

Duane Sauro: The Art That Almost Wasn't

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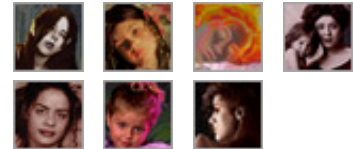
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Photo Gallery



Duane Sauro



Click on image to enlarge and learn more about the photo.

If it weren't for digital technology, Duane Sauro might have left photography as his primary portrait medium.

Taught by his father at a young age, Sauro was already photographing weddings on his own when he was 15. While operating the studio photo processing lab during his college years, Sauro was fascinated with darkroom manipulation techniques. By the time the 1990s rolled around, he was more than ready to embrace new technology, and breathe life into the work he really wanted to create.

"I became very discouraged with the limitations of traditional photography," admits Sauro. "I had already moved a lot of my client base toward a more artistic image using extensive darkroom techniques and oil painted derivations of my photographs. The mixed media offered increased creativity, but the product was very labor intensive. Both aesthetic and business goals remained somewhat frustrated as my perceptions pushed the bounds of photography further than the medium would allow. I was looking for the next level, and I found it with digital."

Experience the Surreal [[Back to top](#)]

Digital technology helps Sauro reveal his surreal style, which resonates in the sometimes unrealistic tones and contrasts he uses to expose the mood of his subjects.

"I prefer for people to have to study my images," Sauro says, "and I suggest a graphic and emotional path. Sometimes I lead the viewer by virtue of contrast—be it color, tone, design, or

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even conflicting emotions. Ultimately, the image is intended to draw from the viewer a personal response. The more the viewer looks at the image, the more they may see or feel."

A Point of Differentiation [[Back to top](#)]

Sauro credits digital for making it easy for him to stand out from the competition. Greater artistic freedom results in more unique customer images as well as fine art works.

"One of the areas where digital is tremendously advantageous is that all of the efforts I invested mechanically can now be done digitally, and I can reuse them again and again," Sauro explains. "That has enormous artistic and business advantages. It is now less critical that I make a profit on every individual project. I can rework elements of different projects and combine them to create salable images of new concepts for clients."

Take for instance the image [Gothic](#), which is an actual image in Sauro's portfolio. The scene shows a teenaged fairy crouched on a giant portabella mushroom with pointed ears, black lipstick, and demons imbedded in the forest behind her. Sauro took elements of that image and applied them to different portrait sessions.

"I have many of those same elements being used in a project of a lovely, delicate young girl," Sauro explains. "Many of the forest and mushroom components were altered and combined with butterflies and a bird instead of demons. The elements now support a portrait statement that takes on an ethereal rather than eerie mood like that of the senior session."

With his background in painting and sculpting, Sauro always wanted to create images that were collectable. However, before the digital transition, color photography was less attractive to the art world than it is today.

"With the level of input, time, and effort I gave to certain assignments, it was very frustrating to know that the materials I was using had such limitations in terms of fading qualities and durability," Sauro says. "This hinders my commitment to the medium and ability to attract art galleries and museums as outlets for my work. In the early days, I would use oil paints not just to create different effects, but also to reduce the potential of my images fading over time."

Sauro says that papers and pigmented output options have advanced to the point that he is no longer concerned about fading. So, he concentrates on expanding the techniques in his arsenal to create more dramatic images.

The Ultimate Digital Tool [[Back to top](#)]

When it comes to capturing his images, Sauro opts for the KODAK PROFESSIONAL DCS Pro 14n Digital Camera, the industry's highest resolution digital SLR. Thanks to the camera's file size and exceptional software, it has become the tool he can't live without.

"The Pro 14n is very easy to work with, and it offers a file size that's just fantastic," Sauro explains. "But the one thing that put this camera over the top for me is the software. Kodak's software is much easier to work with, and the upgrades are so readily available. Because of the file size, we can now capture quality images that are 30 x 40 whereas before we were more limited. Thanks to the upgrades, my equipment stays current, which keeps my costs lower. From a business standpoint, that just makes sense."

Sauro is quite confident that, one day, the digital tools he's come to love will give way to something new. But he's even more confident that when that day arrives, he will embrace the next level—producing even more evocative images.

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Introducing Two New Digital SLR Cameras - Offering the Best of Both Worlds

From the company that invented the professional digital camera comes the most feature-rich digital SLR cameras on the market today: the KODAK PROFESSIONAL DCS Pro SLR/n and DCS Pro SLR/c Digital Cameras. At 14 megapixels, no other digital SLR's have more resolution, or a broader ISO range (6-1600). They are the best of both worlds, offering the quality of medium format, with the flexibility of 35 mm. And now, this advanced technology is available to photographers with either NIKON F-mount or CANON EOS-mount lenses.



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ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Duane Sauro graduated from LeMoyne College with degrees in philosophy and psychology. He joined his father's portrait and wedding business and ran the studio photo lab. That early exposure to and experimentation with creative printing techniques has proven to be a valuable asset particularly during today's technological renaissance.

Within three years, Sauro earned his Masters Degree in Photography, Fellowship of the American Society of Photography, and Masters Degree in Electronic Imaging. More than 30 of his prints have been included in the national Traveling Loan Collection. His portfolio is displayed in the International Photography Hall of Fame and Museum.

www.saurophotographicart.com

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