

Imaging Square Q&A

In January 2011, Casio launched Imaging Square, a new online service where users can enjoy digital photo art. The person responsible for developing this service gives an overview.

Creating limitless enjoyment with Digital Art

IMAGING SQUARE

<http://art.casio.com>

Q.01 Could you tell us how you came to start Imaging Square service?

A During the development of our digital cameras, rather than being satisfied with photographing things just as they are, we looked for ways of realizing an artistic experience that were possible only with digital imaging technology. This is what led us to Dynamic Photo function, which lets users take a subject from one photograph and insert it into a completely different one, and HDR-ART Craft function, where users can employ

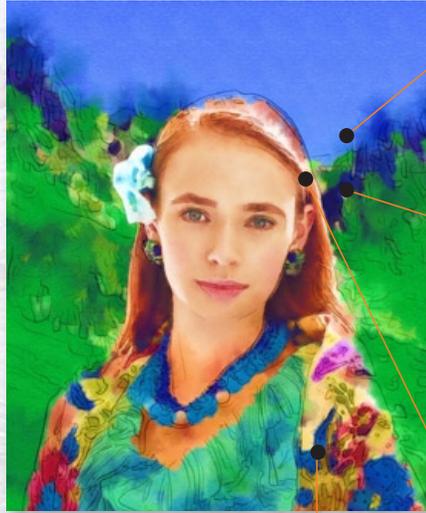
high dynamic range imaging to increase or reduce the contrast in a photograph, giving colors more brilliant than in nature.

To further refine the technology that enabled us to develop our digital cameras, and popularize this new way of enjoying photographic images by transforming them into original works of art, we decided to make the technology available over the Internet.

In January 2011, we launched Imaging Square — an online service where anyone can easily make their own original artistic creations from snapshots — for Japanese users. In February, we launched an English version of the website for North American users.

Transform Photos into Painted Pictures (Virtual Painter)

Transform your snapshots into pictures that look just like they were painted — even into oil paintings, watercolors and colored pencil sketches. Produce images with a finish so natural they truly appear as if drawn or painted by hand. Even professional artists admire them.



Virtual Painter-01

Superimpose paint data over a bumpy surface (like that of drawing paper) along with color data to reproduce real-life textures that appear as if drawn on actual paper.

Virtual Painter-02

When people draw pictures or paint, they do so in a set pattern — first they draw an outline and then fill it in with color. The prominent parts are drawn first and long vertical shapes are painted with vertical brushstrokes. With Virtual Painter you can reproduce hand-drawn brushstrokes to add a human touch.

Virtual Painter-04

The way of blending and running colors together when they overlap differs depending on the coloring materials. Virtual Painter takes this difference and represents it digitally by calculating how colors blend in overlapping areas, which allows the user (artist) to reproduce images that look like oil paintings or watercolors.

Virtual Painter-03

Following preset brush movements, add changes that are characteristic of brush painting, e.g., the beginning of the brushstroke is full and rich, while the end of the stroke is broken and faded.

Q.02 Could you give the reader some details about Imaging Square?

A Imaging Square is an online service that lets users convert photos they have taken with a digital camera or cell phone into original artworks. You can create artistic images simply by manipulating the photos you have uploaded to the Imaging Square website. Up to now, a photograph has been something that you just take out and look at now and again. With Imaging Square, it becomes the material from which you can create a new and enjoyable mode of expression.

The Virtual Painter function enables users to transform their photographs into images that look as if they have been painted by an artist, with a choice of a wide range of artistic modes, including oil paintings, watercolor, colored pencil, and so on. The natural look of the images, which really seem to have been done by hand, has drawn praise from professional artists.

Then there is the HDR-ART Craft, which allows the user to

create new photographic images that are more aesthetically pleasing. It reads the color data of a photograph and partially alters the saturation and contrast to realize an artistic image with brighter colors than the original. Image processing and transformation technology of this function enables you to create dramatic artworks that approach the kind of image retained by the memory or perceived by the eye.

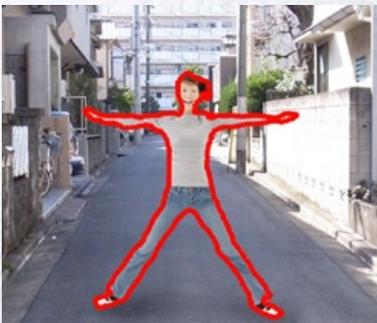
Another major function offered in Imaging Square is Dynamic Photo, which lets you design a completely new visual creation by cutting out the image of a person, pet and so on from one photograph and inserting it into another one. By combining subjects such as people or animals with a background of your own choosing, you can create a picture that would be impossible in reality. For backgrounds, you can choose a painting-like image or a HDR-ART of your own. Also, with DP Animation function, which is a further development of the same technology, you can take a single still image of a person and breathe life into it, making it seem to dance to the music.

Produce Artistic Photographs with HDR-ART Craft



A single image can be recomposed by taking color data and selectively changing contrast and level of color saturation, thereby transforming a photo into a brightly-colored, surreal work of art. Using Casio's proprietary image processing and transformation technology, dramatic works of art can be produced that approach the image reproduction capabilities of the human mind.

Create New Pictures with DP Animation



Cut out the images of people or pets from your snapshots and combine them against different backdrops to produce outrageous and improbable backgrounds. For backgrounds you can use picture images created by yourself or those created by HDR-ART. You can also animate the snapshot of a person by having them dance to music.

A Place Where Artists Can Communicate

What's fun about Imaging Square is that not only can you create works of art, you can interact with other artists. Enjoy producing new works of art by creating your own artist's studio (My Atelier) just like a professional painter, get feedback and evaluations from other artists and trade your creations. You can also connect up on social networking sites, where we plan to make it even easier for you to talk with other artists about their own works of art and comment on the works of fellow artists.

Imaging Square makes art part of your life and everyday fun. Casio will continue to develop and upgrade the functions, features and services of Imaging Square to create the optimal user experience.



Q.03 Please tell the readers about the features of Imaging Square that are unique to such an online service.

A What is most fun about Imaging Square is that not only can users create artworks, they can also share their creations with other users. Just like a real artist, you can create your own studio — your private My Atelier page — where you can display your artworks for viewing by other users. They can

then make appraisals of your works and even buy them from you. This kind of interaction brings a whole new dimension of enjoyment to the creation of new works of art. You can link your My Atelier to social networking services, which makes it easier for you to send messages about your own creations and make comments about other users' artworks.

We plan to continue enhancing the functions and service features of Imaging Square to make our users' artistic creativity a part of their lives, so that every day brings new enjoyment.