

# PHOTOART

**Tech Notes:** With the exception of some of the **Still Lives** - my 'antiques', taken in the '70s and '80s on large format film, then drum-scanned (475, LA020) - all the images are digital; and all my photographs - including the analogue still lives - have been digitally manipulated. My earliest digital pictures are my **Still Lives with Critters** (472, LA001) where each image has a 'critter' - a small animal - added digitally. They were shot on a 6mp Leaf Volare with a Sinar studio camera. I now use an 11mp Canon EOS1Ds with 24-70mm f2.8 and 70-200mm f2.8 zoom lenses. The **Faces** (298, FG001) were shot with a 50mm f1.4 lens, the **Mardi Gras Fringe** shots (421, JB009) with a 15mm fish eye. The retouching software is Adobe Photoshop, my computers are Apple Macintosh and for my prints I use an Epson Pro 4800 and Archival Matte paper. I am a strong advocate for digital photography, I abandoned film in 1998. However, it has always been important to me to produce photographs that do not look digital; the technique used should not be evident in the final photograph - I use retouching to enhance and fine-tune my pictures, not to display digital effects. But there are exceptions: The **No War Yes Peace** writing (502, MA001) on the Opera House is added digitally (the series alludes to a 2003 peace protest before the war in Iraq; 'No War' actually was painted on the Opera House roof. For more info go to: <http://www.sydneyoperahousenowarcleanupfund.org> Please note that I did not photograph the original writing - I got there too late, the roof was cleaned already). The **Tree Fantasies** (175, BD001) are a digital effect of one image multiplied, mirrored and repeated, whereas the **City/Architecture Fantasies** (328, FI133) have the procedure applied twice. My **Wall Art** pictures (388, IB006) are extensively manipulated, as are **The Wall** (442, KA002) and especially **The Floor** (445, KB003). One advantage of digital retouching is that it is easy to reduce detail in a picture - for instance, in the series of the

**Archibald Fountain** (352, HB007) I have removed all glimpses of buildings that were visible through the trees. In fact, I use this technique with all my pictures: Detail is removed, highlights are toned down, 'holes' are filled in - this is done in order to isolate the central subject from the background and to help concentrate on it. Here is another trick: I often sharpen one section of a picture, while I may soften (or blur) the background, as with the **Flower** shots (235, EA001) or the **Angel of Hospitality** (260, FD001). A lot of effort goes into darkening, lightening and adjusting contrast of certain areas; and nearly all my pictures, but especially the **Architecture** series (289, FF061), are perspective controlled. Furthermore, with situation shots I may take a few exposures, where I don't change the camera angle. The result is that I have a bunch of near-identical frames. I could then take a detail from one shot and transfer it to another frame. So my pictures often are not the recording of an instance lasting 1/60th of a second - but an instance lasting some 10 or 20 minutes, or even longer. Importantly, though, I do not combine some unrelated pictures - I just condense a timeframe of a few minutes in a particular situation into one single image. Samples for this technique are some of the **Manly Beach** pictures (199, DA010), with a seagull inserted into one picture from another shot. Or the photograph of the **Opera House and Harbour Bridge at dusk** (2, AA005), where the couple on the bench-seat in the foreground - as well as the fellow sitting on the fence with his digital camera, at the very right edge of the frame - had left a long time before I shot the background; they were added into the frame later, taken from images I had shot earlier on. In this case I used a tripod, and the time frame covered was about one hour. The point of these manipulations is: With Photoshop I have the opportunity to create the image as I saw the scene, and not as the camera and a certain film stock recorded it.

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