

THE ULTIMATE PS4 PHOTO MODE GUIDE

 TAKE BETTER IN-GAME PHOTOS TODAY!

68
PAGES OF
ADVICE AND
INSPIRATION

HOW TO...

TAKE PERFECT
GAME SHOTS
EVERY TIME



HOW TO GET CREATIVE
WITH UNCHARTED 4
EXPLORE THE ARTISTIC
TOOLS OF HELBLADE
MASTER BATTLEFIELD 1'S
SPECTATOR MODE WITH DICE

INSPIRATION • EXPERT TIPS • INTERVIEWS • GALLERIES

THE ULTIMATE PS4 PHOTO MODE GUIDE

Games have come a long way from the challenge of outrunning ghosts in pill-filled mazes. On PS4 the ultimate kudos comes not from snagging top spot on a high score table but snapping a hot shot in Driveclub, or posing Aloy for a portrait. Photo modes are king.

In this special mini-mag we'll take you through how to get more from your console's best photo modes, including the new tools in Hellblade's snapping system. Plus, professional screen-grabber Duncan Harris offers his advice to composing better shots. So, turn the page and start snapping.





GOT
A SHOT?

Send us your best snaps
and we'll print them!

Email: opm@futurenet.com

Twitter: [@OPM_UK](#)

Words by Ian Dean, Miriam McDonald
Design by Milford Coppock, Alvin Weetman
Cover Image by Duncan Harris
Special thanks to DICE's Petri Levälahti

PlayStation®
Official Magazine - UK

READER GALLERY

Get inspired with our readers' favourite photo mode shots



004

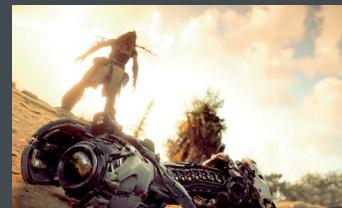
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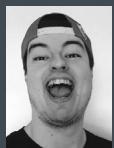
NAME RICHARD MOONEY

TWITTER @MAURICE_II

"The sudden colour difference in the Seattle sky really strikes me, it's both hellish and cold at the same time."



INFO



NAME TJ MARINELLI

TWITTER @MRTJ_808

"The Prison in Uncharted 4 set itself up perfectly for its amazing photo mode, and for me this shot depicted prison life perfectly."

READER GALLERY



INFO

NAME MATT DAVIDSON
WEB N/A

"I really love the sombre expression on Joel's face here – a man full of pain. It's beautifully crafted by Naughty Dog."



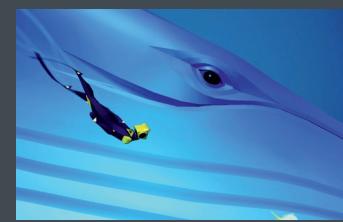
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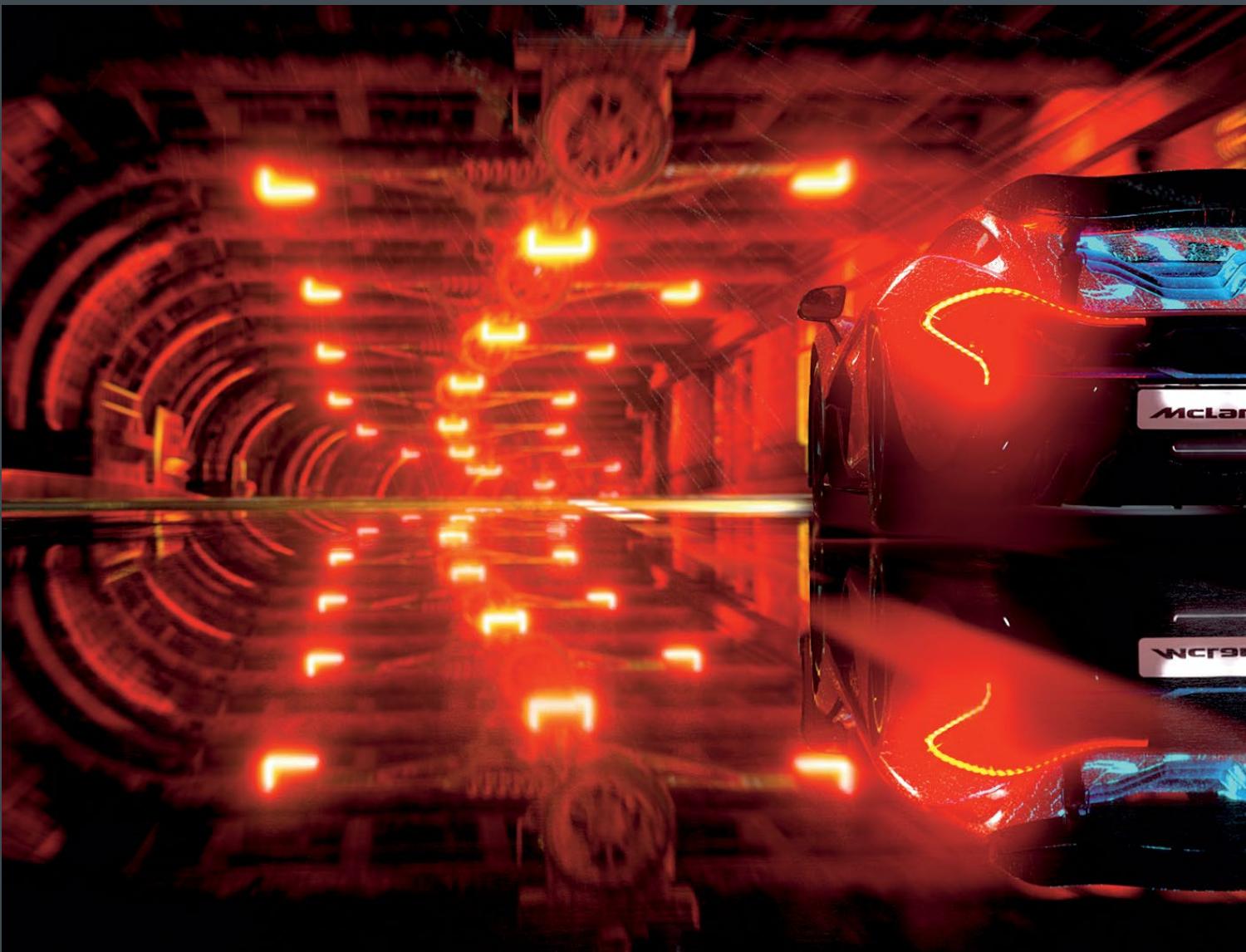
INFO

NAME NICOLE HALL
TWITTER @GAMERSDELIGHT

"I love how it captures the tranquil beauty of this gorgeous, more aesthetic chapter of Uncharted 4."



READER GALLERY



INFO

NAME NICK BAKER
WEB BITLY/NICKBAKER

"Photo mode is such a big part of gaming for myself, it offers us the chance to show off our creative side. It spawned a new breed of player."







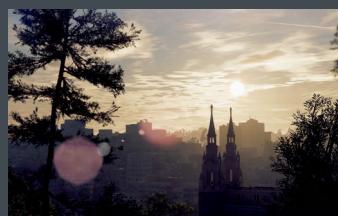
READER GALLERY

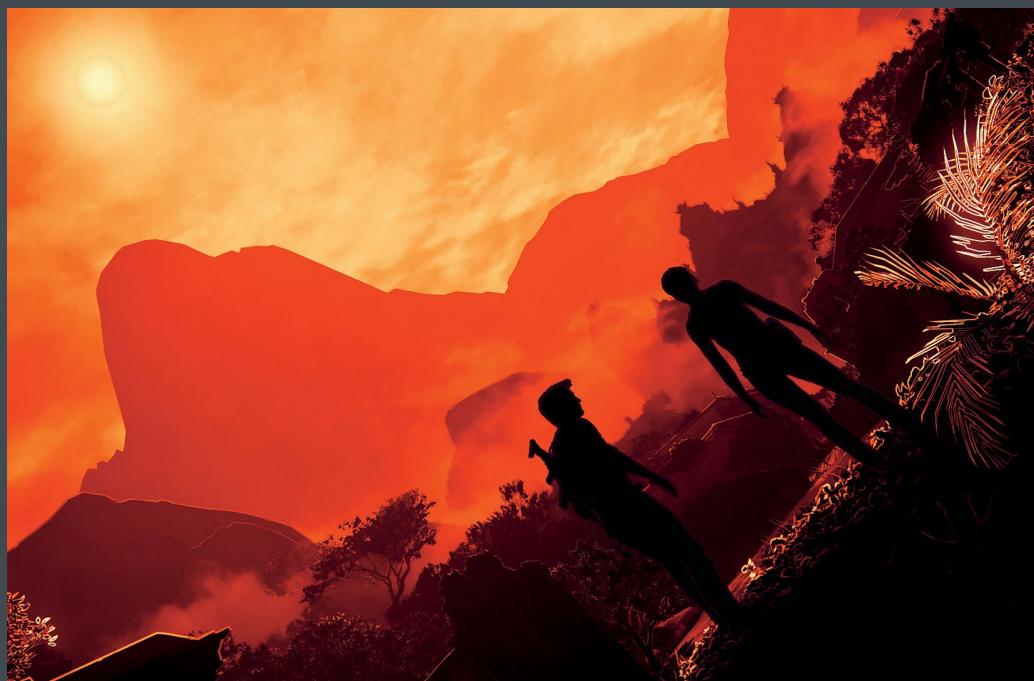


INFO

NAME SEBASTIEN BERNARD
TWITTER @LORSTEIBEL

"Watchdogs 2 is interesting because of the care that is given to the transcription of the lively San Francisco lifestyle."



**INFO**

NAME M FARRELL

TWITTER UTIOGSTABBED_JAWA

"I like the way they're silhouetted against the landscape, and the way Nate's looking at her. Two people in love sharing an epic adventure."

**INFO**

NAME CHLOE HAWKINS

INSTAGRAM

@TEARSTODIAMONDS

"I really like this image because it's a really good wallpaper to use straight from the game."



WALKTHROUGH

FINESSE YOUR
HELLBLADE SHOTS

The latest photo mode to land on PlayStation 4 can be found in the maddening delights of Ninja Theory's Hellblade. It has unique filters and effects that will get your creative juices flowing, and the mode's been subtly tweaked to encourage you to use it in new ways.

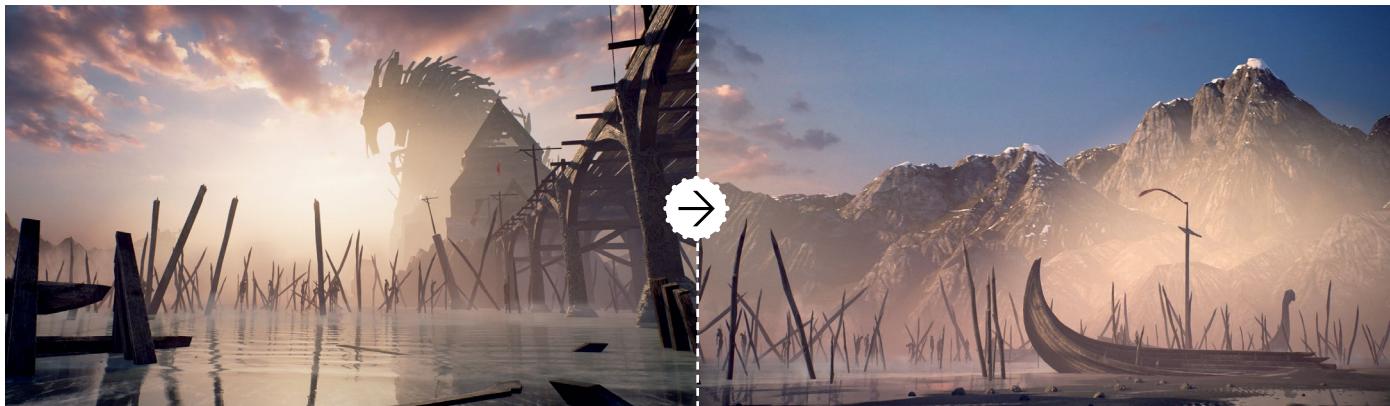
There's a classical, artistic train of thought running through these tools

that will enable you to break your shots away from the 'capture reality' approach of other games' photo modes. If you're a war photographer in Battlefield 1, in Hellblade you're an artist. From suggestive splashes of colour to a tool that creates the dappled effect of an Expressionist's brush, Hellblade is primed to take photo modes in a new direction.





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01 TOTAL MOVEMENT

Unlike most other games' photo modes, Hellblade enables you to move the camera wherever you wish on the axis of the character, but crucially free from the character's position. Control is easy and assigned to the thumbsticks, enabling you to really explore the environment for the most impressive, evocative shots. The two screens here were taken at opposite ends of the game's opening

level, and offer very different subject matter. Despite the similarities in tone and colour, they have very different moods too: the gaping 'mouth' of the structure in the background of the first lends it a more threatening, ominous feel, whereas the mountains in the second means you have more of a sensation of freedom waiting for you beyond the spike-ridden water.



02 USING GRADING

Once you have a shot you're happy with you can further alter the mood it conveys by dipping into the Grading options, which allow you to change the colour balance of the photo. Film Stock is a quick way to boost the blacks and add grain, while the likes of Biorange, Crisp Winter, and Schindler (drops colour apart from reds) are easy ways to set a consistent palette.



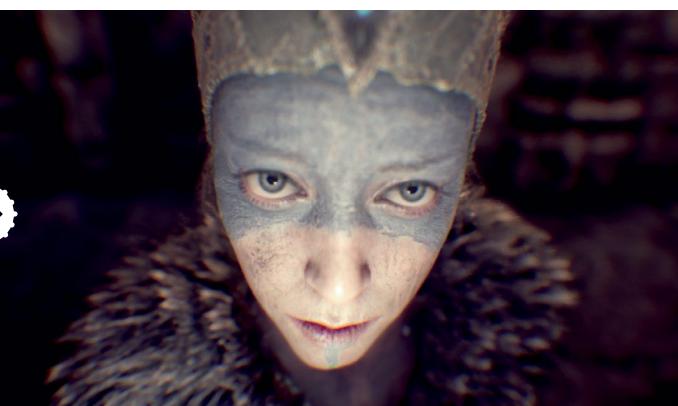
03 EXPERIMENT WITH ROLL

Later in this supplement our pro photo moderator Duncan Harris suggests using camera tilts and rolls sparingly. However, in a game like Hellblade you can use Roll combined with Zoom and Focal Distance to pick out interesting texture detail in the game's world. In this screen we've zoomed in on a door, rolled the camera 90 degrees and focused on the Norse carvings.



04 WHEN TO FOCUS

Using Focus in Hellblade can be a little trickier than in other games. It feels more subtle and the results can take longer to achieve. It's more akin to proper photography. Basically, Aperture controls the field of focus, Exposure the amount of light entering the camera lens, and Focal Distance brings into focus areas of the frame. The key is getting used to moving the camera once these



have been set to achieve an interesting shot. In the image here we've pulled Senua into focus, and the background is blurred, but we've tilted the camera to then bring her eyes into focus and fade her head away from the viewer's gaze for a more evocative shot. Eye contact is one of the most powerful things in a photo, so if anything is sharp, make sure it's your subject's peepers.



05 FLATTEN FOR EFFECT

Hidden in the Effects menu is the Flatten option. This can be a useful tool to take your shots up a notch. It essentially flattens all the light sources in the scene, to enable the texture detail to sharpen. In the shot here we've used it to pull out the texture detail hidden in the background of the raw scene as well as using it with the Focus tools to separate foreground from background.



06 PLAY WITH EDGE DETECTION

The strength of Hellblade's photo mode lies with its Effects modifiers. One fun one to experiment with is Edge Detection, which throws a white glow around edges of models in the scene. In the shot we've pulled Senua from her background, played with Focus, and added Edge Detection. It's one of those tools that, when used with restraint, can result in some unique shots.



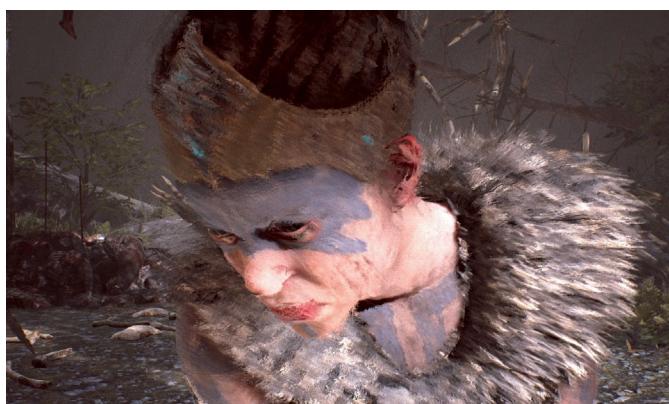
07 SNAP LIKE CARAVAGGIO

If you want to give your shots a look reminiscent of Caravaggio's chiaroscuro technique – strong contrasts between light and dark – the Depth tool (on the Vignette menu) is your weapon of choice. It's like casting a high-beam light on a small section of the scene to pull out detail and leave everything else in darkness. Use with Film Stock (found in Grading) for a stronger image.



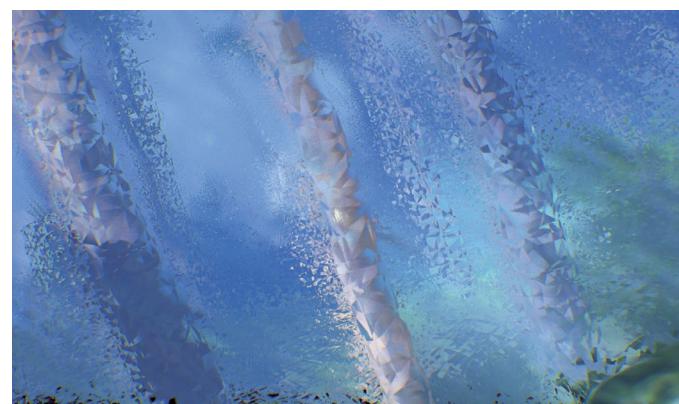
08 FRAME THE SHOT

Talking of the Vignette menu, Hellblade pushes this standard tool up a gear with the addition of sliders. You can use the Crop slider to create fat or thin borders either horizontally or vertically. The Ellipsis tool creates a fisheye frame that can be scaled and its edges feathered using two sliders. Whichever you choose, the Vignette options will add extra drama into the shot.



09 HARNESS MELT

Sit inside the Effects menu is the Melt tool. This offers great scope to affect your shots in creative ways. Using the sliders you can merge texture detail across the model, like a rough blur. Like Focus, you can affect different planes of the shot, front to back, for some interesting results. Here we've used Melt to chopily merge colour and details for a loose, Expressionistic style.



10 PLAYING WITH SHATTER

The final, and quite strange, tool to play with is Shatter (on the Effects menu). It will break apart the geometry of a scene to create abstract patterns. Using the sliders you can pull the foreground from the background, and alter the size of the geometry affected. Combined with Zoom, Roll, Aperture, and Focal Distance you can merge the geometry to create abstract, painterly shots.



A close-up, low-angle shot of dark brown leather straps and buckles, likely from a bag or piece of luggage. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the leather and the metallic hardware.

THE PS4 PRO

Meet Duncan Harris, the man behind the slick pre-release screenshots that had you salivating for Rime, Hellblade, and more

015

Months before any of us get our hands on a game, screenshots of sweeping vistas or frantic action will be feeding our desire to play it, to explore that landscape or land those punches for ourselves.

Enter Duncan Harris, probably the best-known screenshotter in the world. Developers like Bethesda and Square Enix turn to him before a game's release, because he'll take the shots that make us hungry to play. But whereas most of us are content with in-game photo modes, Harris often has to hack into the code using debug tools, freezing monsters, and posing characters, in order to capture the very essence of the gameplay. But, he says, he's no photographer... 



INFO

NAME DUNCAN HARRIS
WEB DEADENDTHRILLS.COM
Harris has a background in software engineering and videogames journalism, giving him an in-depth knowledge of games from both a developer's and player's angle.

» **OPM: What's your background. Do you have a design background, for example?**

Duncan Harris: I don't have a design background outside of a few hobbies. I studied writing and then software engineering at university, and worked for several years at Edge magazine writing reviews and features. Some of my heroes growing up wrote about games for a living, so there's no coincidence there, though plenty of luck.

I've always liked beautiful things, though, and that includes logic. I find coding very therapeutic, but to see that interact with art is what makes videogames fascinating. I bristle at talk of how important games are, but they are magical.

OPM: Do you remember your first great screen grab?

DH: No, not really. Whatever it was, it would have been a shot where the power of a still image really added something beyond what a game is normally capable of. The imagination plays a much greater role when looking at stills, and the scrutiny is so much higher, so a shot that somehow returns a person's gaze, gives them something back, is what I'd consider great. Ultimately that's a credit to the game more than anything.

OPM: How did you turn taking screen grabs into a profession? Who are your clients and what is a typical job for you?

DH: Screenshots were part of my



profession before they became my profession, so there's some serendipity there. I wrote about games at a time when taking screenshots – the right, illustrative screenshots – was important. That was also when real-time 3D was starting to create games that stretched beyond what players were expected to see while playing them, whether that was nuances of animation or unseen corners of the worlds. I started a blog trying to document those things in screenshots, also incorporating things like mods on PC.

Not long after that, the whole idea of cultivating fan communities really took off, which meant publishers

"A SHOT THAT RETURNS A PERSON'S GAZE IS WHAT I'D CONSIDER GREAT."

suddenly needed content, these little artefacts they could put online. That got me industry work on a few titles – this was almost ten years ago now – and the logical next step was to see if I could save some people some money by doing pre-release shots as well.

There's a distinction to be made there, though. Industry shots are a totally different thing to whatever else I'd done before, and so the coding

»





Harris is a big fan of *Horizon: Zero Dawn*, though he did say on Twitter that on PS4 Pro the photo mode had a “bounding sphere the size of a coffin.”



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INTERVIEW



Harris' comments on the original photo mode for No Man's Sky led to big improvements in the following update.





» background, together with the experience of dealing with publishers and developers for magazines, became ever more important.

There's no typical job, really, any more than there's a typical game production. The tools are different; the engines are different; the platforms are often different; the genres and fictions are different; the art directors and brand managers are different; the dozens of things that go wrong — and they will go wrong — are different. That's the job, then: to make sure everyone's happy despite everything.

OPM: Is it possible to get great shots by just using games' built-in photo modes, with no Photoshop trickery?

DH: First thing to say there is that Photoshop is grossly overestimated. The only times I've ever used it professionally were to fix things that broke because, well, that's development. I never use it for anything on the website because it simply doesn't make things look better — or at least it's no substitute for good lighting and composition. Whacking the equivalent of an Instagram filter on a shot is lazy more than it's deceitful.

Tools are important, though. It takes all the tools of game development itself to manufacture the more impressive industry screenshots. That process itself isn't unethical: games simply aren't presentable at the point where publishers and platform holders start marketing them. Games announced at E3 need a full suite of



materials for their first-party store pages there and then, while the games themselves are held together with sticky tape. How the tools are used is where ethics come in: given a game's assets, do you build what players will see or what a marketing department wants to show? Thankfully, I've only been asked for the latter once, and that was a long time ago.

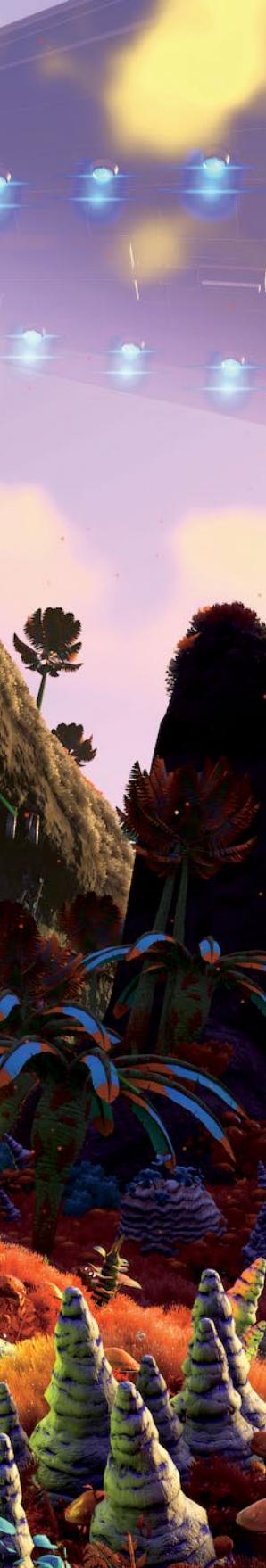
I wish I could say that photo modes alone produce the goods, but a lot of the time they don't. Generally speaking, they're toys rather than tools. A lot of artificial restrictions are placed on them to ensure the game stays within its tested boundaries, especially on console where RAM is very limited. Vanity's another factor: some publishers and developers don't want you screenshotting mesh clipping and low-LOD assets, so your

"I NEVER USE PHOTOSHOP FOR ANYTHING ON THE WEBSITE."

fun with the camera stops barely a few feet from where you'd normally be looking anyway.

OPM: Do you use typical photography techniques when you're creating your game grabs?

DH: Inevitably there's an overlap: colour theory, rules of composition,



» readability, painting with light – a lot of that is more healthily described as just ‘having a good eye’. It’s a fallacy, though, to think that a good photographer is a natural screenshotter and vice-versa. I’m a terrible photographer, and that’s because I don’t know a camera any more than a traditional photographer knows a game engine, game limitations, and how to mitigate one using the other.

OPM: How did the photo mode in No Man’s Sky’s Pathfinder update come about?

DH: They advertised a ‘photo mode’ in their Foundation update which turned out to be nothing more than a toggle for the HUD. I made a big song and dance about this in the direction of an ex-Hello Games friend of mine, and whether through that or coincidence, I got a call from Sean. I gave them a pretty comprehensive design doc with UI mockups, all the menu options, etc, and was pretty stunned when it appeared in game almost to the letter. I can’t credit them enough for how receptive they were to the whole thing.

OPM: What do you think makes a good photo mode? Or prevents one from being very good?

DH: This bleeds into the last question a bit, because one of the big conversations we had about No Man’s Sky was the bounding sphere of the camera. This is where almost all photo

modes get it wrong: how you control the camera, and how far you can move it. Put simply, the more a photo mode diverges from the debug camera tools already used in development, the worse it gets.

There are a lot of legitimate reasons when you’re talking about consoles, where moving the camera and adjusting field of view can jeopardise how a game is optimised: how it culls geometry and scales detail, animation, and so on. Games are meticulously QA’d and that can’t just go out the window for the sake of a photo mode, so the photo mode suffers.

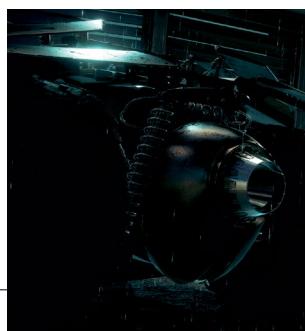
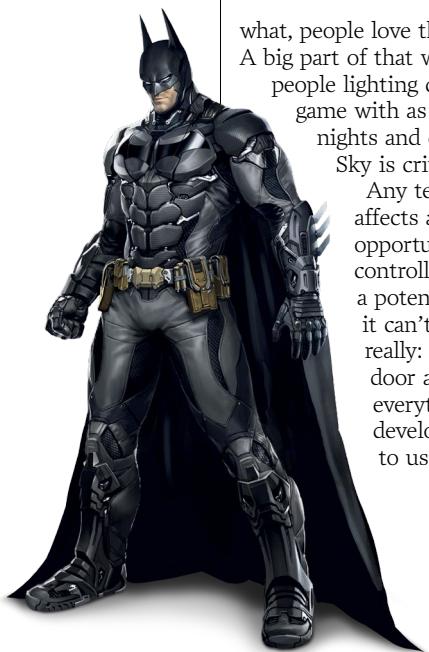
That kind of compromise shouldn’t be taken lightly, though. It’s a major quality of life issue, which is why we ended up doubling the bounding sphere for No Man’s Sky. And guess

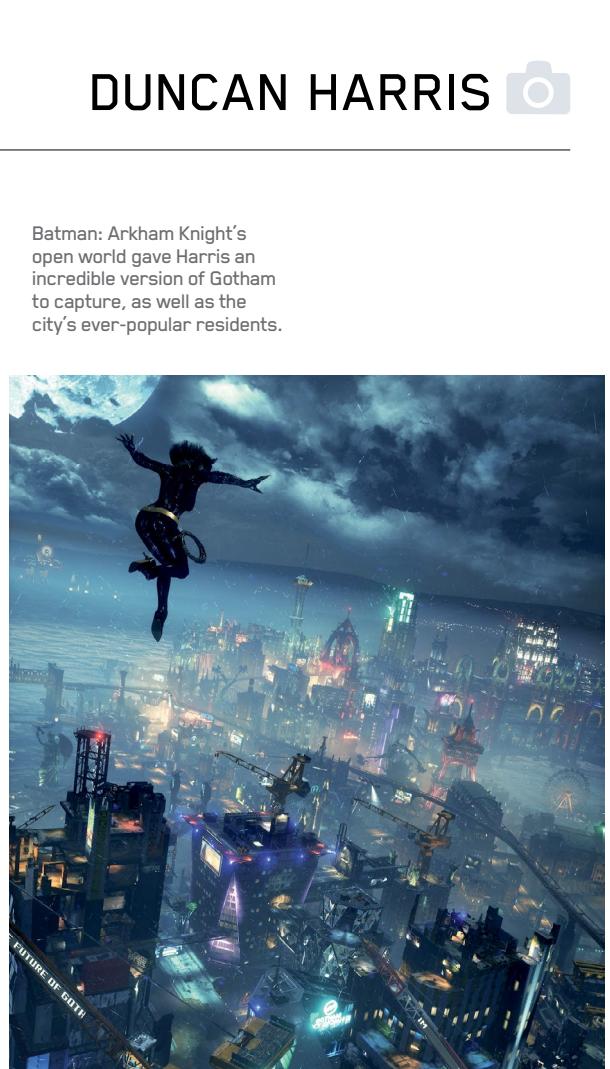
“WE ENDED UP DOUBLING THE BOUNDING SPHERE FOR NO MAN’S SKY.”

what, people love that photo mode. A big part of that was also giving people lighting control, which in a game with as many different nights and days as No Man’s Sky is critical.

Any technology that affects a game’s look is an opportunity when controlled by a player, and a potential problem when it can’t be. That’s it, really: leave vanity at the door and give players everything that you, as a developer, would expect to use yourself.

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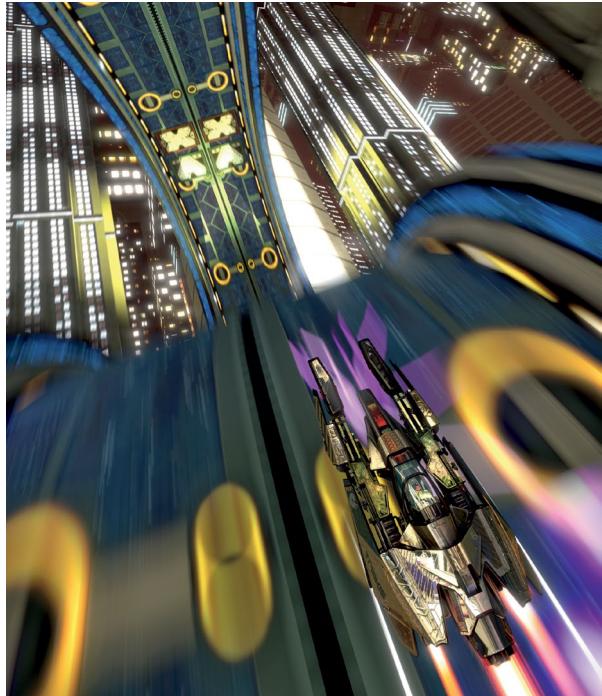


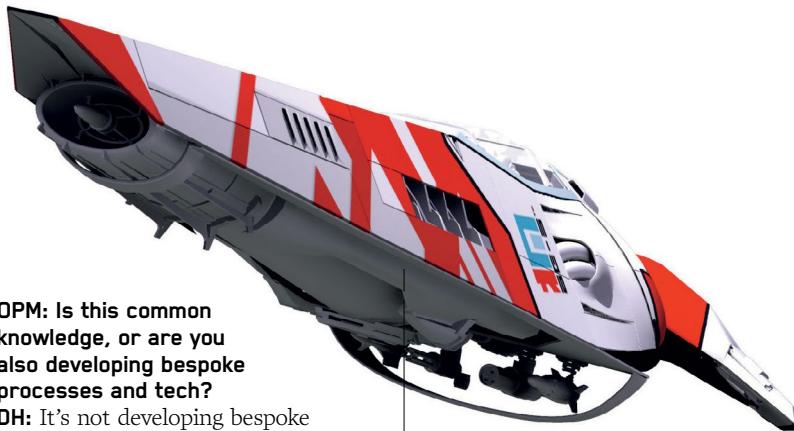
021



INTERVIEW

To get shots as good as these in WipEout: Omega Collection you're going to need to relegate winning to second place.





» **OPM: Is this common knowledge, or are you also developing bespoke processes and tech?**

DH: It's not developing bespoke tech so much as reverse-engineering existing tech for greater control. I wouldn't be able to motivate myself to do something so fundamentally trivial as this if it were never more than tourism, which is all that photo modes often allow.

With pretty much any game I'll use a debugger to map out and control instructions and regions of memory affecting how the game looks – how its technology behaves. The post-processing component, for example, controls things like depth of field, bloom, tonemapping, camera noise, and colour grading. And sometimes you're doing that to remove rather than add things, for example chromatic aberration or any image-distorting 'filmic' effects. You'll never get an image that truly pops if you're working with blurry pixels.

Other stuff I'll often go for is fog control, which can be vital for separating foreground and background, and even control of character meshes and physics properties while the game is paused, which was crucial to the recent Street Fighter V shots.

OPM How important are game sharing tools, like photo modes? And how have they changed how we share and experience games?

DH: They're certainly important or they wouldn't be commanding the time it takes to include and test them. The question is for whom are they important? Are they truly creative tools, are they little more than volunteer PR, or somewhere in

"YOU'LL OFTEN SEE GAME ARTISTS THANK PEOPLE WHO SHARE SCREENSHOTS."

between? I'd say it's the last of those. Most photo modes are structured to create fairly generic publicity shots, albeit at consumer-end resolution and detail. But people love using them and sharing the results, and you can't begrudge anything that wrings more out of games that take so much time and talent to produce. You'll often see game artists thank people who share screenshots of their models, textures, characters or environments, so that's your importance right there. ■



HOW TO...

KEEP YOUR SHOTS READABLE

**EXPERT TIP**

"What's the monkey doing with that trumpet full of beans? Oh wait, it's Gran Turismo." This scenario is unacceptable. No-one should be asking who or what on their second or third glance. Use the

thumbnail test: see how small you can make your shot before it's unintelligible. (The smaller the better, obviously.)

In this example from Middle-Earth: Shadow Of Mordor, the light draws the

eye to Lithariel, a contrasting background makes it clear she's not giving the orc a haircut, and the ridiculous number of other orcs becomes a useful framing tool.



MIDDLE-EARTH: SHADOW OF MORDOR

One Ranger to rule (and gut) them all



PUB: WARNER BROS DEV: MONOLITH PRODUCTIONS REVIEWED OPM #103, 8/10



025

WHAT WE SAID

"A CAVE-TROLL-STRONG FANTASY THAT ANCHORS THE SPIRIT OF THE FILMS TO A BRILLIANTLY EXECUTED ENEMY SYSTEM."

DAVE MEIKLEHAM

 INTERVIEW





THE GRAND TOUR

Jim diGriz reveals why being trackside always inspires him, and why getting distracted is par for the course for a great game photo

Gran Turismo 3 was the game that gave Jim diGriz the photo mode bug. His passion has since left the track to include grabbing artistic shots from games as varied as Mad Max's epic spaces and Uncharted 4, where he looks for the "Drake-ness" in the scene. We catch up with diGriz to learn a trick or two capturing Nate's best angle.

OPM: You clearly like Driveclub. What do you like about its photo mode?

Jim diGriz: Apart from the fine details the cars and bikes were rendered in, I love the dynamic qualities to weather and sky, and, of course, the trackside environment such as wind, litter, balloons, leaves, flags, and smoke. What is best for me, though, is the versatility of its functionality. A picture can be made to be very different, depending on what functions you choose to emphasise the image with.

OPM: How long do you spend trying to get the perfect shot?

JD: Actually, I'm a lot sloppier than I should be. I've seen some shots that other gamers have taken that are so perfect – yet I'm happy if I catch a dynamic, unusual moment. I suppose after taking so many pictures I have a kind of feeling for which angle, depth of field and filter would suit the image best. I'd say I spend between three and five minutes per decent shot, taking several support images from similar angles or using a different filter/approach. From those, I'll choose which one works best.

OPM: Do you have a favourite game photo mode and why?

JD: So far, Driveclub has been my

»



INFO

NAME JIM DIGRIZ

WEB BIT.LY/JIM_DIGRIZ

Like a lot of screenshotters, deGriz was lured in by PlayStation's mouthwateringly shiny supercars – but he's just as adept at capturing the spirit of our favourite heroes.

» favourite for its versatility, though Mad Max and Horizon: Zero Dawn are very close contenders, both for different reasons. Mad Max has a truly epic draw distance and Horizon: Zero Dawn gives you the ability to cycle through a full 24 hours. Infamous: Second Son has a stupendous range of photo mode options; the only problem is its tendency to go into photo mode mid-action due to the function placement. Uncharted 4, with its luscious colours and textures, shouldn't be forgotten. The UI can take a while to get used to but it can bear great fruit. Last but not least would be the remastered WipEout: Omega Collection, great for its visceral feeling of speed.

OPM: What advice can you give?

JD: Something taught to me at art school: move around the subject, if possible, until you find an angle or juxtaposition of shapes or light and dark (the basics of image composition) that 'feels right' to you. There's also another trick called 'negative space', which is everything else not a part of the focal group and how that balances against the subject. Usually they are separated by tone or light and darkness; a strong negative space can be as important as the rest of the composition. What I personally look for is getting an image that's different from everyone else's.

OPM: Do you take inspiration from photography and photo techniques?

JD: I took basic photography during art foundation at college but haven't really kept up with it since. I do appreciate a lot of photography, and must have subconsciously absorbed things like light and dark balance, especially in black-and-white pictures.

OPM: Do you stop a game if you spot something that could make a shot?

JD: Absolutely. With some that's luckily not needed, like Driveclub and Gran Turismo 5 or 6 with its ability to save replays. For most games, though, I'm forever getting in a pickle as I get distracted by something that has caught my attention and I enter photo mode to try to capture it. I have to then get out of trouble once back into the game – not always easy. I'm in the

process of playing through Uncharted 4 again, fully utilising the slow-motion modifier and with the foreknowledge of what's coming next to help set up a great shot.

OPM: What would your key tips be to taking shots in Uncharted 4?

JD: First, balance action and beauty in the scene – these are the essence of the Uncharted games. Second, move around to find the best angle possible. Third, experiment with focal distance plus depth of field for some artistic blurring. Fourth: choose the right filter for the location and moment. Lastly, look for the Drake-ness in the picture, his humour, typical movements. Even if you're not focused on him, make it an unmistakable Uncharted picture.

OPM: Is there a knack for knowing when and where to use a filter?

JD: I think it's a personal preference. You do get a feel for when a particular

"ACTION AND BEAUTY ARE THE ESSENCE OF UNCHARTED."

filter could be best, though, especially if you spend a good deal of time with each particular game's photo mode; you become familiar with its quirks.

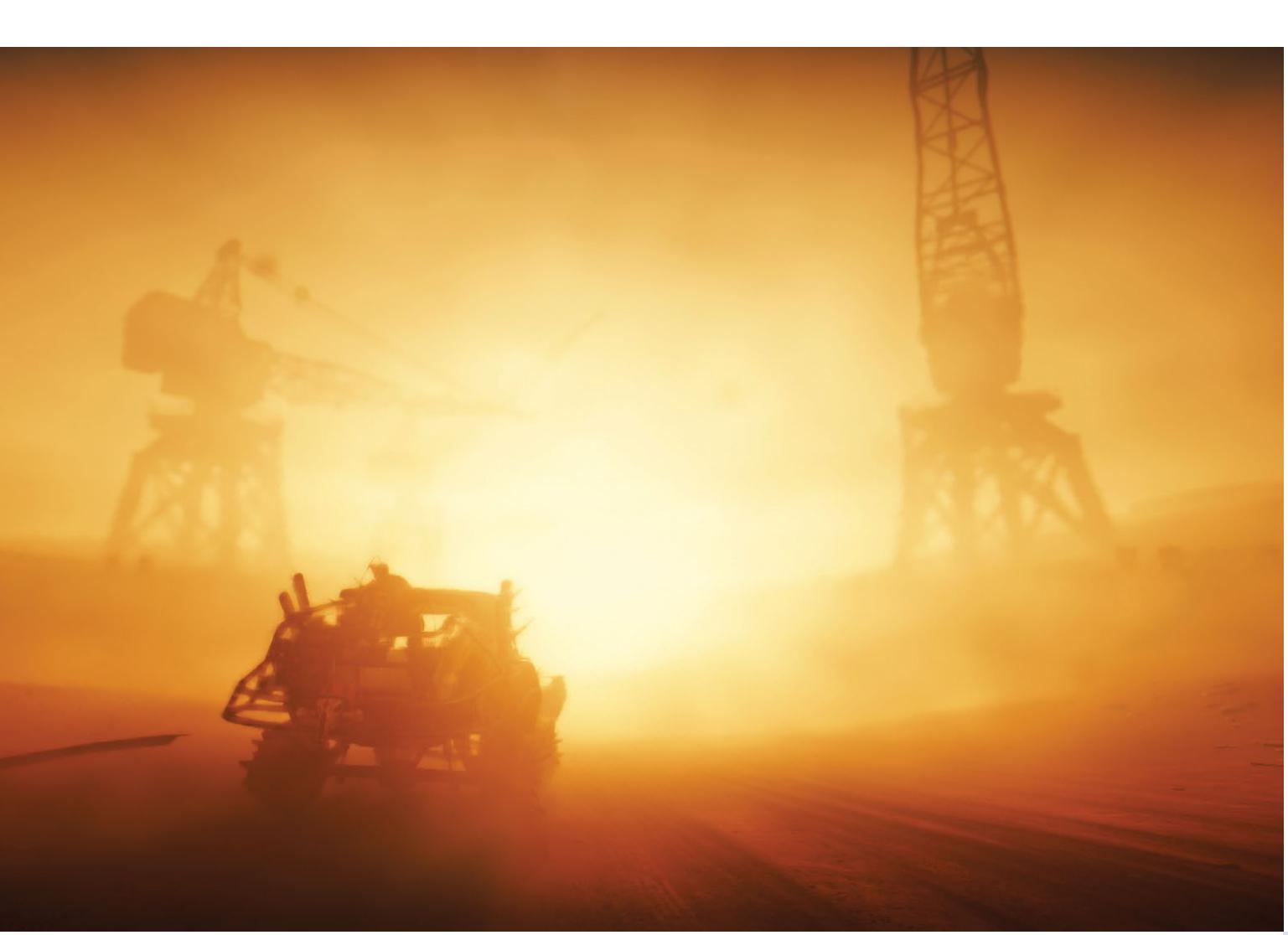
OPM: Is there a file format you'd recommend, such as .png?

JIM: I definitely like .png for its lossless quality aspect – I was happy when that update came to the PS4.

OPM: What's next for you?

JIM: That's easy: Gran Turismo Sport. I have a feeling of excitement whenever I see an update about it. Gran Turismo 5 was the start of my photo mode obsession and Gran Turismo 6 only strengthened that feeling. I also like the look of Gravel by Milestone now that they have the Unreal 4 game engine. Their photo modes have been limited in the past but are improving apace. Of course, I still have a few other games already at home to explore such as The Order: 1886 and MXGP3 for some crazy dirt bike drama. ■





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Mad Max's incredible draw distances caught deGriz's eye - resulting in him creating these intense game shots.



HOW TO... OBEY THE RULE OF THIRDS



EXPERT TIP

You shouldn't obey it all the time, perhaps, but it's not called a rule for nothing. Basically, divide your subject into nine sections, and you want to have something of interest where the sections meet, or use the grid to offset the main focal point. Understand its use in just about any visual composition, and keep it at the back of your mind until it becomes instinctive. The fact is that

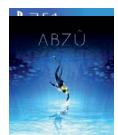
everyone understands the rule of thirds to some fundamental degree; even if they've never heard of it, they'll sense the loss of power in your shot if your subject is simply centred, or your composition lazy.

In this image from *Abzû* (right), we see the rule of thirds applied vertically. A horizontal example would be the scene from *Spec Ops: The Line* (below).





031



ABZÛ

At the bottom of the beautiful briny sea...

PUB SOS GAMES DEV GIANT SQUID REVIEWED OPM #127, 8/10

WHAT WE SAID

"AN UNDOUBTEDLY CAPTIVATING EXPERIENCE THAT HAS SOME OF THE STRONGEST ART DESIGN ON PLAYSTATION 4."
DAVID HOUGHTON





MAKING THE CAR A STAR

You may never see many supercars for real, but as Rafał Ludera proves, that's no barrier to taking fantastic shots of them

033

Car photography is a specialised art – all those shiny, reflective surfaces prove a real, but often addictive challenge to anyone wielding a camera. Given how beautifully recreated cars are in some current-gen racing games, it's no surprise that capturing them in photo mode can be every bit as captivating.

Rafał Ludera knows that all too well: superb shots from games like Gran Turismo are his forte. Whether it's the perfect details or the excitement of racing, he captures it all with photo mode. We can't wait to see what he'll come up with once Gran Turismo Sport is in his hands. For now, let's read how he achieves his shots... 



INFO

NAME RAFAŁ LUDERA
WEB 23RL23.IMGUR.COM

Ludera goes by the name RL_23 online and can be found on GTPlanet. He has a passion for photography, videogames, cars, and motorsports.

"I'M INSPIRED MOSTLY BY REAL-LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY."

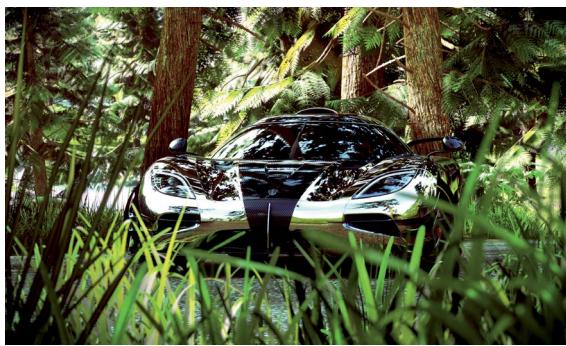
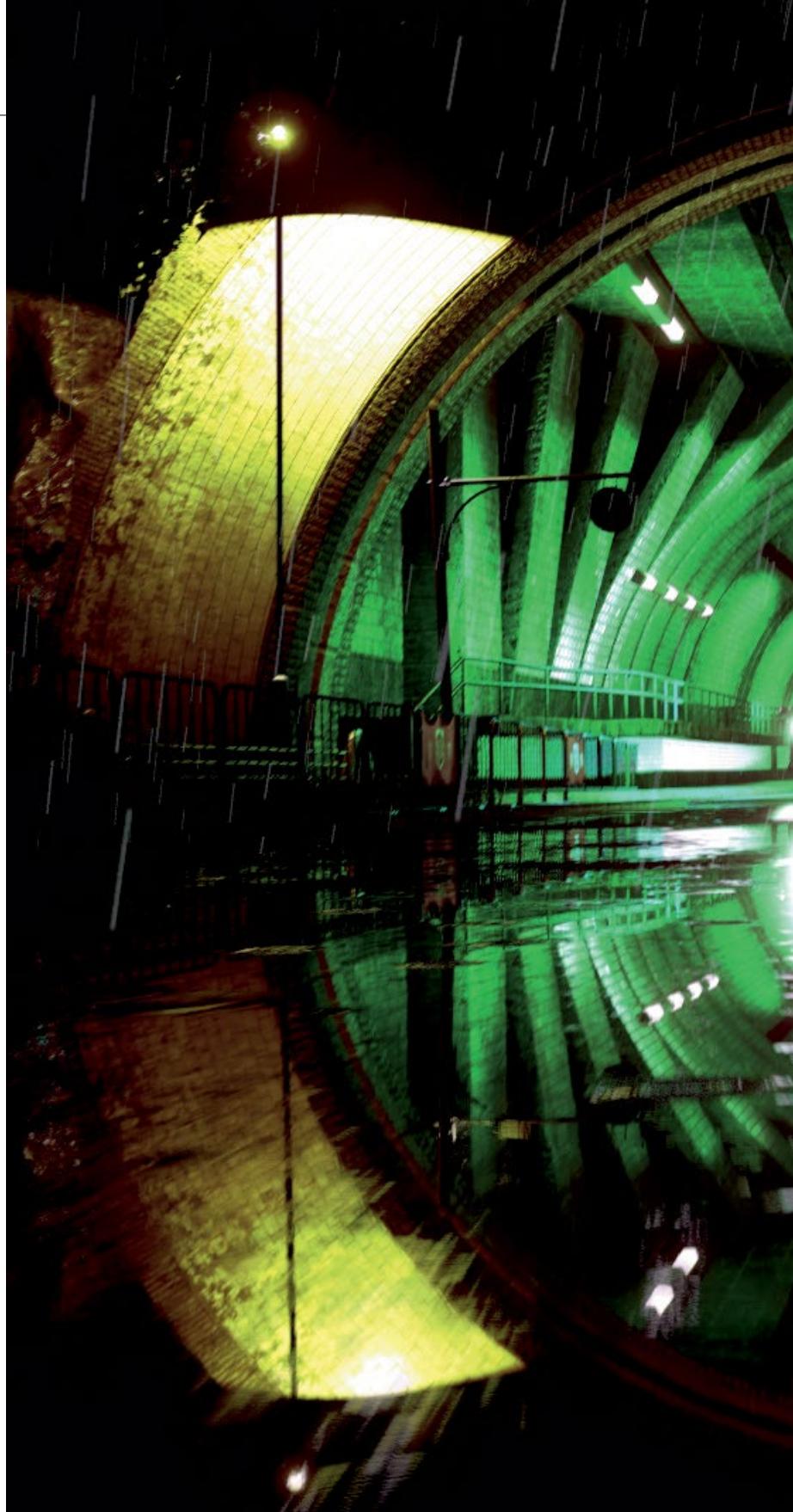
» **OPM:** How long have you been using game photo modes and taking shots?

Rafat Ludera: I've been using game photo modes since Gran Turismo 4 on PlayStation 2. It was my first game with the option to take pictures. It gave me hours of fun, and from that time I was addicted to virtual photography. Thanks to games I'm able to take pictures of cars, places, persons and situations that are out of reach in the real world.

OPM: What inspires you to take a great shot from a game?

RL: I'm inspired mostly by real-life photography. I'm taking rally and car event pictures, so I try to use some solutions learned from them in photo mode. Besides motorsport I'm doing photos of many things like the sky, landscapes, animals, architecture, and almost everything around me. All this gives me a lot of fresh ideas when I'm creating game shots. Also, different media such as other games, manga, movies, or real life, and virtual pictures taken by other people are great sources of inspiration.

»





035



Ludera advises putting the camera somewhere unexpected, to capture a unique view of the cars.



036

A lot of work goes into the lighting and reflections in games – which means you get stunningly-lit shots.





➤ **OPM: Do you have to enjoy the games to take great photos?**

RL: Yes, if a game allows me to create really gorgeous shots or a photo mode is simply incredible I can play the game only to take pictures. For me, photo modes increase a person's creativity and give games a second life. In some titles I've spent a lot more time with a photo mode than with main campaign and other attractions prepared by creators.

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OPM: What makes Driveclub so good for game photos?

RL: Driveclub is accessible, smart, very fast, and its photo mode is easy to use, with many useful options that let gamers create outstanding shots in a simple way. But well-constructed photo tools aren't enough, there are also other very important aspects. [It has] Stunning visuals with very natural-looking light and an advanced reflection system that makes game shots look like real-life photos. There's an incredible attention to detail, not only in the cars but also in the environment, increasing the possibility

»

“FOR ME, PHOTO MODES GIVE GAMES A SECOND LIFE.”



"SEE HOW EACH CAMERA OPTION WORKS ALONE, THEN MIX THEM."

» of taking unique, really creative pictures. Real time/weather simulation can change the atmosphere and look of the tracks drastically too, making them feel more lively and interesting – each lap can be a completely different to experience. Experimenting with weather settings to make some superb photos is a lot of fun and extends the game's replayability. All these things makes Driveclub exceptional compared to other titles.

OPM: What advice can you offer?

RL: Experiment with all the camera options, check how each option works alone, then mix them up. Placing the camera in unexpected places is the key to marvellous shots. Gamers should pay more attention to the environment and small details, finding things that sometimes can escape their attention when simply playing each game. I'd say looking around carefully, going off-track or the wrong way around a circuit, and exploring the game world's borders away from main path can often unveil unique photo opportunities and outstanding spots. ■





Weather can play a big part in a great racing screenshot. Lightning is a particular favourite of Ludera.



EXPERT TIPS

HOW TO... USE NATURAL FRAMING



EXPERT TIP

A frame can be anything in the environment – furniture, enemies, fog, trees, or even anonymous bits of geometry – that brings structure to your shot while also adding depth and contrast. Used in combination with foreground depth of field, framing can heighten the points of interest in a shot, hiding any low-resolution textures in the process.

Here we see three examples of variously explicit natural framing. Using the door frame in Batman: Arkham Knight required the camera to be rolled; in No Man's Sky, this rock formation practically demanded something happening within; less obvious, but arguably most effective, are these partygoers from BioShock: Infinite, providing not just framing but context for the scene.

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NO MAN'S SKY

Flawed, but full of stars

PUB SONY DEV HELLO GAMES REVIEWED OPM #127, 8/10

WHAT WE SAID

"POSTCARD-WORTHY SPACE TOURISM, BEST DIPPED IN AND OUT OF IN SHORT SPELLS TO AVOID MECHANICAL FRUSTRATIONS."
JEN SIMPKINS





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 INTERVIEW





TAKING GREAT SHOTS

We chat to Craig Whitaker about his passion for capturing gaming's many magic moments, and how you can do it too...

When it comes to hobbies, Craig Whitaker is dedicated to grabbing the best and most unusual moments from some of PlayStation's best games. With a Flickr portfolio stretching into hundreds of virtual 'photos' Whitaker's passion is fast overtaking his life. Whitaker started by grabbing shots on PS3, now focuses on PS4, and even admits to playing some games he's not keen on just to get the perfect shot. We find out how far he'll go for a grab.

OPM: Which game do you think has the best photo mode?

Craig Whitaker: This is hard to choose as there are now so many games with good photo modes in them, but not all are easy to use or have the right camera settings. I will narrow it down to GT6 for the PS3, and for the PS4 between The Order: 1886, for its detail, and Driveclub, for its ease of use. But choosing only one, Driveclub would take the honour for my interest in cars and the photos it produces every time.

OPM: Are there easier photo modes than others, and what do you think makes a good photo mode?

CW: Yes, definitely, and this to me is what makes you come back and take more photos. The biggest thing is the ease of use within the game, for example by pressing the touchpad and then having real camera settings to hand in one menu that saves your settings each time, so you can take a few shots around that subject instantly or move forward and take another. Also being able to fully zoom in and out, around, and pan easily helps a lot as well as having good exposure, a mix

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INFO



NAME CRAIG WHITAKER
WEB [BIT.LY/CRAIG_WHITAKER](http://bit.ly/craig_whitaker)
As well as appreciating the details in The Order: 1886, Whitaker's a real car nut. Check out his Flickr stream for fantastic screenshots from Gran Turismo 6, MXGP3, and more.

Whitaker loves the rich details in *The Order: 1886* – but his screen saver is a car shot. Who doesn't love a shiny car shot, eh?



044

» of filters, a powerful zoom lens, a strong aperture/blur and a good sense of speed (shutter speed).

OPM: Do you have a favourite screenshot, and how long did it take you to get it right?

CW: I have so many I like, but recently I have had this shot [see above] as my screen saver. I love this car and track combination, but I knew it was right as soon as I had set up the photo and saw the car racing up the road with the sun creeping over the tree line. It didn't take too long to take and set up the composition. Only a few minutes or so.

OPM: How much time do you normally spend on a shot?

CW: I like to take a few good shots at a time knowing I will use all of them, and this typically takes five to 10 minutes per shot during the game.



OPM: Are filters crucial to getting a great shot? What do you use?

CW: It depends on the game, but most now come with enough filters to get a good idea on the TV what it will look like finished. I do use external filters occasionally, for example if I want to go for a retro '70s feel with an older car or to brighten up the photo I would increase the contrast or lighting on a basic photo editor. I also have learnt a lot from all the helpful guys in the photo mode community.

The only real trick I use to get a nice clean clear picture is to try to imagine it is a real camera and go for a photo-realistic shot and background setting. Zoom right out as far as you can go and circle around the subject for a few seconds to get a good idea where to start your photo.

OPM: What advice can you give to readers to get great shots?

CW: Are there particular composition ideas you play with, or look for in a game – rain, interesting VFX?

CW: My advice would be to take your time, and try to go on all the excellent forums and photo sections out there. All my shots have only got better

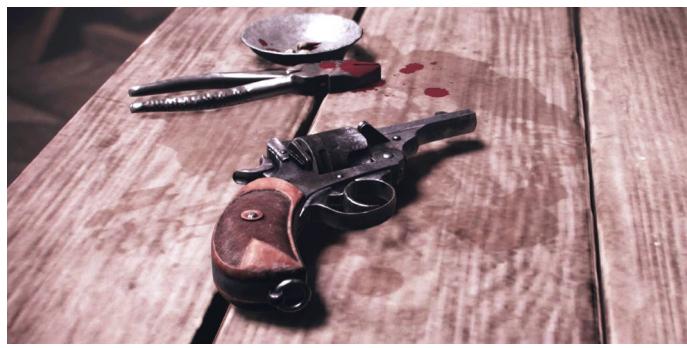
over the last few years by practicing more and more.

Also look carefully at other people's work, magazine promotional shots, or posters. I sometimes buy car magazines and look at those for inspiration. Composition will eventually come naturally to you, and everyone has their own art and style which will shine through. Some are lucky enough to have a good eye for detail naturally.

Experiment with rotation and close ups when you feel confident enough to, and always try to stick to the basic composition rules by having the photo in nine sections in your mind (rule of thirds), or if this is not possible – say you want to zoom in to the subject – then take the surroundings in and don't cut off the top of a mountain for example, just zoom out a touch to get the whole picture. It comes with practice, so don't worry. I do like to have some cloudy skies or raindrops to focus on as the full sun shots are great but sometimes hard to pull off, as in real life.

OPM: Do you have an interest in photography and does it help when taking a great photo mode shot?

CW: Yes I have always been keen on art, design, and photography but



always as a hobby and I have never taken it further. I have been to a few car shows recently with all my camera equipment and this has helped with panning techniques and composition. It has actually helped both ways from having ideas to use in-game to using ideas from a real camera once I get back on the PS4. Getting the composition, exposure, lighting and the shutter speed right can make or break the photo in-game or out there in the real world.

OPM: When playing games, are you always looking for interesting areas or moments in a game for a photo mode? Does it make you play games in a different way?

CW: Yes always, I use replays quite a lot which is great to watch and then go back to, but also some great shots have come from being spontaneous and grabbing the moment like you would with a real camera. I am always on the look out for a great photo. Even if the game doesn't have a photo mode, with the excellent screen capture available on the PS4 it is so easy to capture that moment.

OPM: Would you consider playing a game just to use its photo mode, even if you weren't into the game?

Or to get good shots, do you need to like the game?

CW: Good question, I was actually thinking this the other day, and yes, I have bought a few games just for the photo mode, but having done this, I personally think it really helps to enjoy the game as much as you can first and foremost as the enthusiasm will shine through the artwork/photos. If the game has a really good photo mode then of course good shots will come out, but only as far as you want to play the game through.

"IT REALLY HELPS TO ENJOY THE GAME AS MUCH AS YOU CAN."

OPM: Have you seen an improvement in photo modes in PS4 games since you began doing this?

CW: I started back on the PS3 mainly just for my own enjoyment looking through them. Then PS4 came and yes, I have seen more and more games have photo modes now, and they are improving all the time. I have moved up to a PS4 Pro, and to see the photos in full 4k resolution is

amazing. I am really looking forward to all the new releases later this year as it looks like most of them will have an updated or new photo mode to try. I think every game should have one for longevity of the game, advertising, and exposure for the developer and studio.

Photo modes bring enjoyment, relaxation, a hobby for those that can not get out to the real world, and unbelievable photos you could not possibly take in real life, such as down low on a road, on the wheel of a car, or high up above a building. With them getting more and more lifelike I can see them adding great value for the consumer, and also helping the studios get their games out in the community. Social media sites really help with that – having the actual studios listening and giving their welcome feedback on photos, promoting popular shots, and letting other fans see their game in a different light they may not have thought of.

Knowing the hard-working game developers who actually built the game really like and enjoy your photos is a very nice feeling, and gives satisfaction to all. I do think a photo mode will be an essential part built into any new game engine on new-release games in the future. ■



HOW TO... BE WISE TO FIELD OF VIEW



EXPERT TIP

Gamers have been groomed by internet scammers to assume that low field of view is nauseatingly bad. In screenshots it's the opposite. Trying to cram everything in using high FOV will make the mightiest boss look small, and the most majestic landscape look like a fishbowl of sky. Low FOV reduces

distortion and makes everything effectively bigger, giving shape and character to your scene. A word of caution, though: skyboxes in games (those big painted landscapes around 3D maps) are designed with specific FOVs in mind. They look terrible in close-up, so avoid or obscure them when FOV is low.

Played normally in-game, this scene from Dark Souls sees you either staring at the whole Gaping Dragon from a distance, or at his head up close, neither of which is ideal. Pulling the camera far away and using a low FOV retains the creature's scale while the player fits comfortably in-shot.



DARK SOULS

Try not to break things as this RPG tries to break you



PUB BANDAI NAMCO DEV FROM SOFTWARE REVIEWED OPM #64, 9/10



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WHAT WE SAID

"WHAT MAKES DARK SOULS MAGNIFICENT IS THE WORLD IT CREATES, FILLED WITH SIGHTS AND CONTRAPTION." RICH STANTON

WALKTHROUGH CAPTURING BATTLEFIELD 1

There's something visceral about war photography. In real life, the best war photographers are the ones who manage to convey both a sense of scale and a sense of humanity, like Robert Capa or Don McCullin. Well, they can't photograph your Battlefield 1 exploits, so DICE has given us some tips to turn you into your own photojournalist.

You'll have lots of advantages here: no need to lug an actual camera and

lenses around, nor rolls and rolls of film. (Capa had to carry both to the D-Day landings, and keep them dry.) All you need to do is learn how to use the game's built-in camera.

As well as capturing memories of the game, your photos could help you learn layouts and environments, effectively making your efforts more like reconnaissance than photography. However you use them, we'd love to see your best shots.



Special thanks to DICE's Petri Levälahti for step-by-step images and help.



01 PONDEMONIUM

The free camera really does live up to its name and doesn't limit your creativity. To put things into perspective: on this map (Soissons, from the They Shall Not Pass expansion) the huge 64-player battle takes place far away around the little pond on the centre-left side of the image. We've pulled right out to get a look at the surrounding terrain, and can see how the shadows of clouds fall across the landscape, as well as where field boundaries fall. It gives you a sense of how peaceful things were, before tanks, infantry and air units moved in to destroy the tranquillity.



02 FOLLOW ME!

In Director View you can lock your camera onto players or vehicles and follow them around the battlefield automatically. It's handy if you know someone's likely to do something interesting, like pull off spectacular attacks or take an unusual approach to things. You can orbit your camera around your subject, and apply other camera options (filter, FOV, DOF) if needed. Depth of field can be particularly useful in busy situations as the viewer's eye will be naturally drawn to the sharpest part of the image. Downplay the other areas with some strategic blur.



03 COUNTRY STRIFE

Make use of that free camera and fly away from the battle any time you want and explore your surroundings. The map Fort De Vaux (another one from They Shall Not Pass) is known as a close-quarters grindfest where you fight in trenches as well as within the stone walls of the fort itself, but it's surrounded by harrowing beauty. The countryside has been laid waste. We've applied a sepia filter and FOV 40. Sepia warms up a black-and-white image and usually makes a photo feel 'antique', but in this case it's combined with the mist to give a sense of smoke and burning.



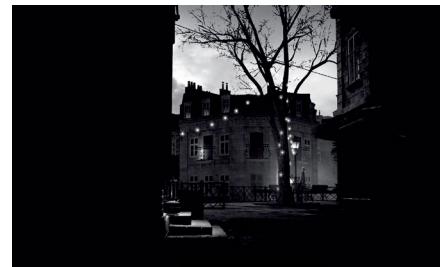
04 FIELD OF SCREAMS

Change your field of view (FOV) to show less or more of the area you're facing. 30 is good default FOV, and that's what we've used here for this shot of Verdun Heights. You often get camera distortions when using higher values, where it has to force a wider-than-natural angle into the frame, though there are times when you might want to use that to add to the sensation of 'wrongness' in an image. Narrow the field of view to pick out points of interest – you can go all the way down to 15 if you really want to show off some details, though you will, naturally, lose some of the context.



05 COLD STEEL

In tip 2 we mentioned using the Depth Of Field (DOF) sliders to set your focus on what matters. Here, again in Verdun Heights, we've combined it with the Noir filter. Removing the colour from a shot is another way to ensure your viewer looks at the critical part of the image. White, yellows and reds will really draw the eye in environments that are mostly browns, greys and blacks (see how you look straight at the fire in the shot for Tip 4?), even with the blur a shallow depth of field provides, and so converting the shot to black and white removes the distraction.



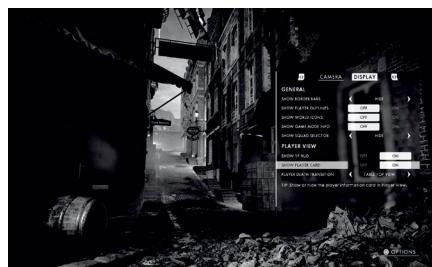
06 DARK CITY

The Noir filter has other uses. It really amplifies the mood in the night maps, like Prise De Tahure here. If we'd used the sepia filter, the scene would look warmer, almost welcoming even, but the coldness of black-and-white makes the shot look ominous instead. We've taken advantage of the buildings either side to create a natural frame, too, so there's only any detail in about 40% of the image. It makes things feel compressed and claustrophobic – ideal for this map, where the narrow streets restrict your actions and can conceal enemies until the last moment.



07 ALLEY-VOUS

You'll find a wealth of options for manipulating your images on the menu. We're taking another shot of Prise De Tahure, and we've turned DOF off completely, because we want to be able to show how the town trails off into the distance, like a long urban gauntlet. We've set the FOV to 30, because there's no point including vast expanses of wall on either side, and this is one of those times when narrowing it to 15 would bear fruit, increasing the sense that the only way to go is forwards. We haven't bothered with a filter, as the colours of fire and lights are useful here.



08 USE YOUR HUD

Don't neglect your Display settings, as they'll be as useful to you as the Camera ones. Things like Game Mode info and player outlines can really spoil a perfectly arranged shot, and destroy the illusion that what you're looking at is a war photo, not an in-game screenshot. That said, perhaps you want to show the excitement of the game, the players around you or the way you're playing, in which case you'll want to make sure one or all of those things are switched on. Think about who you're taking the photos for, and what you want them to feel or learn.



09 HUD DOWN

On the subject of spoiling a perfectly arranged shot, here's the most important tip of them all: hold **Q** on your controller to hide the HUD! This shot from Nivelle Nights has it all: contrast between warmth in the foreground and a cold background, small banks of fire to pull the viewer's eye around the image – a shot that encourages this sort of visual 'interaction' will always be more successful than a flat one viewers can look at and dismiss, and the soldiers in the middle ground to give a sense of scale. Now imagine we'd left our HUD on show. HUD down, soldier!



EXPERT TIPS

HOW TO... STRIKE A POSE



EXPERT TIP

It's hard to think of an environmental screenshot that can't be improved with a character in the foreground. It adds contrast, drama, scale, and thus power to almost any scene – which is why pretty much all of the concept art you'll see has at least one figure within the frame. But how that character's posed has to vibe with the scene around them, whether they're trekking to distant lands, readying their sword for battle, or simply staring in

awe at some towering end-of-game fleshbeast.

It takes time to explore a game's animation system for that one perfect frame, ensuring all the while that your character's in the right position relative to the camera, scenery, and whatever useful patch of fog or lighting you've discovered. In this scene from DMC, the only way to have Dante looking up at this They Live-inspired hellscape was to catch the last few frames of one specific sword-swi





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DMC: DEVIL MAY CRY

More than a quick touch-up, this is Dante's peak

PUB CAPCOM DEV NINJA THEORY REVIEWED OPM #108, 8/10

WHAT WE SAID

"A CONFIDENT REIMAGINING OF A REIMAGINING, DMC'S DEFINITIVE EDITION IS WELL WORTH CONSIDERING."

DAVID HOUGHTON





LIFE IMITATES GAMES

How game photo modes inspired Nathan Todd to pick up a camera for real – and that fed back into his screenshots

Time spent running with *Horizon: Zero Dawn*'s Thunderjaws and capturing the fading light out in the wilds inspired Nathan Todd to take up photography for real. The line between game photos and real life is blurring as PlayStation 4's power and advancements in photo mode technology improves.

OPM: What do you like about *Horizon: Zero Dawn*'s photo mode?

Nathan Todd: The opportunity to create and keep your own photos and memories from such a stunning-looking game. The fact that it features a variety of decent real photography features, such as the depth of field effect, and the fact you can pretty much do anything you like to get that perfect shot, with the new features of making Aloy pose and change her facial expressions – and the option to remove her completely gives a whole other dimension to possible shots to take. The photo mode feature allows you to notice the smallest details that you probably wouldn't have noticed when trying to kill that Thunderjaw. For example, the details of the grass and the way the horizon looks with the lighting or the leaf cutter ants crawling up the tree in the sunset. The little things make the big picture.

OPM: Does it take you a long time to get the perfect shot?

NT: It can vary massively, from literally point and shoot to taking well over an hour to set up and make sure the shot is 100% how I want it.

OPM: What filters do you use?

NT: Whatever the mood calls for. There is no set script for filters; I will



INFO



NAME NATHAN TODD

WEB TWITTER.COM/KINGCOZZIE

While you don't have to be a keen photographer to use photo modes, Todd's found being creative with one improves the other, and vice versa. Your gaming skills can affect your life.

» try them all and just go with the one I think makes the better shot. Some shots call for black-and-white and some call for vibrant colours. Regarding tricks, the 'rule of thirds' does help to set up a good picture in my opinion, not having the main subject slap-bang in the middle of the picture, making depth perception shots (the one with the Stormbird leaving Aloy's hand), and I usually give a slight tilt to my shot – I'm not sure why, it's just a habit I have developed.

OPM: Do you have any tips?

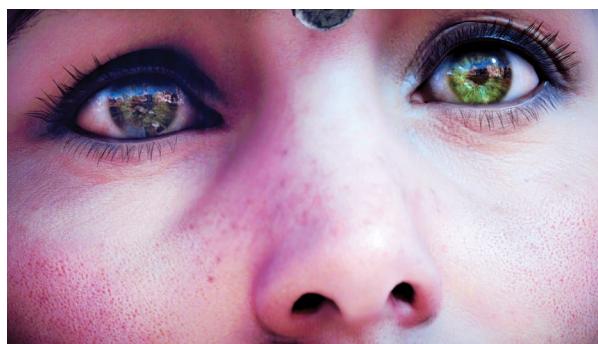
NT: The main advice I can give to budding in-game photographers, and players in general, is just do what you want to do – there is no right or wrong picture. You take an image because you like it; if everyone else does that's a bonus. A photo is a personal thing. If you like black-and-white, take black-and-white, if you like landscapes take them. But do try to vary every now and again, it's good for your creativity. Also try to add a little something extra or think outside the box with your shots. Look at what's in the foreground and what's in the background, consider if it's better

"THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG PICTURE."

landscape or portrait. Do you zoom in or try to capture as much as possible? There is a lot to think about to get the picture looking how I imagined it.

OPM: Does it help at all to understand photography?

NT: That's a tricky one. In some aspects yes, and some no. For me, in-game photography made me want to try real photography. The ability to capture shots of things I could never see in real life was very appealing, from Driveclub's supercars to Uncharted 4's vast scenery and onto Horizon's stunning world and beautiful machines. Due to all these factors I now class myself as an amateur photographer, and have taken what I've learnt from game photography into real life. With practice and knowledge I now take what I do with my camera and apply it to games as much as their photo mode settings allow me to. So, yes, it helps to know what makes a good photo, but it's also a no. Like I've said before, a photo is such a personal item, you take what shots you like. ■





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Back in May, *Horizon: Zero Dawn*'s photo mode got an update that allowed you to make Aloy look at the camera – any photographer will tell you the difference eye contact makes to a portrait – or even make her pose.



EXPERT TIPS

HOW TO...

AVOID FALLING FOR GIMMICKS



EXPERT TIP

Don't use technology for the sake of it, or to excess, even if developers are often as guilty of this as anyone. Depth of field is great for making characters stand out and details pop, for example, but will simulate glaucoma if used too much. A vignette can help mute distracting edges or give an ethereal look to a scene, but should never be used on full-bright

pixels where it becomes a distraction in itself.

This shot of Lara uses depth of field to focus on Rise Of The Tomb Raider's gorgeous eye shaders, skin textures, sub-surface scattering and procedural animation. The detail would still be there without it, but softening the periphery by reducing the depth of field heightens its impact.





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RISE OF THE TOMB RAIDER

Lara's most recent, exciting adventure

PUB SQUARE ENIX DEV CRYSTAL DYNAMICS REVIEWED OPM #129, 9/10

WHAT WE SAID

"THE CAMPAIGN ISN'T QUITE AS THRILLING AS THE 2013 REBOOT, BUT MECHANICALLY THIS IS LEAPS AHEAD OF LARA'S LAST AND THE EXTRA MODES ARE SUBLIME."

MATTHEW PELLETT

WALKTHROUGH CAPTURING UNCHARTED 4

Chances are, if you've spent hours in elegant Italy, on the windswept coast of Scotland, or in the wilds of Madagascar then either you've had the best gap year a trust fund can buy, or you've played a lot of Uncharted 4. We've played a lot of Uncharted 4.

Like all good travellers you want to share your experiences, so mastering the photo mode in Naughty Dog's classic – one of the best in-game

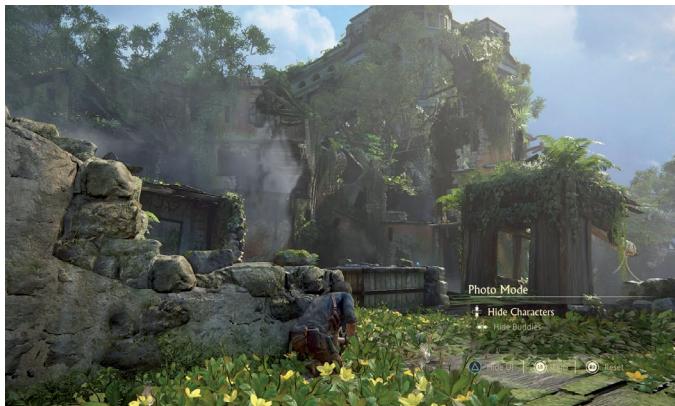
photography modes around – is a must. But it's also a little fiddly, because it has so many options and filters, it's hard to jump right in and get the perfect shot from the get-go.

To help, we've compiled some tips to mastering the game's photo mode and capturing the perfect moment for posterity, and to get lots of kudos from friends and fans alike. Better still, these tips will help with other Sony games' photo modes.





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01 LEARN TO LOOK

A basic one, but before you even consider hitting the grab button you'll need to train your eye to spot an interesting frame or event, and this means turning off your gamer's brain and activating your photographer's instincts, as a good shot need not be a great game moment. Try going in with a plan, perhaps to take themed shots, such as street life, fauna and flora, or landscapes.



02 GRASP THE CONTROLS

Master the controls. Using 'dolly' settings, Uncharted 4's photo mode enables you to use **L1** and **R1** to move in and out of frame, tilt up and down using the D-pad's left and right buttons, and offset the camera on the left thumbstick, while the right thumbstick is used to circle the scene. Harnessing all of these will enable you to do the fun stuff and really improve your shots.



03 BIG UP THE BLUR

The Depth Of Field option blurs out parts of the image, and essentially means you can opt to focus the camera on specific characters or areas of a scene, framing focus and pulling the viewer's eye to what's important. It's easy to use: simply increase the intensity of the effect using **L1**, set the distance you want, and then use **R1** to decrease the intensity until you have an image you like.



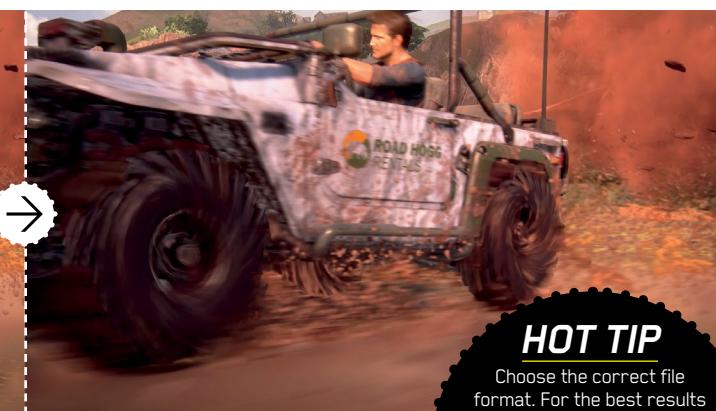
04 GET THE TOYTOWN LOOK

The Depth Of Field option is also handy for imitating the effect of a tilt-shift lens, which photographers use to make standard scenes look as if the subject were a model town or environment. By doubling the amount of blur at the bottom and top of a scene and leaving the centre in focus you can create the illusion the viewer is looking at a miniature model.



05 ADD MOTION BLURRING

This is a technique best used sparingly as it can make your shots look forced if you get too heavy-handed with it. However, adding motion blur to action shots, explosions, and death-defying leaps of faith can really ram home the sense of fast, dramatic movement. Experiment with



the technique, too, because there's more to motion blur than simply giving the impression of movement. Try using it to create focal points in a scene where your eye is drawn to the one thing that's moving (or not), or to create abstract shapes from a shot, for example.

HOT TIP

Choose the correct file format. For the best results save your shots as .png files, they compress the data less than .jpg. Do this by going to the Share menu and pressing Options>Sharing and Broadcast Settings>Screenshot Settings, and changing Image Format to PNG.



06 HIDE YOUR HEROES

You don't always want a great lump of a human getting in the way of the scenery, even if that lump's called Nathan Drake. The Hide Characters option is a great tool hidden away in Uncharted 4's photo mode. It removes the characters from the scene and so frees you up to take beautiful, uncluttered environment

shots. Better still, the setting has layers of options, meaning you can remove Nate and other player characters, enemies, or civilians and solely focus on the environment's features, the architecture, and scenery, everywhere from the Scottish Highlands to tropical Madagascar.



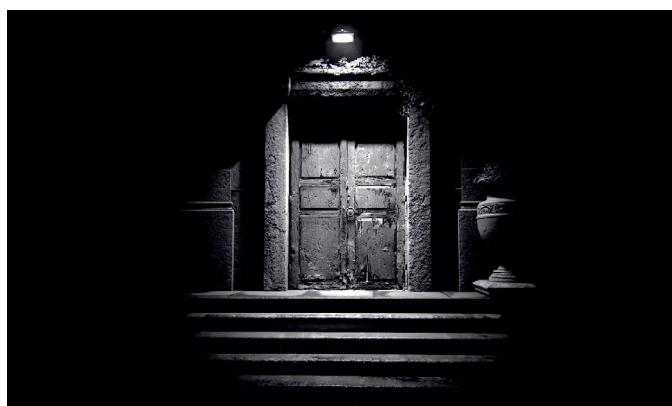
07 USING FILTERS

If you take a lot of selfies then you may as well gloss over this one as you already know how it works, but for the rest of us, using filters is a step into the dark side of digital photography. Uncharted 4's photo mode includes a lot of pre-set filters, including vintage effects for warm shots, and good old black-and-white for a classy look. These are activated and cycled on the D-pad.



08 CRAZY FILTERS

On top of the regular sorts of photo filter, there are some weird alternative ones to unlock in the game, which create effects like turning everything into cel-shaded geometry or pixels. To access these filters, simply pause the game and select Render Modes from the Bonus option screen. You'll need to unlock some, and pay with game coins for others.



09 FRAME AND STYLE

A simple trick, but one that can greatly affect the feel of your shots, is to make use of the framing options. Again, simply cycle through them on the D-pad to either frame your shot, add cinematic widescreen borders or, better still, use the Vignette option to light a focal point and feather around it to darkness (Intensity can be adjusted using **L1** and **R1**).



10 FINISHING TOUCHES

So you've got the ultimate shot. Now what? It's time to finesse the photo by adjusting things like Sharpness, Brightness, and Saturation – this is usually done in software like Photoshop but you can do it within the photo mode in real time. We'd also suggest familiarising yourself with Chromatic Aberration (colour fringing), and cinematic Film Grain option (adds speckles for a grindhouse feel).

HOW TO...
BEWARE THE DUTCH**EXPERT TIP**

A Dutch angle is a conspicuous use of camera roll which makes the entire shot look askew. Possibly the most common amateur mistake in screenshots is to use it willy-nilly simply because the option was there. Using it on a simple

landscape shot makes almost no sense at all, not least because it has no contextual basis in the scene.

Conversely, camera roll is extremely useful in action shots, driving games, and anything intended to evoke madness

or disorientation. A tilted subject automatically suggests movement and danger, which is why most industry action shots use it to some degree. Both are serviced in this image from the 2010 version of Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit.



NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT

Criterion slaps some life into EA's sleeping giant

PUB EA DEV CRITERION REVIEWED OPM #52, 9/10



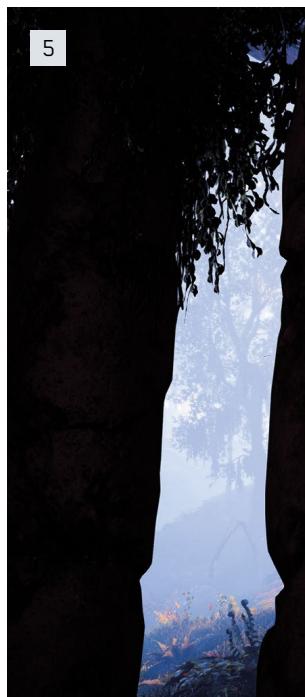
WHAT WE SAID

"AN OBSESSIVELY POLISHED COLLECTION
OF EXOTIC SUPERCARS AND A
RELENTLESS EMPHASIS ON SPEED."
NATHAN DITUM

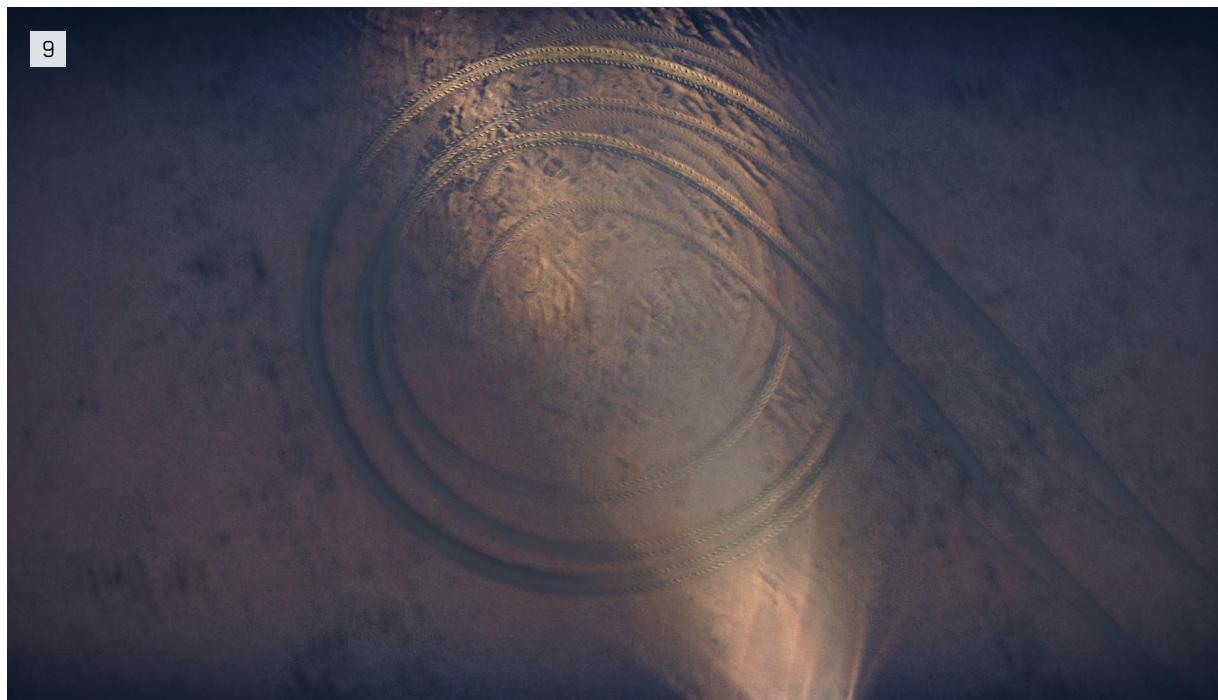
GUESS THE GAME

Unusual angles, dramatic lighting, no characters... can you tell what games these screen shots have come from?

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TEST YOURSELF



- 01. Driveclub, by Jim digrizi
- 02. Infamous: Second Son by Craig Whitaker
- 03. The Order: 1886, by Craig Whitaker
- 04. Need for Speed (2015), by Craig Whitaker
- 05. Mad Max, by Jim digrizi
- 06. Watch Dogs 2, by Jim digrizi
- 07. Watch Dogs, by Jim digrizi
- 08. Battlefield 1, by Craig Whitaker
- 09. Gran Turismo 5, by Jim digrizi
- 10. Gran Turismo 5, by Jim digrizi

ANSWERS



HOW TO...

AVOID 'TEXTURE SHOCK'



EXPERT TIP

Many a terrifying name has been given to what happens in your head when good, high-res textures meet something approaching porridge. This is perfectly illustrated by the early Mass Effect games, where crisp (for a PS3-era game) head and face textures clashed with egregiously optimised bodies and uniforms.

Screenshots are an opportunity to avoid all the jank of even modern games, celebrating the art that exists in spite of it. Nothing destroys this illusion faster than a conspicuously bad

texture, so keep the camera at safe distance, even if it means trading one composition for another.

These screenshots from 2005 game *Shadow Of The Colossus* use the original PS2 textures and models, the game emulated at higher resolution on PC. Those low-resolution assets dictated, to some degree, the distance at which the scenes could be shot. Importantly, although the textures are still noticeably low-res, the uniformity of resolution avoids the aforementioned clashing.





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SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

Getting the really big picture

PUB SONY DEV TEAM ICO REVIEWED OPM #63, 10/10 (HD REMASTER)
INFO REMASTERED AND BUNDLED WITH ICO FOR PS3

WHAT WE SAID

"THE SCRAPS WITH THE TITULAR TITANS ARE EVEN BETTER. THEIR GRASS-LIKE FUR LOOKS TANGIBLE ENOUGH TO RUFFLE... WHILE THEIR MOVEMENTS LOOK EVEN HEFTIER."

DAVE MEIKLEHAM



PlayStation[®]
Official Magazine - UK