The Rf Cookbook

By Bob Rose

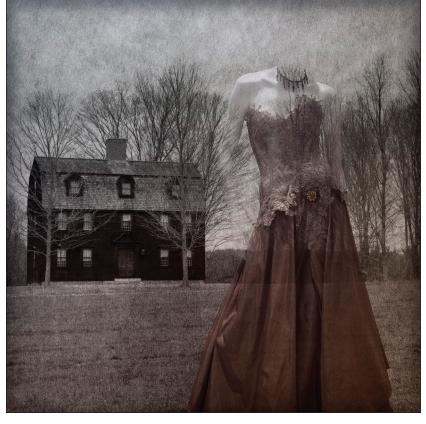## Julieanne Kost: "An Elegantly Dressed Figure"

Julieanne Kost combines a passion for photography with a mastery of digital imaging techniques. Using her degree in psychology, Julieanne identifies the raw components of visual emotion within herself and then expresses them in elaborate composites. Having worked for Adobe Systems for 14 years, she now serves as their Digital Imaging Evangelist, frequently teaching Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom at workshops, prominent industry events and conferences around the world.

Julieanne's feelings for this image of an elegantly dressed, but headless figure are best expressed in her own words: "She is found in the foreground, but there are no clues to her identity. Is she a dream, a vision, a spirit? Regardless of who she is, without the cerebral complexities of 'personality' to interfere, strangers recognize her simply for her beauty. She is thin, well-dressed, desirable, even 'ideal', and yet totally without a name or even a face."

Ever the consummate educator, Julieanne shared her thoughts behind the process and techniques used in creating this vision.

"I began with the image of a mannequin in the dress (taken in a store window), used the Pen Tool to select the dress and removed the background using a Layer Mask. I then dragged the layer into the image of the old house. For flexibility, before resizing the image of the mannequin, I converted it into a Smart Object so I could scale it repeatedly as I changed my mind.

"For this shot, her figure was top-lit, so I burned it down and removed glare from the glass. While I blurred the background image, I kept the foreground in focus to match the crispness of the dress. I try to shoot everything with moderate contrast and in focus. This allowed me to increase contrast and decrease focus when needed; adding focus and decreasing contrast are far more difficult.

"To bring the focus onto the mannequin, I copied the image of the house and blurred it. So the grass appeared sharp in the foreground, but slowly lost focus as it got closer to the house, I added a Layer Mask and used a Gradient to hide the blurred layer.

"I used an Adjustment Layer to darken the sky, then set the mannequin Blend Mode to Hard Light to build contrast and make it semi-transparent. However, when I did so, the effect was too great, so I duplicated the layer, set the Blend Mode to Normal, and lowered the opacity of the duplicated layer to 20% to bring back some density. I put the two mannequin layers into a Group and added a Mask to hide the mannequin's head in both layers at one time.

"Adding a layer of silhouetted trees taken in a graveyard and set to a very low opacity produced some texture in the background. A scanned image of paper on a layer set to Overlay gave the entire composite texture.

"A Channel Mixer Adjustment Layer placed on top of all the other layers converted the image to grayscale. Lowering the opacity of this final layer to 75% allowed for some of the color from the originals to remain.

"Two Gradient Fill Layers with their Blend Modes set to Color at different angles and opacities were used to add a color wash over the image. Finally, I selected the outer edges of the image and burned them down using a Curves Adjustment Layer."

To view more of Julieanne's work and also download lots of great Photoshop tips and tricks, go to www.adobeevangelists.com.

INGREDIENTS
- Camera: Nikon D100 and Canon EOS 5D
- Lens: Various
- Film: Fujichrome
- Scanner: Epson Perfection 3200
- Computer: Both Mac and Windows
- Software: Adobe Photoshop CS2