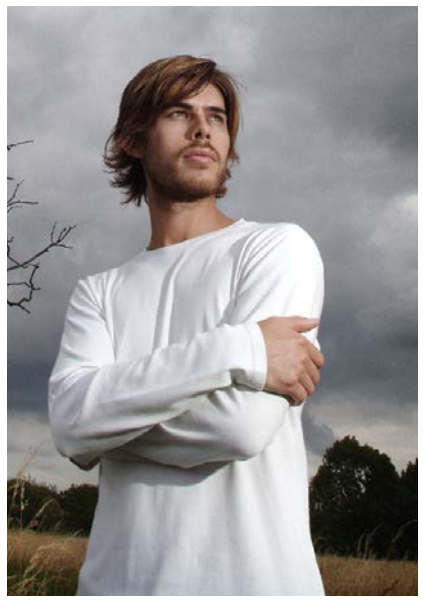


Choose your lab carefully if green tones are important to you. If you shoot landscape, architecture or sports photography for instance, it may be necessary to tweak the green hue in your images prior to sending to print (+ to remove yellow and - to add yellow).

Highlight bleeding

Below the chin of the woman (shown right) there is a white patch of burnt out information. The transition from the white area into the colour can be rendered smoothly or with contour steps depending on the characteristics of the printer. Some printers are more forgiving in this regard than others.

The man standing by a tree has a burnt out section on his left shoulder. This should look completely natural in the print as it blends into areas of his t-shirt with detail.



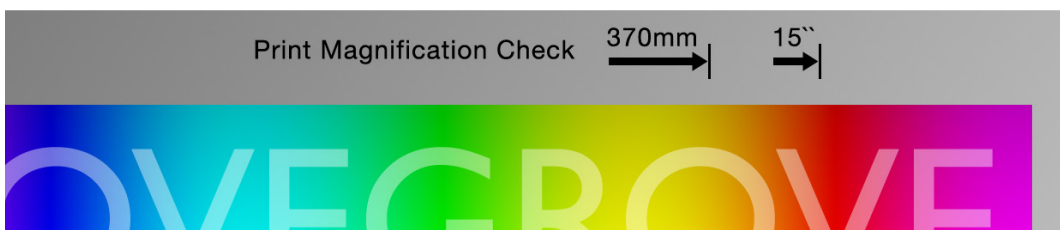
Shadow Detail

The girl in the car is wearing a ribbed woollen hat with a peak. Compare the screen image with that of your print. Is the density and level of the ribs the same on screen as it is in the print? Ideally there should be noticeable detail on the peak. Shadow detail is really important to wedding photographers, especially when photographing groomsmen in dark suits.

Print magnification check (image gain measurement)

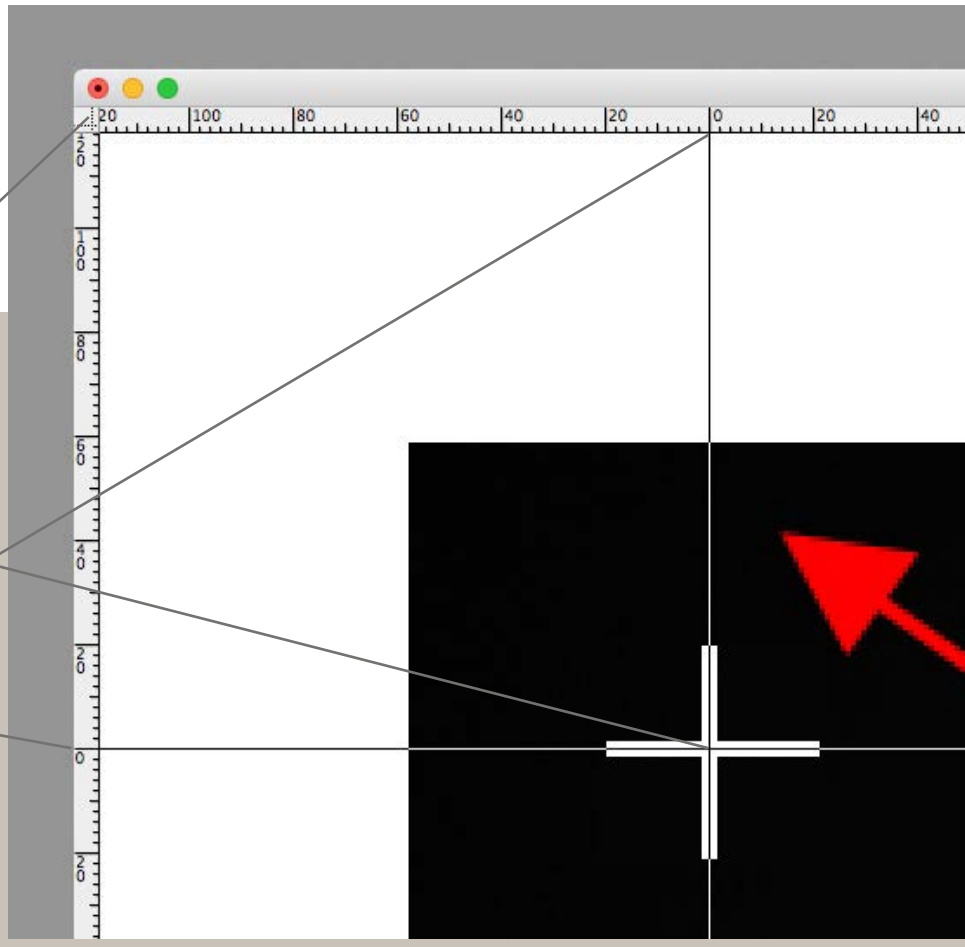
To test this, first you need to have your rulers switched on in Photoshop.

Go to View > Rulers cmd + r



The unit value should also be set to either mm or inches (Photoshop > Preferences > Units & Rulers).

Next, zoom into the file at 200%. Drag a crosshair from the small box between the start of your rulers to the centre of the top left



white crosshair shown on the test file itself.

Once your rulers are aligned to this point, zoom out to 100% and check the position of the measurements at mm or inches in the top right and bottom left corners to assure yourself that the file is accurate.

Next you can check your print with a ruler to see if, point to point, the measurements are the same.

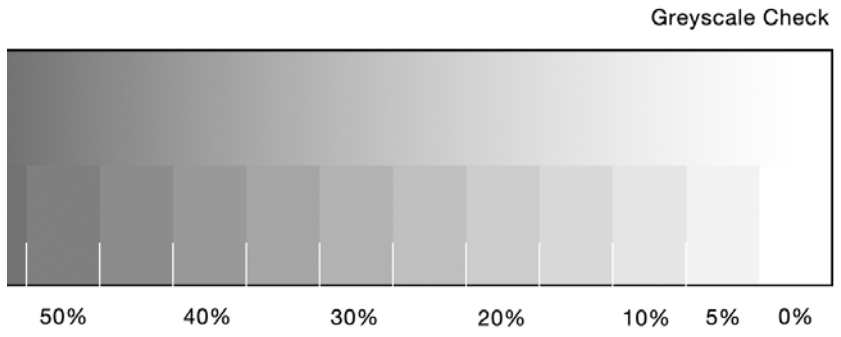
The reason it is important to check both the x and y axis of a print is that the x axis is usually controlled by the laser scan gain or ink jet nozzle travel, and the y axis by the paper feed rate. Any discrepancies between the print and the file can be negated with a Photoshop resize action, prior to an image being sent to print. For example, this can help to ensure that any white borders added around a print are even and accurate (especially useful when creating albums with overlays). At the Lovegrove studio, we use a pre shrink process that uses a ‘transform’ function with different percentages for the x and y axis.

It is worth noting that most modern inkjet machines are usually completely accurate on both the x and y axis.

Other checks

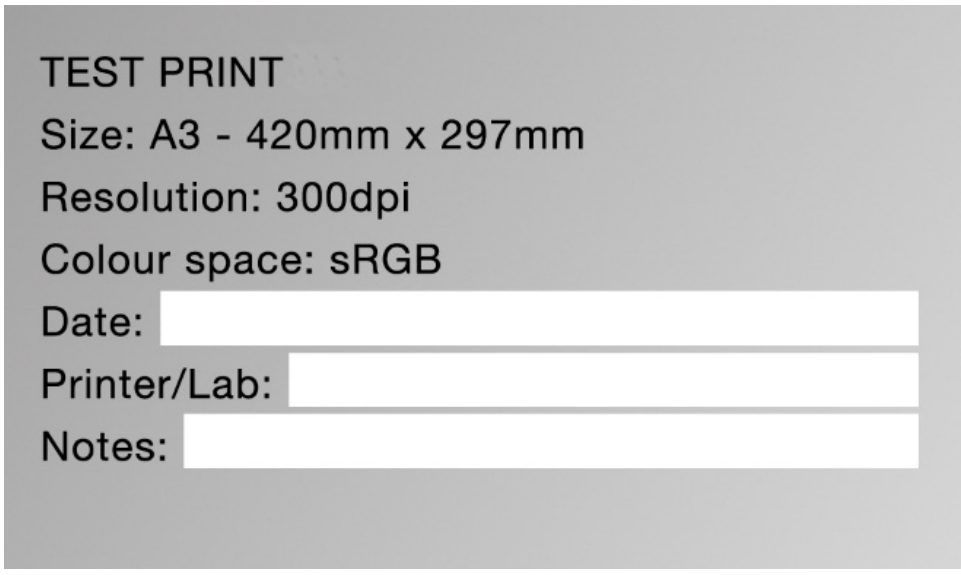
The top section of the panel in the bottom

left is a gradient from black to white. The sections below are 5% steps of flat tone. By comparing the junction between the gradient and steps at each end, it is easy to see how the highlight and shadow details blend. The steps will show discrepancies in the colour profile. All the patches should appear neutral and show no colour hue.



Keeping a record

When you print out the chart, use the white space provided to write with a permanent marker the printer/lab used and date. Keeping your test prints organised in this way is the best way to preserve the accuracy and integrity of the calibration process



Thank you

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PROPHOTONUT is Damien Lovegrove's blog. It is full of ideas, inspiration and advice for creative photographers. You can see his latest work as it gets published here.

Click on the icons below to connect with Damien Lovegrove on social media.

Glossary

Luminaire
The posh term for a continuous lighting fixture of any kind. The word luminaire is most commonly used in theatres, film sets and television studios.

Fresnel
The name of the guy who gave his name to a clever compact design of lens made up of concentric rings. Fresnel lenses are often found in lighthouses, on the front of Speedlights, Lupo or Arri Spotlights and in other film and TV luminaires.

Barn doors
The metal flaps on a light fixture used to control spill or to create a rectangular shaped light pattern.

Flood and spot
Flood and spot refers to the position of a light source relative to the lens in a luminaire or Speedlight. At full flood the light source is closest to the lens and the lens has little or no effect. At full spot the light source is at the focal point of the lens and the light is emitted in near parallel rays. At full flood a light is at its hardest, it delivers a wide area of light and has it's least intensity. At full spot a light is at its softest and most intensely focussed.

Scattergels
A trade name owned by Lovegrove Shop for a screen printed acrylic sheet with regular or irregular patterns used to break up the light to created a dappled effect. A Scattergel can only be used with cool lamps like the Lupo series of LED Fresnel spotlights.

CTO
Colour Temperature Orange refers to the colour of a filter. CTO filters are orange in colour and come in various grades from full to 1/8th strength. Full CTO converts a Speedlight at a daylight colour temperature of 5,600k to 3200k, approximately the colour of tungsten light.

CTB
Colour Temperature Blue filters also come in various grades and full CTB converts tungsten light at 3,200k to daylight at 5,600k or can be used on a Speedlight at a daylight colour temperature of 5,600k to convert it to over 10,000k

TTL
TTL stands for Through The Lens metering. Traditionally a light meter in the camera measured a pre flash pulse of flash from a speedlight just prior to the shutter opening

and then the camera requested what it considered to be the correct amount of flash when the shutter fully opened. Modern versions like eTTL and iTTL refer to a digital measurement and data processing system, rather than the previous analogue systems. TTL has its uses but also its inconsistencies, especially when flashes are used off camera, meaning that manual flash power setting has become far more common.

HSS
HSS stands for High Speed Sync and utilises a strobe flash delivery from the Speedlight at 100hz to evenly cover the travelling slot of a shutter set above the regular flash sync speed. HSS systems loose about 1 to 2 stops of flash power when compared to regular flash that is non pulsed. The advantage of HSS is that high shutter speeds can be used to freeze motion when a degree of ambient light makes up part of the subject illumination.

Umbra
Umbra is the name given to an area of the subject that is complete shadow.

Penumbra
The penumbra is the transition area between the lit and unlit (umbra) parts of the subject. The softer the light source the larger the penumbra is.

Soft light
Soft light comes from a source that is relatively large with respect to the subject. A soft light generates shadows with large penumbra transitions.

Hard light
A hard light is a relatively small light source with respect to the subject. Subject shadows from hard light sources are distinct and have small penumbra transitions. The sun is considered a hard light even though it is the largest light source we have. That is because it is so far away it becomes small in comparison to our subject.

Key light
The key light is the main light source in an image or scene and it doesn't necessarily have to come from the front, it can land on the subject from any angle. A key light can be a back light or a side light, but in all instances it is the principal light source in the shot. It can be the sun, a Speedlight or a window.

Down the nose
This refers to the direction of a key light. If the subjects nose was very long it would touch the lighting stand if a 'down the nose' lighting direction is used.

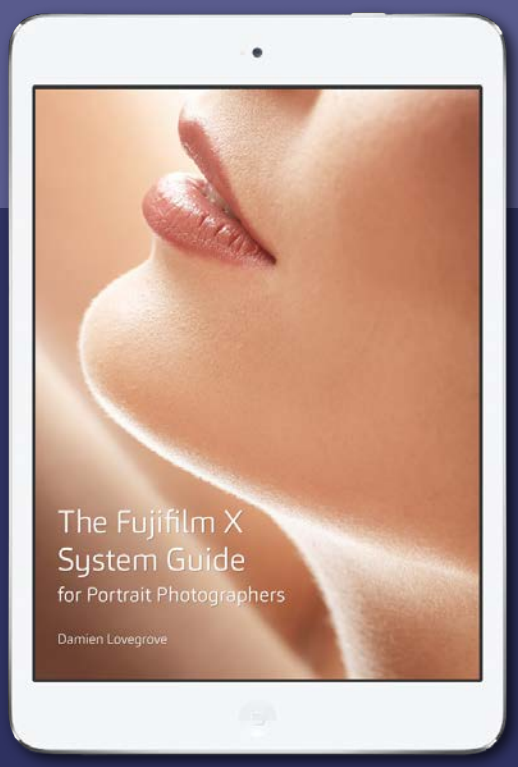
Upstage lighting
Upstage lights are just beyond or behind the subject. Stages always slope to the front so a light that is rigged upstage is at a point higher up the stage than the artist. It can be rigged off to one side in the wings or in the area behind.

Contre-jour
Contre-jour is a French term that is widely used by photographers and cinematographers to describe shooting into the light, where the back illumination is dominant.

Kick light
A kick light glances the cheek of the subject from behind and to the side. It creates a light band, often blown out to white from the specular reflections off the skin.

Back light
A back light is rigged on the opposite side of the subject to the camera position, irrespective of the direction the subject is facing. If the subject were facing away from the camera, a back light would be lighting their front.

Hair light
A hair light is light that literally illuminates someones hair and helps to separate them from the background of the image. Hair lights are traditionally hard light sources as these generate crisp specular highlights that deliver shiny healthy looking hair.



The Fujifilm X System Guide
for Portrait Photographers

92 pages uncovering Damien Lovegrove's detailed insights into the complete Fujifilm X system - the cameras, lenses and the reasons behind his camera settings. Buy it here.

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