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The human inkblots! Award-winning photographer creates stunning images of Rorschach tests using naked figures

- French photographer Olivier Valsecchi, 34, won the Hasselblad Masters Award with the project
- His project was titled Klecksography, the word for the art of making images from inkblots
- Brief was to make photos that represent word 'evoke', which made Valsecchi consider Rorschach tests
- Bodies are pictured folded over each other and composed live on set to create symmetrical optical illusions
- No digital manipulation or Photoshop trickery is used

By DENI KIRKOVA

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In a stunning new photo series, naked human figures are aligned to re-imagine Rorschach inkblot tests.

Without using any digital manipulation or Photoshop trickery, bodies are piled and folded over each other and composed live on set to create symmetrical optical illusions.

French photographer Olivier Valsecchi, 34, won the Hasselblad Masters Award in 2012 with the photographic project inspired by 'graphic duels'.



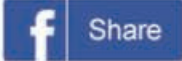
Olivier Valsecchi, winner of the Hasselblad Masters Award 2012, was asked to create photos that 'evoke'

Camera-makers Hasselblad, who grant the award to selected photographers each year in recognition of exceptional accomplishment, set a brief to create a new set of photos that represented one word: evoke.

Valsecchi instinctively looked at Rorschach tests.

'It was a perfect fit for my project; I see a lot of human shapes in them, and I decided to make my own photographic take on the tests,' he told tech, science and art site theverge.com.

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The resulting works of art are entitled Klecksography, a photographic reimagining of the psychological Rorschach inkblot test. Up to seven models are posed together in each shot.

'The artistic concept of the series was to make human sculptures, the technical concept of the series was to make photo montages without digital manipulation,' Valsecchi explained.

'What you see is what you get on my camera's screen. It took at least three hours to make each photo. Everything was shot live. That was the real performance, and nightmare as well.'



© Olivier Valsecchi

The result of that abstract brief was Klecksography, a photographic reimagining of the inkblot test

The result of that abstract brief was Klecksography, a photographic reimagining of the inkblot test



Without using any digital manipulation or Photoshop trickery, bodies are piled and folded over each other to create stunning images that resemble inkblot tests

He continued: 'The first job was to cast people who looked alike. Then I showed them their respective positions, placed everyone on the stage, and the game could start. They had to strike a pose for several minutes while I was yelling at everyone to move very slowly, up or down, left or right, to be symmetrical with the opposite side.'

In the original inkblot tests, coined in 1921 by Swiss psychologist Hermann Rorschach, patients were required to find form in inky abstract patterns. Their perceptions of inkblots are recorded and then analysed to diagnose mental disorders.



Mana II, pictured here, was his most challenging shot. Originally set on two levels and featuring 12 people, it was supposed to recreate what could be perceived as a monster's head

While they were more popular in the late 20th Century, Rorschach tests are still studied and utilised in some fields of psychology today. They've also been immortalised by cult and pulp fictional media, including the Watchmen graphic novel and film, which featured an inkblot-masked antihero, aptly named Rorschach.

Valsecchi, from Paris, went to photography school to refine his techniques, and his work has been exhibited around Europe, the US, and Asia. After winning a Hasselblad Masters award for his portrait series Dust, he created Klecksography. He cites numerous masters as artistic inspiration, including Francis Bacon and Salvador Dali.



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© Olivier Valsecchi

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