

UNLOCK AI

Director's Lens: AI Image-Generation

 **Hi there, I'm Michelle.**
Associate, Creative Director

As creatives, we spend our lives chasing ideas.

We find them, sketch them, build them, shoot them. Every tool we pick up is just another way to bring an idea to life. AI is the newest tool in that chain. I think of it as a new kind of camera, one that doesn't capture the world in front of us, but the one in our heads.

Stock ≠ Vision

You know this problem: the idea is crystal clear in your mind, but the only way to share it is with stock photos or a Pinterest board that misses the point. We've all pitched something with the line: 'It's kind of like this, but better.' AI takes away the gap between what's in your head and what's on the slide.

This isn't about replacing cameras, or the artist.

Photography will always have a depth and humanity that AI can't touch. But AI expands the process. You can explore 20 variations of an idea before you can set up a light. You can pitch worlds that would be impossible to capture otherwise. AI isn't competition for photography, or the arts. It's an expansion of creative possibility.



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A CAMERA
FOR YOUR
MIND

Driving on water



roller-blading on saturn



Same Rules, New Language

What's surprising is how much the underlying logic doesn't change. A strong image, whether it comes from a camera or from AI, is still about the same core decisions: subject, angle, lens, framing, and light.



Anyone can stumble into one striking AI image.

The real skill is directing a set. Building a world that feels cohesive, like it belongs to a single shoot or campaign. That's what we'll dive into.

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World Building









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Before we get into building worlds, we need to ground ourselves in the basics. AI responds to the same decisions we make when shooting with a camera:

Subject Angle Lens Framing Light

These are the main creative controls. If you don't set them, AI makes the choice for you, and that's when things fall apart. Think of each prompt as part of your shot list, and you'll start to build a cohesive shot list.

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Person (portrait) → presence, honesty

“Engineer at eye-level, calm decisive expression, neutral background, hands relaxed at sides.”

Landscape → scale, serenity

“Atlantic cliffs at golden hour, long shadow bands on water, clean horizon, no human elements.”

Product → clarity, desirability

“Polished chef’s knife at 45° hero angle on light gray seamless, soft shadow, no logos or props.”

Animal → character, dignity

“Kingfisher on reed, side profile, iridescent feathers tack sharp, water bokeh, no crossing branches.”

Action focus → energy, intent

“Surfer carving mid-turn, spray frozen, low angle from waterline, horizon level, no crowd.”

Architecture → order, precision

“Brutalist stairwell shot top-down, perfect spiral symmetry, high contrast edges, no people.”

Food → appetite, texture

“Sliced blood orange top-down, glossy juice beads, white plate, generous negative space.”

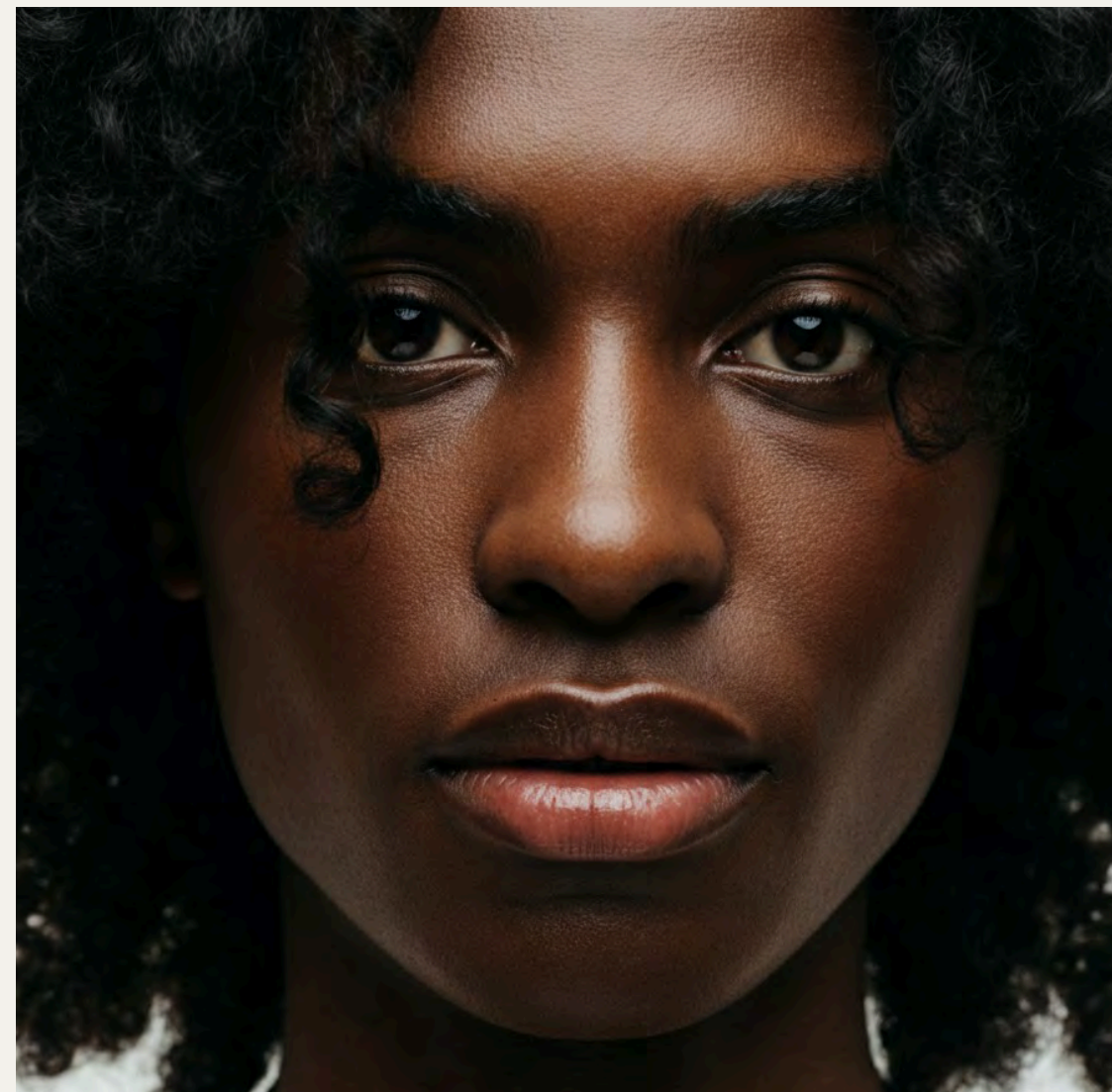
Macro detail → material truth

“Worn denim selvedge in extreme close-up, weave and fray sharp, frame filled, no context.”

Subject

The subject is your anchor. Define who, doing what, where, and why—so the model locks focus, avoids drift, and gives consistent, art-directed results.

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Person



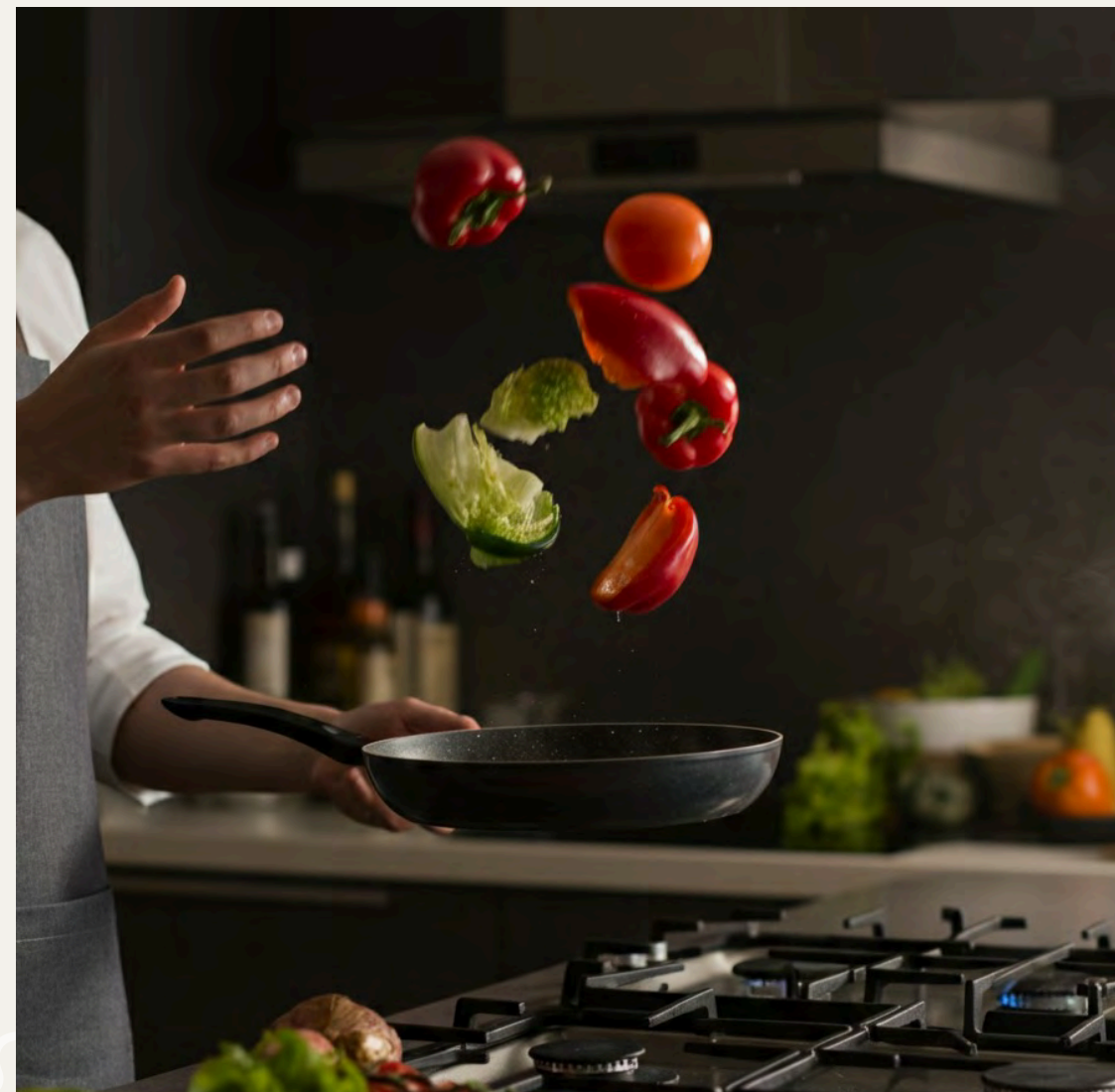
Landscape



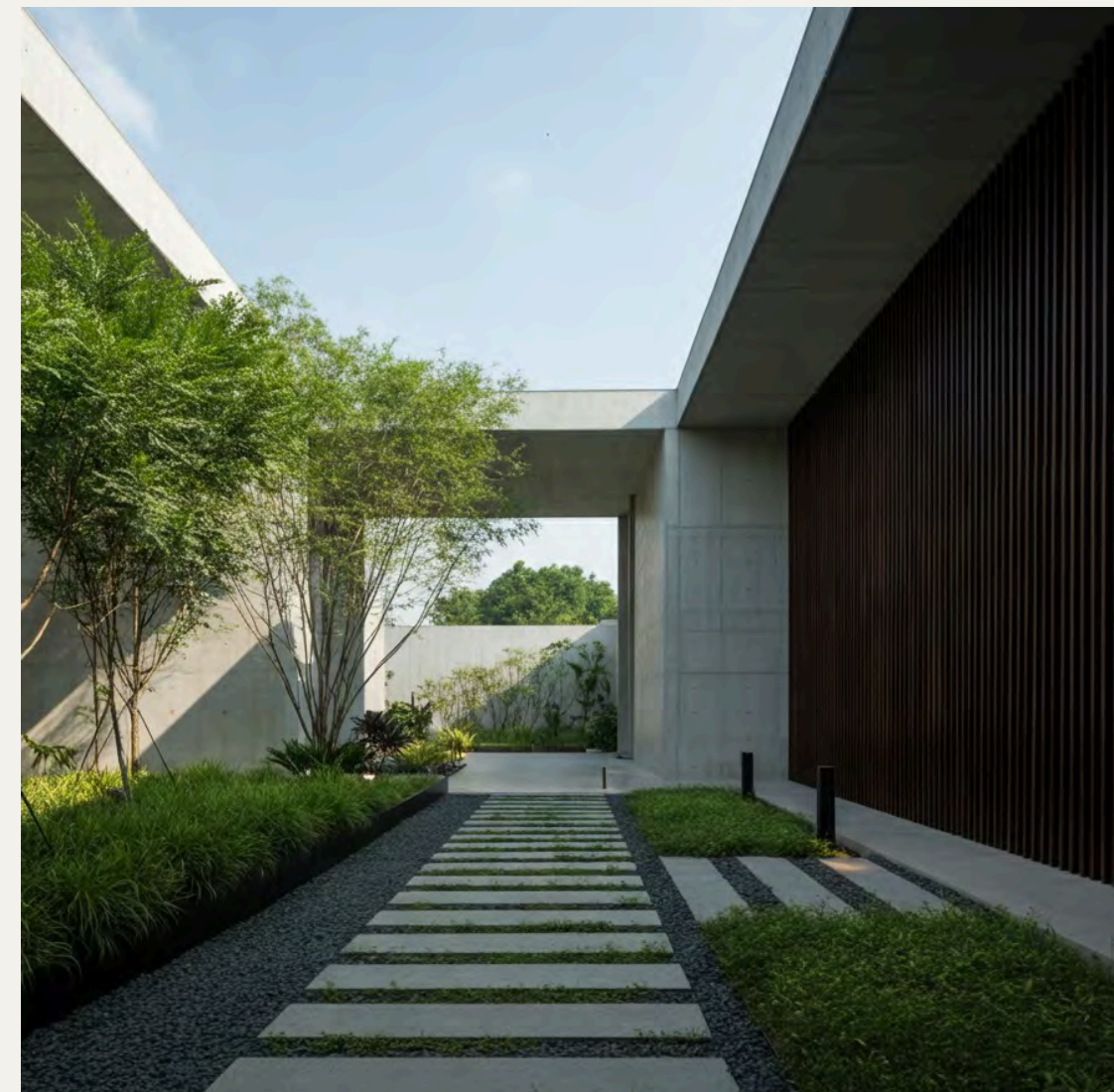
Object / Product



Animal



Action-focus



Architecture



Food



Macro-detail

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Subject Prompts

“Model in sunlight, harsh shadows, chrome chair.”

“Runner mid-stride, tunnel backlight.”

“Serum drop on cheek, macro lens.”

“Cyclist turning, sunset blur.”

“Silk dress in wind, motion freeze.”

“Hands applying cream, soft light.”

“Boots mid-walk, wet street.”

“Powder burst, radiant skin.”

“Boxer training, sweat light.”

“Perfume bottle in steam.”

“Fabric weave macro, soft light.”

“Portrait, tousled hair, halo glow.”

“Long coat in wind, city blur.”

“Basketball mid-air, crowd blur.”

“Concrete texture, cinematic crop.”

“Coffee cup steam, warm tone.”

“Record spinning, neon glow.”

“Notebook flat lay, natural light.”

“Marble table, handbag focus.”

“Silk scarf airborne, edge light.”

Angle

Angle sets the story. Low makes something heroic. High makes it vulnerable. Eye level feels direct. If you call the angle, you call the tone. If you don't, the AI just guesses.

Low angle → power, dominance, heroism

Prompt: “portrait of athlete, 24mm wide, low angle, dramatic sky”

High angle / bird's-eye → fragility, playfulness, or overview

Prompt: “overhead shot of office workspace, symmetrical layout”

Eye-level → honesty, intimacy, realism

Prompt: “eye-level portrait, 50mm lens, natural daylight”

Worm's-eye → surreal, awe, exaggeration of scale

Prompt: “skyscrapers from ground level, extreme perspective”

Dutch tilt (canted) → tension, dynamism, unease

Prompt: “skater mid-trick, tilted framing, cinematic action”

Over-the-shoulder → narrative, perspective-taking

Prompt: “over-the-shoulder shot of gamer, glowing screen in focus”

Point-of-view (POV) → immersion, experience

Prompt: “POV of runner looking down at shoes in motion, cinematic blur”

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Low angle



High angle / Aerial



Eye Level



Worm's Eye



Dutch Tilt



Over the shoulder



POV



Overhead / Table-top

Angle Prompts

Trail runner mid-stride, 24mm wide, low angle, open sky.”

“Electric motorcycle 3/4 view, low angle, city towers looming.”

“Cliffside cove from above, tide patterns, tiny swimmers.”

“Top-down flat lay of desk tools, symmetric grid.”

“Chef plating pasta, eye-level, natural window light.”

“Matte ceramic mug on counter, eye-level, soft shadow.”

“Wind turbine blades from base, ultra-wide, worm’s-eye, sky dominant.”

“Sprinter on starting blocks, worm’s-eye, stadium towering.”

“Skateboarder landing trick, frame tilted (Dutch), urban rail.”

“Alarm clock and scattered papers, canted frame, deadline energy.”

“Engineer over the shoulder reviewing tablet, factory floor in focus.”

“Photographer over-the-shoulder, subject seated, viewfinder info visible.”

“POV cycling downhill, hands on bars, motion blur edges.”

“POV unboxing phone, box lid lifting, product centered.”

“Running kit flat lay: shoes, watch, gels; top-down, neat spacing.”

“Sushi assortment top-down, balanced negative space, white plate.”

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Lens

Lens determines space,
distortion, and intimacy.

Fisheye (8–16mm) → warped, playful, immersive

Prompt: “fisheye shot of nightclub dance floor, distorted perspective”

Ultra-wide (16–20mm) → epic scale, dramatic perspective

Prompt: “16mm wide shot of futuristic city skyline, vanishing lines”

Wide (24–28mm) → dynamic, energetic, sense of presence

Prompt: “24mm lifestyle photo, friends on rooftop at sunset”

35mm → cinematic, versatile, slightly stylized

Prompt: “35mm film still, handheld look, shallow depth of field”

50mm → natural, documentary, human eye

Prompt: “50mm portrait, neutral tone, soft daylight”

Portrait (85–105mm) → intimacy, polish, fashion/editorial

Prompt: “85mm studio portrait, strobes, glossy editorial finish”

Telephoto (200mm+) → voyeurism, compression, scale

Prompt: “telephoto shot of surfer on wave, blurred background compression”

Tilt-shift → architectural precision, miniature effect

Prompt: “tilt-shift photo of city skyline, toy-like proportions”

Macro → texture, intimacy, spectacle

Prompt: “macro shot of condensation on soda can, cinematic light”

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Fisheye



Ultra-wide or Wide



35mm



50mm



Portrait



Telephoto



Tilt-shift



Macro

Lens Prompts

“Fisheye 12mm nightclub dance floor, crowded, playful distortion, lights streaking.”

“16mm ultra-wide skyline at blue hour, strong vanishing lines, epic scale.”

“20mm wide interior of cathedral, towering columns, exaggerated height.”

“24mm street scene, dynamic mid-step, close presence, natural daylight.”

“28mm friends on rooftop at sunset, energetic group vibe, edge-to-edge detail.”

“35mm handheld café moment, cinematic grain, shallow depth, natural window light.”

“50mm portrait, neutral tone, soft daylight, honest eye contact.”

“85mm fashion portrait, studio strobes, polished skin, clean backdrop.”

“105mm product hero, watch at 45°, compressed perspective, glossy highlight.”

“200mm surfer on wave, background compression, spray frozen, distant vantage.”

“400mm wildlife—red fox on ridge, heat haze compression, crisp subject isolation.”

“Tilt-shift cityscape at noon, selective plane of focus, miniature effect.”

“Tilt-shift architecture facade, perfect verticals, surgical sharpness.”

“Macro condensation on soda can, beads tack sharp, cinematic rim light.”

Framing

Framing decides what matters. Close-ups highlight detail, wides build context, mediums give balance. Mix them and you build narrative flow.

Extreme close-up (ECU) → texture, detail, abstraction

Prompt: “extreme close-up of eye with neon reflection”

Close-up (CU) → intimacy, emotion, drama

Prompt: “close-up of hand holding flower, cinematic lighting”

Medium close-up (MCU) → head-and-shoulders, portrait standard

Prompt: “medium close-up fashion portrait, studio backdrop”

Medium shot (MS) → subject + partial environment

Prompt: “medium shot of chef in kitchen, warm morning light”

Medium long shot (MLS) → $\frac{3}{4}$ body, outfit focus

Prompt: “fashion lookbook, full outfit in studio, soft strobes”

Long shot (LS) → person + environment equally

Prompt: “long shot of runner in desert landscape, cinematic”

Extreme long shot (ELS) → spectacle, scale, insignificance

Prompt: “tiny human silhouette against glacier, epic wide frame”

Overhead (flat lay) → graphic, design-driven, commercial

Prompt: “flat lay of skincare products on marble, diffused light”

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Extreme close-up (ECU)



Close-up



Medium close-up



Medium shot



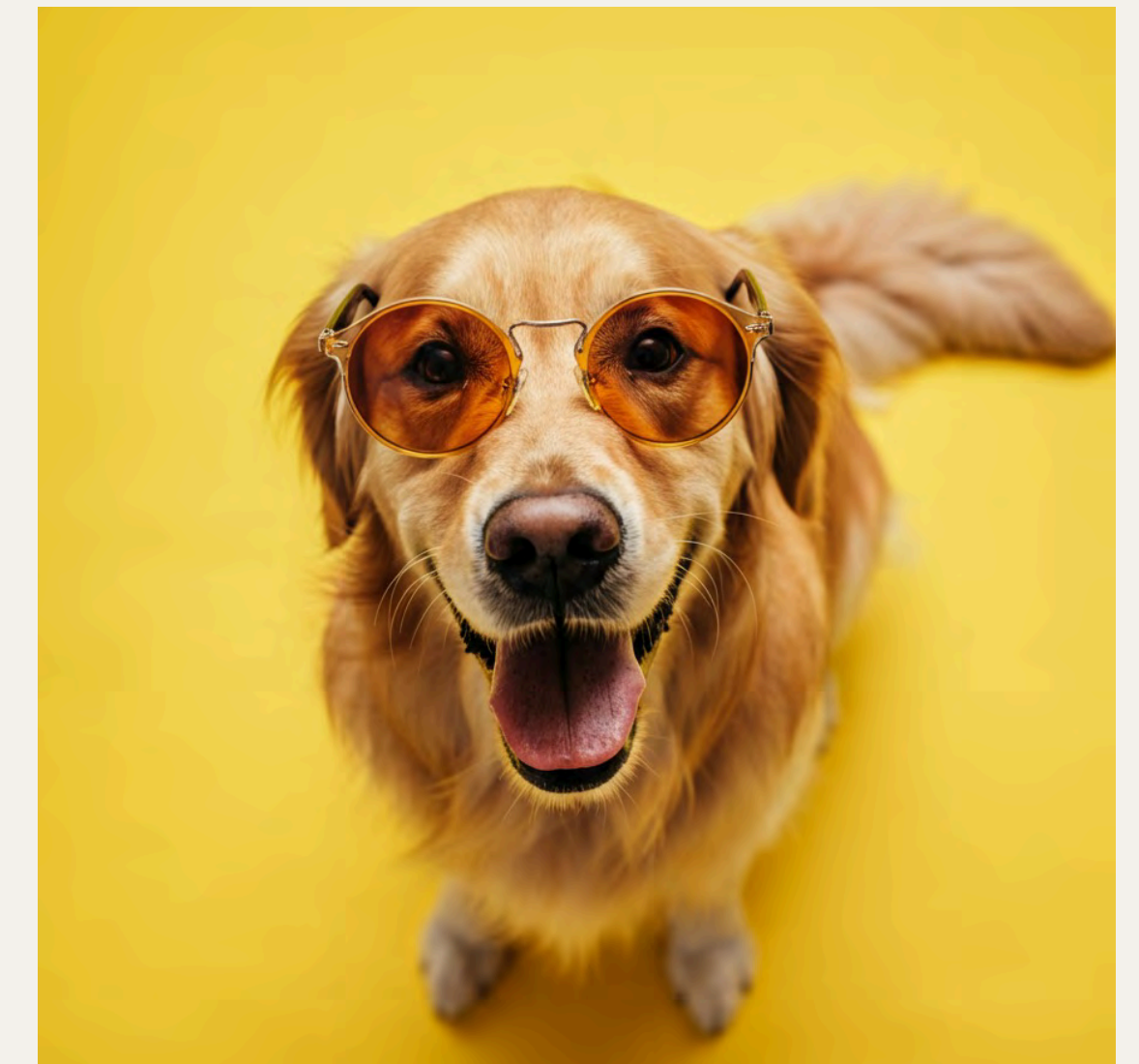
Medium Long Shot



Long shot



Extreme long shot



Overhead

Framing Prompts

“Extreme close-up of steel coin edge, knurling razor sharp, frame filled.”

“Extreme close-up of cracked earth, texture abstracted, no horizon.”

“Close-up of tearful eye, soft catchlight, skin texture visible.”

“Close-up of espresso pour, crema ribbon, shallow depth.”

“Medium close-up engineer, head-and-shoulders, neutral backdrop, calm expression.”

“Medium close-up chef plating, hands and face in frame, window light.”

“Medium shot cyclist in workshop, torso + bike frame, tools softly blurred.”

“Medium shot product demo, model using skincare, sink and mirror included.”

“Medium long shot fashion look, ¾ body, studio seamless, soft strobes.”

“Long shot runner on dune, subject and landscape balanced, warm evening.”

“Long shot architect on site, person framed by scaffolding, context clear.”

“Extreme long shot tiny hiker on glacier, vast negative space, epic scale.”

“Overhead flat lay of camera kit, grid alignment, diffused top light.”

“Overhead shot of breakfast table, graphic arrangement, clean shadows.”

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Golden hour → warmth, cinematic glow

Prompt: “runner on rooftop at golden hour, lens flare, cinematic realism”

Blue hour → calm, moody, twilight

Prompt: “city street at blue hour, neon lights just starting to glow”

Hard light → grit, contrast, drama

Prompt: “streetwear editorial, harsh noon sun, deep shadows”

Soft light → intimacy, naturalism, warmth

Prompt: “soft window light on portrait, cozy interior”

Backlight / silhouette → mystery, graphic shape

Prompt: “backlit dancer silhouette in fog, strong spotlight”

Neon / artificial glow → surreal, hyperreal

Prompt: “cyberpunk alley, magenta + cyan neon lights”

Studio strobes → fashion polish, sharpness

Prompt: “editorial portrait, Rembrandt lighting setup, 85mm lens”

Chiaroscuro → painterly drama, Baroque vibe

Prompt: “Caravaggio-inspired chiaroscuro portrait, oil painting style”

Gel lighting → graphic, bold, experimental

Prompt: “dual-tone gel lighting in pink and blue, glossy magazine shoot”

Light

Light is mood. Soft feels human, hard feels raw,
golden hour feels cinematic, neon feels surreal.
Call your light, or you lose your emotion.

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Golden hour



Blue hour



Hard light



Soft light



Backlit / Silhouette



Neon



Strobe



Chiaroscuro

Lighting Prompts

“Runner on rooftop at golden hour, lens flare kissing edge, warm cinematic glow.”

“City street at blue hour, neon just flickering on, wet pavement reflections.”

“Streetwear editorial in harsh noon sun, crisp shadows, high contrast.”

“Portrait by north-facing window, soft wraparound light, cozy interior.”

“Backlit dancer in haze, silhouette clean, rim light carving edges.”

“Cyberpunk alley, magenta/cyan neon wash, humid air bloom.”

“Studio beauty with clamshell lighting, glossy skin highlights, seamless backdrop.”

“Rembrandt portrait in studio, key at 45°, triangle under eye, rich falloff.”

“Caravaggio-style still life, single candle practical, deep chiaroscuro.”

“Dual-gel setup (teal + amber), split lighting, glossy editorial finish.”

“Overcast beach, giant softbox sky, muted palette, gentle contrast.”

“Golden backlight through leaves, dappled bokeh, subject in open shade.”

“Tungsten practicals in bar interior, warm pool of light, cool window fill.”

“Telephoto surfer at sunset, strong rim from low sun, spray catching sparks.”

“High-key product on white, broad softboxes, minimal shadow, clinical clean.”

“Low-key boxer in gym, single hard top light, sweat sheen, background falls to black.”

[Subject] + [Angle] + [Lens] + [Framing] + [Light] + [Style/Emotion] = Direction

VAGUE = EXPLORATION
SPECIFIC = DIRECTION

Why Worlds Matter

One image is decoration. A world is direction.
Brands don't hire us for one-off pictures, they buy into campaigns and design systems. Cohesion is what makes work feel like it belongs to itself.



Cinematic



Editorial



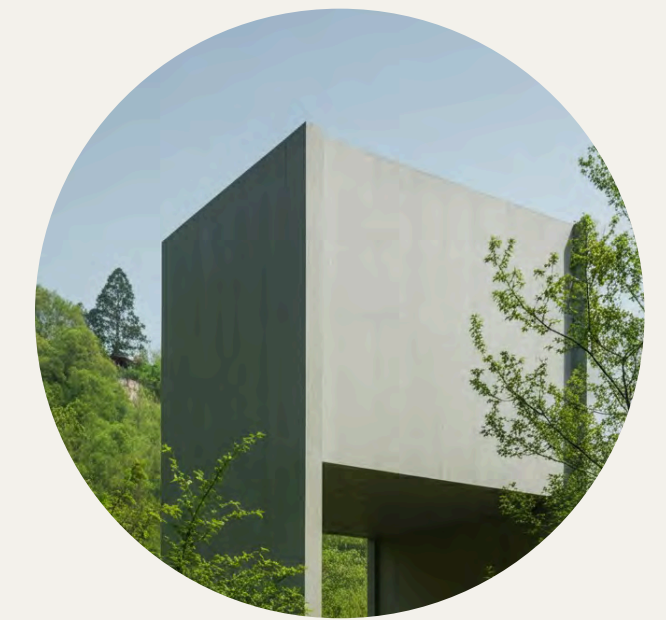
Surreal



Illustrated



Graphic / 3D



Minimalism



Futurism



Documentary



Retro / Film



Landscape



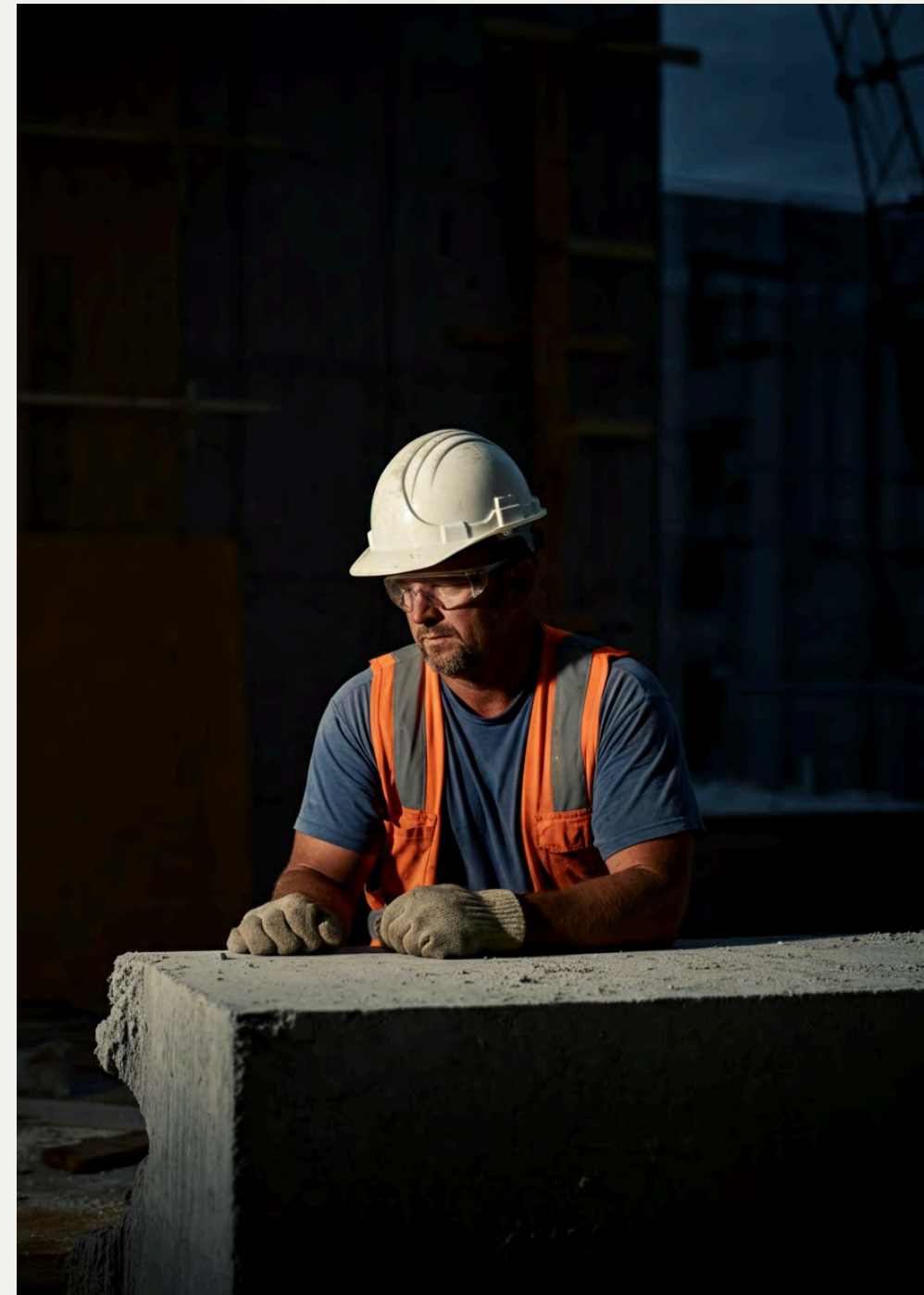
Dreamscape



Dynamic

Cinematic

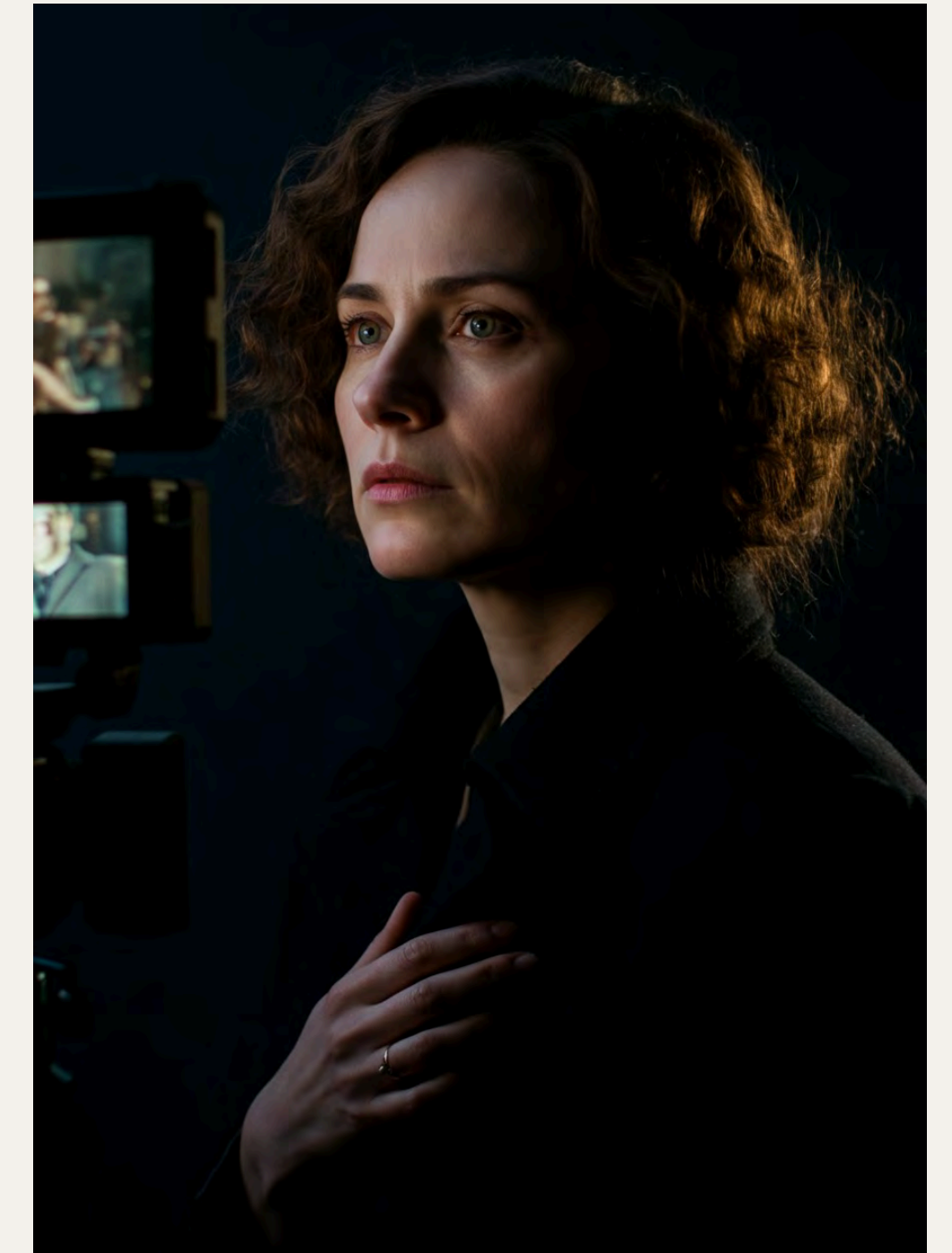
Feels like stills pulled from a film.
Lens-accurate, moody, and graded.



cinematic portrait of worker on
construction site



cinematic portrait of teacher in classroom,
cinematic film



cinematic portrait of woman,
cinematic film

Editorial

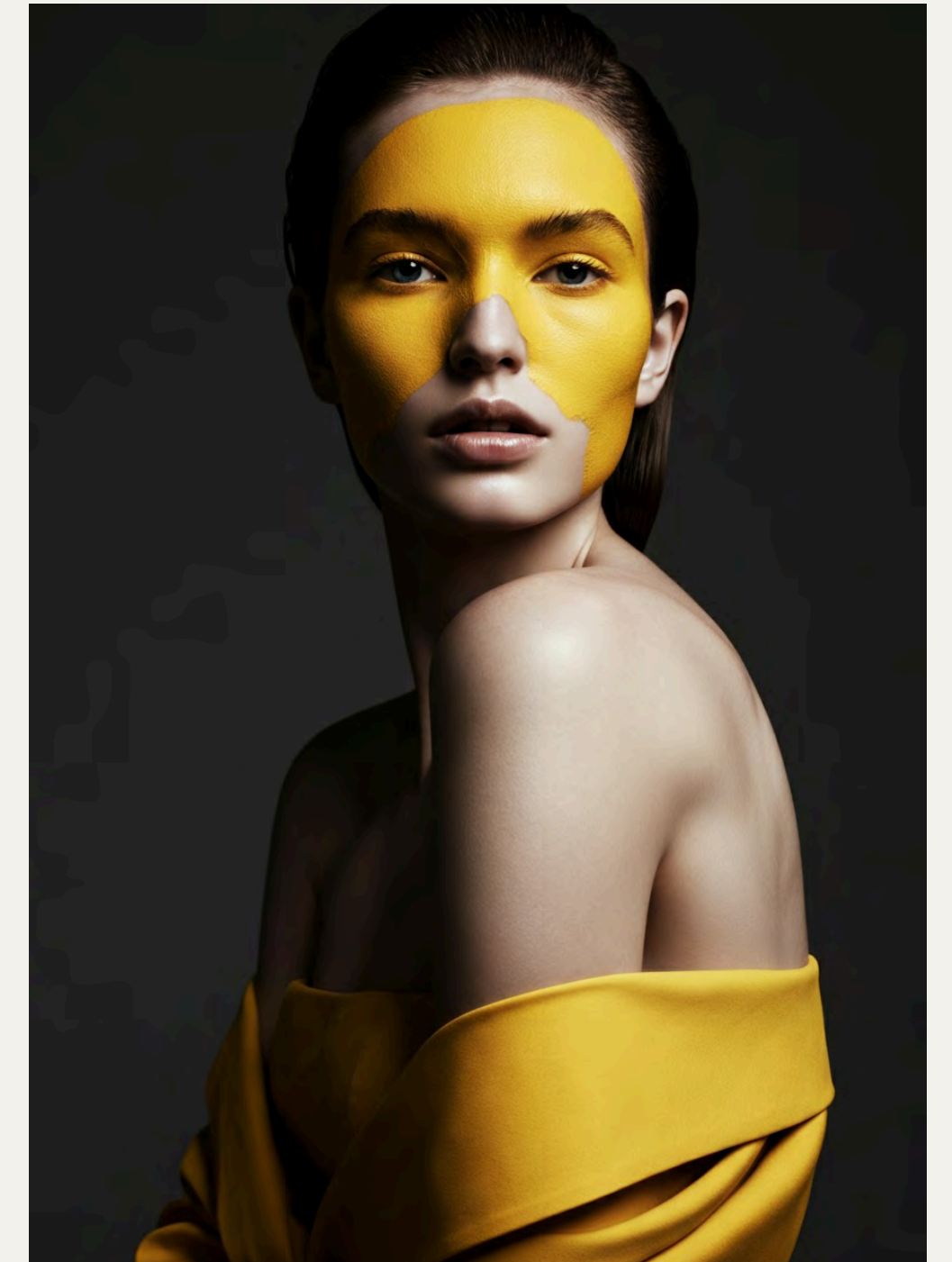
Glossy, stylized, perfectly lit.
Feels like a magazine spread.



editorial portrait of model on red
background



an editorial portrait of a celebrity
in a studio



editorial portrait of model in yellow world

Surreal

Physics breaks, imagination leads.
Strange, dreamlike, impossible.



surreal shot of huge person in tiny
nyc streets, giant-like



surreal shot of driver driving a
huge baguette in nyc



surreal portrait under water, fashion
editorial, majestic, surrounded by 10 sharks

Illustrated

Handmade quality.

Painterly, drawn, or sketched styles.



an illustrated line drawing of a city
using colorful tones



illustration of flowers, abstract, colorful



illustration of asian family on doorstep

Graphic / 3D

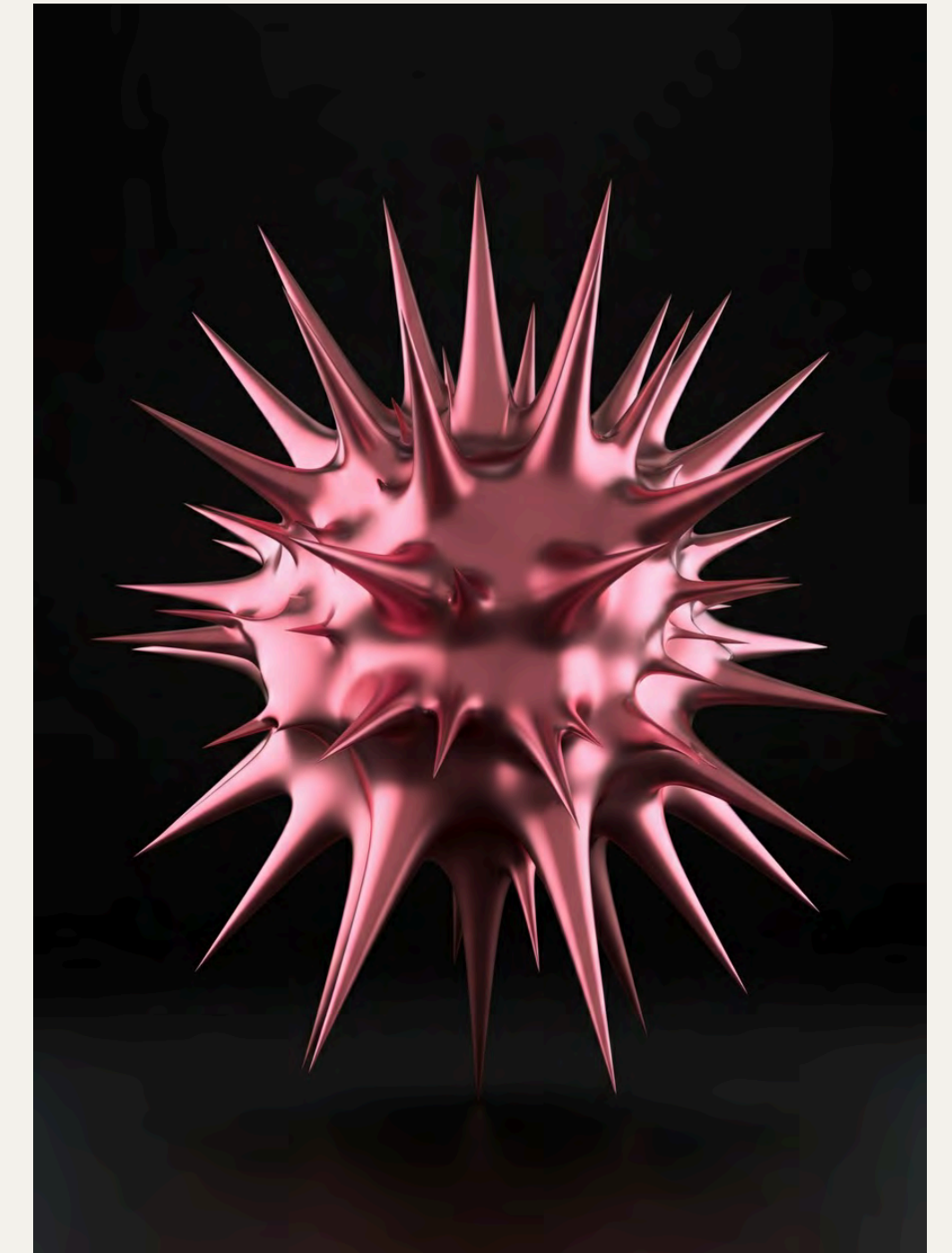
Sharp, dimensional, designed. Feels engineered more than captured.



3d render of apple watch in colorful environment, colorful gradient background, colorful bright glass material



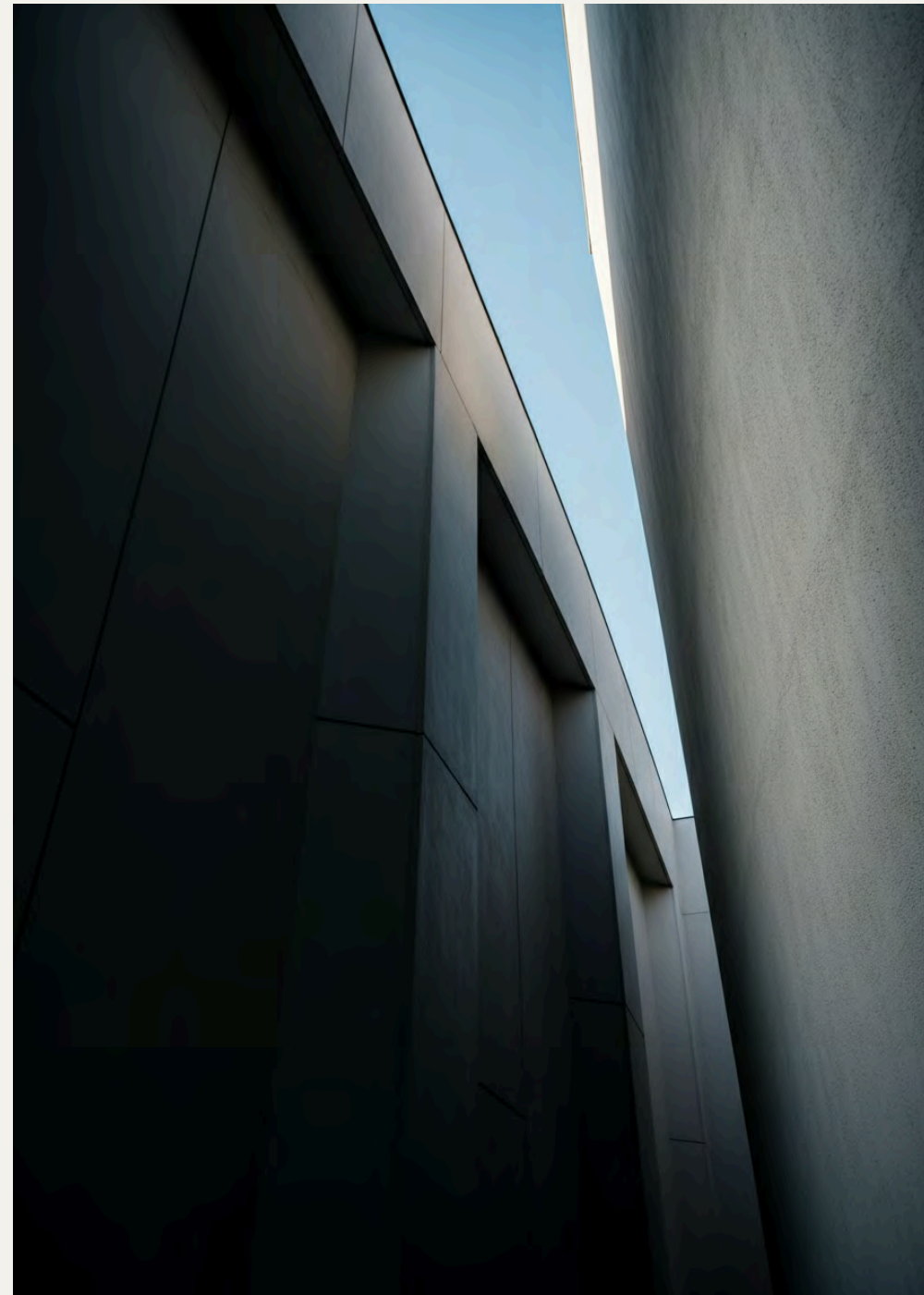
a 3d render of an architectural building



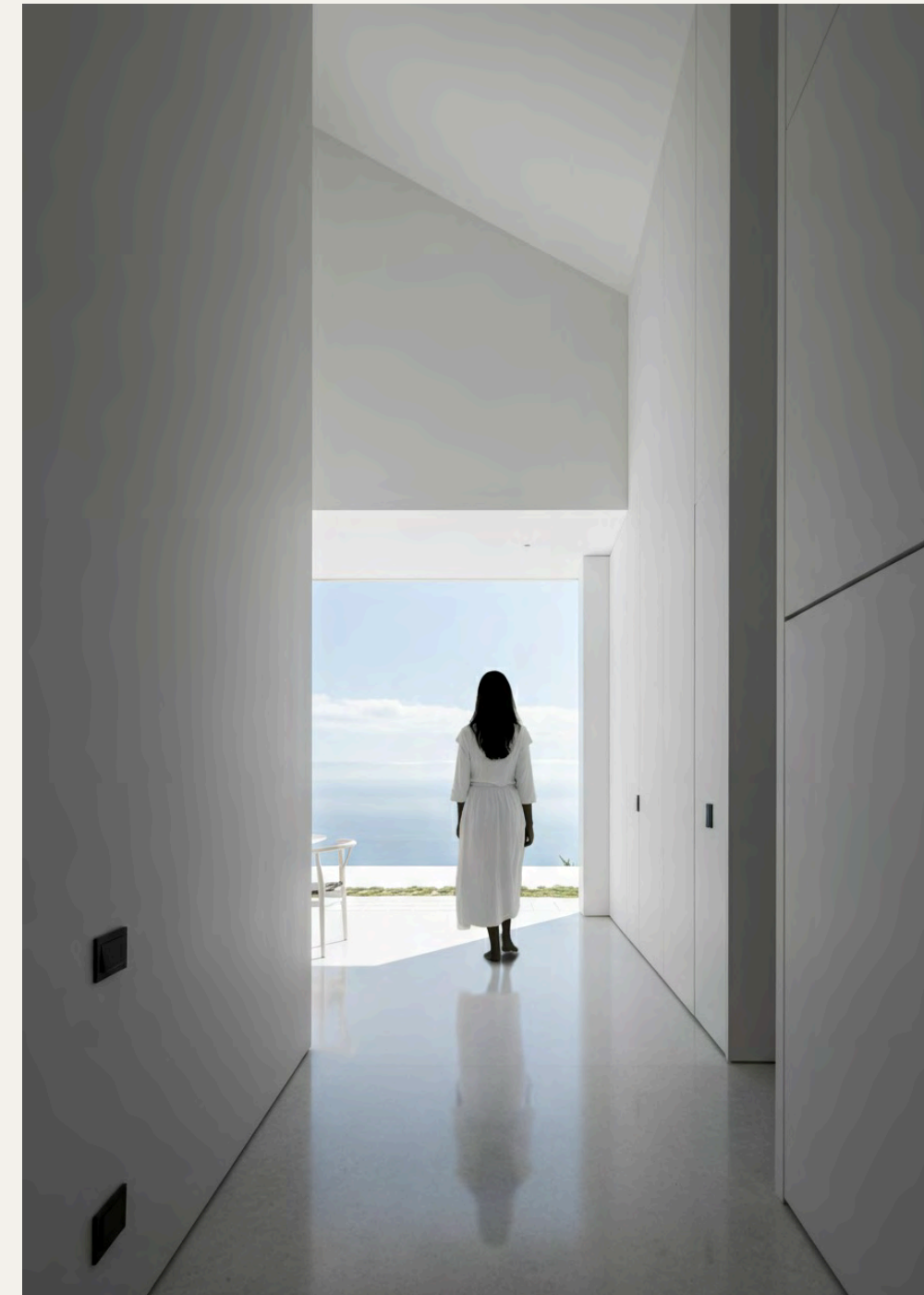
a 3d icon, abstract shape, pink, fluid, metallic, spikes, texture

Minimalism

Reduction, clarity, negative space.
Less is more.



a minimal shot of architecture



a minimal wide shot of a person in
expansive white minimal villa, silhouette,



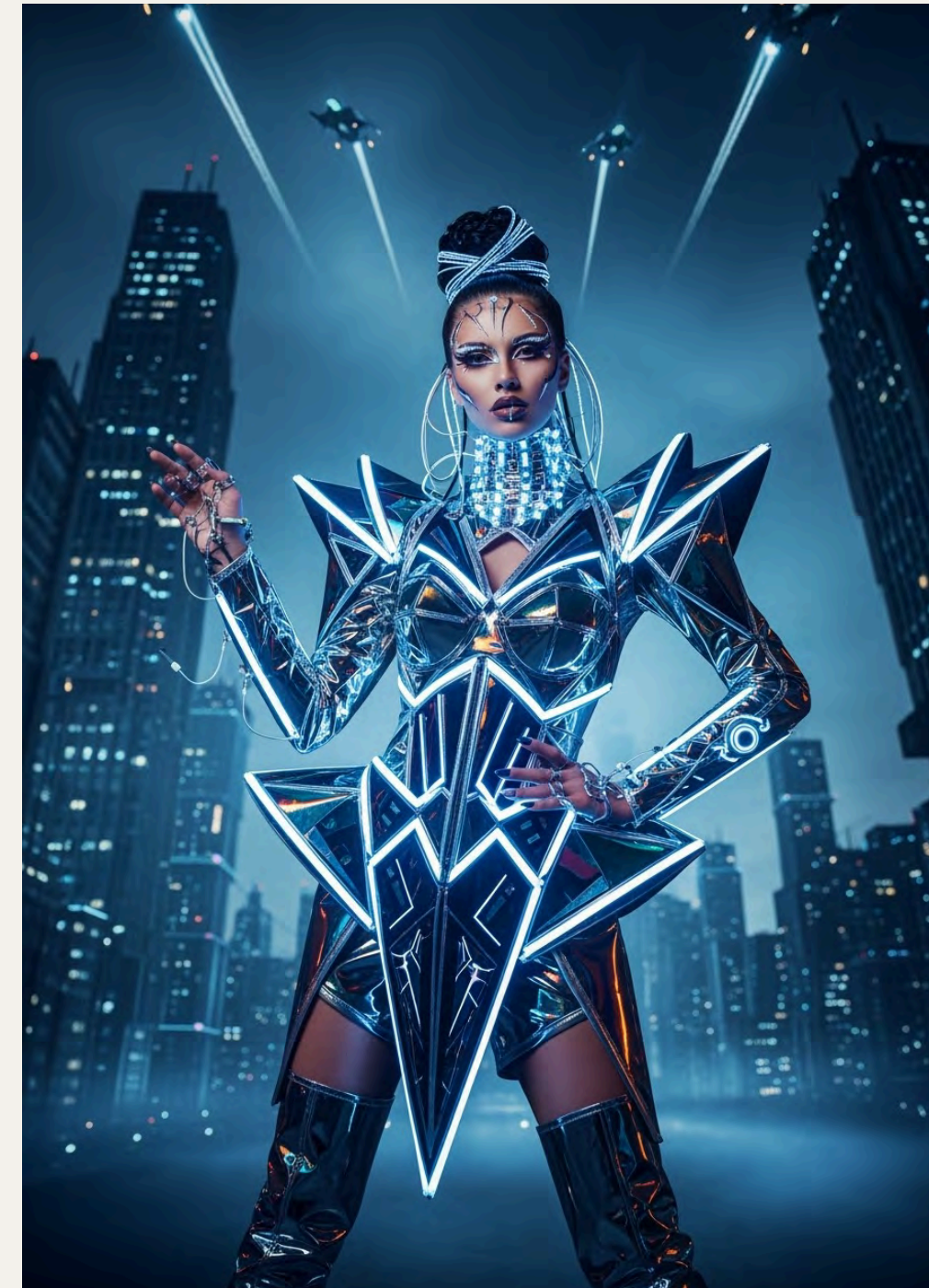
a minimal photo of model in nyc

Futurism

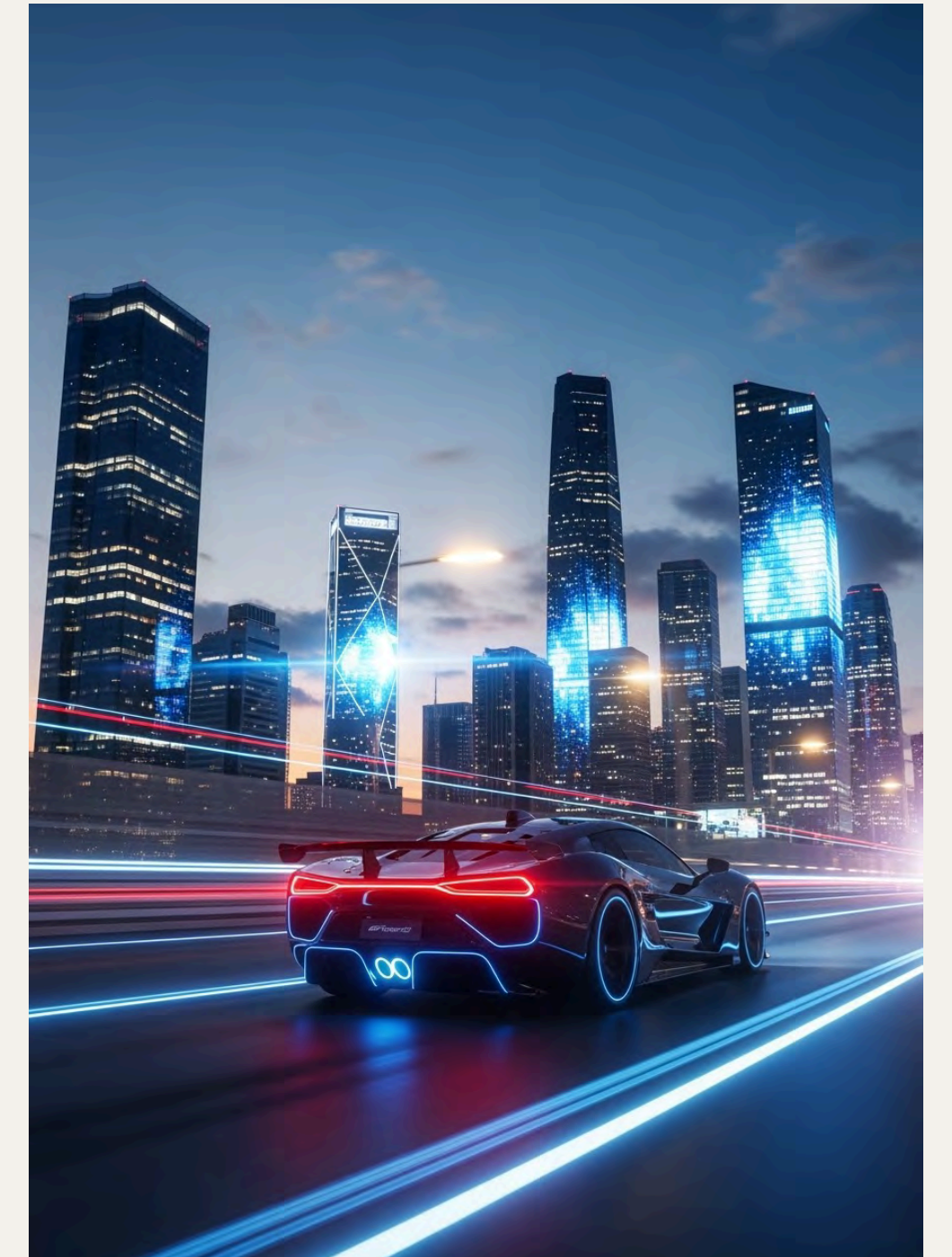
Neon, chrome, high-tech environments. Synthetic and glossy.



a futuristic photo of city



a futuristic photo of model



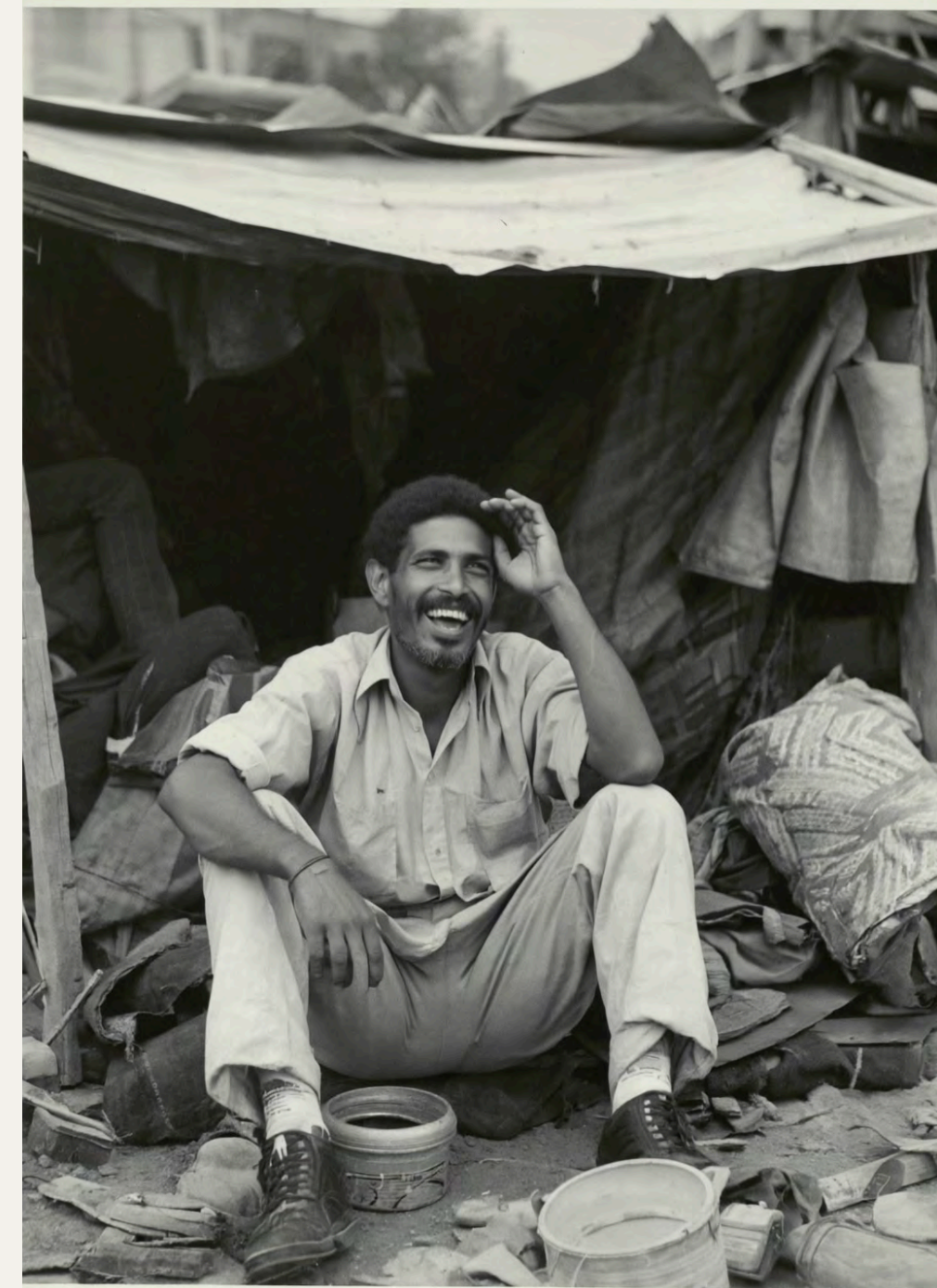
a futuristic car commercial,
editorial, cinematic

Documentary

Unpolished, handheld, raw.
Feels authentic and
immediate.



documentary style photography of kids
playing in nyc street



documentary style photography of
homeless person, happy laughing, black
and white, realistic portrait



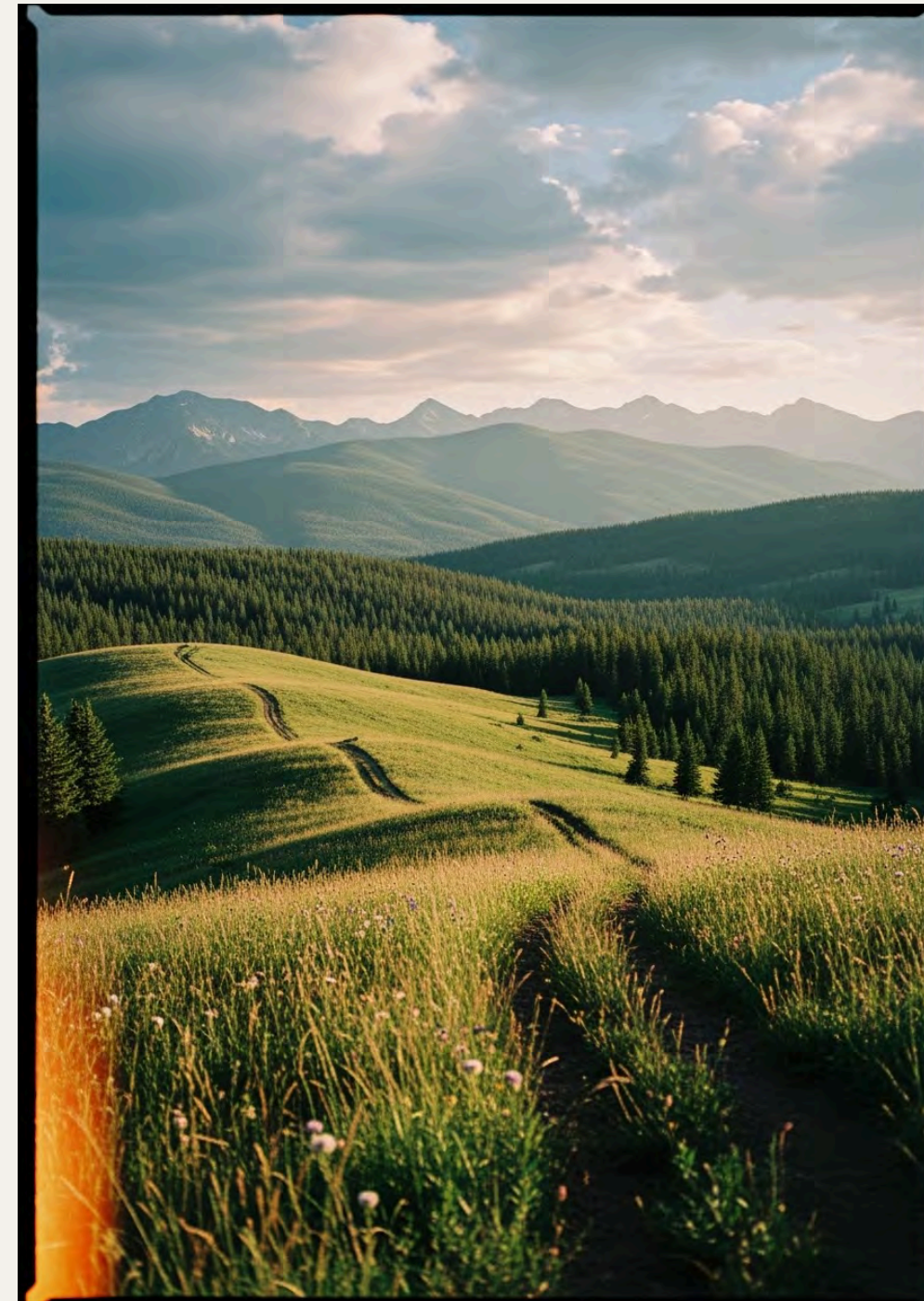
documentary style photography of an
indigenous woman, closeup portrait

Retro / Film

Film nostalgia. Grain, VHS static, analog quirks.



film fashion portrait, 16mm film



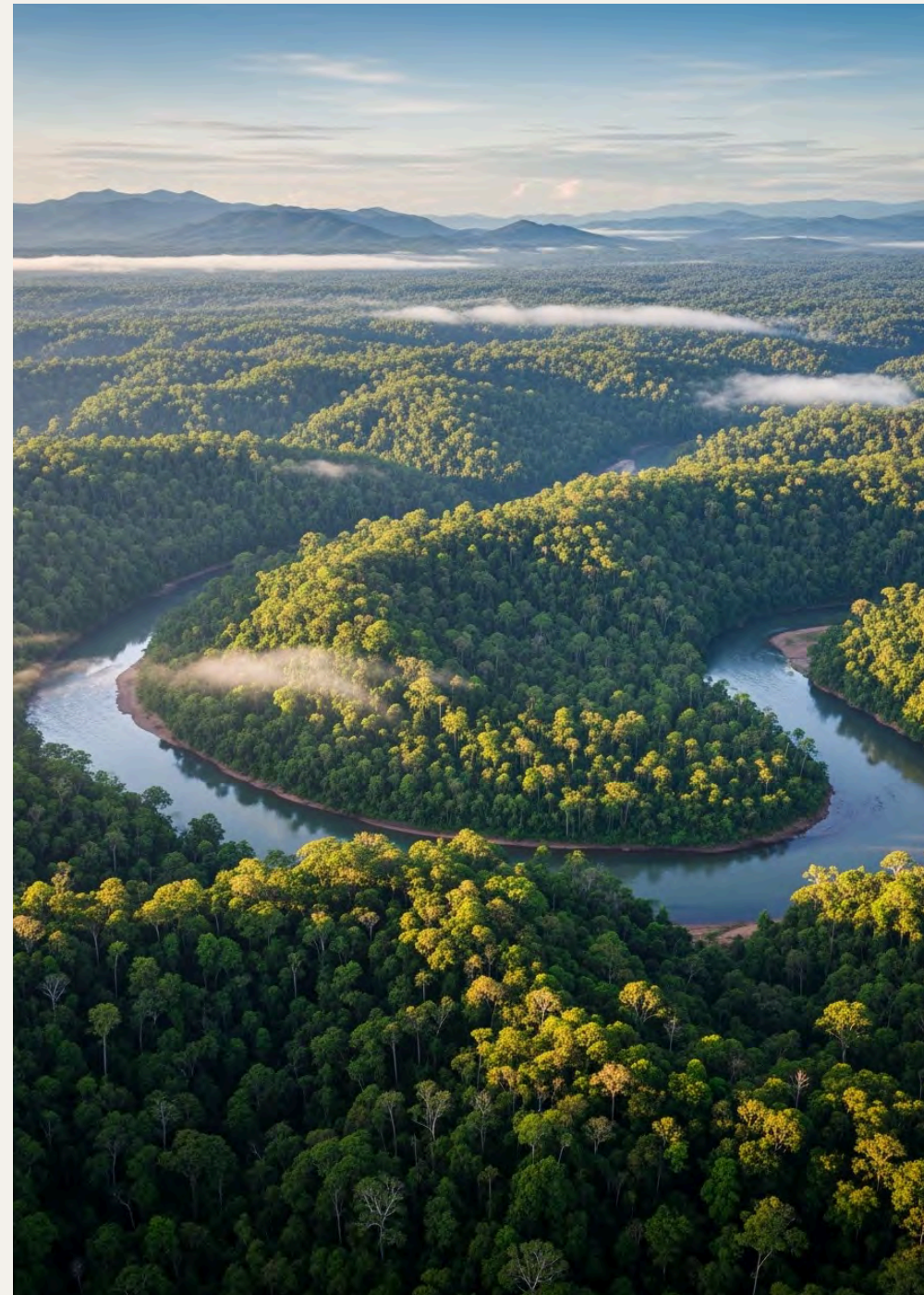
film landscape photo, 35mm film



back of a model is wearing an oversized white viscose beach shirt with short sleeves and camp collar, paired with high-waisted shorts in the same color palette. She's sitting on the deck of an old wooden sailboat during the midday light, surrounded by calm sea waters in front of Capri's iconic rock formations. The focus should be on her relaxed pose as she poses for a photoshoot. She has a long light hair. Shot by Miranda Makaroff for moodboard. Bright blue sky and the blue sea, editorial photography, cinematic, fashion magazine cover + 35mm film grain, Kodak Portra 400T taken from a distance of about five meters

Landscape

Wide, environmental, awe-inspiring.
Nature and scale.



landscape photography, jungle, aerial shot,
wide, breathtaking beauty



landscape photography of snowy
mountains in california, aerial shot,
wide, breathtaking beauty



landscape photography, desert

Dreamscape

Ethereal, soft, atmospheric.
Halfway between real and surreal.



dreamscape world, water pond, oasis,
calming symmetry, bright, crisp, commercial



dreamscape world, water pond, oasis,
calming symmetry, bright, crisp



dreamscape world, water pond, oasis,
calming symmetry, bright, crisp, editorial

Dynamic

Movement, energy, action.
Kinetic and alive.



a dynamic editorial shot of runner, motion blur, running on side of building



dynamic shot of two vintage cars crash crashing, people flying from collision



a dynamic editorial shot of person running through glass window, glass everywhere

5 MIN ACTIVITY

Give it a shot

Your challenge is to replicate this image as closely as possible using AI.
Pay attention to the angle, the lens, the lighting, and the style keyword.
The closer you direct those details, the closer you'll get to the original shot.

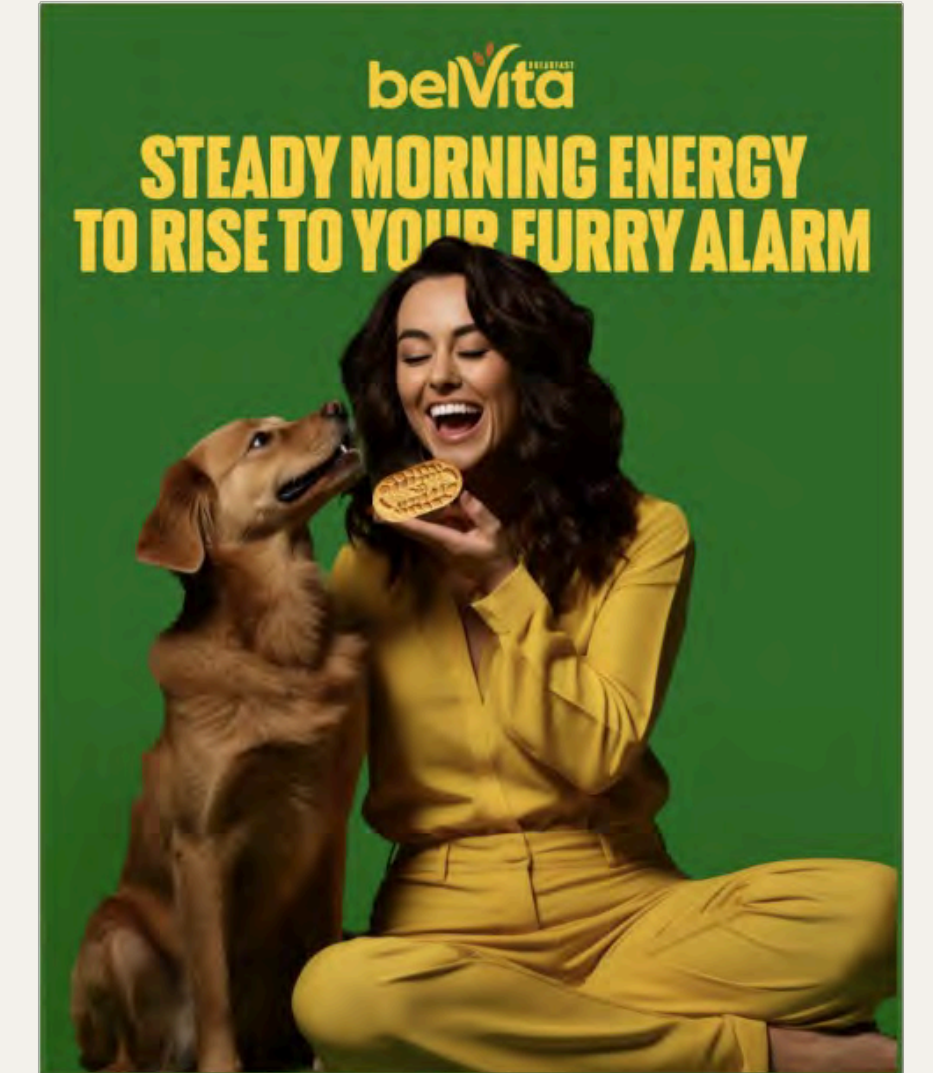


a 50mm blurry ethereal portrait, fashion editorial, blurred colorful, blurry ethereal

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From Image to Campaign

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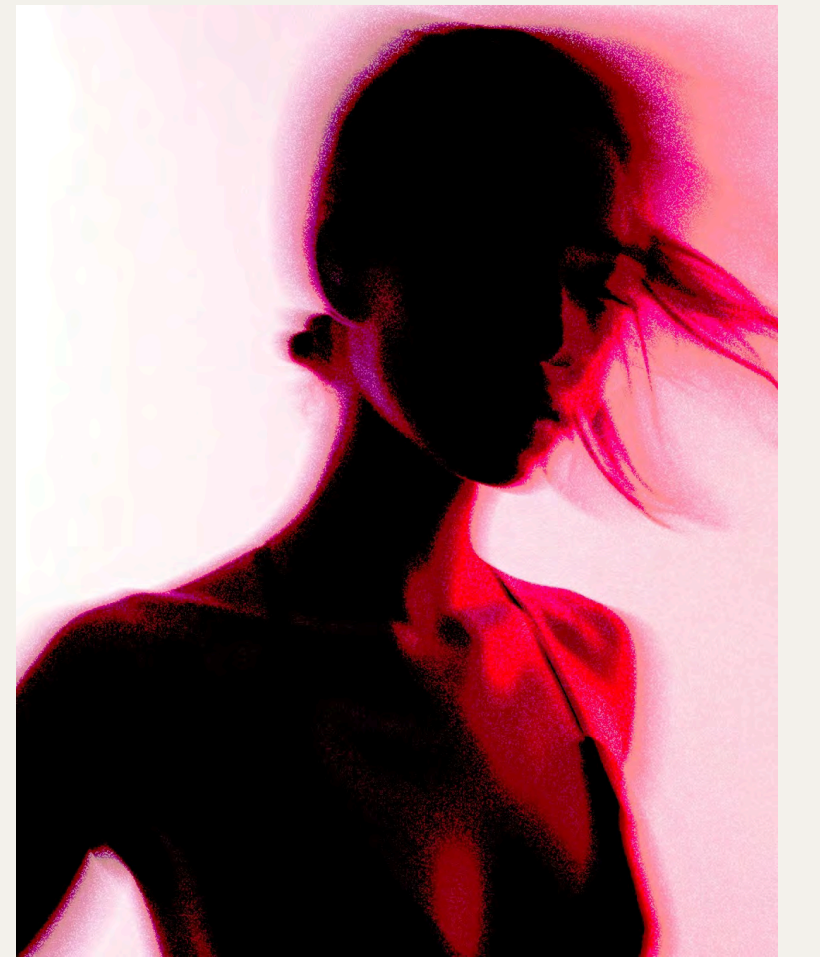
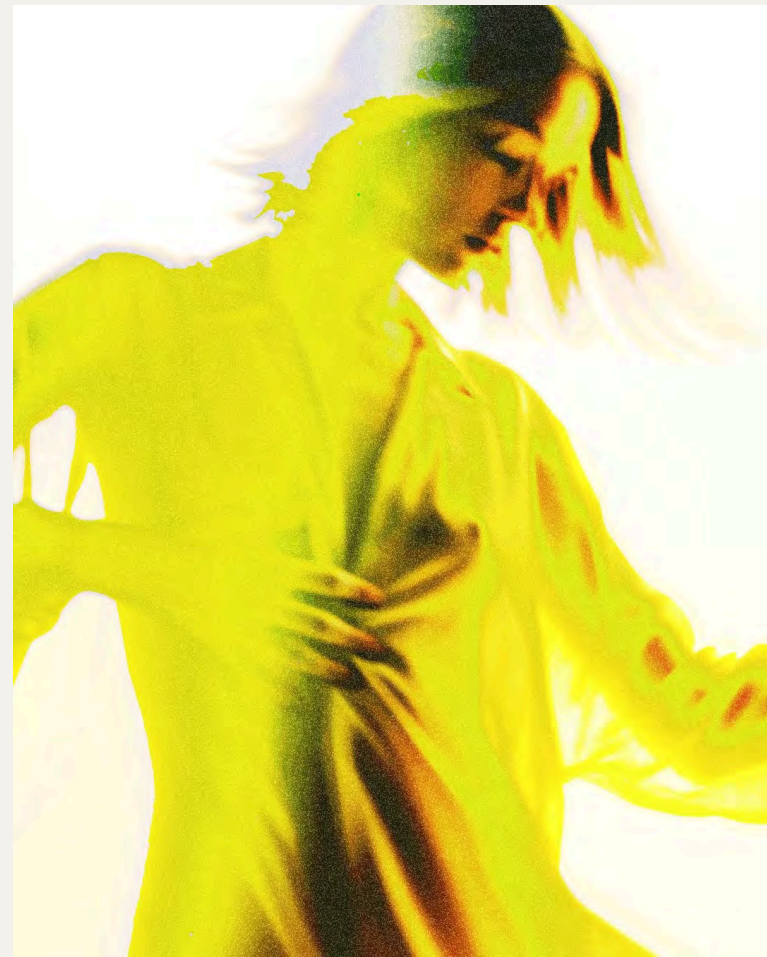
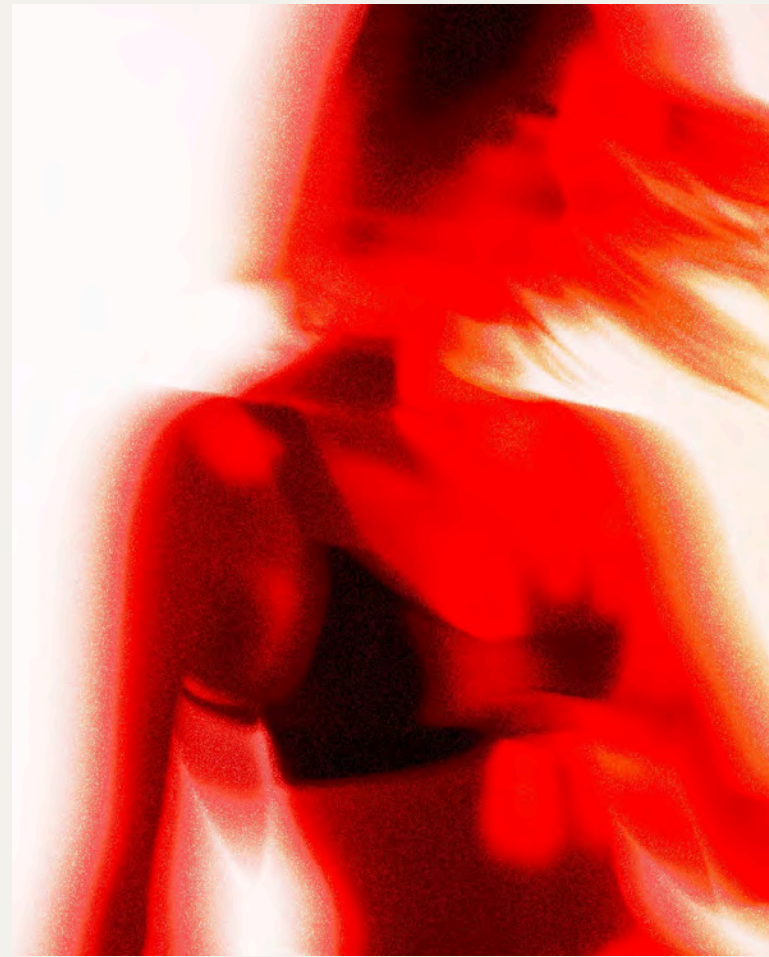
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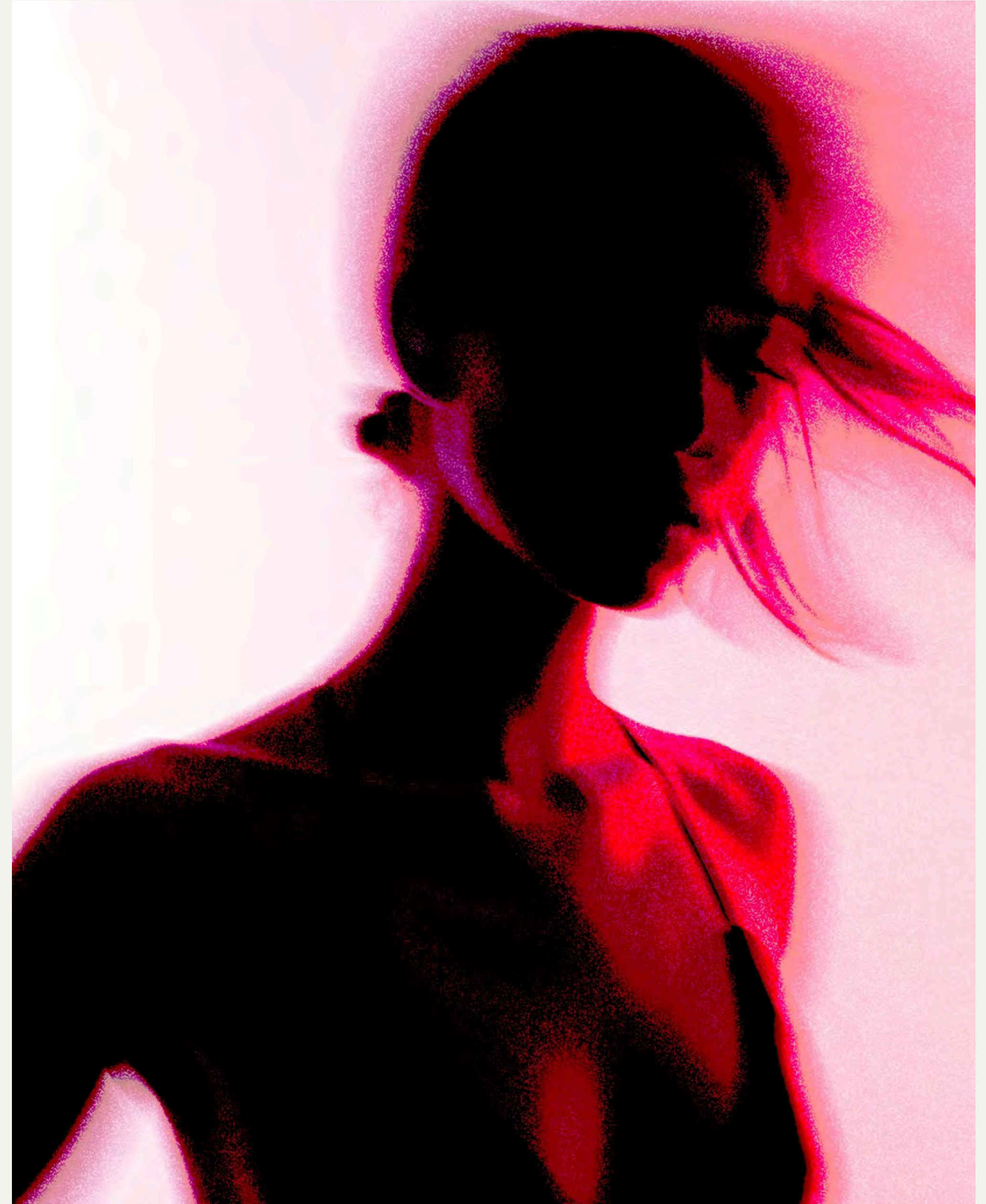
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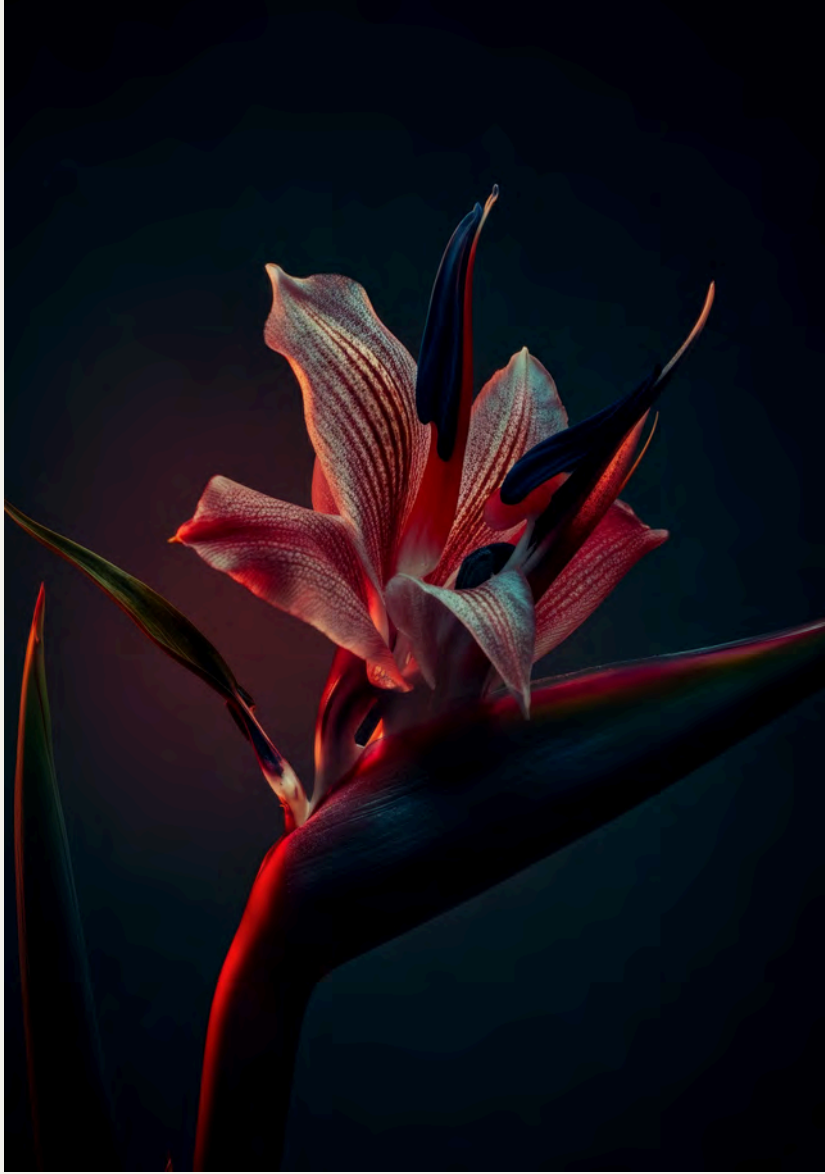
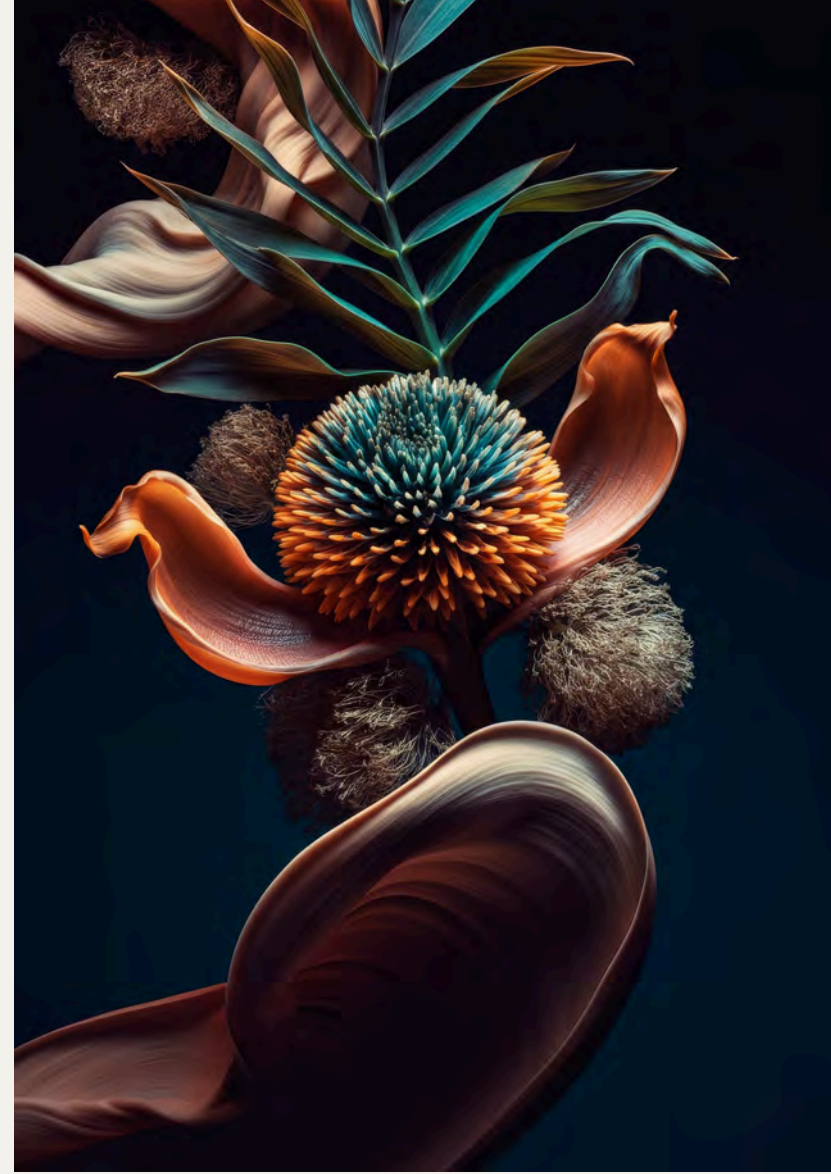
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Iteration = Direction

One strong image is a spark. But campaigns live in sets — a wide, a medium, a detail.
The key is learning to art direct not just a shot, but a sequence.

With AI, iteration is fast. You can see ten versions of an idea in minutes, compare them side by side, and decide which direction feels strongest. Then you refine again.
This is how cohesive campaigns are built: not from one lucky output, but from dozens of small decisions layered over time.

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prompt: 3d isometric render of a [subject], [styling], [details], isolated on white background, stylish, minimal, symmetry, beautiful aesthetic, natural, lived in, pop, colorful, soft edges, playful, minimal



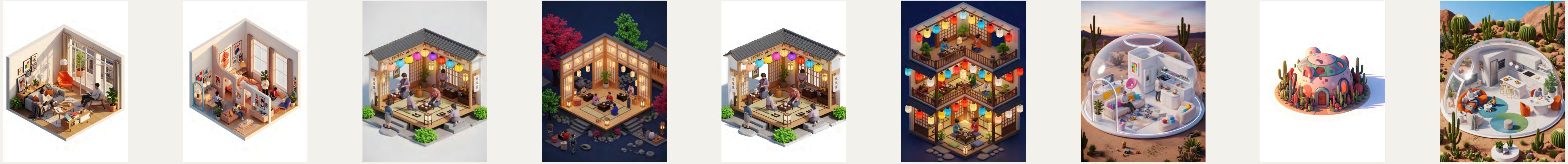
UNLOCK AI



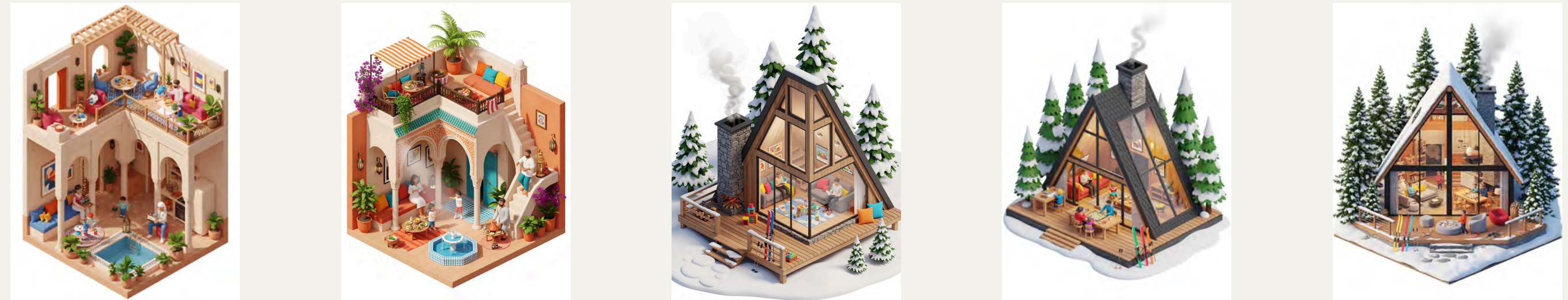
Explore → first outputs to open possibilities.



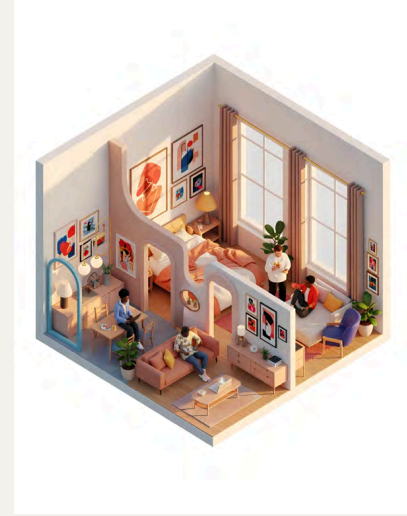
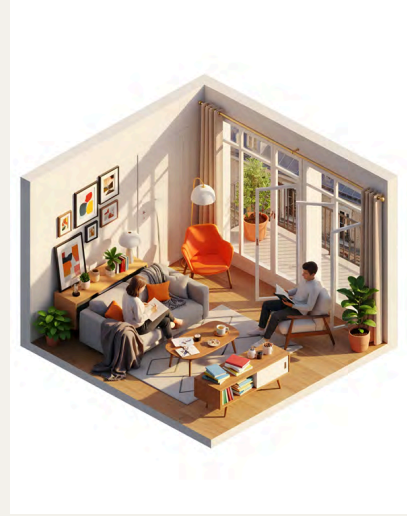
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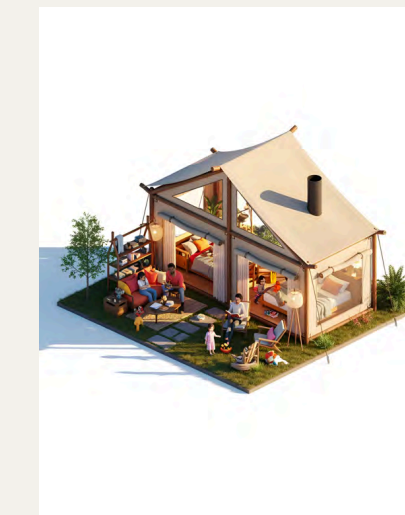
Define → lock style, look and feel.



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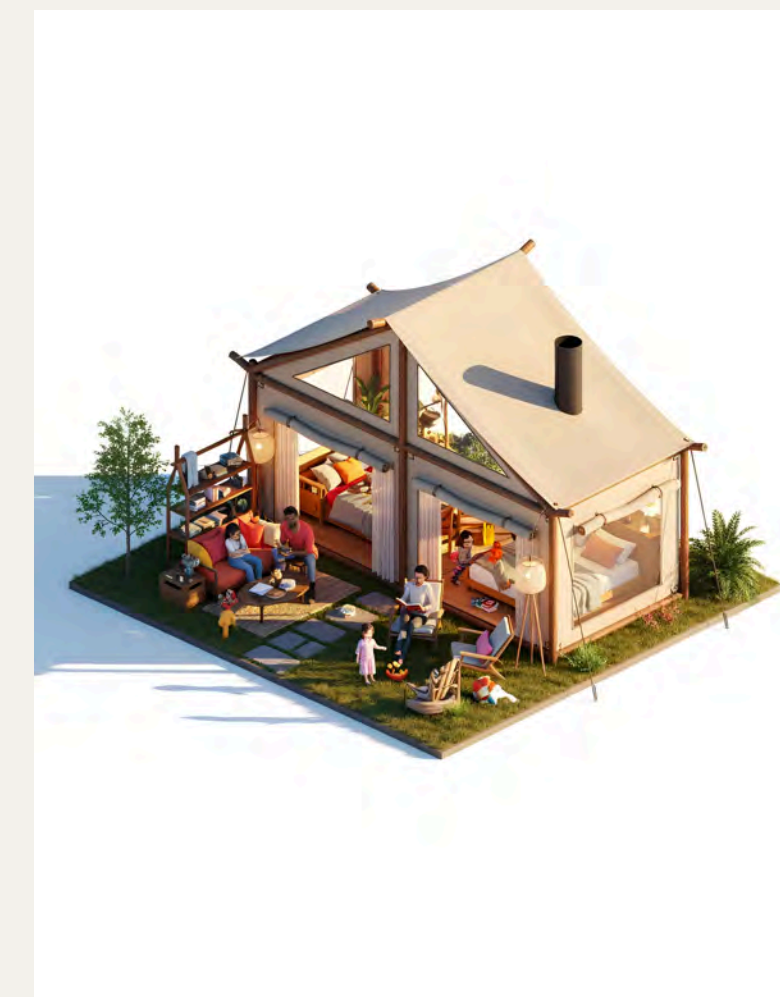
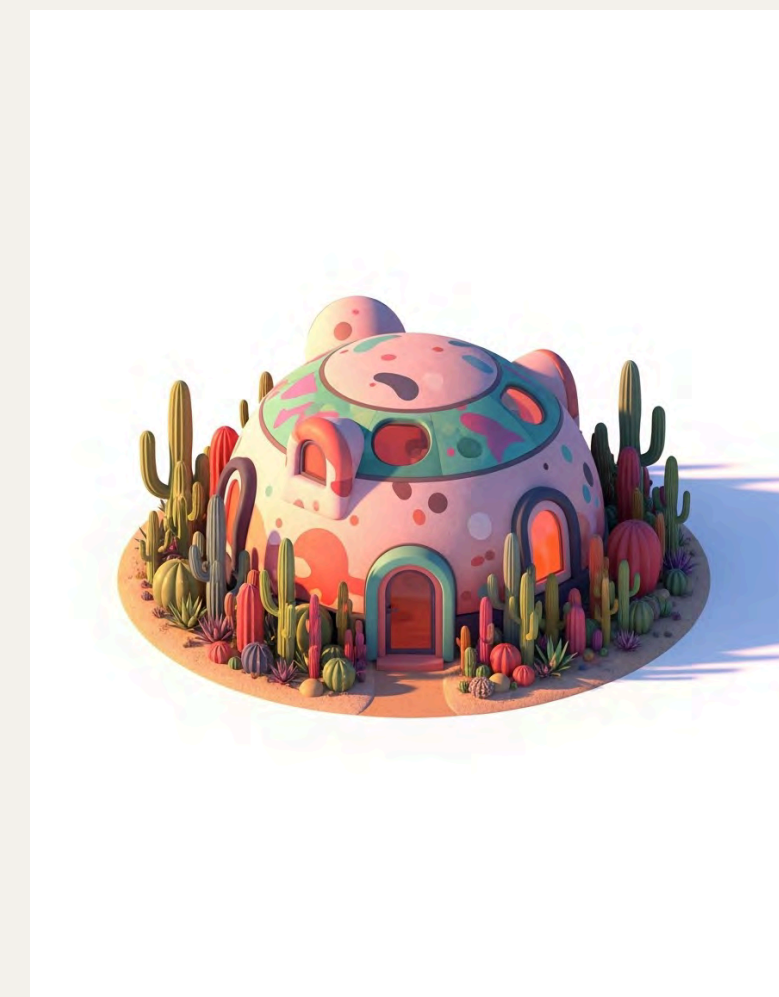
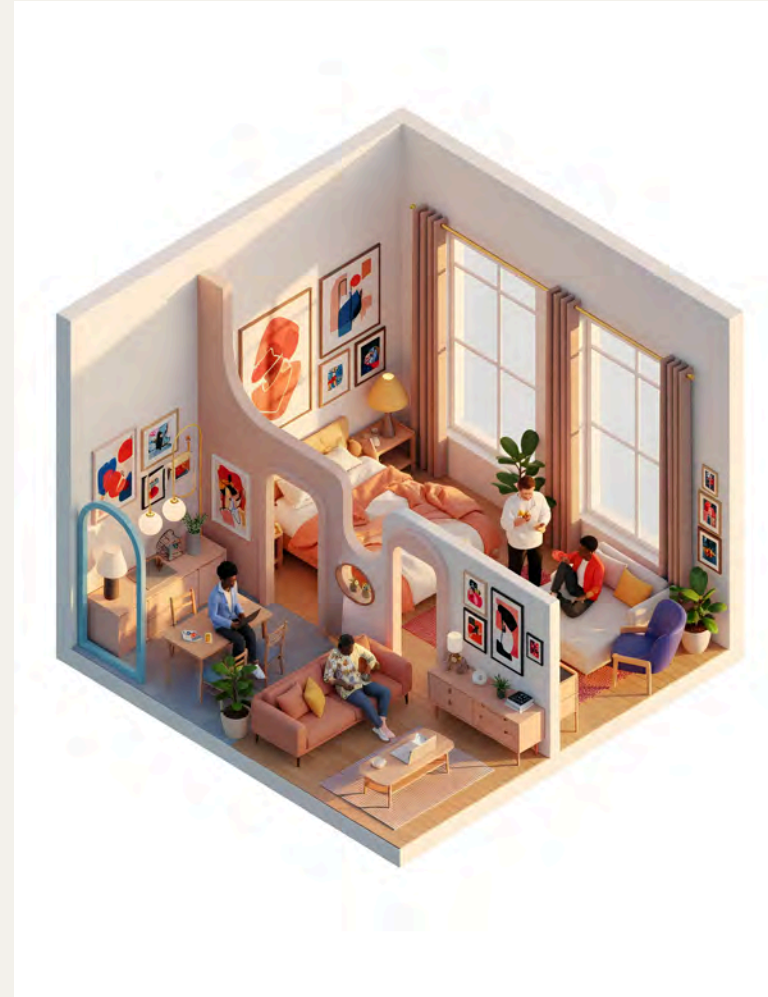
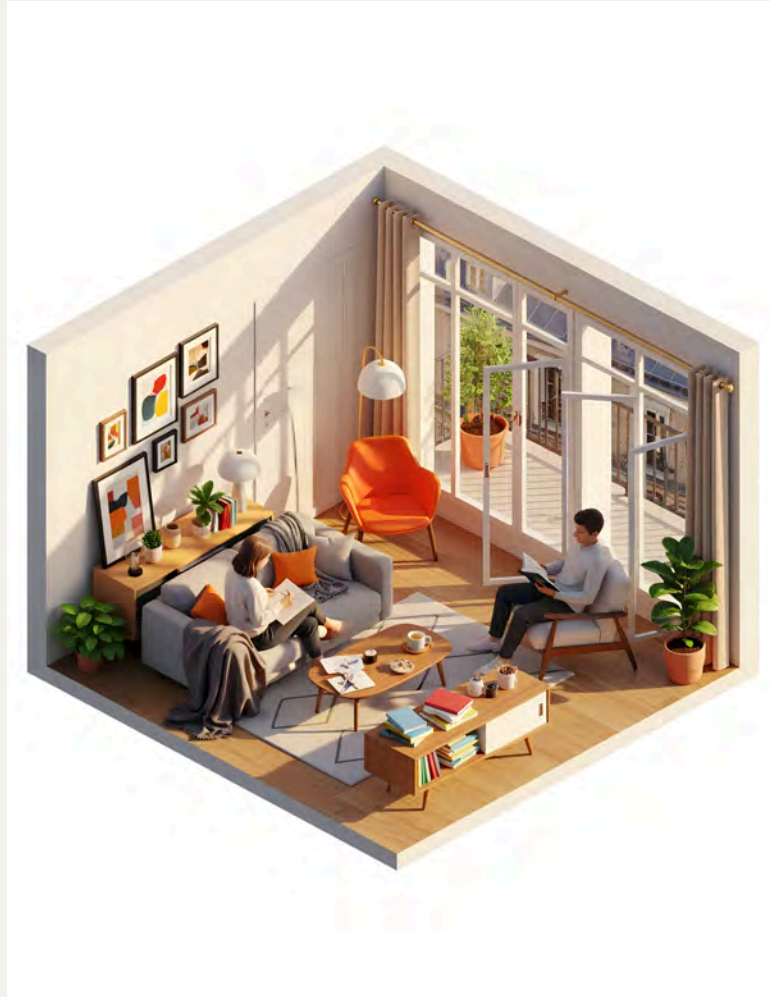


Refine → narrow down to the strongest set.



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Curate → build a shotlist from selected images, and make final retouching fixes.



**Integrate → add design and
copy to shape the campaign.**

UNLOCK AI

Home.



Home. Anywhere.

Find your home away from home.

Casa.



UNLOCK AI

Bâan.



Hjem
Rumah
Home
Heim
Ev



うち。



UNLOCK AI

Hoggar.



Rumah.



Hjem.



UNLOCK AI



Home. Anywhere.



Find your home away from home.

10 MIN ACTIVITY - 3 IMAGES OR MORE

Create Your World

Now it's your turn to create something entirely your own. Start by choosing a world keyword, it can be anything, cinematic, editorial, surreal, minimalism, dreamscape, and keep that style consistent. From there, explore with different lenses, angles, and framings to build a small set of images that feel like they belong together.

UNLOCK AI

Director's Lens: AI Video-Generation