Jane Long

The Evolution of a Photographer

Photographer and digital artist Jane Long was born in Melbourne, Australia in 1970. Currently based in Brisbane, Australia, she combines photography and photo manipulation to create slightly surreal images that straddle the line between reality and fantasy.

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Long has spent most of her career as a graphic designer, entering the industry over 20 years ago and establishing her own studio in 1996. Her work as a designer influences her style and enhances her compositions, with strong use of negative space, particularly in her portraiture work. Completely self-taught, she has worked with Photoshop since 1994, both commercially and on her personal projects.

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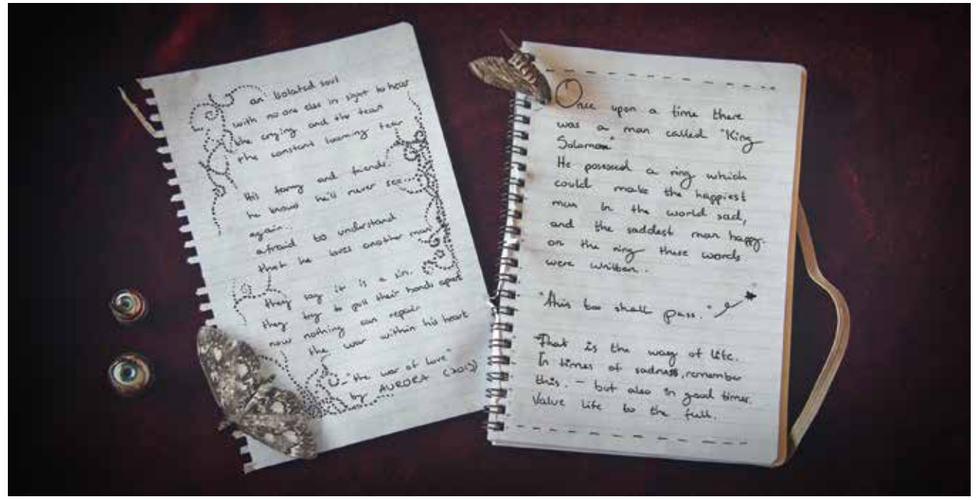
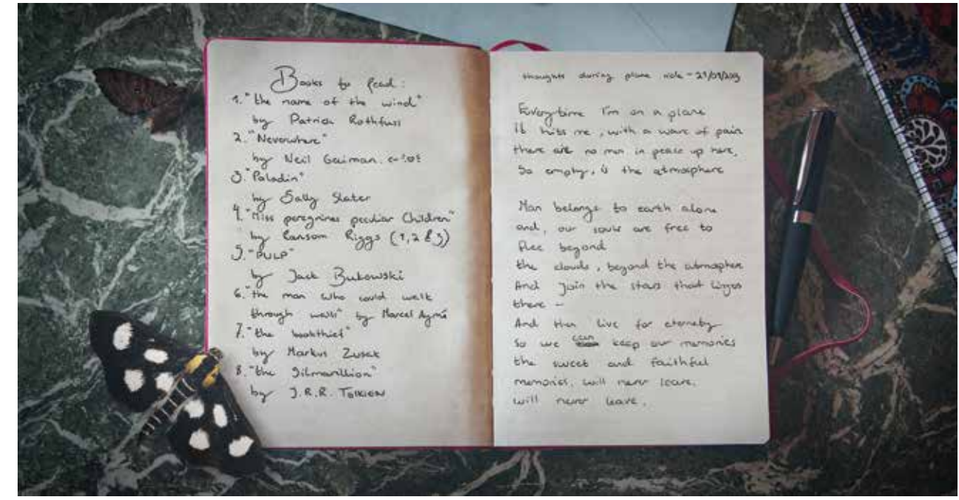
Long's entry to digital art was through working with stock images from sites like DeviantArt, where she spent a lot of time advancing her skills. Eventually she came to want more control over the stock images she was using, both from a creative and copyright point of view, and developed an interest in photography.

Initially working with friends and family, she used an old INSTAMATIC or borrowed equipment for several years until her first DSLR purchase a little over three years ago. Since then, Long has delved wholeheartedly into photography, concentrating on conceptual portraiture. However digital art remains a passion and forms an integral part of her work.





Of Moths and Music

I was approached by Decca Records around September last year about creating some images for Norwegian singer Aurora's debut album. I was thrilled to be approached and was already familiar with some of her songs (which I love!) so I was more than happy to jump on board.

> The music from Aurora's album is quite haunting, so I wanted the images to have a mix of innocence and darkness to match.

Initially, we set up a conference call between Aurora in Norway, Chris (our contact at Decca) in London and myself in Brisbane to discuss ideas. Aurora directed me to her Instagram account for some ideas on the type of images she likes. She's quite obsessed with moths so we knew straight away that they would need to be featured heavily throughout the images. In the beginning I was contracted to do the album cover and three single covers but a decision was made along the way to do a 36-page booklet, so we ended up with almost twenty images in total. The music from Aurora's album is quite haunting, so I wanted the images to have a mix of innocence and darkness to match. I also had a crash-course in lepidoptera, ordering moths online and learning how to taxidermy them. I have quite a collection now and can tell the difference between a moth and a butterfly! These were all shot in a variety of angles and light setups.

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Aurora's logo is of a hand-drawn tree, so I created a 3D tree in Photoshop to mimic its shape. This tree was then used in *The Swing*, *Windy Tree* and *Moth Tree* (the cover for the *Conqueror* single). Around this time the brief was expanded and I started creating the series of vignettes. I used objects around my home and called in favours from a friend for props, adding in my little stuffed moths along the way.

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The composites were put together and textures and toning was added. The images then went back to Decca and Aurora for approval. At Aurora's request most of the images were made a little darker. It's always a bit of give and take when working with a commercial client. Due to my design background, I also did the entire layout for the vinyl, CD tray and two different booklets.

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