

Remember that you can alter your original image as much as you'd like. It's meant to be a starting point for inspiration, not a rigid blueprint. You're making art. YOUR art! That means YOU get to make the decisions!

Be inspired by your photo, not owned by it!

Composition

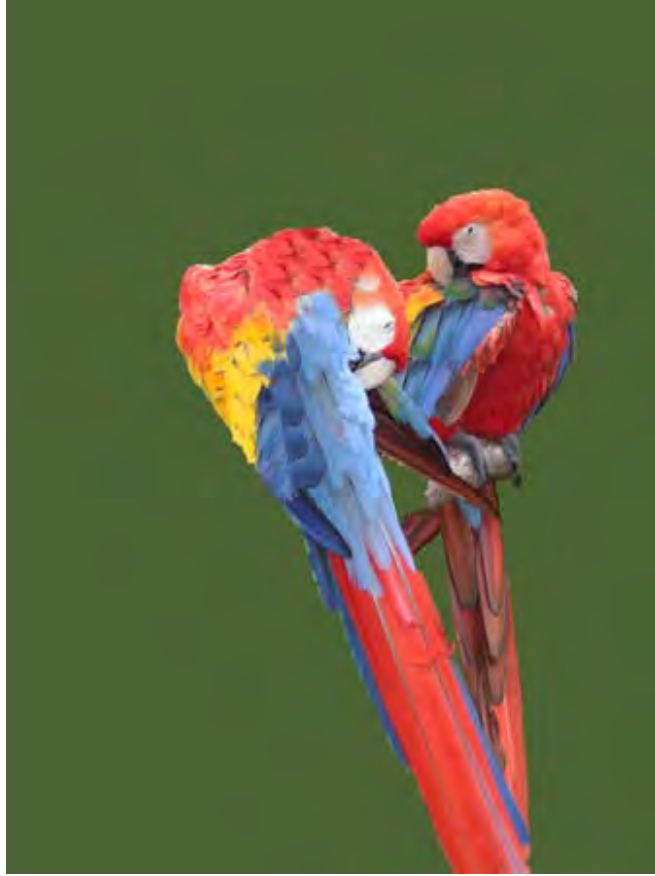
Quick, where does your eye go first in this next photo? (We'll come back to that, later.)



To think about:

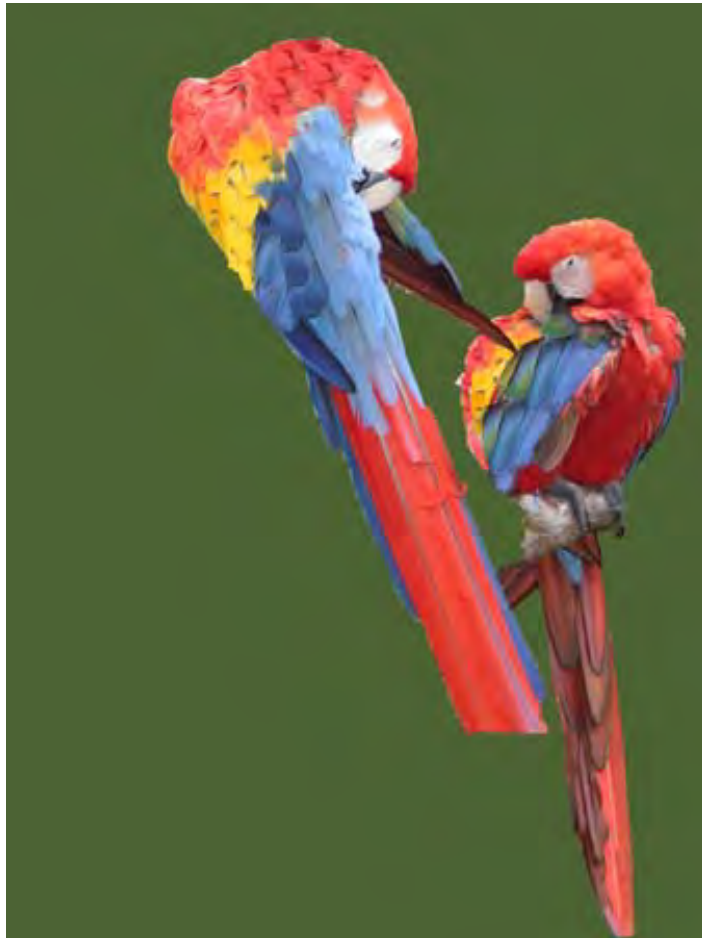
What could we do to improve this photo? Any removing, rearranging, adding, or altering? (I'll show you my answers to these questions on the following pages. You may want to reach your own conclusions before continuing.)

Here, I've digitally removed the branch in front of the left bird, and I've changed the background, for better contrast. (This isn't the permanent background, just one we'll use while experimenting with composition.)



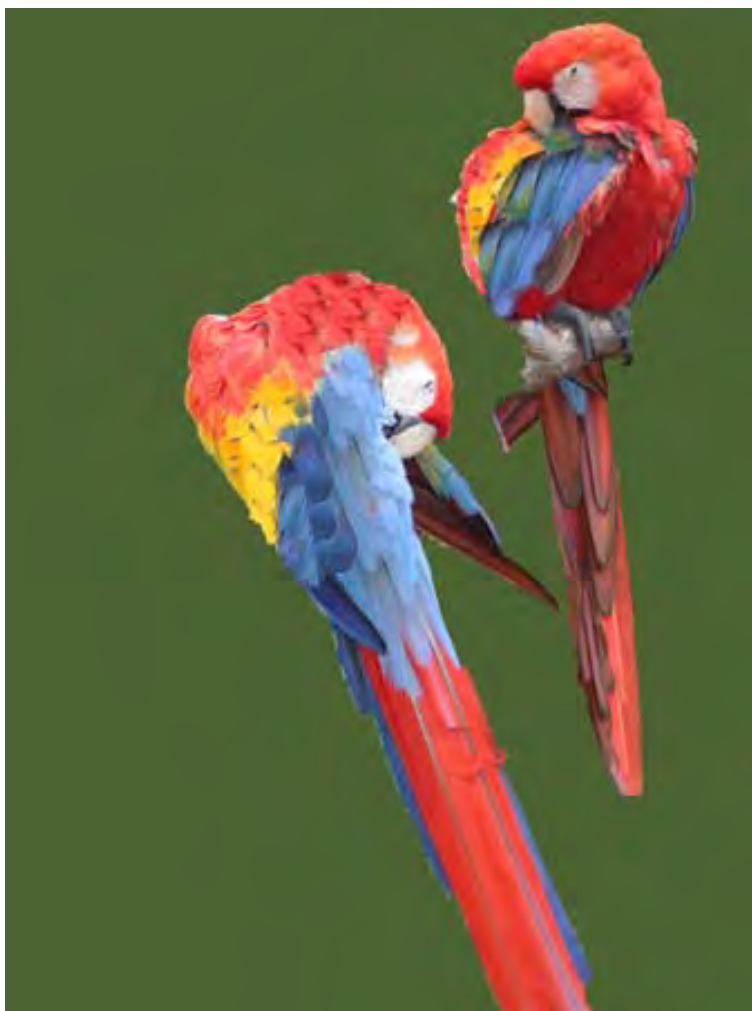
Speaking of composition, do you like the arrangement of these two birds? What other options would you like to try?

A diagonal arrangement often works well, because it adds a sense of movement or energy. Let's see how that might look:



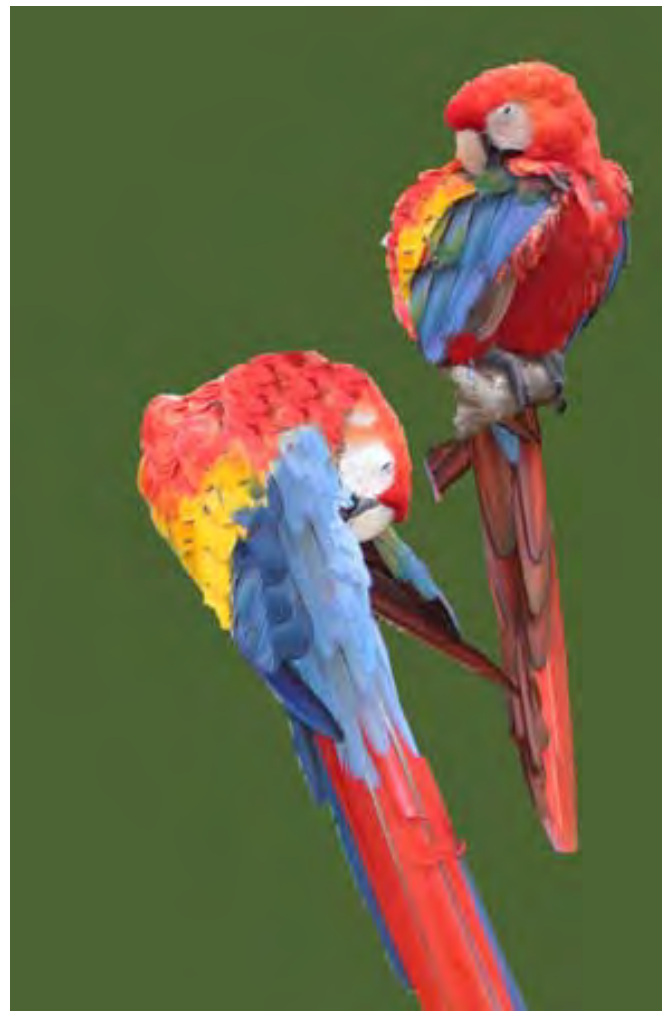
Hmm. It's definitely more dramatic, but is it right? I think it's rather awkward. What else can you suggest?

Let's try switching the direction of the diagonal.



That's much better, don't you think? Where would you go from here? How would you crop it? Or would you like to enlarge it?

Let's recap:



The original photo served as a wonderful inspiration. A starting point. With our changes, the composition has been greatly improved, and the contrast between background and foreground has been enhanced. What does it need now?

- A branch. Where will you put it?
- A background. Do you want busy or plain, light or dark? Remember that the background is a supporting element. It shouldn't attract attention. Its purpose is to provide contrast for the foreground. Although you'll want some pattern to suggest leaves, it shouldn't compete with the parrots.
- Corrected tail feathers for the right bird. Will you extend the feather that goes to the left, or will you use some creative license and omit it entirely?

P.S. The photo, above right, is not the same one as the one on page 10. Can you see the subtle differences in cropping?

Optional Exercise

Look through your fabrics to see which green ones you could use for the background. Perhaps you'll want to use small amounts of quite a few.

Remember: ***Be inspired by your photo, not owned by it!***

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