

FEA TURED



Exclusive Interview with
David Stewart
Cover Interview
K. M. Asad
Michał Karcz
Featured Story
Freak Songkarn
by Tavepong Pratoomwong
Calcutta Diaries
By Soumyendra Saha
View Point
Featured Artist
Ricardo Solis

Art is undoubtedly one of the best ways to take journeys to the places of your fantasy and dreams, and this is exactly what creating photo manipulations is to **Michał Karcz**. In this exclusive interview, he says, "In matter of creation it always should be pursuit to show our imagination in way which should be as identical as output vision as it could. Planning of whole shooting in matter of lighting."
[p67](#)

Ricardo Solis was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. He graduated from the School of Visual Arts and acquired expertise in workshops taught by outstanding teachers. He has participated in several exhibitions nationally and internationally and his work is in major collections. We spoke with him about his inspirations behind these bizarre, magical scenes.
[p55](#)

Soumyendra Saha is a freelance photographer from Kolkata and an erstwhile software engineer. After an erratic 12-year career crunching C code for companies making network equipment, he was toying with the idea of quitting and finally left his job in early 2014. He decided to roam the streets as far as photography is concerned, and started taking photos. Here he presents his new series, Calcutta Diaries
[p33](#)

Michał Karcz
Ricardo Solis
Soumyendra Saha



EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW
VIEW
Michał Karcz



Michał Karcz

Q. Hi Michał, good to have with us today. Before we get started could you tell our readers a little about yourself and when did you first discover photography?

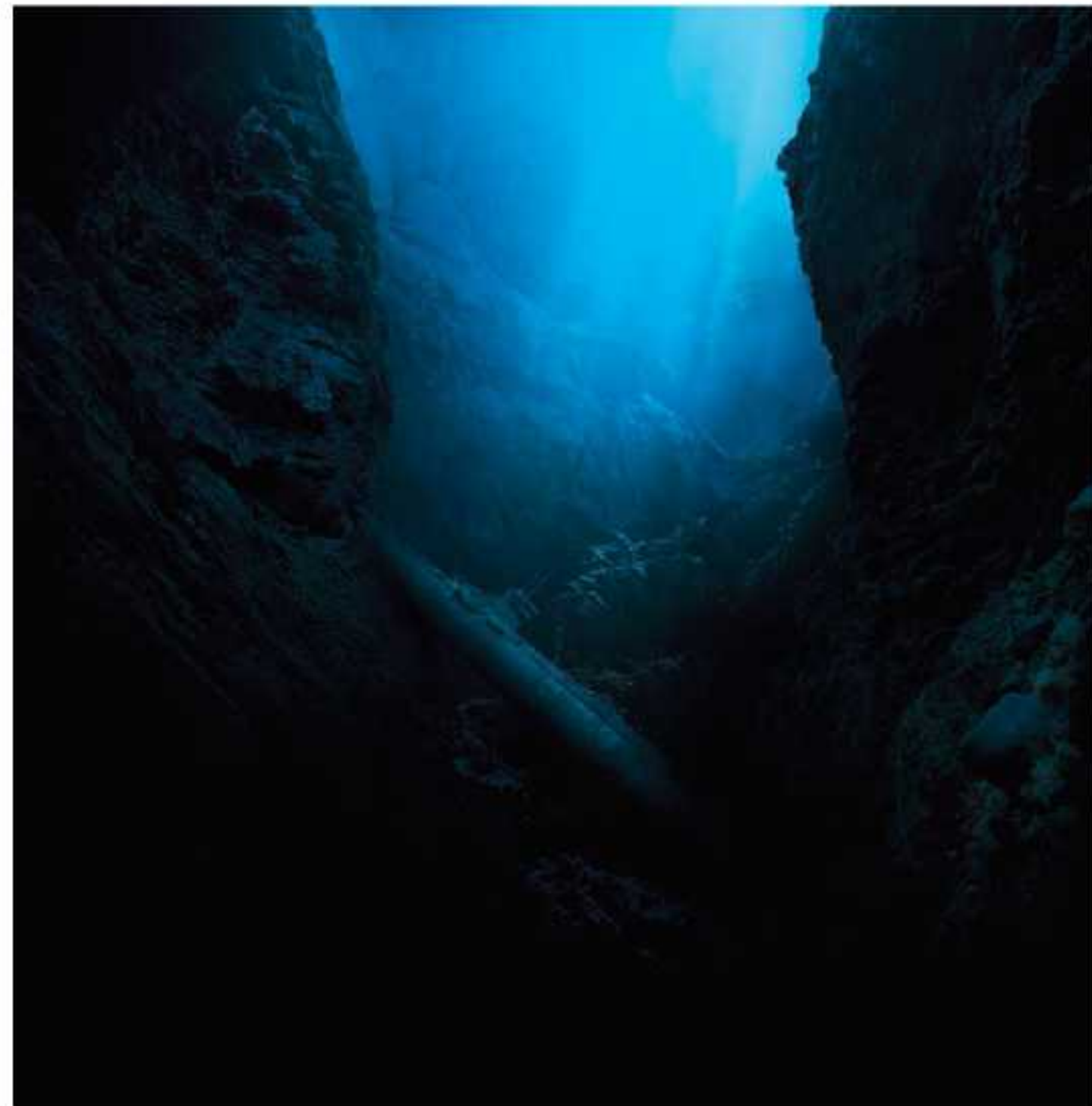
A. I was born in 1977, in Warsaw, Poland. I graduated from High School of Art in Warsaw and Commercial Advertising School in Warsaw.

I'm a graphic designer and my work is focused on CD cover design and book cover design, digital retouching. I make my pictures from the straight will of creation. To show what's inside my mind, share with my dreams and fears. I sell some of these artworks in galleries around the world too. Because I have new ideas all the time I just can't stop creating. This machine is working like my heart beating, without breaks. This is my way of life and self-realization. In the beginning it was hard as everything. Since few years I worked on my present position and possibility of doing what I feel is important and creative. Now I choose my clients and project, which I want to be involved in. Ones which are interesting and inspiring, where I could fully use my skills and imagination. I hang the bar for myself high and don't want to low it. Without all those things I could feel unrealized, dull and my life – pointless. I can tell that I feel almost complete in this field, but I know that it's still many things to do. Everything flows and I'm going with it. With thoughts, time, life. I'm still searching for more. I've always been interested in photography, but my serious contact with analogue cameras, darkroom and landscape, architecture, experimental photography began in early '90 when I started my education in High School of Art. I began my work with photography of any kind. In the beginning it was ordinary landscapes and architecture. I remember heavy middle format camera with lenses which I took on mountain hiking each time. After this time, my work had to evolve to the more ambitious projects. Since I began my education In High School of art I start to find new techniques In analogue photography, but it was still not enough. When digital age has come (digital camera, digital software for editing) finally I found the way to realize projects and visions which have poisoned my mind since few years. I have mixed passion for painting with photographic techniques which I make until now. Early fascinations of painting and photography have been combined into one piece, with the use of digital tools. It gave me the opportunity to generate unique realities that were impossible to be created with an ordinary dark room techniques.



Q. Your works show deep understanding of light and composition, did you study art or photography and how would you say your formal education has influenced your work?

A. Yes I have graduated High School of art and I think that painting has influenced my present work in high degree. Most important things, which I borrowed and which have shaped me, are lighting, composition and color treatment. So starting from light. No matter if I make photo manipulation, montage or clean photography, light is the creator of mood and can make a picture to be almost three-dimensional. Lighting is a most important thing in my work. It helps create perfect environment for my visions and made photomontages look natural. I catch the best light at the morning's golden hour and late afternoon. At golden hour more blue light is scattered, so if the sun is present, its light appears more reddish. In addition, the sun's small angle with the horizon produces longer shadows. Picture is richer in details, moody, warm and contrasted. Very nice, cinematography like effects we can make at the blue hour too. The blue hour is the period of twilight each morning and evening when the sun is a significant distance below the horizon and the residual, indirect sunlight takes on a predominantly blue hue. So this is why I don't take shoots in the middle of the day. Light is straight over us. It produces short shadows, flatten view and pale sunlight made natural colors unattractive. I'm always very precise with shadows, lighting to make picture where viewer will not easily distinguish what and where has been connected and composed. Second Important part of whole is composition. Everything have its appropriate place. This process starts always on the stage of photo shooting. Each part, place, element has its own place on my pictures and its never accidental. Same is with color treatment. Many times, even if my artwork is formally done there's still one thing to do which can take even few hours. Coloring. Finding this one and only color scheme can be stressful, but I never give up. There's always only one, right way which lead me to the end. I think the way how I use these three main visual tools. I'm sure that painting had special impact on this and inspirations which I'm talking about further .



Q. Most of your works encompasses your journeys into the place, which don't exist. From where would you say you draw your inspiration?

A. Most of my work is like a journey to the places, which don't exist. Places from my dreams, desires, imagination and fears. First of all is the idea inspired by the music, dreams, thoughts and moments. Sometimes it's very clear and sometimes it just evolves through the months. Everything what I'm doing is some kind of escape from reality. I move to the real life everything what haunts me in thoughts and dreams. Those things are caught by my imagination during listening music, reading, observing the world or dreaming. There are emotions and moods which reflects my state of mind and spirit showing those dark and positive parts of my personality. When I'm in creating process I feel that I'm just right there, where frame begins, feeling smells, wind on my face with no boundaries. This is very nice feeling – so realistic, like a drug. This is only my time when I discovering and visit my own world.

Q. What photographers or artists from the past or present have influenced you the most?

A. There were few landscape masters whom I have admired, but only from esthetic way and just for pleasure. My inspirations and some kind of pattern about composition, coloring, saturation, expression, scenery comes more from painting masters like John Martin, Zdzisław Beksiński and Caspar David Friedrich.

Q. Could you tell us about the creative process which goes behind the creation of these extraordinary artworks? Does it start with a sketch or you like to go with the flow?

A. Everywhere I'm going I'm taking my camera with me. It always, somewhere could be this only moment which I want to let through my imagination filter. Place, time, memory. When I'm watching reality I see this all like through the lens. I see frames, possible pictures, scenes, compositions. In most of cases I know already, in the beginning how I could effect to reality. This is like starting a creative machine right after first sight. First of all is initial picture, after this I create mood on existing photography with help of some light effects or colors, curves or with deep intervention – photo manipulation, collage with different elements which after mixing they become complete work. I'm trying to do this as my best, involving my best skills to create picture which will be not far from my first vision and primal inspiration. Each work is processing of existing places so any observant person can find among them familiar parts of landscape. In creating process first of all is thought and idea. After this I'm searching appropriate elements of composition, places, moments. Very often it's a long time. I still have many projects which have been not realised because of lack of materials. I'm mixing my pictures in one piece from individual pieces taking care of composition and natural looking final effect. I want everything to be done so anyone could distinguish which was real and what's montage. Appropriate coloring, shadows, lights, precise cutting and pasting with help of my WACOM bamboo touch& pen tablet and whole creation thanks Photoshop CS6.



Q. You have been creating these works for a few years now. What do you think is the secret to longevity of a digital artist?

A. Most important is to all the time keep going. Learn on the work of others, read and listen their good advice and constructive criticism, improve technique. I know it could be maybe hard, but important is to find your own style. Something which will guide people, viewers to you. Make that they will want to come back. It should be a small sign, stylistic signature in each work. There's few very serious and popular places in the web where everyone can publish their artworks. Show it to the world. This is the place where you can be seen. It can take time before someone will stop on your work, make it famous, popular, but patience is the great virtue not only in this kind of activity. If you're good, creative and determined finally you will get attention which you deserved and in one day whole world will know about you. IF you're on some elite and you have your own style you can't just rest on its laurels. Of course in that moment you have some more freedom in making decisions, choosing clients and have some rest, but you have to be vigilant, don't let people forget about you. Remember there's plenty of great artists, more and more younger with great skills, abilities and world is standing open in front of them. If you will rest too long or will go into a routine...market will probably put you on the sidetrack as natural selection.

In matter of creation it always should be pursuit to show our imagination in way which should be as identical as output vision as it could.



Q. If you had to choose one work of art to hang on your wall for the rest of your life, what would that be and why?

A. There's one masterpiece of Zdzisław Beksiński which I love since many years and in some way it affected many of my works. I don't know the name of this painting because Beksiński didn't give titles to his artworks. Picture which I'm talking about shows us a mountain like rock structure in the middle of picture with some kind of entrance below and path in the valley which leads to the gate. You can see this picture here.

<http://arts-wallpapers.com/galleries/zdzislaw-beksin-ski/imagepages/image167.htm>

Q. Would you like to share some tips or advice with fellow photographers trying to establish their vision and craft?

A. In matter of creation it always should be pursuit to show our imagination in way which should be as identical as output vision as it could. Planning of whole shooting in matter of lighting. To know at which time it will be the best conditions to have spectacular effects just measure a time of trip and right time of the day in place where you want to shoot your beautiful photos. The best and most interesting effects you will find at the beginning and the end of the day. Because of longer shadows and contour over the objects photos will have great mood, beautiful coloring and crisp overall look. It's good to experiment with your own approach of photographed themes and objects. Find your own treatment and feel which could define your kind of style. Cropping, composing elements in the way you see it in imagination, not exactly as it's written in the books about photography. Try with shots with illuminations from behind, with backlit of the morning or afternoon sun using some nice flare effects in your lens. Don't be scared to use digital tools to make your vision more fantastic, closer to your imagination, and how you see through your own eyes. It's the same tool as any other. Each modern photographer use it to wider possibilities and lower limitations of gear and moments.

