

# Creative window



Danny Pietrodangelo's "Windows No. 2." DANNY PIETRODANGELO

## Photographic landscapes mesh in digital world

Amanda Sieradzki Council on Culture & Arts

**A** full moon shines above local photographer and instructor Danny Pietrodangelo's animated rendering of the LeMoyne Arts building. As the viewer virtually glides along the brick path, through the open door, and into a 3D model of the gallery's interior, it becomes clear that even in the midst of a world pandemic, new public art spaces can be manifested with just the click of a mouse.



Pietrodangelo

"I wanted a sense of authenticity," says Pietrodangelo. "I learned so much spending four months working on this. It's all about creating an environment that isn't really there but appears to be."

The Double Exposure exhibition featuring photography by Pietrodangelo and Riko Carrion first debuted in person at LeMoyne Arts in September 2019. Pietrodangelo has exhibited in Tallahassee for four decades and wanted to collaborate with Carrion given their divergent photography styles.

When shelter-in-place was established mid-March, Pietrodan-

gelo was faced with new questions about the viability of physical exhibitions given the virus' impact on the arts and galleries.

In the mid-90s he started commercially creating 3D spaces and animations for court trials. Mostly self-taught, he spent hundreds of hours this spring rendering the graphic elements to create a template of the LeMoyne gallery in order to "re-hang" the Double Exposure exhibition. Carrion was completely on board when Pietrodangelo approached him with the idea for a virtual exhibit and was excited for an opportunity to reach an even larger audience.

"This show was a brainchild of his," says Carrion. "He put it together like he put together a home."

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Carrion



Riko Carrion's work, like "Wakulla River," tends to capture wild, natural landscapes in full color and texture. RIKO CARRION

# 3D Gallery

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The virtual reality art experience features a computer constructed model of LeMoine's four galleries, capturing everything from the carpeted wall panels to the antique doorways and windows. Pietrodangelo took many tools from his skill set as a traditional and digital photographer into this project.

His photographic style over time has made a profound shift from "straight-shooting" to manipulated, photo composites. Pietrodangelo digitally alters existing scenes to re-imagine them. His photograph of the Monticello Opera House takes the linear, symmetrical brick wall and warps it, creating curvatures that bend and ripple the image.

His cityscapes similarly distort and seek to capture the spirit of a place, such as his work that focuses on the historic art deco hotels in Miami's South Beach district.

"I wander through an urban area and take pictures of the buildings or other objects in the area and reimagine them into my own cityscape," says Pietrodangelo. "It's a matter of picking things I find are iconic and representative of that city. The more you look at your work the more you start to realize that a good photograph is instinctive. You've seen something with your eye that captures you and you replicate or approximate it on film or in pixels and see things later that you were reacting to subconsciously."

Carrion and Pietrodangelo diverge artistically in terms of their photography yet photograph in a similar vein that vacillates between curated and natural landscapes. Carrion's work tends to capture wild, natural landscapes in full color and texture. The relationship between both photographer's eye for architectural elements is apparent in how their work hangs together in the gallery space.

"Our styles are so different, but we had a lot of admiration for each other's work," says Carrion. "The idea of me bringing in my view of the world and how [Pietro-

dangelo] changes or manipulates his view of the world was such a great contrast."

"That's the beauty of photography because no two photographs are the same," adds Pietrodangelo. "This gave me so much more insight into [Carrion's] skill, incredible perception and ability to see a photograph where others might not."

Aside from visually experiencing the work, Pietrodangelo felt it was important to include voiceovers. Visitors can select pieces to study and can hear audio commentary by Pietrodangelo and Carrion.

The commentary provides deeper insight into the process of capturing and editing each image. Consequently, recording the audio clips gave each artist further insight into their own photographic processes. In many cases, Pietrodangelo came to realize he wasn't ready to finish manipulating some of these photographic composites.

Given the democratization of photography with smart phones and digital technology, Pietrodangelo is looking forward to seeing the impacts of this virtual art experience and what it could mean for future exhibitions and art sales. He feels the Double Exposure exhibit is his first step in going beyond physical spaces and making the arts accessible for all, regardless of COVID-19's many restrictions.

"In a time where there are constraints on what we can do physically, we need to find ways to deal with that mentally and art is just a wonderful way to do that," says Pietrodangelo. "Whether it's looking at visual art, performances online, or reading, it's a reciprocal process that you have in these stressful times. We need relief and art gives us some of that."

To experience Double Exposure: A Virtual Exhibition of Photographs by Donato (Danny) Pietrodangelo and Riko Carrion, visit <https://www.pietrophoto.com/>.

*Amanda Sieradzki is the feature writer for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area's umbrella agency for arts and culture ([www.tallahasseearts.org](http://www.tallahasseearts.org)). This article is part of COCA's Creativity Persists collection which highlights how our community uses the arts to stay connected and inspired during the COVID-19 pandemic.*