When in Rome...
An Artist’s Journey

by
Tony Karp
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On our first night in Rome.
A few words about how I work.

I see myself as an artist rather than a photographer. Taking the picture is just the first step. From there, it’s sometimes a long path to the final image. Some images go through many steps (stages) until the final version is reached. Sometimes, a series of variations will be produced along the way. This is the way that Picasso worked, always open to new possibilities, variations, and methods.
And now, a brief poem.

Sometimes... You make a picture
And sometimes... The picture is right
And sometimes... The picture is wrong
But sometimes... You look at the picture again
And sometimes... The picture that was right is wrong
And sometimes... The picture that was wrong is right
Sometimes... But not always.
Thankyouverymuch
The oculus of the Pantheon
A hole in the roof, it lets the weather in.
Stairs behind the Campidoglio
Termini at night
In a Roman courtyard

In Rome, there is beauty everywhere you look.
Suppose you worked for the tourist board in ancient Rome. And your job is to put together a campaign to bring visitors to your city. You’ve got a picture to use in the campaign. All you need now is a slogan.

"Welcome to Rome! You’ll lose your head over our glorious attractions!"
Saints in the clouds at Saint Peter's
Keeping watch over the plaza
Beneath Saint Peter's dome

Taken from a vertiginous position
An interesting view of the Colosseum among the ruins. It looks like a pyramid.
At the baths of Caracala Foro Romano
The muse and me on the Via Appia Antica

A forest on the Appian way
Notte Bianca!

Four hours before the great blackout of 2003
Sunset in Gubbio

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In a church in Gubbio
Palazzo dei Consoli through an old glass window

They call this "bullseye" glass
A glass of wine at sunset

The artist's muse brought me this wine
Il fumo uccide

Spoleto

Smoking kills
Angel on the bridge at the Castel Sant'Angelo
The top angel at the Castel Sant'Angelo
It's Saint Michael, with his sword.
Former top angel at the Castel Sant'Angelo

See "Behind the Scenes" for more info
Stairway to the sky

A view of the sky at the Castel Sant' Angelo
Italy is a very young country, as a country, younger than the United States.
When in Rome
Roman Sunset
Roman candles
A Roman face

The floating monk
The oculus of the Pantheon
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Termini at night

In a Roman courtyard
Via Belsiana after the rain
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The top angel at the Castel Sant’Angelo
Former top angel at the Castel Sant’Angelo
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A view of the sky at the Castel Sant’Angelo
A picture of Rome in the 19th century
Italy is a very young country
Spirit of the Vatican
The mystery that is Rome
Behind the Scenes
Roll your mouse over the buttons to see how picture was made

Making an Angel - Part 1

Here we are in Rome, at the Castel Sant’Angelo. Not as popular as the Vatican or St. Peter’s basilica, but quite interesting in its history, which goes back quite a ways.

Today’s assignment is to find an angel (easy at the Castel Sant’Angelo, hence the name), take a picture of it, and then turn it into art. (Not so easy, given the zillions of tourists that have taken all of those pictures.)

We’ll start with the original angel, the one who stood at the top of the castle. He’s retired now. He doesn’t sit on the top of the castle anymore, but is stuck in one of the lower courtyards.

This is a standard tourist photograph. A good view. Nice and sharp. Well exposed. Plenty of detail. Very dull. And note the poohy belly. This guy is seriously out of shape. Also, the wings look like something out of a school play. And to make things worse, the statue is this dull, putty color and the wings are green.
VATICAN STORY - PART 1

Today, we’re deep inside the Vatican. Everything is very old (you don’t come here to see modern art). So old, in fact, that the tapestries in this room are kept in a dark area to keep them from fading. So dark, in fact, that you can’t shoot by available light, and flash is forbidden.

So I turn on the “Nightshot” mode in my Sony DSC-707 and shoot it in infrared. The result, as you can see, is still pretty dark, and it has an overall dark green cast. It looks like some thing from CNN, seen through night vision binoculars, just before they start bombing some country.

But all is not lost. There is some color hiding in here if you look for it. The computer will help to save this picture and, perhaps, turn it into something interesting.
About the Artist - Tony Karp

Tony Karp has been working with projects involving art and technology for over fifty years. He believes that all art requires technology, and vice versa. Tony calls this blending "Techno-Impressionism." Tony's work has taken him down many paths, through many different careers with the common thread being the successful integration of art and technology.

Tony created his first professional images as a photographer. In 1959 and 1960 he took most of the photographs for NBC's on-the-air advertising. His work also appeared in Life Magazine, the New York Times, Newsweek, and Sports Illustrated. He received several Art Directors awards for his work.

During the 1960's, Tony's technical interests turned to engineering. The high point of this work was the design of a computer-controlled zoom lens that was used to shoot the opening scene of "The Godfather." For this work, Tony was nominated for an Academy Award for Technical Achievement.

In the early 70s Tony became fascinated with computers. For the next twenty five years Tony was the architect and systems designer for a number of large computer systems. Tony designed and built the computer system that controlled a large multimedia pavilion for the 200th anniversary of the Bill of Rights.

In the early 90's Tony changed his focus and again made art his metier. He created the concept of Techno-Impressionist art, in which he combined his knowledge of art and computer technology to produce new and varied images. His largest artwork is the Techno-Impressionist Museum, a complete art movement on an Internet web site. Tony used technology to build the web site, and art to create the images. There are shows, exhibits, and galleries in the museum.

Tony now works in his studio in a rural area of northern Virginia, creating art for the Internet and prints for galleries. Since moving to Virginia, Tony has had twelve one-man shows, at venues both large and small.
About this book

Artists are driven by many things. For Tony Karp it’s his desire
to make as much art as possible and to have as many people as
possible see the art.

Tony gave up being a systems architect and software engineer
in order to pursue his art. But technology is part of him and
it was a natural progression for him to use it to create his art.
As Tony’s work has evolved, so has his ability to seamlessly
Artist’s Journey” is his latest art work. It’s the future of artistic
publishing. It redefines what’s possible in an art book.

Tony designed and built this book. A book created as a virtual
medium has attributes that a hard copy book does not. The book
is a work in progress and will continue to evolve as it is easy to
modify virtual media.

Tony has modeled this after a physical book. You can turn the
pages, go to the index pages, or view the table of contents. You
can flip through the book or you can have it turn the pages
automatically for you. You can even turn the titles of the pictures
on and off. The book’s special feature – the back button will
retrace all your steps.

Everything that’s been described is available on the interface
that Tony calls the “Bookbar” at the bottom of every page. Click
the buttons to see what they do. It’s very easy.

This book has a “live index.” Clicking on the image on the index
page takes you directly to the page. Click on an item on the
Contents page and you’ll be on that page. The map gives you
the context of where in Italy the images were created.

Marilyn Karp, the Artist’s muse August 2010

Colophon

These pictures were taken with a Sony DSC-F707 digital camera. Some of the shots were taken in the normal mode and some
were shot in the infrared mode when there wasn’t much light. With these shots the colors were restored in the computer.

The software used to process the pictures included LightZone, PaintShop Pro, and Adobe Streamline.

This book was designed and laid out in Adobe InDesign and
packaged in Adobe Acrobat Pro. Other software, built by the
artist, was used for the intermediate processing.

Picking typefaces for a print book is a lot easier than for an
electronic book. The print book will always be the same size,
but the electronic book can be viewed on anything from a tiny
netbook to thirty-inch monitor. What looks too big on a large
screen can shrink to unreadability on a small one. In addition,
screens have limited resolution when compared with print,
which further complicates the issue. In the end, it’s a compromise
at best. We chose TheSans font for its readability and wide
variety of fonts for most of the text in this book. But we’re still
experimenting to find out what works best.

My wife, who is also the Artist’s muse, is the co-creator of this book.
We worked side by side choosing the pictures, laying out the content,
and designing the interface. Thanks to her contributions, this book
has reached its current state.

Visit the Techno-Impressionist Museum

Send me an email at tkarp@TonyKarpBooks.com