

Featured Artist: Eric Meola

Think of Eric Meola and your first thought is “color.” Since the 1970’s Meola has traveled the world creating vivid images that stay in the mind’s eye long after you see them and subtly change your perception of the colors around us.

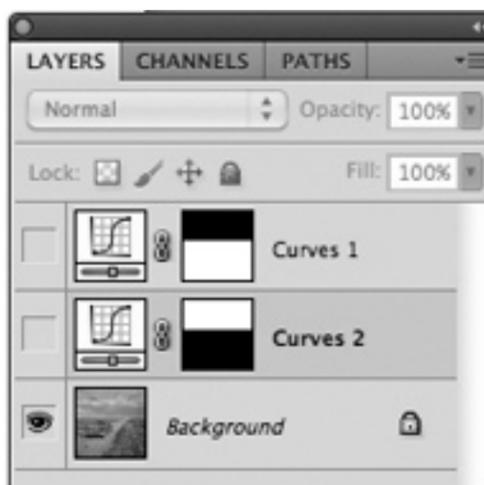
But it was a black and white photo of Bruce Springsteen—the cover image of Springsteen’s breakthrough album, “Born to Run,” in 1975—that first brought Meola wide recognition.

Now, another of Meola’s black and white images takes center stage again as the cover photo of Bruce Springsteen’s, “The Promise (The Lost Session: Darkness on the Edge of Town)” a major new multi-media release from Columbia Records.

AutumnColor’s Mark Doyle played an important part in preparing the cover photo and hundreds of others from that period, including the original cover photo for “Born to Run,” (1975) as well as the photo that appears on “The Promise,” which Eric shot during a road trip with Springsteen in 1977.

“We flew out to Salt Lake City, spent a day or two looking around used car lots and found a 1965 Ford Galaxie convertible,” he recalls. “We drove from there due West to Reno, Nevada.” The photo on the new Springsteen release was made in Nevada.

There’s a reference to the area of the photo in the lyrics of Springsteen’s, “The Promised Land (1978): “On a rattlesnake speedway in the Utah desert...” The substitution of states was a matter of creative license, Meola says. “I think he used Utah desert because it fit the lyrics,” he says.



Original AutumnColor scan yields “flat” image (left), but contains 100% of information in original negative. Meola’s Photoshop adjustment layers (center) result in completed image (right) with broad dynamic range.

Along with the new release, “Bruce is revisiting that time and Sony asked me to go through all my old stuff and pull some things together for them to look at,” explains Meola.

Easier said than done perhaps.

“These photos were taken over the course of a year or more, on the road and in the studio. This road trip was only a small part of it. I was shooting a lot of this material—2 1/4 square and 35mm—not always making contact sheets,” he says.

Over the years he would cut a negative out of the middle of a strip, put it in the enlarger, and re-file it. “The years would go by and little by little things became a little disorganized,” Meola says. “The only way to prepare the material for Sony to see it was to have Mark scan it.”

Meola knew he could rely on AutumnColor for both the quality and help this job demanded. About a year ago, AutumnColor began to make low-resolution, flat-bed scans of his negatives.

“Mark has done quite a bit of color printing for me and he also scanned all the material for my first book about Bruce, “Born to Run: The Unseen Photos,” back in 2006,” says Meola.

Using the low-res scans, Meola could evaluate and choose those images he considered worth scanning at high-resolution.

“Mark’s scans are always very, very clean. Maybe just as important, Mark organizes the material so that it can easily be filed and found when needed,” says Meola.

“Mark’s scans are quite different than what most labs provide. Most attempt to give you what they think you want. That’s understandable, but Mark’s approach is to give you as much as is possible from that negative,” he explains.

AutumnColor does the high-res scans on a drum scanner at very high resolution, as grey scale, instead of color.

Meola says in this way he gets the most out of his negatives. "When you get them back, they look wrong--very flat and very open. This is ideal because I can know with total confidence that I have 100% of the information in that negative and I can correct it as I want with adjustment layers in Photoshop," he adds.

"Mark writes them to disk and archives them. He puts all the originals back into sleeves and numbers them. He's got a whole process by which he gives you a complete package from A to Z. He doesn't leave anything out of the equation," explains Meola.

As it turns out, AutumnColor's level of service not only helped Meola put some of his past work in order, it opened new doors, too.

"As part of this process, I started to realize how much I had shot of Bruce. You know it has been a long time. So I started thinking, and I may be doing a book on this material," he says.

Learn more about Bruce Springsteen's, "The Promise" at www.brucespringsteen.net

See more of Eric Meola's photos on our [Customer Gallery page](#)

Visit Eric Meola's website at www.ericmeola.com

Scanning Requires Science to Render Art

Film scanning remains an important part of creating photographic art, even with digital capture dominant. Eric Meola's experience is a good example. Meola shoots digital 100% today, but like most photographers much of his photo heritage is in film.

At AutumnColor film scanning is a precise process that demands great attention to detail, Mark Doyle explains.

"First, all the negatives are thoroughly cleaned, then we fluid mount them on a drum scanner, which means we coat them with a very high-end, optically-clear German scanning fluid. This minimizes scratches and eliminates Newton Rings, rainbow-colored flare that can occur when two plastic sheets touch," he says.

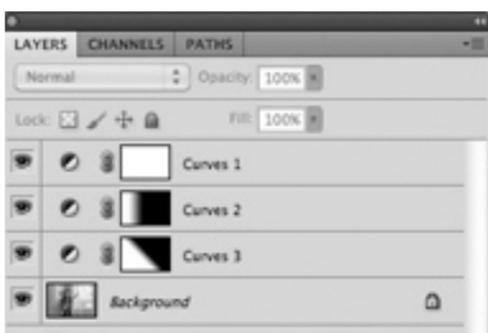
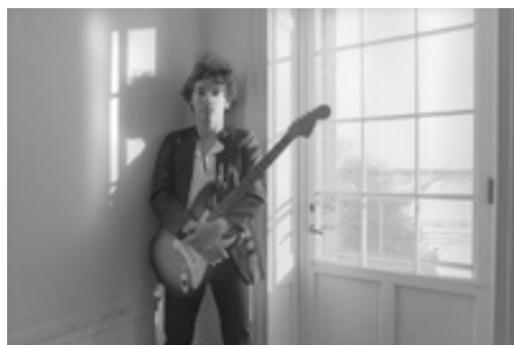


Image of Bruce Springsteen from original scan (left), with post-production Photoshop adjustment layers (center) makes a tonally-rich completed image (right).

"Then they're scanned on a completely color-calibrated system. By setting up the correct profiles, we get the full range of an original transparency or black and white negative."

"Eric wants slightly flat originals, so we reduce the contrast slightly. That gives him very open shadows and toned-down highlights, which gives him full latitude to go in either direction with his prints, without getting noise in the shadows or blowing out the highlights," Mark adds.

Scans are made on Optronics Color-Getter drum scanners with optical resolution up to 8,000 dpi. The pulsed light source and PMT light sensors yield exceptional shadow detail.

"Through our customized color calibration system and work flow, we utilize the same digital file to print with every process we offer," Mark says. "This means you can switch processes or papers, without sacrificing your investment in scanning, retouching and color correction."

Learn more about AutumnColor's scanning and film related services at www.autumncolor.com.

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Thanks for your interest.
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