



e-news

from the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain

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A N D R E A H A R G R E A V E S



The question I am asked the most is how I created an image. I can tell you the technicalities and techniques of its creation but how they come to be is often a mystery, even to myself! So where did my latest Valkyries come from?

Like all good tales, it starts with *Once Upon a Time*. In the year 2014, I did a shoot with the fabulous Carla Monaco. "The Swan", was to me such a beautiful pose, an elegant and serene nude figure on a black background. I knew it wasn't a ground-breaking image but it was my right of passage into fine art nude, and I loved it. So, into competitions it went and out of competitions it came, retiring early as a hopeless failure!

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The Swan



Time passed and one day whilst I was experimenting with Angels and winged ladies, "The Swan" jolted back into life. This time cut out, donned in feathers and renamed "Fallen to Earth" she won a Silver Medal first time out at Smethwick.

Fallen to Earth

ANDREA HARGREAVES



It was hit and miss with her and someone told me it was because she was facing the wrong way! So, she was revamped yet again, flipped, renamed "Fallen Angel" and spookily she did much better.... so much so that as I lurked nearby her on the wall at an Exhibition I overheard her being described as a Valkyrie. Intrigued by this I began researching the Valkyrie, which in turn spread to every Goddess under the sun and every female heroine in mythology and folklore.



Having already submitted "Fallen to Earth" to the YPU Annual Exhibition a couple of years previously, I couldn't enter the revamped "Fallen Angel". So, I had in mind to replace and enhance another favourite model, Maja Stina, who unwittingly developed into my first Valkyrie. As I gave her a feathered cape I remembered the story of Freyja, and the Valkyrie. Valkyrie were Norse noblewomen, handmaidens of Odin, seekers of the bravest souls of departed warriors to fill the Halls of Valhalla. They were also known as Shield maidens and Swan Maidens. If you could steal her cloak of swan feathers you could extract a wish from her.

Young men would steal the cloaks of the Swan Maidens as they bathed, binding the maiden to earth to marry and bear them children. Her heartache so strong, she would encourage her children to find her hidden cloak. Once found, she would put it on and fly away without looking back.

Finding Swan feathers for their cloaks was easy, who can resist photographing swans? The Valkyrie have capes of rooks' feathers which should technically represent the Irish Goddess Morrighan but I think there is room for a little poetic licence here.... and Morrighan will appear soon I'm sure!

These Seekers of Souls are portrayed on a grey horse and, luckily, I had the stunning Irish draught cross, Nelson, belting hell for leather round his paddock and the stunning Holstein, Leisel, gracefully bowing, ready and waiting in the wings.

However, I decided to create an image like the Carmargue horses running through water, so we see here, Eowyn, Shield Maiden of Rohan from Lord of the Rings charging through the surf and Epona, Protector of horses, ponies and donkeys in her secret waterfall cave.



My biggest problem was choosing names for titles. They had to be pronounceable and indeed all of them had to have stories which captured my romantic heart. My naughty streak, however, laughs at the thought of what the synthesised voice of the PAGB computer will make of the Norse Valkyrie names like Hlaogor Svanhvit! It would certainly brighten up the judging, wouldn't it?



..... so, in answer to the question, why were they created, they were born simply from a casually overheard word. **Andrea Hargreaves DPAGB EFIAP BPE3 PSA4**



I asked Andrea for some brief technical details of her process.

I use Photoshop CS6 on my 27" iMac and my best friends are the zoom & pen tool, blend modes and the opacity slider! Where I could use a layer at 100% I will always use 3 x layers at 30%. It not only makes a difference in the image, it makes me think I know what I'm doing. They are printed with Epson inks on an Epson P600 and have just swapped papers from PermaJet FB Royal (now discontinued ^{note 1}) to PermaJet FB Satin 310.



Freya is 17.5" x 12", a relatively small image for me, and consists of 66 layers amounting to a mere 1.21 GB. I cap the size of a PSD file I save at 2GB and, whilst they were within range, Lagartha and the Ride to Valhalla had to have some layers merged to bring them out at 1.89 GB, so that I still had room for final tweaks. I keep the PSD file, a flattened JPG, and a 1400x1050px ^{note 2} file in separate folders to cover most eventualities.

Each element is made up of many layers. The right wing has only 4 pieces in layers, but the left wing has 11 Pieces in layers, which is essential should a spear or halberd need to nestle under and over the feathers. The background in red has 15 layers, plus 10 over-layers and finishing tweaks. It is important that you name your layers.as it would be impossible to find a stray feather in all those layers if it wasn't named.

I usually lie in answer to the question "How long did it take you?"

I am embarrassed at how long I spend. I can sit and swing from side to side on my chair for ages just contemplating. Once swinging and contemplation was over, I think Freya took about a week. I ration myself to 6 hour stints but there are at least 3 of those possible in a day. My dog usually reminds me that enough is enough! The others came thick and fast after Freya so these 13 Valkyrie and Sun goddesses took about 400 hours over 4 weeks.

Editor's Notes

1. PermaJet Fibre Royal is now discontinued but FB Royal Gloss has the same coating on a different paper base and is an excellent replacement. As, of course, is FB Satin.
2. Please remember that, from July 2017, the PAGB and many Federations will change to a maximum file size of 1600px X 1200px saved as a Quality10 jpeg, not greater than 2MB. It might be worth providing for this in your workflow and filing regime.

I would welcome similar submissions to Andrea's excellent presentation from other amateur photographers.

FB Satin 310



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The FB Satin 310 is a fantastic new addition to the PermaJet Baryta range. This long overdue introduction combines the best features of the popular FB Gloss and Royal with a sumptuous satin finish which emulates an un-glazed/air dried fibre based print. The subtle undulations throughout the paper base, combined with the new coating technology allows for detailed ink retention across a wide tonal range for a unique character.

This new media incorporates our superior coating with a unique satin top layer delivering pin sharp results. The alpha cellulose base is acid and lignin free and is internally buffered to enhance fade resistance from changing ozone effects. The coating provides an exceptional D-Max and colour gamut with pigment inks, making it ideal for both colour and monochrome reproductions.

<https://www.permajet.com/Products/00090035>



The Arts Centre University of Warwick

**Saturday
15 July 2017**

**Commencing
at 10.15am**

How to Choose the Right Inkjet Paper for Your Images

April 12, 2016. Alex Cullen.

It doesn't seem to matter where PermaJet exhibit, in the UK or abroad, my colleagues and I are always asked, "what is the best PermaJet media for my work?"

It's not as simple as saying there is a paper out there that will suit every image. *That is not true.* Whilst there are some papers that lend themselves to a variety of styles, there will likely be a more unique surface that suits the subtle features you can find in every photo.

Sometimes the image will choose the paper and sometimes the paper will choose the image. We have 22 different papers to choose from in our PermaJet range, so making sure you choose the right paper is important to us.

First, let's have a think about the image that you are going to print. What is the subject and what is the mood of the photo?

You should also remember, not all whites are white. We have paper that is designed to provide brilliant whites in the highlight areas of an image, such as the FB Distinction or Matt Plus, and other paper that produces a warmer, more natural tone like the incredibly popular Smooth Pearl. So be sure to think about what you want from your final print.



Read the rest of this article and other interesting features at –
<https://www.permajetphotographyblog.com>

The PHOTOGRAPHIC ALLIANCE OF GREAT BRITAIN invite all interested in Photography, whether members of a competing club or not, to attend this exciting and stimulating event. It is held in the 550-seat tiered theatre within The Arts Centre complex of the University. The University is just a few miles south west of Coventry, Brown Signed off the A45 the southern Coventry By-pass. There are Bar and Catering facilities within the building and ample free Car Parking.

Two Clubs from each of the 15 Federations, together with the top 8 placed clubs from the 2016 Championships will compete to find the Champion Club for 2017.

Admission is by prepaid ticket only from 9.30am; these can be purchased by completing the form below and sending it with the correct remittance and a SAE, see below.

Wheelchairs can be accommodated, but such requirements must be notified on the ticket application form.

To: Mrs Carol J Cheetham CPAGB APAGB Tickets available mid-April 2017
6 Twentylands, Rolleston-on-Dove, Staffs. DE13 9AJ

Please send me Admission Tickets at £10 each. Total Remittance £.....

Please make cheques payable to the 'PAGB'

Name

Address.....

..... Post Code..... Tel. No:

I/We are members of Club/Society Fed.....

Tick box – if map to the University is required Wheelchair access required

Please include a Stamped Addressed Envelope

Please note that tickets booked and paid for are non-returnable