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The Colorful Chris Borgman

Chris Borgman was featured in the January/February issue of *Digital Photo Pro*, and his dramatic use of high-impact color was shown off in the article “Shockingly Vivid.” In this issue, we’ve selected one of Borgman’s images for the cover. While he has been a respected and accomplished fashion photographer, Borgman has branched out from that somewhat narrow genre into broader realms of photography.

When discussing his approach to photography and how that approach has evolved, Borgman says, “I was getting really bored with your typical fashion editorial images. Models doing the

‘broken doll’ pose on gray background or laying on the beach doing the ‘one leg up’ pose was starting to turn my stomach. I wanted personality and emotion. I didn’t want to pick up the camera unless there was an actual story or theme obvious in the pictures. Taking pictures just to show clothes or makeup was getting boring—I needed more. If I just played by their rules, I’d probably still be shooting a lot of fashion.”

While much of Borgman’s photography is full of vivid color opposites and pure RGB hues, images like the one featured on this issue’s cover show an appreciation for more subtle, but

equally full-of-impact employment of color. Explains Borgman, “I’m always looking for nice color combinations; I like to see two or maybe three dominant colors or hues that play off each other. Color just for the sake of color isn’t always pretty. Too much contrast is too ‘heavy’ for me, but it depends on what your vision is.”

Talking about his digital expertise, Borgman says, “Years ago, I was confused by the computer; I had no idea how it worked. I had to learn, so one night after closing up the Kinko’s where worked, I sat there all night and explored the Mac. Wow, what a machine! I just want to learn new things and let myself evolve and explore.”

That exploration has paid off in spades. Today, Borgman’s skills with Photoshop are self-evident.

Despite his talent and accolades, Borgman insists he isn’t overly caught up in the hype of the fashion world. “I’m just a normal guy from Texas living in New York City who’s trying to make my way in this supercompetitive industry,” he says. “Maybe I’m a little special because I don’t wear all black.”

Borgman offers some insight to young photographers looking to make it in the industry: “There are many photographers doing very similar images and marketing to all the same people. It’s really hard to stand out and get more attention than the other guy, and I don’t have the answer. I do think you have to have the right work in the right place. A fashion photographer in Littletown, USA, isn’t going to do so well. He needs to get to a market that can support his goal. And get there ASAP—you don’t have to be a star in your hometown before you get to New York City. I spent way too long in San Antonio trying to be a good fashion shooter—don’t make that mistake! Shoot what you like to shoot, make it good, and promote to the right people. If your work is good and it’s seen by the right people, then your work will be considered special. No matter how good of a car shooter you are, the editors of *Parents* magazine aren’t going to think you’re special.” DPP