

Blog #120: Infinity Fountain

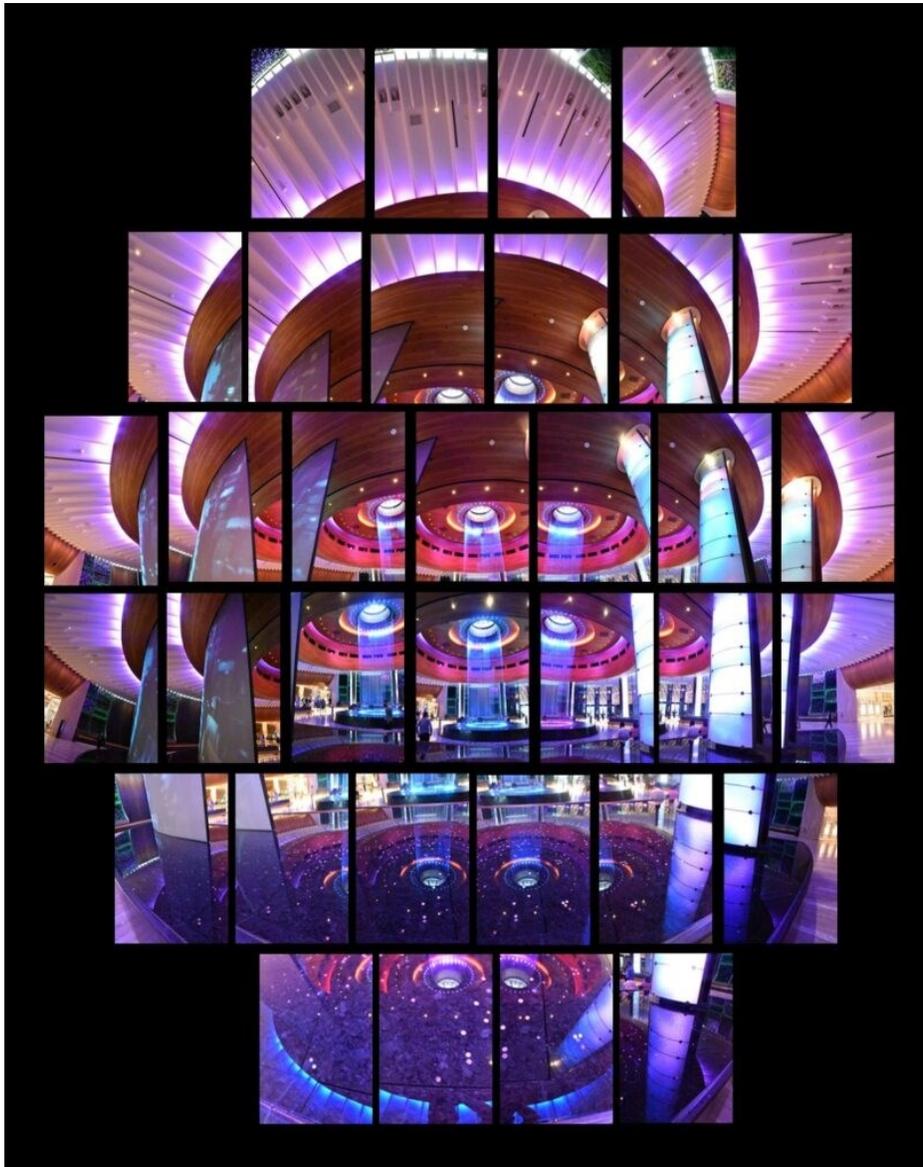


This photo was created from a resort's fountain using the illusion of reflection to create an endless waterfall.

To begin this project, I found a wonderful fountain in a resort setting.



The next step was to create a series of 40 overlapping individual photographs of the setting. By taking this step, I am creating the foundation for the project by merging the individual images into a single photo which lets me capture a full panorama.



Merging the photos can be done easily and inexpensively in a number of photography programs available. I like Microsoft's ICE (Image Composite Editor) because it's free, very intuitive to use, and provides a number of options for combining photos with different lens formats. Many photo stitching programs can even use technology to "complete" a photo if there is a section of the panoramic missing after the pictures have been combined. You can find lots of option by Googling "photo stitching" on your computer.

The process requires some patience and multiple tries. Keep your photo setting on a consistent exposure while shooting and overlap photos by a quarter to a third of the previous photo to enable the software to match images. The end result can create a panorama of the setting capturing the full detail of the subject with surprisingly good clarity in the components of the image.

Take multiple sets of the images because there is some trial and error to get a final image you like. In the Microsoft ICE program, you can also select templates that change the look of your image. Here are three variations of the final merged image:



Orthographic Lens



Transverse Spherical Lens -
This is the one I selected.



Transverse Cylindrical
Lens

At this point, editing is up to you and there are an unlimited number of possibilities. I used the "spot removal" tool in Lightroom to copy and paste the colored section in the lower left of the photo to cover the lobby section visible at the lower right. I also used this tool to remove people that were visible in the photo.

TAKEAWAYS

1. Look around and imagine what could be created from an unusual setting. In this case, it was the vibrant colors of the fountain, the dramatic fall of the waterfall that got my imagination going.
2. Look for new opportunities. Once I saw that I could capture the image of the full waterfall in the reflecting pool, it opened up the opportunity to create a waterfall that continued below and emptied into the mirror image of the water source above. Return to great spaces for a second time. I originally photographed this space during the daytime. A window in the center of the ceiling above the waterfall affected the spaceship image, so I returned in the evening to retake the photos and got the additional benefit of night lighting. The downside was that there were many more people walking by at night, so I had to be patient to get the shots I wanted and do more editing to remove people from the final shot. The added benefits of experiencing the same location during a different season (or even a different time of day) can be rewarding.
3. Be open to unexpected opportunities. The coins that had been tossed into the reflecting pool added a nice element when they were captured in the reflection of the waterfall.
4. If you are looking for more information about photo stitching, order the free guide available. Select "Free Photo Stitching Guide" from the top menu.