

Frames within Frames

Inverse Photography – Through the Crystal Ball...

A crystal ball inverts the scenery so everything inside looks upside down and captures a really wide angle. It sort of a like a poor man's fisheye lens, but more flexible in what you can do with it.

A lot of the shots looks great if you rotate the image 180 degrees (flip it upside down in your image editing program) so what's reflected inside the crystal ball looks right side up and the background ends up blurry (out of focus) and upside down.

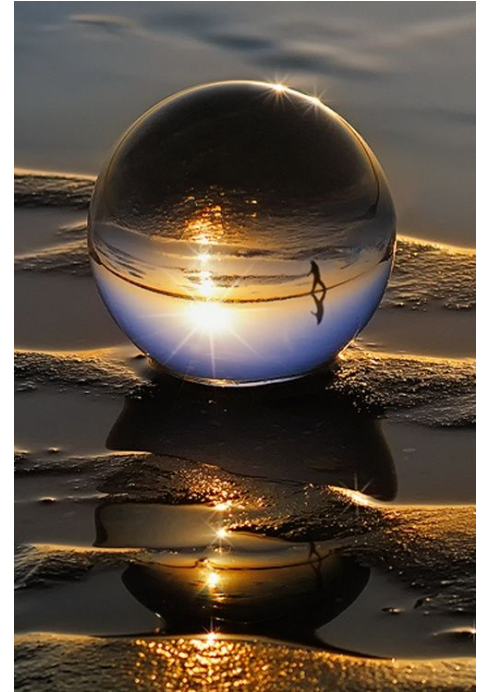
Play with the placement of the ball closer and farther away from the camera lens and be sure to focus on the image inside the ball – dslr's are a lot better at this on manual mode since autofocus will often not focus properly. Turn off the flash, and be aware of any glare that's coming from your side of the ball. Pay close attention to the entire image within the frame!

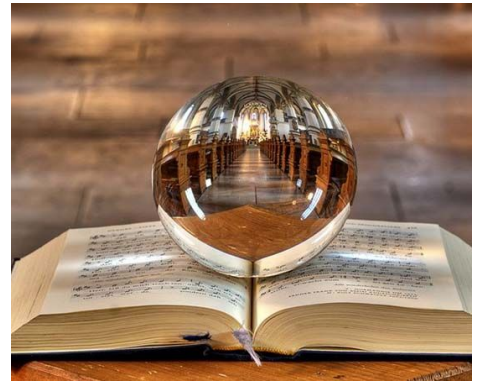
TIPS ON PHOTOGRAPHING CRYSTAL BALLS

1. Keep your crystal ball in the shade, if you can, to avoid distracting reflections from the sun or the sky. (If the sun is shining on the ball you will pick up that sunshine all around in the ball. The main thing to watch for it is the light reflections on the ball. Remember, if you see it so will your camera.)
2. Don't touch your sphere with your bare hands. Fingerprints will show easily and are distracting in your photo
3. Don't hold the crystal ball in the sun as it becomes very hot and could burn you!
4. Focus only on the ball, but pay attention to your background. The wider-open you shoot, and the further way your background, the more bokeh or blur you will have surrounding your ball.
5. Position your crystal ball with knowing you will have to turn your photo upside down.
6. The distance between the ball, subject and camera does matter. Move the ball around until you find the picture you are looking for.
7. Since you are shooting through the ball, you do not have to worry about your own reflection on the ball. You will be far enough away that it should not be an issue.

If you get the chance to try a DSLR or SLR camera:

8. Use a long lens or a telephoto setting on your zoom lens. This will give you a more pleasing perspective and a better effect.
9. Shoot at a wide-open aperture. A small f/stop number will give you shallow depth of field and will help render the background out of focus. This will emphasize the image within the ball as the main subject.
10. If you have a macro lens, use it. But other lenses will work too. I often use a 85mm for these images. Any lens will work, but shooting fairly wide open helps.





Reflective Surfaces & See-Through Surfaces – Through the Looking Glass....

Mirrored surfaces, such as at the side mirrors on a car or the rear-view mirror, will give the reverse of the image. Magnifying glasses and prescription glasses will distort the image, depending on the strength of the magnification, the distortion may not be significant.

