

THE **RPS**

ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY

VISUAL ART

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY VISUAL ART GROUP / FOUNDED 1921

Editor's Comments

RAY HIGGINBOTTOM ARPS

It's been a long frustrating journey to reach this point in editing the latest edition of the Visual Art Magazine. I'm so much aware of the volatile, violent and climatic events that surround our everyday lives and the dramatic images in newspapers and on our TV screens that we cannot escape from. However, I continue to be inspired and uplifted by the imagery that I see every day and I hope this issue will do the same for you.

I first discovered the work of Fran Forman through my love of Edward Hopper. Her imagery evokes all the feelings I get from looking at Hopper's paintings. As Fran says, she is aware of the 'sense of alienation, of expectations and ambiguous relationships, a disquiet within each domestic scene'

Ray

Shadows that lie beneath

FRAN FORMAN

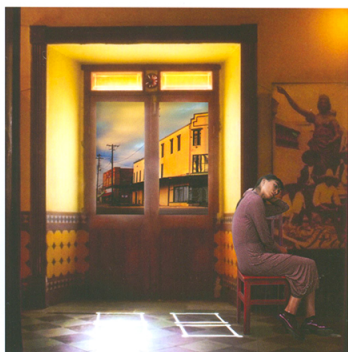
As a former therapist, I am acutely aware of the shadows that lie beneath the illusory sunny narrative of American life and the promise of 'domestic tranquility' There is a sense of alienation, of expectations and ambiguous relationships, a disquiet within each domestic scene. My constructed photo images bring light to the shadows and expand on the noir tradition that exposes this fragility, longing, and missed connections. Each image I create is immediately personal, and their dual realities offer an 'escape hatch' in the way of a portal or a slash of light.

I combine and manipulate, paint and alter, fuse photographs with painting, reality with fiction – whatever it takes to tell the story. Each image is carefully constructed digitally over many weeks, compositing and assembling models (mostly non-professional), costumes, figures, objects, and settings,

as if creating a stage set. Shadows and light, often digitally constructed, become major characters.

I have long been drawn to and inspired by artists and art forms that evoke solitude, mystery, or self-reflection through colour, chiaroscuro, and geometry. My image-making is heavily indebted to: the geometry, patterns and abstractions of the mid-century American painter Edward Hopper, whose solitary figures seem absorbed in their interior lives, and whose work I often re-imagine; the 17th-century Master painters and later painters such as Jacob Schikaneder who used light and shadow to evoke emotion; the eerie staged film-like constructions of Gregory Crewdson; and the foreboding sparseness, slashes of light, alienated protagonists, and stylization of contemporary noir cinematography.







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