# Panoramic Stitching and the Brenizer Method

There has been a couple of articles in photo magazines recently which have highlighted a technique which stitches together a number of images both horizontally and vertically to give the impression of shooting with a very shallow depth of field/very expensive lens. It also allows you to capture a lot more of the scene than you could with a single shot.

The technique is really straight forward and works best if you have a fast prime lens like a 50mm f1.8. The guy who developed this is called Ryan Brenizer, an American photographer who uses the technique in wedding and documentary photography. There are plenty of YouTube videos on the 'Brenizer Method' but here is my brief guide.

1) Kit – the effect works best using a fast prime lens like a 50mm f1.8. You can use a zoom lens but make sure the zoom doesn't change between shots.
2) Select a white balance. If you choose Auto there is a chance the shots may have slightly different WB making the post-processing more difficult.
3) Quality. You can use RAW but you are going to stitch together between 12 and 30 images – this will take a lot of computing power! JPEGs of medium or basic quality will be ok. Use basic quality for 'trial runs'.
4) Pose. You are going to shoot several pictures so the model will have to keep relatively still during the series of shots. This isn't a technique for people jumping about.
5) Exposure. To keep things consistent select manual exposure. The first frame should include the most important bit of the picture – usually the face or faces. Set the widest aperture and focus on the eyes. Dial in a shutter speed appropriate to expose the face correctly and take the first shot.
6) Change to manual focus and take a series of shots without changing any of the settings or zoom. Make sure you overlap each picture by about 20% for the stitching to work well. For the picture of Calum below I took about 12 shots in the sequence shown. Each rectangle is one photo taken with a 50mm lens at f1.8.
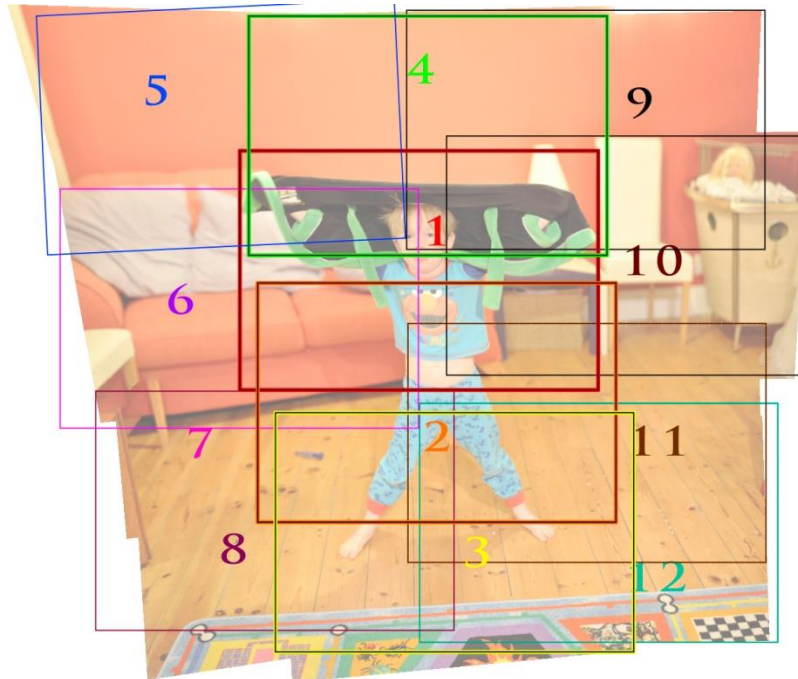
7) Open the images in Photoshop or Bridge, choose photomerge and let Photoshop do its thing. If you have a large number of shots to be stitched together or a slow computer do this 3 or 4 images at a time and then photomerge these together.

8) Crop, do any adjustments and save as a PSD to keep the layers and masks. I added a curves adjustment layer and a bit of High Pass sharpening to this image.