

Multiplicity Portraits.

Australia artist Michael Cook has recently used this concept to produce the series "Majority Rules" for the 19th Biennale of Sydney. Click on the link below to hear Cook talk about the series and see the images.

<http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stories/s3968526.htm>

To see a copy of one of the images, and more information about the series, click on the link below.

<http://www.biennaleofsydney.com.au/19bos/artists/cook/>

For more of his work, go to his website <http://www.michaelcook.net.au>

OK, so how do you do it?

There are a number of ways, below is a link to a tutorial that I found online which makes use of layer masks. <http://content.photojojo.com/inspiration/a-digital-guide-to-cloning-yourself/>

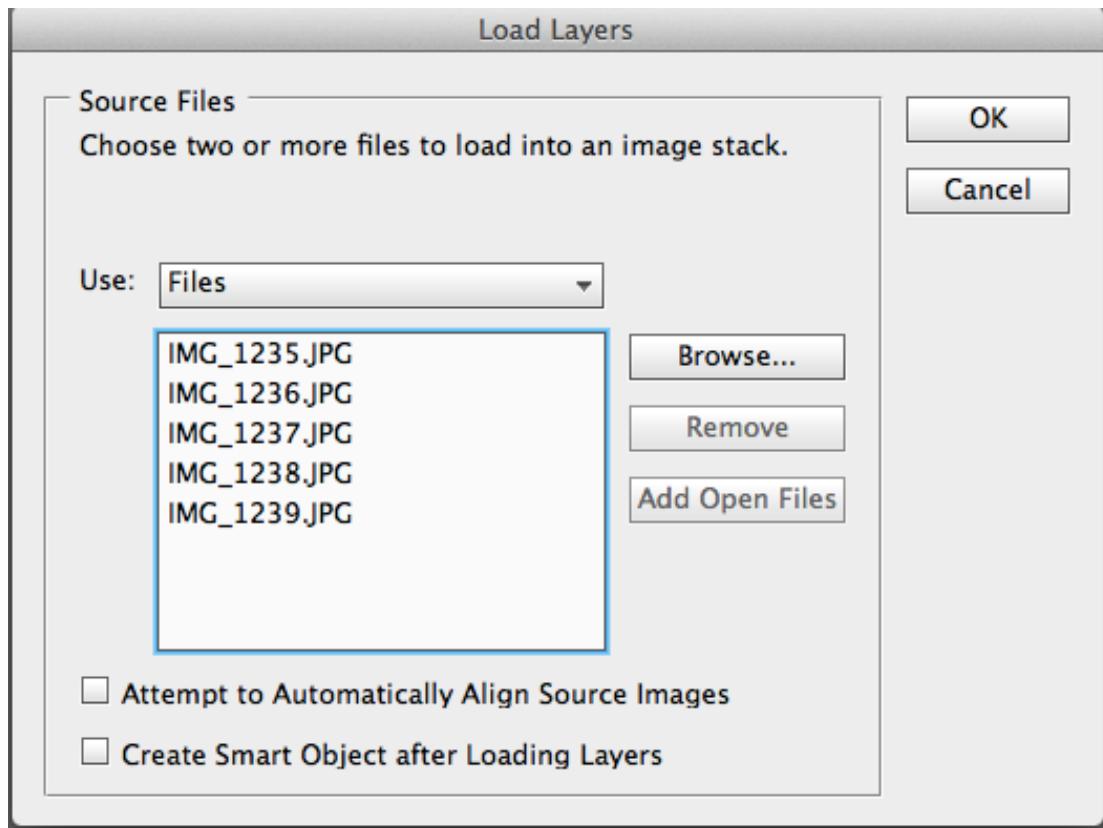
The method that I will show you uses a slightly different approach.

What you need:

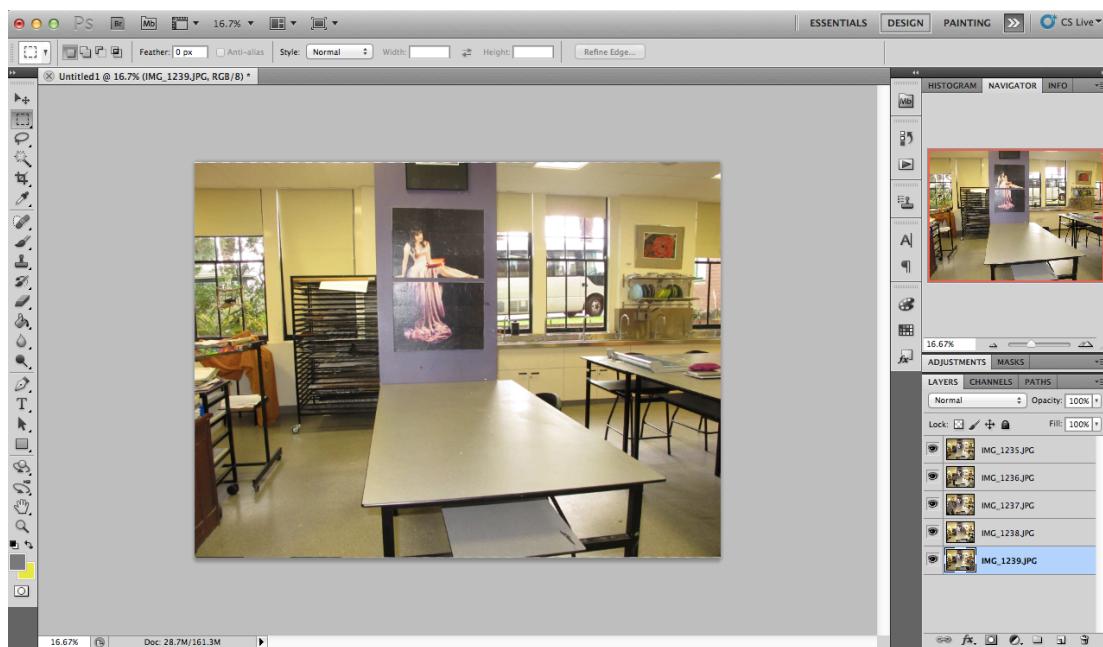
A tripod (preferably....I have seen a fine example done this way without one)
A digital camera
A model (yourself?) or someone to help....or a self timer!
Props or different costumes (optional)

In the example below, I have set the camera on a tripod and taken 5 photos, one of the background, then four with me in different positions within the frame.
HINT: Be careful not to occupy the same physical space as another of your 'selves' as two figures cant be in the same space at the same time.

The next step is to get them all in layers and all lined up. The best way to do this is to create an Image Stack. To do this look under the FILE MENU for SCRIPTS the LOAD IMAGES INTO STACK (at least that's where it is on CS5). Select the files that you want to use.

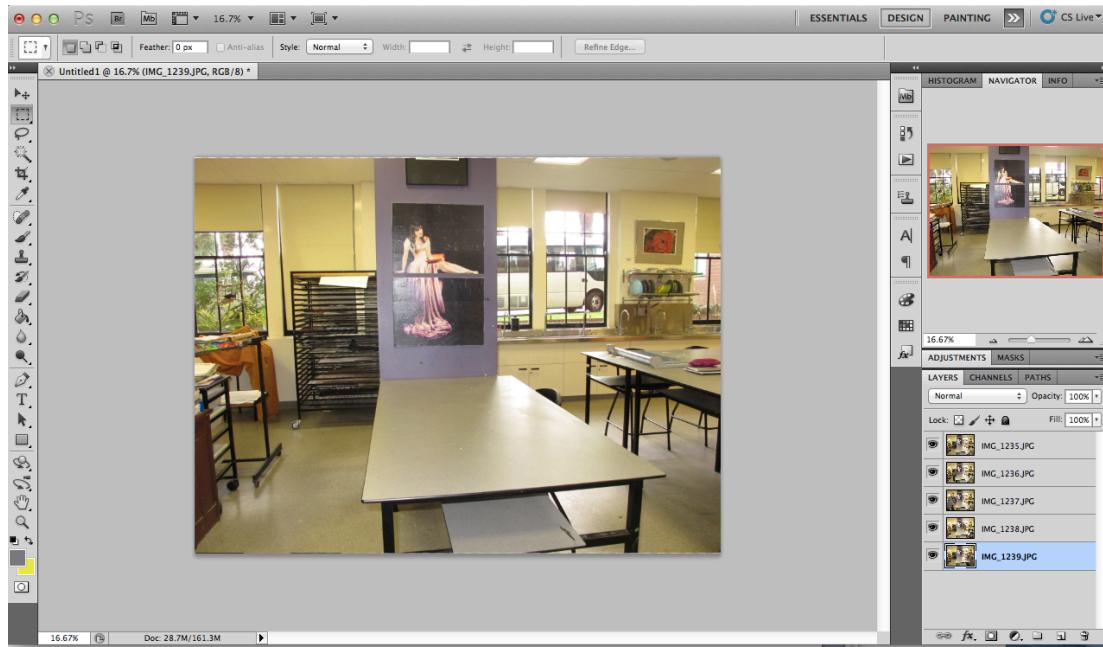


Click “Attempt to Automatically Align Source Images” which is essential if you haven’t used a tripod. Then select OK and sit back and wait.

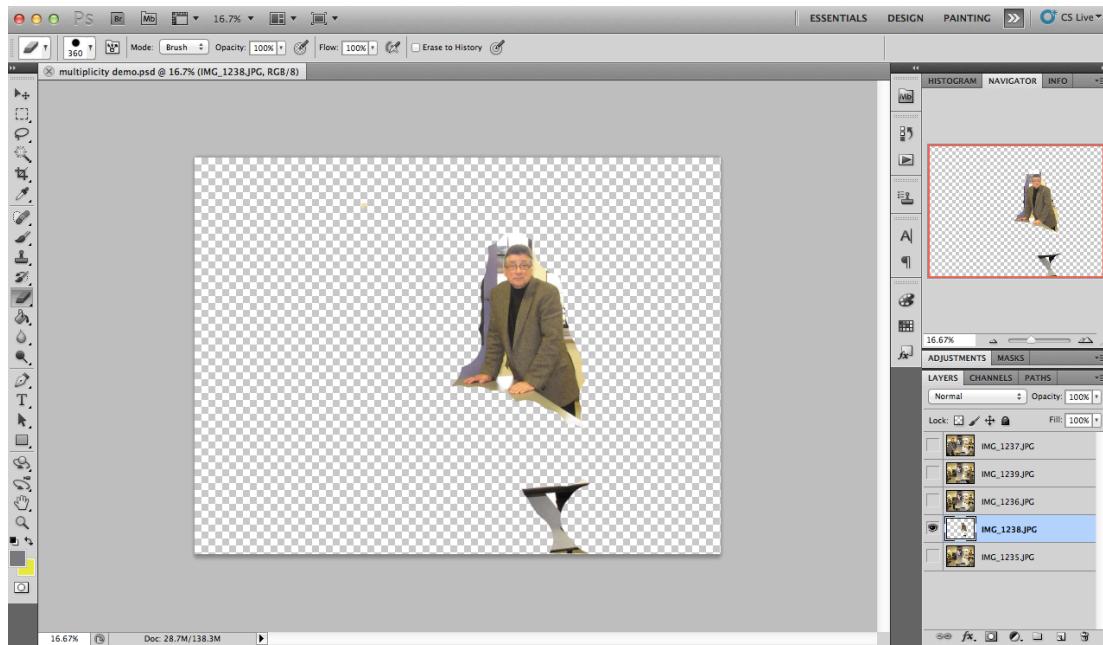


Note that in this case the empty background image is on the top of the stack, you will need to move it to the bottom of the layers. To do this, just click on the layer, drag it to the bottom and drop. You can rearrange other layers as required. I generally rearrange the layers so that the objects in the back are at the bottom,

then turn off all layers except the first image that you want. Now you can use this as the background if you want to or you can erase the unwanted sections.



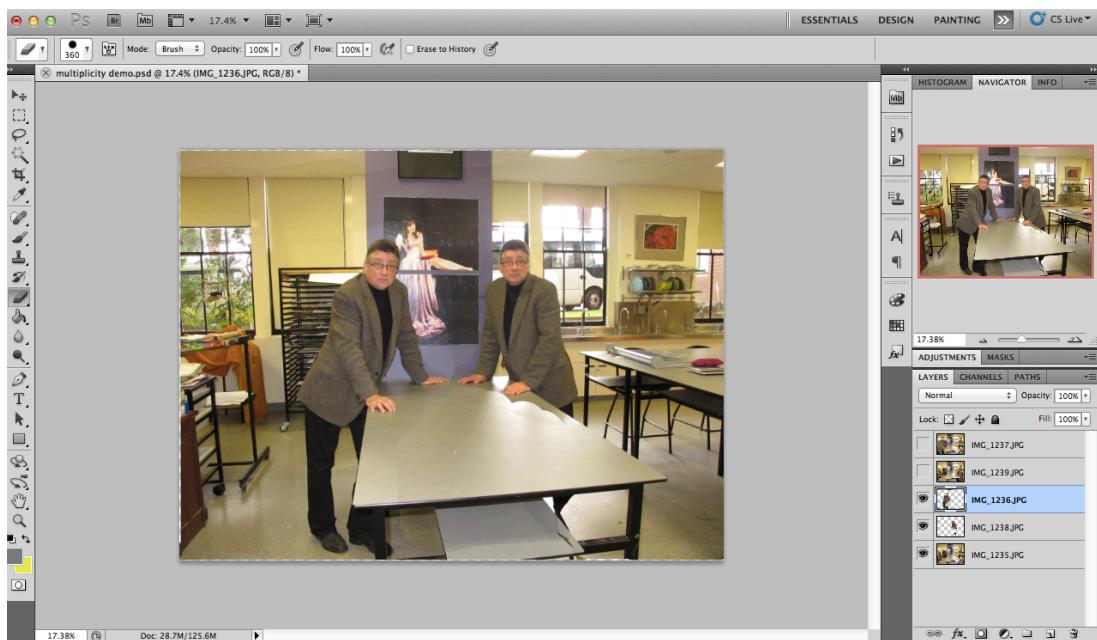
Because you used a tripod and the same exposure settings etc, you don't have to be super careful with the first image, just erase around the figure and remove as much background as possible.





Turn on the background to see the first stage of your image. At this point you will see any obvious differences in the lighting (see image at left) and you can make adjustments to your layer (Brightness etc) and tidy up your editing...using an eraser tool with a blurred edge will help merge the two images. You may wish to leave this until later as overlapping figures may negate the need for some edits.

Turn off the background and the first layer, then use the eraser tool to remove the unwanted background. You can turn the first two layers on and off as desired to assess how the image is coming along and to work out what 'fine' edits you will need to make. You will now have an image with a background and two figures visible.



Repeat the procedure for the next two layers (or as many as you have) to complete your Multiplicity Portrait. Where figures overlap you will need to be particularly careful with your use of the eraser (this is where the Layer Mask method is better).

Finally, look at your image with all the figures in, and make any edits required for the images to blend seamlessly.



And here is the final image.

To see more examples of what can be done with this technique go to
<http://www.noupe.com/photography/35-surreal-examples-of-multiplicity-photography.html>